

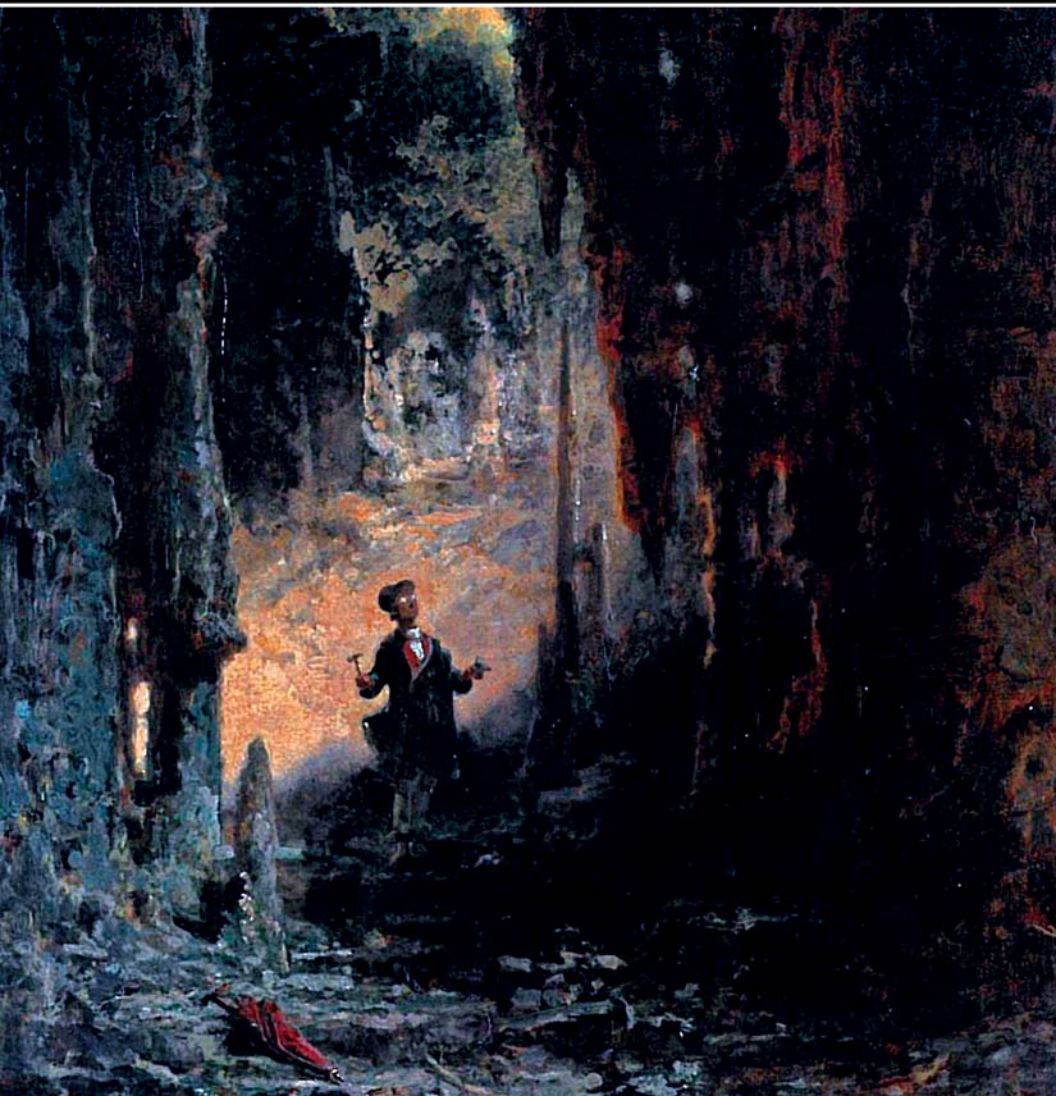
DW 1

a Dungeon World adventure



Lair of the Unknown

Johnstone Metzger





All the dungeons have been looted, all the monsters have been slain, and this land is free from the oppression of mad sorcerers and marauding armies. There is no longer any need for adventurers like you, and not a single opportunity for you to get rich left in these parts... or is there? Deep in the Haunted Forest you stand, directly in front of the lost stronghold of Fearsome Forbus and the Unknown Wizard—two of the greatest dungeon raiders that ever lived. Will you leave laden down with all their precious loot? Or will you uncover horrors this land thought dead and buried, never to return?

Red Box Vancouver



Lair of the Unknown

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Dungeon Module B1: In Search of the Unknown, by Mike Carr (TSR Games, 1979).

Dungeoneer's Survival Guide, by Douglas Niles (TSR, 1986).

The Dying Earth, by Jack Vance (Hillman Periodicals, 1950).

Realm of Chaos: Slaves to Darkness, by Bryan Ansell, Mike Brunton, and Simon Forrest (Games Workshop, 1988).

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Introduction

You stand in front of a stout door in the side of a hill in the Haunted Forest. Hidden behind the overgrown vegetation, it has stayed untouched for half a century. Who could have known that this sketchy, tattered map in your hand would turn out to be accurate? But here you are, at the mouth of a strange, subterranean sanctum, an army of rumours swirling around in your imagination. Could this really be Xallevyrx, the long-lost lair of the legendary warrior Fearsome Forbus and his loyal companion, the Unknown Wizard? Their exploits have been enshrined in song—could their many treasures, looted from the dungeons of a hundred ancient sorcerers, still be here, waiting for your hands to bring them back up to the surface of the world?

There is only one way to find out. Do you dare?



The Lay of the Land

A century ago, this land was wild and untamed. Hideous beasts of all descriptions made their lairs in the ruins of subterranean dungeons that veritably litter the landscape, built by mad wizards long ago. But thanks to several generations of brave adventurers, this land was civilized. The last of these monsters was slain fifty years ago by the greatest pair of heroes this land has ever seen: Fearsome Forbus and the Unknown Wizard.

This peace was not to last, however, and the Haunted Forest has seen more than one tragedy in the time since. When the victorious duo attempted to construct a subterranean sanctum of their own, they were apparently destroyed by the evil wizard Zamzomarr. What his purpose was, no one can say, but for decades afterward, Zamzomarr terrorized the countryside from atop his iron tower—until the coming of the Dragon Army.

So named because it was commanded by a dragon—or multiple dragons—the Dragon Army actually consisted primarily of orcs and goblins, organized in hordes and legions, along with a devious assortment of other monstrosities. In Zamzomarr they found a staunch ally, but this proved to be his undoing. Together they raged across the countryside for several years until Lord Stefan came, with a host of armoured knights, Elven archers, and Dwarven sappers at his side, to smash their power. Orcs and goblins were slain by the hundreds along with their dragon leader. Zamzomarr was executed by Lord Stefan's own hand, his severed head displayed for all to see.

Since then, the town of Westham has been on the mend. Life in and around the Haunted Forest has returned to normal and even flourished. Finally rid of both Zamzomarr and the Dragon Army, trade in the area has grown dramatically, it is now safe to travel, and towns and villages are rebuilding. Lord Stefan returned east in a hurry once the fighting ended, but has left Belrain Swordsinger, a loyal Elven commander, in charge of Westham, and there are still soldiers stationed about.

Xallevyrx

But what of the lair built by Fearsome Forbus and the Unknown Wizard some fifty years ago? They called it Xallevyrx and spoke of it with pride, but its exact location has been lost beneath the ever-shifting sands of time. That it was upriver from Westham all agree, but beyond that, no one can say for sure. There is no evidence that it was ever found by Zamzomarr, or anyone else, after they disappeared. Their servants vanished along with them and their many treasures have never been recovered.

Westham

More properly named Westham-on-the-Haunt because it straddles the Haunted River, this town lies outside the Haunted Forest, about a day's journey away from Xallevyrx. Having lost a few thousand citizens to the war, Westham has opened its doors to all who would help rebuild. This has resulted in almost a hundred immigrants a month, and Belrain Swordsinger, the Elven sheriff, is having more and more trouble maintaining order, in spite of the veteran soldiers he commands. This guard proved adequate at the end of the war, but the town's new size has them stretched thin.

Westham has always earned the lion's share of its wealth from pottery made from the river's rich clay beds. Not even the weavers' guild has the same kind of clout, but the pool of unskilled labour is threatening to become an unstable force in municipal politics.

THE TOWN OF WESTHAM-ON-THE-HAUNT

- Moderate prosperity, booming population, and a guard and walls for defence.
- Craft: Pottery, Market, Oath to Lord Stefan, Personage: Belrain Swordsinger, Resource: Wood.

Chronology

LONG, LONG AGO

The mad archmages of ancient history build their underground lairs in and around the Haunted Forest, drawn by a mysterious magical force emanating from the ground. When they die, the archmages leave their subterranean complexes to the monsters that love them so. The area remains infested with these monsters until heroes begin to take them seriously.

c. 150 YEARS AGO

The town of Westham is built upon the banks of the Haunted River, at the outskirts of this forbidding, monster-filled land. The founders and most of the population are highlanders, used to hard living.

c. 100 YEARS AGO

Adventurous heroes begin to take notice of the Haunted Forest. As their efforts to fight the monsters grows, decade after decade, civilization moves in to the area and Westham grows larger and more prosperous.

c. 70 YEARS AGO

After several decades during which adventurers are rare and strange, they suddenly begin to flock to this region. Where once a monster-slayer could make his name with a single fearsome pelt, these newer generations of heroes compete to clear whole dungeons as fast as possible and include many scoundrels only interested in treasure. The greatest legends of the monster-slayers are written during the next twenty years.

C. 50 YEARS AGO

The last of the monsters are destroyed by the most successful and celebrated heroes of this region, Fearsome Forbus and his loyal companion, the Unknown Wizard. The pair then proceed to build their own underground fortress in the Haunted Forest, going to great lengths to keep its location a secret.

Soon after they move in, though, the evil wizard Zamzomarr defeats them and begins a reign of terror from atop his wizard's tower. Trade to the area dries up and many people prefer to leave.

Phasic spiders, arriving from another plane of existence, then attack the wyrdstone and contain its power. After this point forward, the dead no longer rise from their graves when left in the Haunted Forest.

NO MORE THAN 5 YEARS AGO

The Dragon Army invades, assisted by Zamzomarr. Westham suffers heavy losses and many nearby villages are burned.

LAST YEAR OR THE YEAR BEFORE THAT

Lord Stefan defeats the Dragon Army and beheads Zamzomarr.

Changing the Details

As you introduce details from the history of Westham and the Haunted Forest and ask the players questions about their characters, they might mention things that contradict some of what is written down in this book. That is fine! They might have an idea you think is better, or you might even decide to change some of the details yourself. Do so. Everything in this book is here to help you run the game—none of it is mandatory. If you change something, make a note of it and if it comes up again, remember what is different in your game and how that affects the other elements of this adventure that you do decide to use.

Rumours

The PCs have probably heard about this place. If not, why bother investigating the map? As part of your initial setup or while you ask questions about the PCs' lives, their backgrounds, and their motivations, make sure to tell them about some of the rumours they have heard.

Rumours beloved by **people who have not been to this area:**

- Before Lord Stefan defeated the Dragon Army and restored order to these lands, there was no law and order at all, just adventurers. That's how an evil wizard ruled for so long, and why the Dragon Army found it so easy to invade.
- Lord Stefan left an elf in charge because he couldn't trust any of the locals. Any one of them could have secretly been collaborators helping the Dragon Army.
- The evil wizard Zamzomarr terrorized these lands, consorting with demons, devouring children, and calling down lightning on hapless boatmen plying their trade along the river, until the mighty Lord Stefan put a stop to it.
- The Haunted Forest is called that because anyone who dies in it will rise for their grave and hunt for human flesh to devour, unless their body is decapitated and burned.

Rumours circulating amongst the **soldiers who fought the Dragon Army:**

- Lord Stefan left too early. There are still reports of goblins and other monsters in the Haunted Forest. Westham is going to need a whole new generation of adventurers now!
- Lord Stefan would have won the war even faster if he hadn't lost his magic sword during the fighting. With but a touch it unravelled sorcery and could only be wielded by a man blessed by the god of war. Alas, now it lies somewhere in the Haunted Forest!
- The dragons leading the Dragon Army fled and attacked the kingdom from the East after the evil wizard Zamzomarr was beheaded. That's why Lord Stefan had to leave so quickly. The war's over in these parts, and it won't be coming back.

Rumours circulating around the **Imperial College of Magic**:

- Fearsome Forbus was a mighty warrior, but his real power came from a host of magical weapons and accoutrements—none of which have ever been recovered.
- The generations of adventurers who rid these lands of monsters, like Fearsome Forbus and the Unknown Wizard, didn't kill them all, they just sealed them inside the ancient, ruined dungeons with magic. The Dragon Army invaded these lands in order to free all those monsters.
- The Unknown Wizard found a way to stop spells from being forgotten. No one knows how it happened, though. Some say the spellcaster would forget other things instead. That's why he was called the Unknown Wizard—because he caused everyone who knew him to forget his real name. They even forgot his face! Others say he used it to stop other wizards from memorizing more spells—they were instead forever stuck with the last ones they had prepared.

Rumours told by **locals**:

- Fearsome Forbus found some kind of enchanted stone—a diamond the size of a fist, maybe—and that's why he disappeared. He left to go live the high life!
- The evil wizard Zamzomarr killed Fearsome Forbus and the Unknown Wizard to steal their treasures, but he couldn't find them. That's why he terrorized this area from atop his iron tower.
- The Haunted Forest is full of old, underground ruins, but they are all empty. Fearsome Forbus and his loyal companion, the Unknown Wizard, killed all the monsters half a century ago. Before the Dragon Army invaded, there was only the evil wizard Zamzomarr, but he never left his iron tower.
- When Forbus and his companion built their secret lair, half a century ago, cost was no obstacle for them. They were rich beyond all imagining, but their treasure hoard disappeared when they did.

Getting Started

If you want to get crawling through the dungeon right away, start with the PCs at the door to the dungeon that was called Xallevyrx and ask them what they do next. Their map has led them right to this door that obviously leads underground. How will they proceed?

As they venture into the dungeon to wander its corridors, ask them questions. Ask them how they got here and why. Ask them what they brought with them and what they left behind. In between encounters with monsters, traps, and other strangeness, ask them what they hope to achieve here. Treasure? Fame? Magical power?

Most importantly, tie them into the world around the dungeon. There is a town nearby, one they will have to go back to after they loot this place of its treasures—or after they narrowly escape its horrors with their lives. This town, Westham, has a history, as does the dungeon and the whole countryside around it. The events of the past are what made Xallevyrx what it is today, and this past is revealed along with the other contents.

The Map

How did the PCs come to have a map that leads right to the dungeon's front door? They are certainly not the first adventurers to venture into Xallevyrx, just the first to come through this door...

- Did they find it in the hands of a dead man on their way to Westham?
- Was it in one of their rooms in the inn, hidden under the bed, or at the back of a drawer, perhaps?
- Was it sold to them by some shady-looking adventurer who needed coin to get as far away from here as possible?

If the players are looking to you for the answers, tell them. If the events prior to their arrival at the dungeon aren't clear, either because time has passed or this is the first session with these characters, ask them for the answers.

Starting Somewhere Else

It is also possible to start at another point. You might want the PCs to snoop around in town before they head off to the dungeon, especially if that makes it easier for them to scout out the forest and find the other entrances. You could draw a map of the Haunted Forest and let the PCs explore it, before they get to the dungeon—or collaborate with your players and draw it together. Perhaps the players would rather begin at a tavern, in the tried-and-true method of adventurers everywhere. Or, if they are looking for a clear goal or objective to strive for, they could be given a mission at the Imperial College of Magic, where they are asked to track down the Unknown Wizard's last known stronghold.

None of this setup, nor any of the rumours that follow, needs to come in the form of flashbacks, if you don't want it to. You can make up characters and have them talk to the PCs before they get to Xallevyrx. Just make sure you keep asking questions.



Questions to Ask

The goal of these questions is to tie the PCs to the town of Westham and the Elven sheriff who runs it, Belrain Swordsinger, and to establish the recent history of the Dragon Army's invasion. This will become important when they find Anastasia later on in the adventure. If one of your questions introduces a new character, tell the players who that person is when you ask the question.

Ask About Their Stuff

First ask if the PCs brought all their possessions, or if they left them in the nearby town of Westham, which is about a day away. What kind of arrangements did they make in town, and when are they expected back?

If they **brought all their gear**, it must be because they don't feel comfortable leaving anything in town. Ask them some of these questions:

- How did you run afoul of Belrain Swordsinger, the sheriff of Westham? Why did he warn you not to show your face in town again?
- How many other adventurers did you see in Westham? Did you talk to any of them? Do they know where you are now?
- What did you see in Westham that makes you mistrust it? How do you think the recent invasion by the Dragon Army has affected the townsfolk?

If they **plan on using Westham as a base of operations**, ask them some of these questions:

- What did you learn from the old highlanders, whose families originally settled Westham?
- What do you think of the soldiers who make up the town militia now? Do they seem to get along with the older inhabitants?
- What important advice did Belrain Swordsinger give you before you left Westham to come here to the dungeon?
- What kind of deal did the innkeeper give you?
- Who do you know in town that you trust?

Ask About Their Past

If any of the PCs are **natives of Westham**, ask them about the recent war:

- Considering that adventurers cleared these lands of monsters decades ago, how did their return change people?
- Did you help to rebuild Westham? Why or why not, and what do people think of you because of it?
- Do you believe the stories old people tell about the Haunted Forest, how it used to be that anyone buried there would rise again and attack the living?
- What did you do, and where did you go, during the Dragon Army's invasion?
- What do you think of all the people who settled here after the war was over? How do you feel about your town being run by an elf?
- What was it like growing up with the evil wizard Zamzomarr's iron tower so close? Were you ever personally terrorized by him or his magic? How does it feel to know he is gone now?
- Where does your family hail from? Are they highlanders, among the town's earliest settlers, or did they come with the waves of adventurers who hunted all the monsters of these lands to extinction?

If any of the PCs **have been in this area for a while**—a few years, maybe—but aren't natives, ask them about the aftermath:

- Did you fight in Lord Stefan's army? Where you there when the evil wizard Zamzomarr was beheaded and the land was liberated?
- What happened to the dragons leading the army? Does anyone even know?
- What have you heard about the Haunted Forest? Did you ever see a corpse come back to life in it, or think you might have?
- When you were asked to help repair the damage to Westham caused by the Dragon Army, what did you do? Did you leave that work to look for this dungeon?
- Why did Belrain Swordsinger, the sheriff of Westham, not want you to come out here looking for the dungeon?

Running the Adventure

Get the players to help you flesh out the world. You don't need to ask them questions about the dungeon because it's already detailed quite extensively here. Instead, ask about their characters' lives and the people they know. Bring up details from the history described here, but work with them to create the outside world. Entering the dungeon should feel like stepping into the unknown, but the rest of the setting should feel like someplace they already know.

Xallevyrx is a dungeon that the PCs can explore at their leisure—for a little while, at least. At first, the only obstacles they have to face are rival adventurers, but as they uncover more of the mysteries buried in the dungeon, those mysteries will turn into active dangers that threaten not only the PCs, or even just the nearby town, but the entire region.

The Dungeon Front

This series of modules introduces a new type of front: the Dungeon Front. Very simply, this is just another category for you to group your dangers into. A dungeon front is where you put all the dangers that lurk within a single dungeon, but which do not become active until that dungeon is explored by the PCs. These are passive dangers, waiting to be discovered and unleashed.

As the PCs move through a dungeon, they encounter different dangers which you then move from the inactive and passive dungeon front into the adventure front, where all the active dangers in play for the current session are grouped. Once a danger moves from a dungeon front to the adventure front, start using its grim portents and work toward its impending doom like normal.

Lair of the Unknown presents one adventure front and one dungeon front. The adventure front, *They Who Make Trouble*, starts with only one danger: rival adventurers. The dungeon front, *Unknown Dangers*, contains three dangers, all of which lie dormant and waiting in the bowels of Xallevyrx. When the PCs discover them—or when you decide that rival adventurers trigger them—they move from the dungeon front to the adventure front.

Inventing New Things

It is possible that you may find some of the more monstrous denizens of Xallevyrx a little less than inspiring. Orcs and goblins are fairly typical fantasy tropes, after all, and this supposed to be the lair of the “unknown,” isn’t it? Every group is different, though, and it is no easy task to invent something that will be both novel and exciting for people without knowing them. Instead, here is a simple procedure that you can use to make something new and unexpected for your own players, either to replace the existing monsters, or to use in addition to them.

First, ask the players about what their characters expect, hope, or fear to find in the abandoned dungeon that is Xallevyrx. What do they think could be lurking in there? What kind of creatures have they prepared for? What kind would present a real danger?

Then take the answers and create something that is the exact opposite! Whatever they tell you, reverse it, turn it around on its head, and make that the new creature that lives in Xallevyrx. Combine all the opposites into one, to be really strange, or split them into two or more types of monster. This way you will have a threat unlike anything they had expected. For example, say they respond with these comments:

Mouse, the Thief: “The forest is haunted, huh? Ghosts I can handle, but I hope we don’t run into any vampires!”

Carmine, the Cleric: “Aw, yeah, vampires would be awesome. Then I could Turn Undead!”

Finnegan, the Fighter: “Spiders is what I’m afraid of. Spider-people, spider-soup, spider-anything. No spiders, please! With my luck, there probably will be spiders, though.”

Okay, vampires and spiders—what are their opposites? Vampires are suave, sexy and they drink blood, so the opposite of that must be: a blood-barfing slob! Now, what about the opposite of spiders—how about snakes? They don’t have *any* legs! Plus, spiders are small, so these have to be huge. Put that all together, and our new monsters are giant snakes that are very dirty and spit venomous blood all over everything. The players will never see it coming!

The Adventure Front : They Who Make Trouble

Description and Cast

Whether or not the game starts with the PCs at the doorway into the dungeon, at some point they should realize that they are not the only ones who have discovered the location of Xallevyrx. In fact, they have a host of rivals—other adventurers intent on beating them to the choicest loot this subterranean lair still holds. These other adventurers have discovered a back way into Xallevyrx, through the natural caverns beneath it. If the PCs are not quick enough, these tomb-robbing opportunists will leave them nothing but monsters to discover.

As the PCs explore Xallevyrx, the dangers of the dungeon front will be triggered and they will join the rival adventurers in this front. If these rival adventurers aren't dealt with, they might even trigger some of these dangers themselves. Of course, they will probably not survive and even if they do, they are in no way prepared to deal with the consequences of their actions. Only the PCs can do that!

- Belrain Swordsinger, Elven sheriff of Westham.
- Glurni, son of Kâst, Dwarven mining engineer.
- Kirsha, wealthy sorceress.
- Penrose Wiyams, tomb robber.
- Supper Brown, priest of Melanoë.
- Velli Turinsdottir, graduate student and caver.

Custom Moves

When you **absorb a piece of wyrdstone...** (page 43).

Stakes

- Will Penrose Wiyams betray the PCs?
- Will the PCs make an ally of Belrain, or an enemy?
- Will Velli Turinsdottir find enough treasure to fund her research? Will she survive the terrors of Xallevyrx?

Dangers

Rival Adventurers

How many other enterprising scoundrels and would-be treasure-finders there are, and in what groups they organize themselves, is up to you. A number of example characters are described and you are free to invent more. These adventurers cause trouble all on their own, as their grim portents show, but they can also discover any of the dungeon front's dangers and cause them to become active. Survivors of such foolishness may even turn to the PCs for help, dragging them into the mess they made.

Type: Unholy ground (the forest is a cursed place).

Impulse: To sow discord and cause trouble.

GRIM PORTENTS

- Rival adventurers cause trouble in Westham without ever going to Xallevyrx.
- Rival dungeoneers recover treasure from Xallevyrx, take it back to town, and stir up trouble.
- The PCs find dead adventurers inside Xallevyrx.
- Belrain the Sword Singer comes after the adventurers exploring Xallevyrx, including the PCs.
- Rival adventurers recover pieces of wyrdstone, take them back to town, and stir up trouble.

Impending Doom: Rampant chaos (as the wyrdling curse spreads across the land).

Details:

This danger is described in detail on pages 28-41.

New classes for adventurers can be found on pages 92-108.

The Dungeon Front : Unknown Dangers

Description and Cast

The secrets of Xallevyrx have lain hidden from all but a few for half a century. Now they are ready to escape. This underground structure was built on top of natural caverns that contain a crystal of great magical power—the wyrdstone. This stone, an intruder from another plane of existence, is the root of all that is supernatural in the Haunted Forest. It makes the dead rise from their graves to attack the living, and it warps the shape of all life that comes in contact with it. It feeds the mutant fungus that festers in the Unknown Wizard’s laboratory. It sustains the undead he left behind. And just like a siren’s call, it draws the goblins and the gravesleeping orcs to it, slowly but surely. Only the phasic spiders, themselves intruders from another plane, beware its power and seek to nullify its influence.

- Attack mushrooms.
- Dragonmarked goblins.
- Mutated zombies.
- Orcish gravesleepers.
- Phasic spiders.
- Sewn-up zombies.
- Spore stalkers.

Custom Moves

When you **find yourself covered in blight fungus...** (page 49).

Stakes

- Will the dead in the Haunted Forest be put to rest?
- Will the fungal blight cut off all access to Xallevyrx?
- Will the orcs manage to summon a dragon?

Dangers

Blight of Fungus

One of the Unknown Wizard's many experimental projects was the cultivation of specialized, magical fungus. He hoped to create a form of biological technology, perfectly suited to a subterranean environment, that only he could control. His creations have grown and died and fought with each other over the last half-century. For all that time, they have remained inside Xallevyrx, but if something should happen that would release them out into the world, they could spread like wildfire, choking off all other vegetation and making the countryside unliveable.

Type: Invasive species (use cursed places moves).

Impulse: To blanket the earth with itself.

GRIM PORTENTS

- Attack mushrooms and spore stalkers roam the halls of Xallevyrx.
- Carpets of mold creep out into the hallways of Xallevyrx and the caverns below.
- Attack mushrooms and spore stalkers roam the Haunted Forest.
- The creeping mold is unleashed upon the Haunted Forest.
- The fungal blight invades croplands and villages.
- The fungal blight invades Westham.

Impending Doom: Famine (as the fungus destroys any and all edible vegetation in and around the Haunted Forest).

Details:

The fungal threat is described in detail on pages 48-49.

Return of the Dragon Army

Though Lord Stefan claimed victory over the invaders, not all of the dragon's minions have been defeated. A force of goblins still lurks within the caverns below Xallevyrx, where they took refuge in the final days of the war. The orcs who were formerly their commanders sleep in graves outside of Xallevyrx for weeks or months at a time. They hate the sun, and do not venture far from their graves when they are awake, but they have discovered fissures in the walls of Xallevyrx caused by an earthquake and sometimes lurk within its halls when they catch the scent of adventurous human explorers. Once these graves are discovered, or the orcs and goblins encounter stiff resistance from armed humans, there is no going back to sleep and no more hiding—there can be only war.

Type: Wandering barbarians (horde).

Impulse: To bring war to the sunlovers.

GRIM PORTENTS

- Orcs rise from their graves and enter the dungeon, looking for humans to slay.
- Goblins venture out from the caverns below Xallevyrx to find out what is happening.
- The orcs reassume leadership of the goblins.
- Orcs and goblins swarm out of the dungeon to make war on nearby human settlements.
- The orcs perform ritual human sacrifice to summon a dragon.

Impending Doom: Tyranny (as the summoned dragon terrorizes the countryside).

Details:

These remnants of the Dragon Army are described in detail on pages 50-55.

Rise of the Undead

The leftovers from the Unknown Wizard's attempts at necromancy have been left as traps in the brick labyrinth, but they are not the only undead in Xallevyrx. Those servants that remained here when the end came have become undead mutants under the wyrdstone's influence. The phasic spiders have cocooned them in webs to keep them contained, but once the undead are stirred to action—when living, breathing adventurers disturb them—all of them spring into action, and the spiders are overwhelmed.

Type: Plague of the undead (horde).

Impulse: To swell the ranks of the dead.

GRIM PORTENTS

- Zombies escape from the brick labyrinth and wander the dungeon, attacking the living.
- Cocooned zombies escape from the phasic spiders and wander the caves below Xallevyrx, attacking the living.
- Phasic spiders attack those they hold responsible for freeing the zombies.
- The undead escape from Xallevyrx and make their way to Westham.
- The power of the phasic spiders to contain the wyrdstone's magic fails completely, and dead bodies in the Haunted Forest once again rise from their graves.

Impending Doom: Pestilence (as a plague of the living dead washes over Westham).

Details:

The undead are described in detail on pages 57-59.

Zarina the zombie is described on page 78.

The zombie king is described on page 80.

They Who Make Trouble



Adventurers of Note

There are as many adventurers in the town of Westham eager to explore the caves beneath Xallevyrx as you need. Some will want to ally themselves with the PCs and some will seek to betray them. Several of the more prominent adventurers in Westham are presented here.

These rival adventurers all enter Xallevyrx through the caverns underneath, unless the PCs show them the front door or they discover the gravesleeping orcs, at which point some of them will change their tactics.

GLURNI, SON OF KÂST *Cautious, Hoarder, Intelligent, Organized.*

Hammer (1d10 damage, 1 piercing) 12 HP 1 Armour

Close

Special Qualities: Dwarf, Mining engineer.

Glurni has come a long, long way to delve into the caverns below Xallevyrx. He was told about them by a man who saw his companions killed by a pit trap before fleeing, in exchange for passage through the Clawcrest Mountains. Many moons later he arrived only to find that others had discovered this place too! Just one more thing for him to complain about...

He generally prefers to work alone or with one assistant, but if he gets on well with any of the PCs, Glurni can teach them what they need to know to qualify for the engineer compendium class.

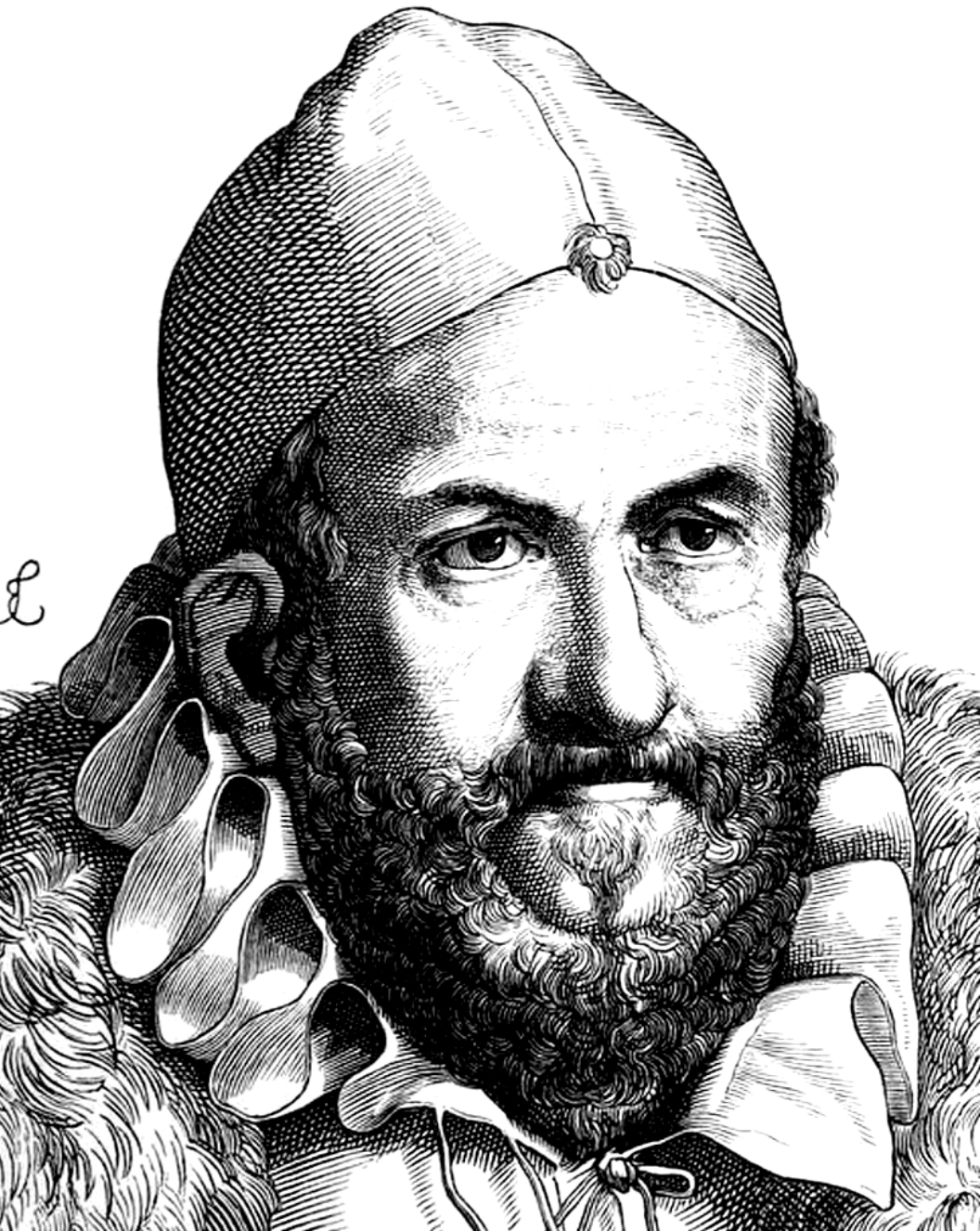
Instinct: To prize gold and gems out of the earth.

- Like anyone with a hammer, see any (non-engineering-related) problem as a nail.
- Set up ropes and ladders.
- Smell treasure.

When confronted by riches: Be overcome with greed.

When they demonstrate loyalty: Show loyalty in return.

The engineer compendium class is described on pages 97-99.





KIRSHA *Cautious, Intelligent, Magical, Organized, Stealthy.*
 Prismatic spray (b[2d10] damage, ignores armour) 10 HP 0 Armour
 Near

Special Qualities: Sorceress.

An alumnus of the Imperial College of Magic, Kirsha is also an independently-wealthy landowner from one of the Southern hill tribes. She has no interest in gaudy baubles like gold and gems—she has enough already. She is only interested in recovering any magical work the Unknown Wizard may have left behind. She has an overly-suspicious nature that comes from being mocked for her provincial culture in school—she is always concerned that someone may be lying to her or tricking her in some way. And yet she never ventures into Xallevyrx alone.

Her magic revolves around light and mirrors, as well as some conjuration, though she is not a particularly strong illusionist. A failed experiment turned her hair as blue as her eyes, but instead of cutting it, she covers her head with cowls, scarves, and hats.

Instinct: To covet magical power.

- Ask too many personal questions.
- Cast a distracting spell.
- Cast a spell of mending on something broken.
- Conjure a small object.

When threatened by a foe: Cast the Excellent Prismatic Spray.

When threatened with overwhelming violence: Cast Phandaal's Mantle of Stealth and sneak away.

If you want to play Kirsha as a Wizard PC, she has Detect Magic, Invisibility, and Magic Missile at level 1, plus:

Level 2: Prodigy and Mirror Shield as a level 2 spell.

Level 3: Empowered Magic and Mirror Image.

Level 4: Arcane Ward and Visions Through Time.

Mirror Shield

LEVEL 3

ONGOING

You are protected by an almost-invisible shield. When you are attacked, either the effects are reflected back upon the attacker and the mirror is shattered, ending the spell, or you take -1d4 damage, your choice. While this spell is ongoing you take -1 to cast a spell.

PENROSE WIYAMS

*Cautious, Devious, Intelligent,
Magical, Organized, Stealthy.*

Knife (1d8 damage)
Hand

8 HP ○ Armour

Special Qualities: Magical amulet.

Dark-haired, smirking Penrose is a professional thief—and a skulking, treacherous opportunist. He never goes into the caves alone, but when he does go in, he takes every chance he gets to betray his companions in order to keep any treasure for himself. He relies on his affable, non-threatening slouch to hide his intentions.

Penrose carries a magical silver amulet. When a small glass vial filled with the dust of the corpse of a lord buried in a tomb more than a century ago is placed within this silver amulet, it repels magical influences. If a PC can obtain this amulet and deduce how it works, they qualify for the tomb robber compendium class.

Instinct: To steal.

- Push someone else into a trap.
- Quickly steal something valuable.
- Sneak away from trouble.

When confronted: Deny everything, blame others.

When someone else has treasure: Betray them and take it.

When trouble strikes: Let someone else face it, hide behind them.

The tomb robber compendium class is described on pages 100-103.

Some of the antics Penrose gets up to:

- He tries to convince others to eat pieces of wyrdstone. His amulet protects him, but it amuses him to see others lose control of their forms. When others see him resist magic, he says it comes from swallowing pieces of wyrdstone.
- If asked to lead others, he takes them to the lightning trap adjacent to the feasthall of pillars. His amulet protects him.
- If someone with treasure accompanies him inside Xallevyrx, he pretends to hear someone coming and encourages them to run right into the pit trap over the pool in the goblin cave.
- When things look bad, he suggests, ambushing other adventurers as they leave Xallevyrx and taking their treasures.

SUPPER BROWN*Intelligent, Magical, Organized.*

Mace (1d8+1 damage, 1 piercing)

14 HP ○ Armour

Hand

Special Qualities: Priest of the muse Melanoë.

Tall, square-jawed, and curly-haired, Supper Brown wears the tartans of his chthonic earth goddess proudly. He has made it his life's work to explore and catalogue all the dungeons in and around the Haunted Forest, in order to cleanse them of any remaining soldiers of the Dragon Army and to retrieve any lost treasures for his temple. He has little patience for self-serving moneygrubbers out to make a quick buck, but he has no compunctions against working with other adventurers who have goals similar to his.

Instinct: To root out evil and restore treasures to their proper place (which is the goddess' musaeum, naturally).

- Call upon his goddess for guidance.
- Pound on foes with his mace.

When confronted by immorality: Preach the virtues of justice.

When confronted by trouble: Fight!

When in the presence of the supernatural: Say a prayer.

The Muse Melanoë

She is the mistress of dark and mysterious places, of that which is hidden underground, driving her followers to recover what has been lost and restore it to the light. Her hymns and epic songs recall the discovery of fire, the sun, and before them the very souls of the living from the darkness that was chaos.

Domain: What Lies Beneath.

Precepts: Although they delight in displaying the riches of their musaeum in the city of Adelida, the priesthood of Melanoë is cultish and insular (add Petition: Gaining Secrets).

Boons Granted: Melanoë will grant her priests visions of treasures underground, directions towards the artisans who will aid in their retrieval, and occasionally a ward or shield against the dangers that lie beneath the earth.

VELLI TURINSDOTTIR *Cautious, Intelligent, Organized, Stealthy.*

Short sword (1d8 damage)

12 HP 1 Armour

Close

Special Qualities: Graduate student, Speleologist.

A graduate student from Nornfell University in Mournhaven, Velli is a highly skilled and experienced caver. Though she is only a novice treasure-hunter, she has some distinct advantages already: instead of carrying a torch or lantern, she uses alchemical eye drops that allow her to see in the dark. Above ground, she wears spectacles, partly because of the strain caused by the eye drops.

Velli normally studies nocturnal, cave-dwelling animals, and has already pioneered several medical advances through her discoveries. She needs money to continue her research, however, as her latest request for grant funding was denied. The deans of Nornfell deemed it more important to put that money into the jockey and yachting clubs, in the hopes of finally fielding teams that will be able to defeat those of Glorfallen University, a sports powerhouse.

Instinct: To pursue an academic career.

- Investigate thoroughly.
- Proceed cautiously.
- Test experimentally, from a safe distance.

During the day: Don't go adventuring.

When in trouble: Suck it up and keep going until she's safe.

When violence breaks out: Get the hell away from it.

If she finds any of the PCs to be staunch and helpful allies, Velli Turinsdottir can teach them what they need to know to qualify to become a caver. The caver compendium class is described on pages 92-95.

Other Adventurers

Most of the other adventurers in Westham that gather around these other five—and the PCs, if they can—are barely worthy of mention. Maybe they get hired, maybe they manage to organize an expedition of their own, but the last time anyone in this part of the world braved a real dungeon was half a century ago. None of these fools know how to do this.

ADVENTURER

Group, Intelligent, Organized, Reckless.

Sword (1d8 damage)

6 HP ○ Armour

Close

Why work? There's this place in the woods full of treasure! Sure, it's dangerous. Why, you scared or something? Nobody owns this stuff—it's not even stealing! Come on, let's do it!

Instinct: To get rich quick in an exciting manner.

- Betray an ally.
- Go where they aren't supposed to.
- Grab something and run.
- Say anything to get what they want.

When threatened: Act tough.

When violence breaks out for real: Run!

Random prominent trait table for adventurers (1d20):

1	Arrogant.	11	Huge debts.
2	Braggart.	12	Impatient.
3	Complains a lot.	13	Loyal.
4	Coward.	14	Man-child.
5	Degenerate gambler.	15	Professional criminal.
6	Doesn't listen.	16	Scared of the dark.
7	Educated.	17	Tells bad jokes.
8	Fake duelling scars.	18	Useless.
9	Fancy clothes.	19	Very religious.
10	Has several weapons.	20	Wants to be "on a quest."

Possible Troublemakers

You can include the following characters on their own, as Glurni's assistants, as part of a group with the other adventurers, or as prospective hirelings for the PCs.

Bedard Landon is a fop and a braggart, but also a competent duellist. He will take on almost any dare or challenge, including raiding Xallevyrx, just so he can prove he is better than his rivals.

Calla is a muscular, greedy thief with a disagreeable personality—mostly because of the constant stream of spiteful comments that comes out of her mouth. She has a hat made of pebbled alligator skin that she cherishes.

Deru is a close-mouthed and cross-eyed little man. Forced to serve a wizard from a young age, he is clueless as to how the rest of society functions, and very gullible. After hearing about Zamzomarr's execution, he moved to Westham. He is slow to respond to demands of him, but will always obey.

Grimus is a devilish taskmaster of stevedores. He is trying to be an artist, but clearly has no skill or talent. His love of crispy pig skin makes him welcome in the home of his wealthy merchant employer, who shares this love, but even this is not enough to stop him from leaving the docks to organize a team to carry away loot from Xallevyrx if the opportunity presents itself.

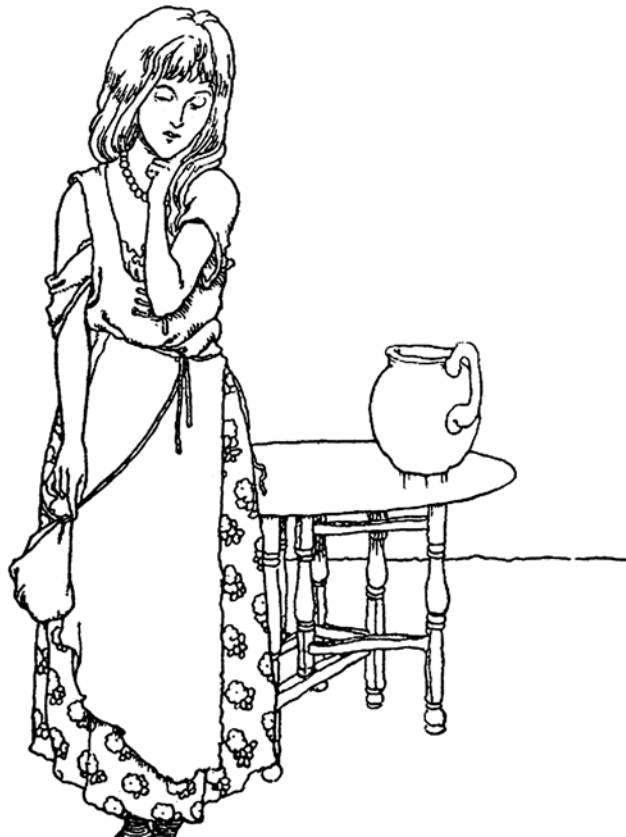
Handsome Hans is an inveterate carouser who somehow manages to find his way into every sort of party. His promiscuity has given him a terrible disease and now he is searching desperately for a miracle cure.

Louise is a hunter and a herbalist with a grudge against Belrain. She carries a composite longbow, enjoys smoking a pipe, and is always covered in scratches. She noticed these troublesome adventurers who kept going into the Haunted Forest and decided to accompany them.

Sir Lorman Deenstall used to live in a sanatorium, but was expelled when the staff became sick of him. He is convinced that he is dying of three dozen different diseases, many of which are clearly ridiculous even though his face does look like it is falling off and he smells bad. He wants to die in battle and thinks an expedition to this dangerous cave is an excellent idea.

Thellara is a beautiful Elven warrior with an odd cruel streak. She stayed in Westham after the war to enjoy how men fawn over her and turn on each other to impress her, but this has lately grown tiring and her friendship with Belrain is strained, so now she just wants to find some treasure and return home.

Wendy works as a servant in one of Westham's inns. She is desperately in love with Supper Brown and would like nothing more than to find some way to get him to notice her and be impressed—and she's heard what interests him is in this dungeon...



Causing Trouble

Adventurers are a greedy, irresponsible lot, disdainful of real work and with no understanding of safety. They can—and will—cause all manner of trouble even before they bring down the wyrdling curse on Westham and the countryside, and those tasked to deal with them are woefully unable.

The Sheriff of Westham

The responsibility of maintaining law and order and keeping these rowdy adventurers in check falls to an elf named Belrain Swordsinger. Lord Stefan left him in charge of the town, along with a small company of soldiers, but the recent growth of the town has left him stretched thin. Whatever chaos these adventurers bring will tax him beyond his limits.

When Belrain decides to take action, he does not distinguish between adventurers, unless any have proven themselves to be upright beyond reproach. More likely, he will attempt to arrest the PCs, or the PCs' friends and allies, along with any other adventurers, when the trouble starts. If a series of arrests does not stem the tide of lawlessness and disorder, Belrain grudgingly moves on to public executions.

Resources

Belrain has several guard buildings in Westham but not enough. Parts of the town are either not policed or are policed by the private guards of the wealthy, who are less concerned with the law than with the safety of their patrons.

Belrain's only jail is a simple affair: two cells that measure ten feet by ten feet. This is where he keeps drunks until they sober up, along with criminals he hasn't branded, hanged, or whipped yet. He is attempting to have a second jail constructed, but he does not have enough money.

BELRAIN SWORDSINGER*Intelligent, Organized, Solitary.*

Fancy bow (b[2d10] damage)

12 HP 2 Armour

Near, Far

Silver sword (1d8+1 damage, 1 piercing)

Close

A dedicated champion of all that is good, Belrain is amongst the minority of elves who desire closer ties with the other races. He has been a loyal companion to Lord Stefan since they first fought against the Dragon Army, but he does not understand what prompted his friend to return east so soon after their victory.

He is used to leading highly-disciplined Elven soldiers, and finds his new job very difficult—more like managing unruly children than running a community. It often seems like he is talking down to people that he thinks should know better.

Instinct: To maintain order.

- Command soldiers.
- Make an arrest.
- Shoot an apple out of the air at a hundred yards.
- Sing to his sword and make it shine with blinding light.

When they attack: Keep them at bay with arrows while human soldiers charge in; use the sword when they get close.

When they break the law: Pursue them.

When they loiter and look suspicious: Give them a warning and send them on their way.

Trouble in Town

If dungeoneering adventurers are known for anything, it is their legendary carouses while in town and flush with treasures. Or even when they are not flush with treasures! The ways they can cause trouble in Westham are endless, but here are a few possibilities:

- A gambling dispute turns into a drunken brawl and sets the inn on fire. While the innkeeper tries to put it out, drunken adventurers scramble to retrieve their gear—and the gear of other adventurers as well, which they promptly make off with.
- A shady-looking adventurer is selling trinkets that are supposedly magical items retrieved from nearby dungeons, now repopulated with the remnants of the Dragon Army. But a local has recognizes one of these trinkets and believes the adventurer is looting local graveyards, not dungeons.
- A small group of adventurers hired some locals to go adventuring in the woods with them, but the locals never came back with them. Now their families are asking questions and if the adventurers don't give them good enough answers, there will be trouble.
- An adventurer, well-known for gambling debts, is found murdered. Rumour has it this is a warning to other visitors from out-of-town who also have debts to pay.
- Some adventurers get drunk and decide to kidnap someone important to collect a ransom. When they sober up they are stuck with a prisoner and have no idea what to do. Maybe they ask the PCs for help, or maybe Belrain asks the PCs where they are.
- Someone has defaced the coat of arms on the town hall's front doors. Considering how many drunken adventurers were seen on the streets the night before, there are at least a dozen possible suspects. The townsfolk are pressuring Belrain to do something about it, and suddenly there are twice as many groups getting ready to explore the Haunted Forest as there were before.
- Two adventurers decide to duel. Belrain and some soldiers try to break it up, but the crowd that wants to watch them fight turns ugly.

Trouble in the Dungeon

Because some of these adventurers know where Xallevyrx is located, they can cause trouble there as well as in town. Would-be looters with more greed than scruples may decide to ambush other adventurers—PCs in particular—and take whatever loot they have found already. Some possible ways adventurers can be encountered in the dungeon include:

- Adventurers-turned-bandits wait outside Xallevyrx to rob other dungeoneers as they exit the dungeon.
- Belrain Swordsinger and his soldiers mistake the PCs for wanted criminals (who may also be adventurers) and attack them outside the dungeon.
- Local farmers mistake the PCs for monsters or troublesome adventurers and attack them outside the dungeon.
- One or more rival adventurers have fallen into a pit trap or have been wounded and are yelling, screaming out for someone to help them.
- Rival adventurers mistake the PCs for goblins, orcs, or zombies and attack them in Xallevyrx or the caves below it.
- Rivals attack the PCs with paralytic poison so they can use their bodies as bait to lure out the phasic spiders, which they believe to be filled with gold and gems.
- Rivals hide near one of the pit traps in Xallevyrx and once the PCs arrive, try to drive them towards it and push them into it.
- Rivals wait in the darkness of Xallevyrx until they see the lanterns or torches used by the PCs, then rush out of the darkness to attack and flee again as fast as possible.
- The PCs encounter a group of adventurers in the dungeon, fleeing from a pursuing foe. These foes could be fungus creatures, goblins, orcs, phasic spiders, or zombies, but once they arrive they target the PCs as well as, or perhaps instead of, those fleeing adventurers.



The Wyrdling Curse

In a cave beneath Xallevyrx, the wyrdstone lies embedded in the rock around it. Strange, chaotic magic radiates from it, affecting the surrounding landscape, but the real danger comes in handling it. It is easy to chip off small pieces of it and take them away. If you hold a piece of wyrdstone against your bare skin for more than an hour, it will dissolve into you, affecting you with its extraplanar magic. Swallowing a piece achieves this result even faster.

Two custom moves illustrate how the wyrdling curse operates:

When you **absorb a piece of wyrdstone for the first time**, raise one of your ability scores by a point, up to a maximum score of 18, and decrease a different ability score by a point, down to a minimum score of 3.

For example, if you have 15 Strength and 11 Wisdom, you might choose to change them so you have 16 Strength and 10 Wisdom. This effect only happens the first time you absorb a piece of the wyrdstone, not every time.

When you **absorb a piece of wyrdstone**, whether you have done so before or not, you gain one use of the Druid's starting move Shapeshifter. You can transform into any animal or any inanimate object, both natural and man-made, although pure elements such as fire and water are still beyond your power. If you miss your roll, however, and each time you miss a roll while transformed, some aspect of your new form is retained when you transform back. If these new characteristics obscure your humanity to any great degree, lower your Charisma score by a point. If you're the Druid and you eat a piece of wyrdstone, gain +1 hold the next time you change your shape, but if you miss, you also gain another tell that shows up in every form you assume.

Wyrd Results

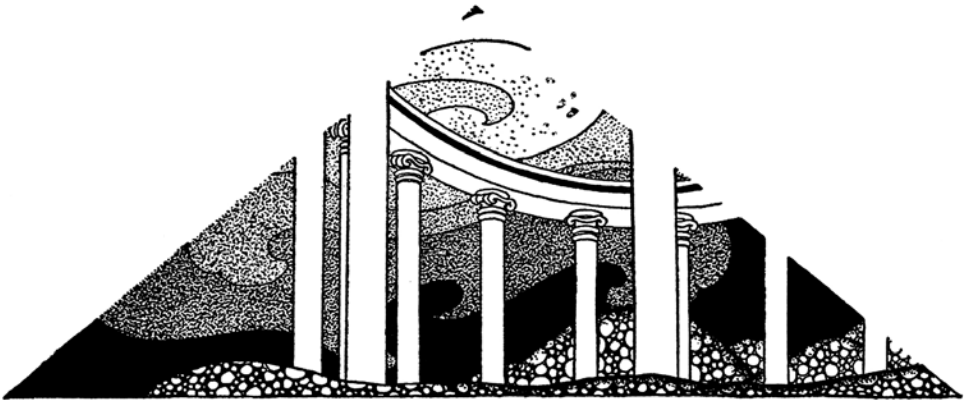
Seasoned adventurers and magicians may find the effects of wyrdstone consumption to be advantageous and useful, but they are disastrous when normal people are exposed to them. When rival adventurers start bringing pieces of wyrdstone back to Westham with them, the resulting chaos drives a wedge through society. Most people, when affected by the wyrdstone, react instinctively, out of fear. They have no control over their transformation and may not even know how to transform back into themselves once the wyrdstone has worked its magic. Those that do are still stuck with strange new features on their bodies.

These mutants are driven from their homes, form gangs of their own, and a rash of violence ensues. The desperate search for a cure attracts charlatans of every stripe and leads to the financial ruin of many. As well, the wyrdstone has an insidiously infectious nature. Just keeping pieces of it around without touching them will still cause life nearby to warp and twist, but over the course of months and years, not in an instant. Even pieces dropped on the ground or hidden away in jars will affect nearby humans. Only the phasic spiders are immune to the wyrdstone's mutating influence.

Many people will turn into animals, but others will be transformed into inanimate things—objects they desire, for example—and be stuck that way. Or they will be stuck somewhere in between, half-animal or half-object. Some may learn to mitigate the effects of wyrdstone, or even use it to transform back into a normal person, but most people will join the ranks of the despised.



Unknown Dangers



Blight of Fungus

Inside the fungal garden, deep within Xallevyrx, a world of fungus waits to emerge into the light. This bizarre landscape of mold creeps slowly over the world once it is free, spreading by means of flying spores and by growing ropy, fibrous strands out of its already-existing masses.

As it expands, it targets sources of water and human agriculture especially. Once it has conquered an area, no human can live there—the fungus is poisonous and it strangles the growth of any plant that is edible to mammals. Along with the great carpets of creeping mold there are smaller, more mobile fungal creatures: the attack mushrooms and the spore stalkers.

ATTACK MUSHROOM

Group, Magical, Organized.

Claws (1d8 damage, 2 piercing)

9 HP 2 Armour

Close, Reach

Special Qualities: Amorphous fungus, Vulnerable to fire.

These mobile fungi resemble giant mushrooms, moving across the ground upon a stubby base by means of muscular contraction. From underneath their hat-shaped “heads” extend many long, tuberous tentacles that end in jagged, woody claws. At the very top of their heads they have a kind of mouth with a radula inside it that they can use to grind up both plant and animal matter.

Instinct: To defend the fungus.

- Escape bonds by exuding slime from its pores.
- Grasp a foe with its tentacles and drag them into its mouth.
- Grind up a foe inside its mouth.
- Wail like a banshee.

When confronted by fire: Exude slime and retreat.

When foes retreat: Let them go.

When outnumbered: Call for aid.

SPORE STALKER *Group, Large, Magical, Organized, Slow, Stealthy.*
 Spores (1d8+1 damage, ignores armour, stuns) 17 HP 1 Armour
 Reach

Special Qualities: Amorphous fungus, Vulnerable to fire.

They appear to be a collection of vine-like strands of vegetable matter, ranging in colour from brown to yellow to green to aqua, and connected by large bulbs that superficially resemble poppies. When these bulbs burst they throw clouds of toxic spores into the air that burn the eyes and lungs of other animals and burrow into their skin. Spore stalkers move slowly, deliberately, and whatever they cover soon becomes the exclusive domain of fungus.

Instinct: To find sources of nutrients and claim them.

- Cover in strands and crush slowly.
- Creep silently.
- Exude a cloud of spores.

When things are still: Expand and stretch.

When things move nearby: Keep still.

When threatened: Call the attack mushrooms.

Confrontations with these fungal monsters can lead to a great deal of mess, given their inhuman biologies and tendencies to cover any available surface and to exude spores into the air.

When you **find yourself covered in blight fungus**, roll+CON.

- On a 10+, you are fine, the fungus does not affect you adversely.
 - On a 7-9, small pieces get stuck in your gear, between your toes, under your nails, etc. It keeps growing and is hard to get rid of.
 - On a miss, the fungus makes you sick and perhaps even violently ill.
-

Remnants of the Dragon Army

DRAGONMARKED GOBLIN*Horde, Intelligent, Organized, Small.*

Claws or improvised weapons (1d6 damage) 5 HP ◦ Armour
Hand

The goblins of the Dragon Army are somewhat more disciplined than other goblins, but only because the orcs beat them so much. Hiding out in the caves below Xallevyrx, their energies are mostly spent on avoiding the phasic spiders, and so they have let their equipment fall into ruin. If they can get their hands on real weapons and armour, they will become even more dangerous.

Instinct: To take advantage of others in any way possible.

- Attack from a superior position.
- Make lots of irritating noises.
- Retreat.
- Swarm.

When humans appear: Attack them in a group.

When outnumbered: Retreat!



GOBLIN DRACOMANCER*Intelligent, Magical, Organized,
Small, Solitary.*

Magical fire (1d10+1 damage, ignores armour)
Near, Far

14 HP ○ Armour

The dragon trained the most gifted of its goblins in the arts of fire and spellcraft. The results were not impressive enough to win the war, but can still end the careers of lone dungeoncrawlers.

Instinct: Throw magic at threats until safe or exhausted.

- Cast an unstable spell.
- Command lizards.
- Produce great goutts of fire.
- Use other goblins for shields.

When trouble occurs: Go crazy!

Note: Because of the close presence of the wyrdstone, goblins may exhibit signs of mutation.



ORCISH GRAVESLEEPER*Construct, Group, Intelligent,
Magical, Terrifying.*

Rusty sword (1d8+4 damage)

12 HP 1 Armour

*Hand, Close, Forceful***Special Qualities:** Aura of hate, Gravesleeper.

Created from the angriest of goblins and forged in the fires beneath Dragon Mountain, the orc is a creature that lives only to kill. It hates the sun, not just because the eyes on its beast-like head are blinded, but because the mere touch of light upon its skin is painful. And when the orc feels pain, its rage can only be sated by bloodshed and murder.

Instincts: To kill all life in a burning rage.

- Command goblins.
- Lie in wait and attack by ambush.
- Maim with jagged weapons.
- Sacrifice human lives to summon a dragon.
- Vomit a cloud of noxious fumes.

When goblins fail or disobey: Rage at them.

When other living things appear: Kill them!

When the dragon commands: Obey.

Random orc and goblin mutations (roll 1d12):

1	Barbed tail.	7	Glowing eyes.
2	Beard of tentacles	8	Many eyes.
3	Camouflaged skin.	9	Snake body for legs.
4	Covered in fur.	10	Snout and horns.
5	Eels for hair.	11	Three heads.
6	Extra arms.	12	Tusks.





Treasures of the Orcs

Most of the orcs wield rusty, chipped blades, but their leader has captured a much more distinguished prize—he wields Lord Stefan’s sword. As far as anyone knows, this blade was lost in the forest during a particularly brutal and bloody skirmish and never found. But it *was* found, and now the orcs use it against the humans.

A few of the orcs also have shirts made of cast-off dragon scales and thus benefit from an increased armour rating.

Dragon Scale Shirt

2 armour, 3 weight

These shirts grant the wearer 2 armour, as well as protection against fire and cold. These scales are always slightly warm and their temperature does not change.

Living Sword

+2 damage, alive, bloodthirsty, 2 weight

Lord Stefan’s lion-pommeled sword is a living blade, and it hungers for blood, almost leaping from its wielder’s grasp. If you are not strong enough to control it, you will be unable to defend yourself while wielding it. The blade’s touch also causes spells to be forgotten and magic to dissipate. A wizard holding the sword will soon forget all his spells, while a fighter who also wields items containing magical charges must be careful not to touch them with this sword, or she will destroy those charges. The blade will also cut through constructions made entirely of magic just as well as it cuts through people. It cannot undo things caused but not sustained by magic, however.



The Undead

The wyrdstone causes the dead to rise up and attack the living, but for the last fifty years it has been contained by the phasic spiders, who come from some other dimension and loath this artifact with every alien part of their souls. The Unknown Wizard harnessed this power to create traps out of the undead before Xallevyrx was vacated, and these traps are waiting still.

MUTATED ZOMBIE

Group, Terrifying.

Biting mouth (1d8+2 damage)

14 HP ○ Armour

Hand, Close

Special Qualities: Mutant, Undead, Vulnerable to fire.

The last dozen servants of Fearsome Forbus and the Unknown Wizard were encased in webs by the phasic spiders, to contain the wyrdstone's influence on them. Over the decades they became undead horrors, mutating inside their cocoons.

Instinct: To kill the living.

- Grab and chew.
- Stay still and wait.

When the living are there but cannot be reached: Stalk them.

When the living can be reached: Attack.

Random undead mutations (roll 1d12):

1	Acid touch (+2 damage).	7	Melting flesh (+2 armour).
2	Adhesive grip.	8	On fire.
3	Bone spikes (+1 piercing).	9	Poisonous slime.
4	Eyestalks.	10	Quadrupedal.
5	Floating head.	11	Slithering.
6	Huge maw (+1 damage).	12	Tentacles (reach).

PHASIC SPIDER*Group, Large, Planar, Stealthy.*

Giant mandibles (1d8+3 damage, 2 piercing) 14 HP 2 Armour

*Close, Reach, Messy***Special Qualities:** Immune to acid, gas and poison.

Vaguely resembling terrestrial spiders but covered in strange colours and made of no material resembling organic matter, these creatures are native to some distant dimension that wouldn't have any contact with the material plane save for the wyrdstone's malign influence. The only thing the phasic spiders hate more than this dimension's properties is the wyrdstone. The havoc it wreaks on their societies is far in excess of its effects on the Haunted Forest.

Instinct: To oppose the wyrdstone.

- Crawl across the ceiling or the wall.
- Descend by a strand of webbing.
- Move between dimensions, blinking in and out of reality.
- Spin webs to catch foes in.

When they approach: Back off and spin a web to trap them in.

When they have a piece of wyrdstone: Stalk them and take it.

When they retreat: Attack them from behind or above.

Some types of phasic spiders are more dangerous than others:

PHASIC HIEROPHANT

The leaders of the phasic spiders more resemble scintillating lobsters with ropes of crystal sugar draped about them. Each hierophant has 20 HP, 3 Armour, and their claws do b[2d8]+4 damage (2 piercing).

PHASIC PSYCHOPOMP

The near-monochromatic phasic spiders that have expertise in dealing with the lands of dead souls are a slower, more deliberate breed. They have the following additional moves:

- Attack a foe's mind with images from alternate possible worlds where they are more happy, loved, and successful.
- Implant false memories from other realities.
- Kidnap a foe and deposit them in the shadowlands.

SEWN-UP ZOMBIE*Construct, Fast, Group, Stealthy.*

Claws (1d8+2 damage)

14 HP ○ Armour

*Close, Forceful***Special Qualities:** Undead, Vulnerable to fire.

The Unknown Wizard's experiments with the undead produced this strange form of zombie. The body is stuffed with arcane powders and all its orifices are sewn up. Once preserved, it waits for the living to come close before it strikes. It is almost impossible to tell who a sewn-up zombie was in life, or even if they were man or woman.

Instinct: To kill the living.

- Rake with jagged claws.
- Stay still and wait.
- Strangle.

When the living are there but cannot be reached: Stalk them.

When the living can be reached: Attack.

THE RISEN DEAD*Horde, Slow.*

Grasping hands (1d6 damage)

7 HP ○ Armour

*Hand***Special Qualities:** Undead, Vulnerable to fire.

Once the wyrdstone's influence is no longer contained, anyone who dies in the Haunted Forest will rise from their graves and attack the living.

Instinct: To kill the living.

- Converge upon the living as a group.
- Grab and tear.

When the living are near: Attack them.

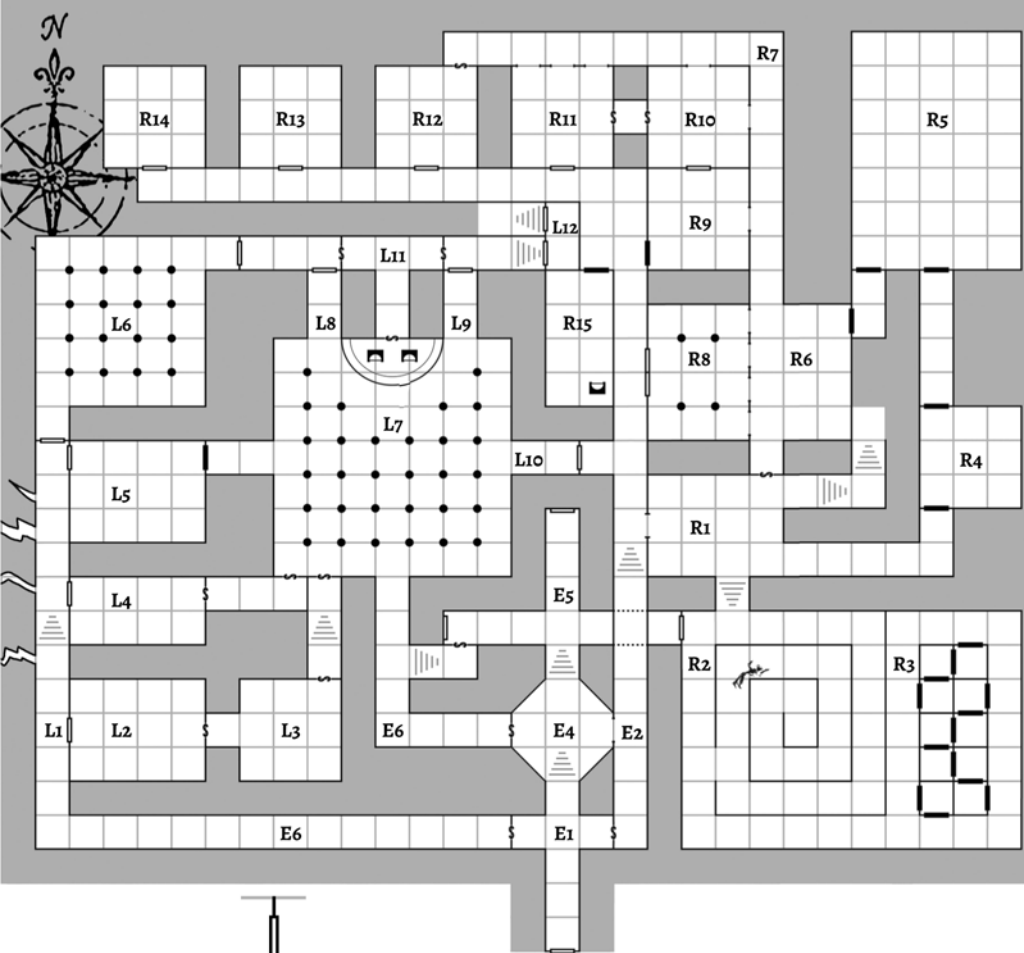
When there are no live bodies near: Wander aimlessly.

The two other important undead creatures in Xallevyrx are:

- Zarina, described on page 78.
- The zombie king, described on page 80.

The Lair Itself





Key

One square equals five feet.



DOUBLE DOORS



DESTROYED ZOMBIE



FALSE DOOR



MIRRORED WINDOW



LOCKED DOOR



PILLAR



OPEN DOORWAY



SOLID STONE



SECRET DOOR



STAIRS



UNLOCKED DOOR



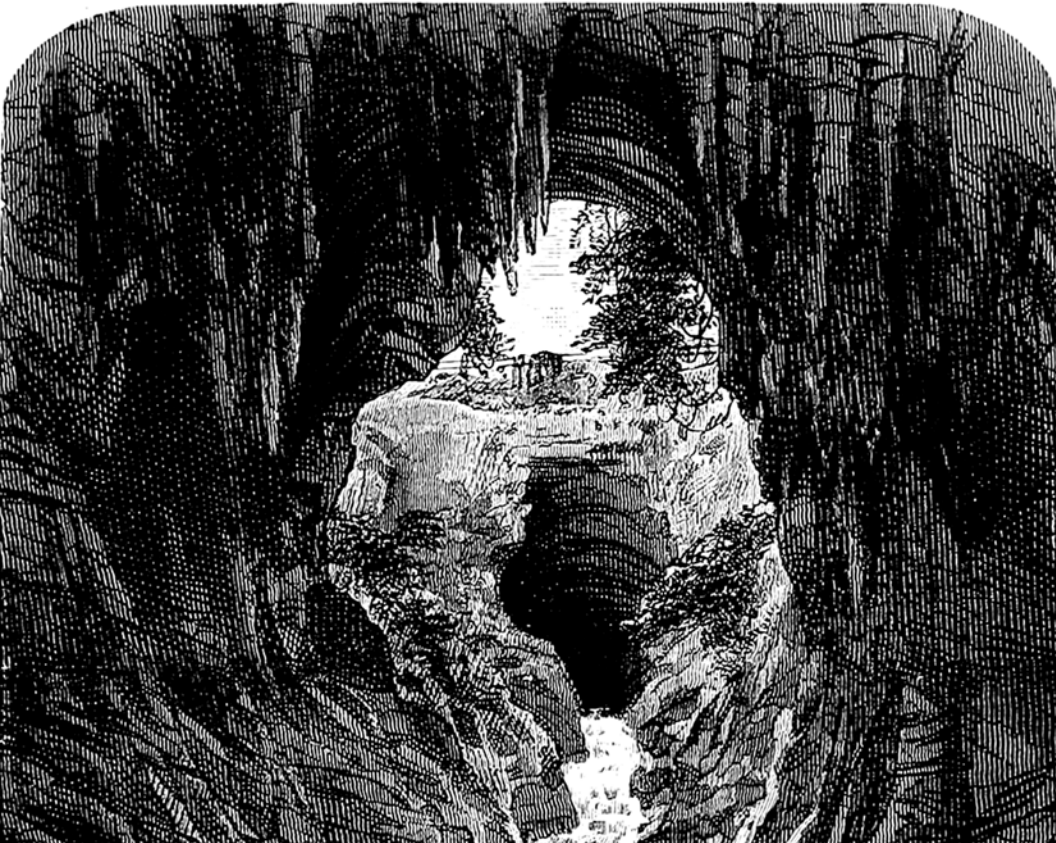
THRONE

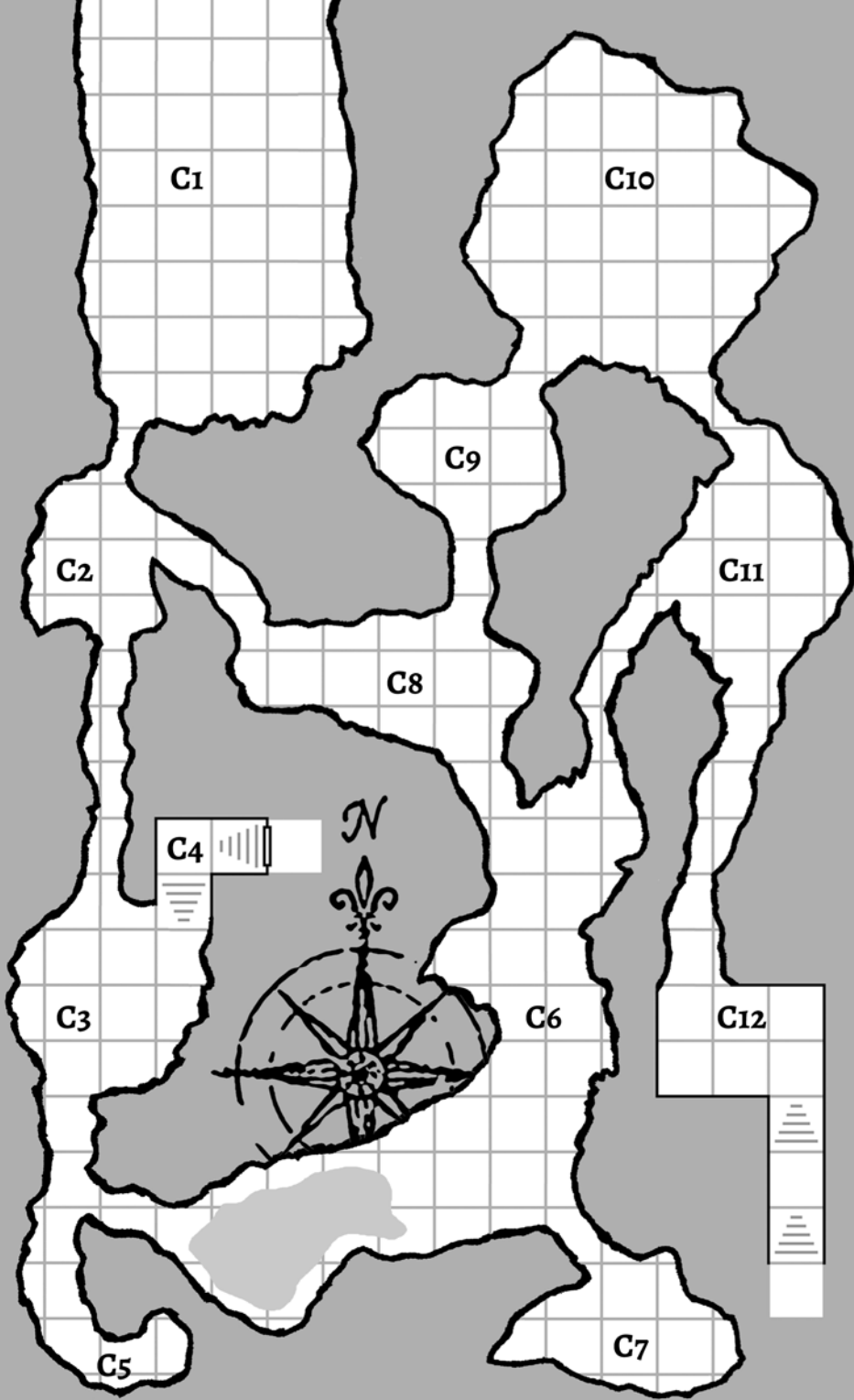
The Caves Below

In the limestone underneath the dark rock that Xallevyrx is carved out of there is a natural cave system. Inside one of these caves lies the thing that prompted Fearsome Forbus and the Unknown Wizard to build this lair in the first place—the wyrdstone.

CI. BAT-FILLED CAVE RN

The natural caves beneath Xallevyrx can be entered through this large cavern, one end of which terminates on the other side of the hill the dungeon is built in. A small river runs through this cave, a large population of bats live here, and the ground is covered in guano. The roof of the cave varies between twenty and thirty feet high.





C2. DRIPPING CAVE

The roof of this small cave is made of constantly-dripping stalactites, about nine feet above the floor. The passage between it and the bat-filled cave is rather narrow but has a high ceiling. An awful stench emanates from the passage to the east.

C3. PIT TRAP CAVE

There is a pit trap built into the roof of this cave. Hapless victims fall through the floor above and onto an array of spikes and blades affixed to the ground. Those who fall through these days are in luck, for there are several bodies, both old and new, covering most of these blades and spikes. Unless, of course, the explorers of this cave also encounter a dangerous animal who has wandered inside to take advantage of this free meal.

C4. STEEP STAIRS

Carved into the side of the pit trap cave are extremely steep stairs and a regularly-shaped corridor, carved out of black rock, that leads up to the stairs and landing just past the feathall of pillars in Xallevyrx. Hasty explorers might end up right back in the pit trap cave if they are not careful, however.

C5. DEAD END CAVE

This narrow tunnel starts off with a seven-foot ceiling but it gets smaller and smaller until it ends with a tiny stream dripping from the wall, next to a curled-up adventurer who has been dead for weeks. He fell afoul of the pit trap that dumped him in the lake in the goblins' cavern and fled here to get away from the goblins. Then he died of his wounds.

C6. THE GOBLINS' CAVERN

This long, curved cavern has a high ceiling and an uneven floor. At the south end there is a surprisingly deep lake and a pit trap built into the roof above it. Anyone falling through into the icy cold water will attract the attention of the goblins who live in the northern half of the cave. They have a few rough structures built out of scavenged wood but also sleep in hollows in the cave walls. They are remnants of the Dragon Army, hiding out with the hope that one day they will be restored to their former power. They covet the wyrdstone but fear the phasic spiders intensely.

C7. GOBLIN SHRINE

The goblins have built a shrine to their gods and their dragon overlords in this small cave, with idols made out of rusted metal and scavenged twigs. The ceiling here is low, only four feet high in places, which means the larger goblins—and anyone larger than them—must crawl on their hands and knees in order to worship the idols, as is only proper.

C8. BARRICADED CAVE

The goblins have set up rude barricades of rocks and poorly-chopped pieces of wood here, in front of the passage that leads back to their cavern. The middle of this cave has become their refuse dump, full of feces, garbage, and the bodies of their dead. The smell is awful, though the mess itself does not impede passage through this cave, like the barricades do.

C9. PHASIC SPIDER PORTAL

The limestone stalactites in this cave shimmer and glitter in the light. This is where the phasic spiders enter the material plane from whatever alien dimension they come from. There are a few webs about, but the spiders do not make a habit of spending much time here—this place is just a road to them.

C10. THE WYRDSTONE CAVE

At the centre of this large cave is a huge crystal, faintly pulsing with a soft purplish glow that writhes and dances when light falls upon it. This is the wyrdstone. Around it are many large webs and a dozen or so cocoons made of webs. Each of these cocoons holds one of the former servants of Fearsome Forbus and the Unknown Wizard. They have become mutated undead creatures under the influence of the wyrdstone and the phasic spiders have tried to keep them, and the wyrdstone itself, contained as much as possible. If the PCs enter this room they will trigger the rise of the undead and likely the wrath of the phasic spiders.

C11. CAVE FULL OF FUNGUS

This cave is right next to the huge fungal garden in the north-east section of Xallevyrx, and over the years the fungus has broken through the earth that separates the two. Consequently, this room is full of fungus, and if PCs enter this cave and interfere with it, they trigger the blight of fungus. It is also possible to break through the fungus and enter the fungal garden from here, if anyone feels like digging.

C12. FRESCO ROOM

This small room is made of plaster-covered stonework, but the crumbling frescos of Fearsome Forbus and the Unknown Wizard have been defaced with graffiti of phalluses by some previous adventurer. The stairs lead up to the Unknown Wizard's laboratory.

Xallevyrx

In this part of the forest, outcroppings of black and green rock—basalt and serpentine—are frequent. It is just this black rock, nestled in layers between natural caves, that Xallevyrx is carved out of. Many of its halls have the addition of brick, stone, or wood panelling, but a few are bare, black rock.

The Entrance

E1. ENTRANCE HALL

This hallway is made of red brick and has a curved ceiling, seven feet high. Even the floor is brick. Niches on either side of the hall contain stone bas relief carvings. On the west side is a carving of an armoured warrior, slaying a giant. To the east is a carving of a robed and hooded wizard, with no face visible, hands full of fire. Each is a secret door triggered by a small panel. Neither door is hidden on the other side.

E2. RIGHT HALLWAY

Behind the secret door with the wizard carved on it is a long hallway. The ceiling is carved from the living rock of the hill but the walls and the stairs are stone masonry and the floor is covered in cobblestones.

Where the hallway passes the octagonal foyer there is a large window set in the stonework that reveals the entire foyer. The other side of this mirror, which was made by magic and almost unbreakable, is a mirror.

E3. LEFT HALLWAY

Behind the secret door with the warrior carved on it is a very long hallway carved from the living rock. The walls, floor, and ceiling are almost entirely even in construction, as if they were made by magic.

E4. OCTAGONAL FOYER

The ceiling of this room is domed and mirrored. The walls are covered in wood panelling. There is a hidden door behind the panelling on the western wall, triggered by a panel at its base. The floor is tiled but the stairs are made of bricks. There is a large mosaic of a mouth in the tiles that comes alive when anyone steps off the stairs. Every single time, it bellows “Who dares to enter the fearsome lair known as Xallevyrx?”

E5. THE CROSSROADS

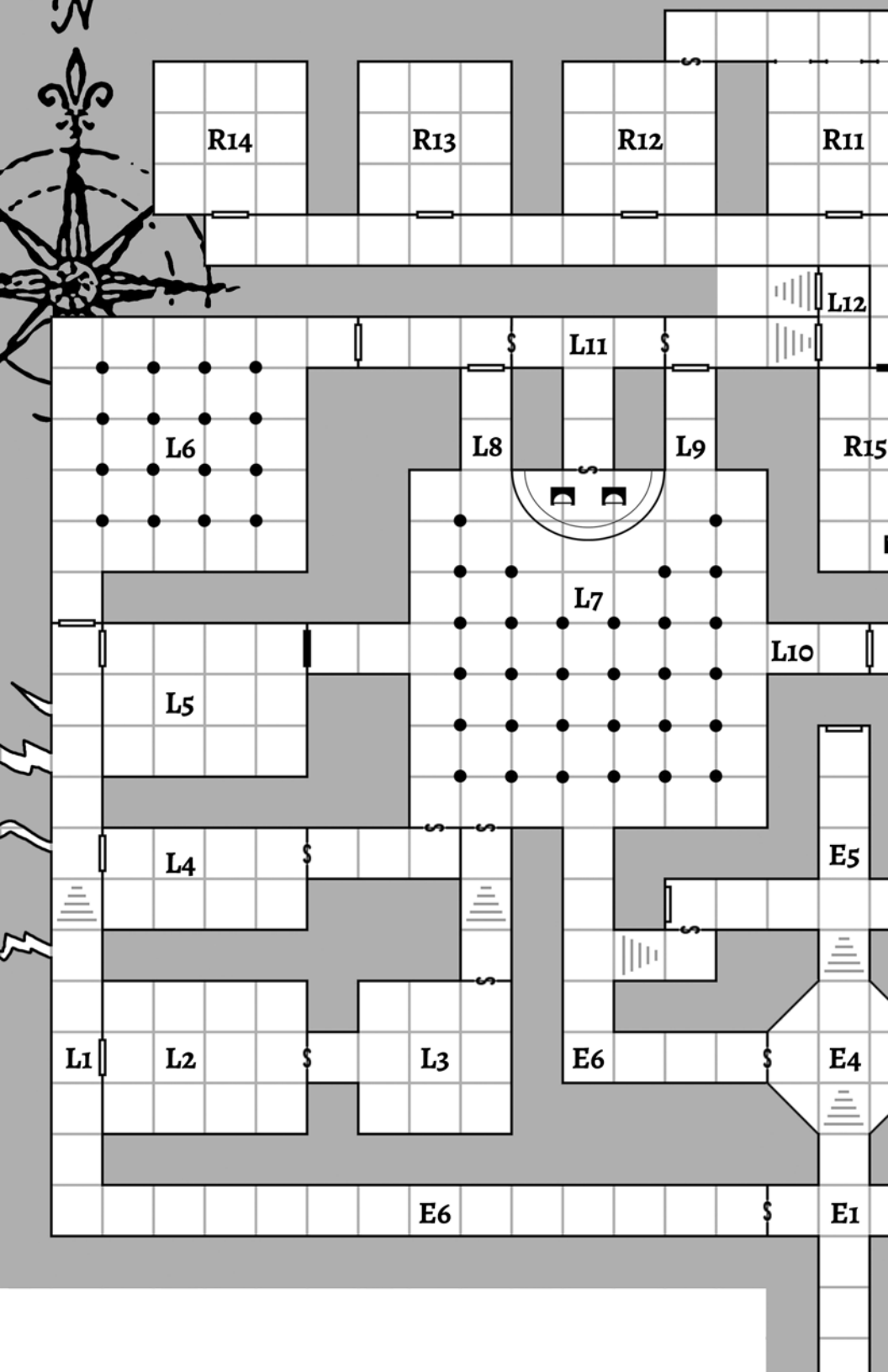
The floors, walls, and eight-foot high ceilings in this four-way junction are covered in stonework. There are deep, odd-looking grooves in the ceiling. One person alone can pass easily, but the weight of multiple people on the floor in the middle of the junction causes an iron cage to descend from out of these grooves, cutting off access to each of the four hallways and imprisoning anyone inside. The metal is almost completely rusted and can be broken easily, if not quickly.

To the north is a false door with a dead adventurer lying in front of it, seemingly stabbed in the back. Trying to open this door triggers the trap: a large blade swings down out of a groove on the ceiling and stabs them.

To the west is another false door, but there is no trap, only a secret door next to it, hidden in the masonry.

E6. SECRET ENTRANCEWAY

Behind the secret door in the octagonal foyer is another hallway, carved entirely of black stone, that leads to the feathall of pillars. A side passage has steps leading down to a secret door that leads to the crossroads and makes it easier for the residents of Xallevyrx to surround anyone caught in the iron cage.



The Left Side of Xallevyrx

L1. THE WESTERN HALLWAY

The eastern wall of this hallway is made from stone blocks but the western side is bare black stone which has deep cracks and fissures in it due to a minor earthquake a few decades ago. Some of these cracks are large enough for a person to squeeze through, and they run all the way to the surface.

This is how the orcs gain access to Xallevyrx on the rare occasions that they are awake. The graves they sleep in are located a few dozen feet from where the cracks meet the surface. If the PCs investigate them, they trigger the return of the dragon army danger.

L2. STORE ROOM

Behind a stout, wooden door that is stuck in its frame is an old storage room, full of kegs and barrels. Most contained spoiled or desiccated food in spite of the various preservation methods on display. The only thing still good is a keg of Leerhausen brandywine, now spectacularly aged and rich with the flavours of saffron and cinnamon. There is a secret door in the east wall, triggered by pressing a specific stone block.

L3. SECRET STORAGE

This room is full of old construction supplies—picks, shovels, rope, plaster, boxes of nails, even some lumber. The roof has cracked, though, and moisture has ruined everything. The door to the west is visible from this side and while the secret door to the north is not supposed to be, it is easy to find now because of the shifting of the earth.

L4. KITCHEN

The south wall of this kitchen once had work tables against it but they are now scattered around the room. There are brick and iron ovens also along the south wall but the chimneys are almost completely blocked. The door on the east wall is triggered by pressing a specific stone in the wall, which is more weathered than the others around it. This secret door, and the one at the end of the hallway it leads to, are both visible from inside the hallway.

L5. BARRACKS

Old bunks and cots lie strewn about this room. Six desiccated skeletons of long-dead soldiers lie here. One was murdered, the other five committed suicide. Everything they have is rusted and ruined, but they will be amongst the first to rise again once the wyrdstone's influence is uncontained.

L6. TROPHY ROOM

This large room is full of pillars and has a high ceiling. It is also full of trophies, consisting mostly of strange monsters, stuffed and mounted, but there is also the shrunken head of a giant and a pickled werewolf inside a large glass jar on display. Some of the stuffed monsters have been torn apart and their pieces are scattered across the tiled floor.

L7. THE FEASTHALL OF PILLARS

The floor and walls are covered in expensive tilework and the thirty pillars are high and painted. Between these pillars are several feasting tables and benches. To the north there is a dais with two thrones upon it, one marked with a large F, the other with a large Z. A rotten purple tapestry hangs behind them. None of the secret doors are immediately obvious from inside the feasthall.

L8. LIGHTNING TRAP CORRIDOR

The floor in this corridor is dirty, smudged with ash, and smells faintly of ozone. When someone walks through it, magical lightning arcs from the walls, dealing 1d6 damage (ignores armour). This enrages the orcs and they have partially destroyed the door.

L9. THE FIRST PIT TRAP

When the weight of an average man is put on the floor in the middle of this corridor, it falls away, depositing anyone standing or walking here into the pit trap cave after a twenty-foot drop. The spikes and blades are covered with bodies already so the fall only deals 1d6 damage.

L10. THE SECOND PIT TRAP

When the weight of an average man is put on the floor in the middle of this corridor, it falls away, depositing anyone standing or walking here into the pool of water in the goblin's cave after a twenty-foot drop. The noise this causes attracts the attention of the goblins if they are still around.

L11. SECRET PASSAGEWAY

This secret passageway, hidden behind the wood panelling of the adjacent hallways and the tilework of the feathall of pillars, links all three safely together. There are also levers in the middle of the north wall that would stop the pit traps and the lightning trap from operating, but they have rusted over the course of a half-century and no longer work. They are still labelled "spike pit," "water pit," and "lightning," though.

L12. STAIRS AND LANDING

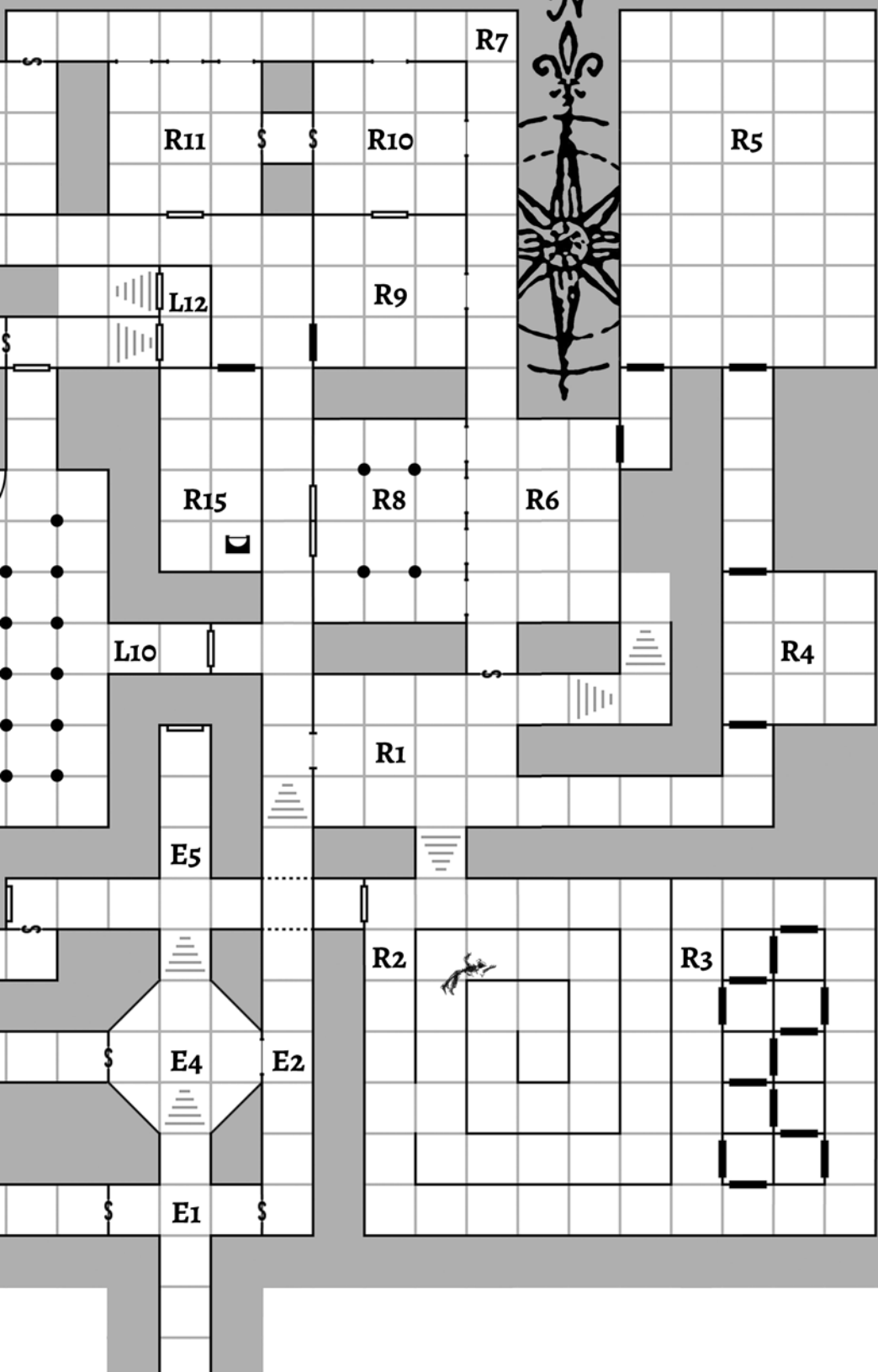
Two stout wooden doors and an undecorated landing carved from the living rock separate the halls of Xallevyrx from the natural caves below.

The Right (or Wrong) Side of Xallevyrx

RI. THE UNKNOWN WIZARD'S LABORATORY

The door is broken and sits in a corner, so the doorway is always open. Along the walls are bookshelves full of jars and boxes, potions, powders, and musty, damaged books. Most of it is ruined. On a table in the middle of the room are various sorcerous implements, no longer usable, and a sealed glass jar full of clear fluid with a black cat suspended in it. If the jar is opened, the fluid quickly evaporates and the cat comes back to life, as good as new. This was the unknown wizard's failed attempt to create petrifying liquid. The secret door is hidden behind a bookshelf. The stone frame of the southern doorway is decorated with carved images of skulls.





R2. THE BRICK LABYRINTH

The walls, floor and ceiling of this area are made of red brick, the same as the entrance hall. There is a fallen sewn-up zombie on the floor, its legs visible from the archway. Its torso has been beaten to a pulp and it will not rise again. If the PCs venture to the centre of the spiral, they find nothing except two sewn-up zombies waiting there, motionless, who attack as soon as they become visible. If this happens, the rise of the undead begins.

R3. IMPRISONED ZOMBIES

The walls of these ten rooms are made of thin, flimsy wood. The doors are all locked but they are no thicker. Half of these rooms have a zombie in them, and all awaken if any are disturbed. This triggers the rise of the undead and they begin to break their way out through the thin wood that imprisons them.

R4. FUNGUS GUARD ROOM

There are four attack mushrooms stationed in this bare stone room, along with overgrown pots full of other types of fungus. Both doors are locked tight and the fungus cannot open them.

Above the door that leads to this room from the laboratory is a weathered capstone, inscribed with the word “xAllevyrx.” The two Xs, one on each end of the name, seem to be more recent additions by a less-skilled engraver.

R5. FUNGAL GARDEN

All of the Unknown Wizard’s experiments in fungus are housed here and they have grown wild over the last fifty years. Now they are ready to emerge. Opening either door to this room triggers the blight of fungus.

R6. SECRET LAB

This room contains the Unknown Wizard's secret laboratory. Almost the entire west wall is a window into the training room. There is also a desk, some sparse shelves, and an unlocked chest. There is a loaf of fresh bread on the desk that is covered in dust but will always stay fresh—the Unknown Wizard's greatest invention perhaps. On one shelf is a jar of clear liquid with pieces of crystal in it, which are neutralized pieces of wyrdstone. This is the same liquid the cat is suspended in. The Unknown Wizard was trying to make petrifying liquid but failed. Inside the chest is a strange mechanical contraption—the memory machine (see page 85).

Otherwise, the desk and shelves are covered by a large collection of handwritten papers. At a glance, these seem to be the Unknown Wizard's notes on the various dungeons he raided, his various magical experiments, and the construction of Xallevyrx, along with biographical details concerning Fearsome Forbus, his mistress Zarina, and the evil wizard Zamzomarr.

R7. SECRET PASSAGE

Carved from the living rock, this passageway contains windows looking into Forbus' equipment room, his bedroom, and the bedroom of his mistress, Zarina. At the end, it connects with the Unknown Wizard's bedroom.

R8. TRAINING ROOM

This small room contains four pillars and a few pieces of what look like gymnastics equipment. The entire east wall is composed of mirrors, the others are covered by wood panelling.

R9. FORBUS' EQUIPMENT ROOM

This room is covered in expensive tilework. A mirror hangs on the east wall. It cannot be removed because it is secretly a window that allows anyone in the adjacent secret passage to see in. This room was once bedecked with lush wall hangings but they have rotted and crumbled. Against the south wall, most of Fearsome Forbus' gear is set up—his bracers, shield, and suit of plate—but not his sword, which is missing.

R10. FORBUS' BEDROOM

This room once had a large, comfortable bed in the corner, a furry rug on the floor, and tapestries hung on the walls but all these are now ruined. The secret door to Zarina's bedroom is obvious but only if the rotting tapestries are pushed aside. There is a small fireplace in the northwest corner. Its small chimney leads to a natural cave, not to the surface.

Scattered across both bed and desk are stacks and stacks of papers, all with atrociously bad love poetry on them, written by Forbus for his mistress Zarina.

R11. ZARINA'S BEDROOM

This bedroom is decorated much like Forbus', only more lavish. It is also now ruined. In the four-poster bed, underneath a moldy quilt, lies the body of Zarina. She has been made into a zombie and attacks anyone investigating the bed. The mirror on the north wall is permanently attached.

ZARINA*Construct, Fast, Solitary, Stealthy.*

Claws (1d10+2 damage)

20 HP 1 Armour

Close, Forceful

Special Qualities: Magically tied to her bedroom, Undead, Vulnerable to fire.

Once she was Forbus' beloved mistress. She opened his heart, made him a man, and taught him how to love. Now she is dead, her every orifice sewn shut with heavy black thread, her long black hair still somewhat recognizable. She is like any other sewn-up zombie except she is even tougher and she waits in her bed for victims.

Instinct: To kill the living.

- Rake with jagged claws.
- Stay still and wait.
- Strangle.

If the living have not reached the bed: Wait.

When the living are there but cannot be reached: Stalk them.

When the living can be reached: Attack.

R12. THE UNKNOWN WIZARD'S BEDROOM

This bedroom is very sparse—no rug, no tapestries. The north wall is a bookshelf, which hides the secret door. What few books remain are travel narratives and alchemical treatises of dubious quality. Several books lie half-burned in the fireplace in the northwest corner of the room.

R13. GUEST BEDROOM

Another bedroom decorated like Forbus', but more simply. The bed looks like it was well-made and not slept in fifty years ago, the last time it was touched. The mirror on the north wall can be removed. In the middle of the room there is a large jar full of clear liquid with a woman suspended inside it. She is wearing comfortable indoor clothes—slippers, soft trousers, and a white embroidered shirt. Her dark hair swirls around her face. If the lid is unsealed, the liquid quickly evaporates and Anastasia comes back to life (see page 82).

R14. BATHROOM

Carved from the living rock, this room contains dusty stone bathtubs and toilets that are now frequented only by large centipedes. There is a brick oven and rocks for creating steam. Like the fireplaces in the bedrooms, the small chimney leads to a cave, not the surface. There are also buckets, but no water here.

R15. THE ZOMBIE KING'S THRONE ROOM

The door to this long, narrow room is made of iron and locked. At the far end sits the zombie king on a battered wooden throne, covered in cobwebs, holding Forbus' sword. The walls are hung with thick, rotted tapestries, and the stone behind them is cracked and crumbling. On the floor is a small chest and two shrivelled corpses—adventurers slain by the zombie king decades ago. Their gear is mostly ruined, they have a few coins. The chest is locked and trapped—if it is not unlocked with a key that cannot be found it will release a cloud of acidic gas that does 1d8 damage, ignores armour, and can cause blindness. Inside the chest are several rolled-up paintings of Forbus and his mistress Zarina, another loaf of bread that will always stay fresh, and a collection of black thread, corpse-powders, and large rubies inside a red velvet bag. The rubies are worth hundreds of coins each.

The zombie king attacks as soon as the door is opened, but will not leave the room to pursue fleeing enemies. Once he is alone again he shuts the door and locks it.

THE ZOMBIE KING *Construct, Fast, Solitary, Stealthy, Terrifying.*
 Golden sword (b[2d10]+4 damage) 22 HP 1 Armour
Close, Forceful, Messy

Special Qualities: Magic sword, Tied to his throne room, Undead.

Who was he, this once-powerful man now condemned to an unlife of servitude? None can say—his features are obscured, his flesh hangs in tatters, withered and dry as a bone. His sewn-up eyes seem to bore into your very soul as waves of majestically palpable fear radiate out of him. His sword is golden, and a jewelled crown, worth thousands of coins, has been nailed to his grisly head.

Instinct: To guard his throne room.

- Grab a foe and gut them with his sword.
- Sever a foe's limb, then let them stumble and fall.
- Swing the sword at one foe and rake another with his free hand's claws.

When they are not there: Sit on the throne and wait.

When they enter: Hack them to pieces.

When they leave: Shut the door and lock it.



Anastasia

Anastasia is a pretty, dark-haired young woman who speaks with a thick highland accent. Once she is revived, she wants to know who the PCs are and where Forbus is. Once she realizes there is trouble of some sort happening, she asks the PCs to take her back to Westham, where her father will reward them. Her father is—or was—the mayor of Westham fifty years ago when she was immersed in the jar of fluid. She has remained in a state of suspended animation ever since.

If the PCs agree to escort her out of Xallevyrx, they should find Anastasia to be an intelligent, helpful companion. She tells them all that she knows about Xallevyrx and the state of Westham when she left it if they ask. Given the serious nature of her situation, she will help in any way she can, although she does not know how to fight.



Anastasia's Story

Fifty years ago, Fearsome Forbus and the Unknown Wizard began building Xallevyrx, hiring labourers from Westham-on-the-Haunt. Forbus was attracted to Anastasia and although she had no interest in him, her father wanted to curry favour with such a rich and successful man. Anastasia agreed to humour him and take a tour of his subterranean “lair” but before she could even stay the night, she woke up standing in a jar with the PCs standing in front of her.

In her opinion, Forbus was a muscle-bound ignoramus, both childish and dull. He had almost no concept of how normal people lived and thought his customized dungeon was the apex of good taste and style. Obviously, Anastasia did not share this opinion then and has an even lower opinion of Xallevyrx now.

Forbus' mistress Zarina was about a decade older than him and the Unknown Wizard—she estimates the famous duo were “about thirty.” Anastasia could see that Zarina was intensely jealous of her, and she was amazed that Forbus could not. He could not even see how keeping his old mistress around while courting a new, much younger woman might be a bad idea. Anastasia also found it obvious that the “Unknown Wizard”—a ridiculous moniker, in her opinion—was deeply in love with Forbus and jealous of both her and Zarina.

She took a short tour of Xallevyrx and remembers most of it like it was yesterday or even earlier—because *it was*, as far as she can remember—so she can find her own way out if need be, or she can show the PCs the way to the front door if they do not know it. She is surprised and frightened to see orcs and goblins and giant fungus creatures, but is not scared of the zombies. Anastasia grew up before the phasic spiders contained the power of the wyrdstone, when dead bodies left out in the Haunted Forest always came back to life to attack people. She knows they are vulnerable to fire.

Fearsome Forbus' Equipment

Fearsome Forbus' special equipment consists of a golden sword, a golden shield, golden bracers, and a golden suit of plate armour. All of these pieces are incredibly heavy and do not possess any special properties until they are magically charged. If a wizard casts a spell on any one of these pieces, it has no effect except to give the item magical qualities until the next sunrise, and is forgotten.

These accoutrements are all located in Forbus' equipment room except the sword, which is held by the zombie king. The empty scabbard has been left behind.

Golden Bracers

2 weight

When charged with a spell, these magical bracers give the wearer +1 armour and +1 damage. They are decorated with etchings of men and hounds hunting stags and a wild boar under a starry sky.

Golden Longsword

Close, 3 weight

When charged, this sword does +2 damage, ignores armour, and adds the forceful tag to all attacks made with it. The blade is etched with the script of a long-dead language, the hilt is the head of a hound, and the crosspiece is decorated with a stylized star symbol. This sword was clearly made to be a set with the bracers, but looks unlikely to have had the same maker as the armour or shield.

Golden Plate Armour

2 armour, Clumsy, 4 weight

When charged, this suit protects its wearer for 4 armour instead of 2 armour. The metal is decorated with studs of hepatizon and etchings of snakes and harpies. The interior padding is made of a strange purple leather from no beast anyone living has ever seen.

Golden Shield

2 weight

Normally, this shield is too clumsy and awkward to be used effectively and offers no real protection. When charged, it gives +1 armour against melee attacks and +2 armour against ranged attacks. It is decorated with etchings of birds and does not match any of the other items except that it is gold-coloured.

The Memory Machine

A strange contraption superficially resembling an astrolabe, the memory machine is made of silver and gold, iron and crystal. It focuses magical energies in order to affect the memories of a target, though it often affects the memories of the user as well. Like Fearsome Forbus' equipment, it is activated by casting a spell into it, although anything that generates magical energies or a magical effect can be used.

The magical energy that is cast into the machine is focused by the crystal lens and shines forth as light in magnitude comparable to the level of the spell or the power of the magical effect. A level 1 spell, cantrip, or rote will affect only one person. A level 2-5 spell can affect a whole group, while a level 6-10 spell can affect people who are not even present. They are all affected similarly, however, and the memories to be altered must be connected in some specific, concrete way—the same event, place, or person, for example. The nature of the magic used also affects the results of a 7-9 roll, as described in the individual move descriptions.

If you are using a magical item that has a spell effect, use that spell's level. Otherwise, if the magic item has no magical properties aside from being magic, count it as level 1. If it has any special properties, count it as level 2-5, unless those properties are particularly earthshaking and powerful, in which case, count it as level 6-10.

The memory machine can be used to:

- Erase memories.
- Implant new memories.
- Make a memory more concrete or indelible.
- Make a spell unforgettable.
- Remember a spell.

The Custom Version

If the PCs are not expecting to find the memory machine, use these custom moves when they try to make it work:

When you **use the memory machine to make someone forget something**, roll+INT. •On a 10+, they forget exactly what you want them to forget. •On a 7-9, they forget, but there are side effects. If you used a level 1 spell, cantrip, or rote, you pick one and the GM picks another. A level 2-5 spell, you can pick one or let the GM pick one for you. A level 6-10 spell, you still pick one but it is only temporary and will wear off soon:

- They know they have forgotten something.
 - What they forget is replaced by one of your memories.
 - You forget something as well, the GM will tell you what.
- On a miss, your own memory is altered instead of your target's. Perhaps you forget something and remember something else in its place, or one of your own memories becomes unforgettable and replays itself in your mind constantly, the GM will tell you what.
-

When you **use the memory machine to make someone remember something that did not happen to them (or a spell)**, roll+INT. •On a 10+, they think it is their own memory (or the spell is successfully memorized). •On a 7-9, they remember it, but there are side effects. If you used a level 1 spell, cantrip, or rote, you pick one and the GM picks another. A level 2-5 spell, you can pick one or let the GM pick one for you. A level 6-10 spell, you still pick one but it is only temporary and will wear off soon:

- Some of your own memories are added to this new memory.
 - They do not believe it is a real memory (but cannot forget it).
 - This new memory replaces something important they know or remember, which they forget.
 - You forget something, the GM will tell you what.
- On a miss, your own memory is altered instead of your target's. Perhaps you forget something and remember something else in its place, or one of your own memories becomes unforgettable and replays itself in your mind constantly, the GM will tell you what.
-

If you make a spellcaster remember a particular spell they have already prepared, either on purpose or by mistake, it is lodged inside their brain and cannot be forgotten. When they prepare their spells, it is always there, like a rote or cantrip, but if it has levels, they reduce the number of total spell levels the spellcaster has available. If this affects a PC, they cannot choose to forget this spell—they must choose a different 7-9 result. Spells remembered in this way cannot be used to power the memory machine or any of Fearsome Forbus' equipment. Since the memory machine can be used to reverse its own effects, it can also make someone forget the spells it has made them remember.

If someone without the ability to cast spells is made to remember a spell, they are stuck with it inside their mind but they cannot make use of it or get it out.

The Improvised Version

In some games of Dungeon World, the players invent a great deal of the world and determine many of its details. If they have some ideas of their own as to how this machine works, perhaps based on the rumours they heard at the Imperial College of Magic and their own deductions, you may prefer to use this move for the memory machine instead—but make sure you know what they think it does before you let them read this!

When you **try to use the memory machine**, roll+INT. •On a 10+, eureka! It works just as you suspected it might. •On a 7-9, you were close, but the GM will add one major difference and one minor difference to how it actually works. •On a miss, disaster! The truth is not what you thought it was—perhaps it does the opposite of what you suspected it would be.

Depending on the results, you may need to write a new custom move for subsequent uses of the memory machine.

The Unknown Wizard's Journal

The mass of papers that make up the Unknown Wizard's "journal" are a mess. His handwriting is poor and he is prone to contradicting himself, changing his mind, and spending a lot of space and ink on childish rants. These papers span a number of years and some parts seem like the beginnings of an autobiography, but there is no consistency in this regard. It appears more like writing was a release for him, and that his plans for the finished papers—aside from hoarding them in his secret lab—were left unfinished.

Unknown History

The Unknown Wizard's real name is apparently Zamzomarr. It was given to him by the wizard who bought him as a child and raised him as an apprentice. This elder wizard was also named Zamzomarr, and the papers do not say what became of him. If he was a presence in the Unknown Wizard's life in later years, he is not mentioned.

The younger Zamzomarr began exploring monster-infested dungeons before he was a teenager. Forbus joined him soon after. They had many different companions over the years, some who betrayed them and abused them, according to these papers, but there is no list of names. Once they started raiding dungeons, both their lives revolved around it forever after. They spent as much time as they could underground, risking their lives for ancient treasures, eking out a miserable existence with what few coins they could scavenge.

Things turned around when the Unknown Wizard began his magical experiments. After that, they became heroes and legends, taking down one infamous dungeon after another. There is a list of accomplishments in these papers that does not quite match up to the contents of the trophy room.

Other adventurers turned their fame into prosperity, saving their money and marrying the daughters of merchants and landowners. But the Unknown Wizard was in love with Forbus, and Forbus was in love with Zarina, an older woman who seduced and manipulated him for more than a decade—or so the papers say. Substitutes could never live up to Forbus, while Forbus was oblivious and unattainable.

Unknown Experiments

The Unknown Wizard's first great success at magic came when he enchanted some old armour that Forbus found in a dungeon. Over the subsequent months, they scavenged the rest of Forbus' golden equipment and he managed to enchant them all. This made Forbus almost invincible, and turned them into the famous team of monster-slayers they are remembered as still.

His subsequent experiments did not fare as well. Xallevyrx was constructed, in part, as a place for him to perfect the projects that had outgrown their campsites and the private rooms of inns. He tried to create fungal minions and many kinds of potions from his collection of subterranean plants, but he calls this a failure. He tried to make petrifying water, but this also failed. He managed to create the sewn-up zombies, but his real objective was to discover the death-defying properties of the Haunted Forest and the wyrdstone, and this he did not achieve. There are no mentions of mutations or the phasic spiders—or the perpetually-fresh bread, either.

The End of It All

What happened at the end? These papers do not say. There is no hint of anything falling apart, no dangers waiting in the wings, and no stated intentions other than to stay in Xallevyrx and continue the experiments. As far as the Unknown Wizard was concerned—in the final papers—their adventures were concluded, the dungeons were all empty, and no threat still haunted them.

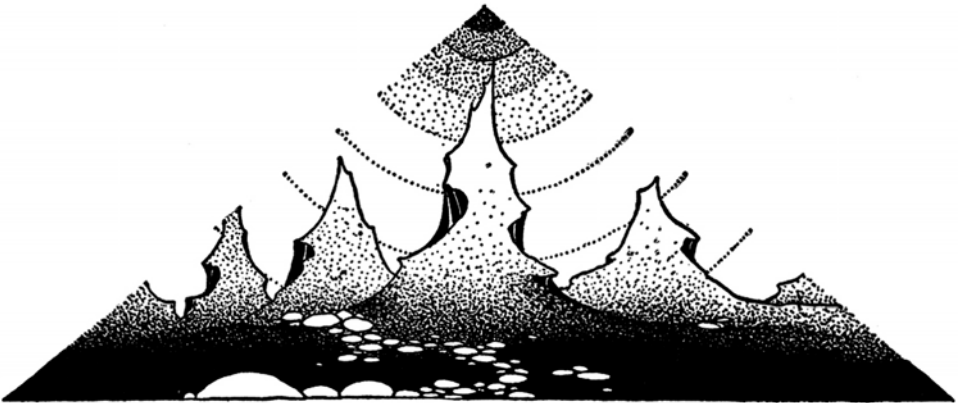
Who then, is the Zamzomarr that terrorized the countryside for decades from his iron tower after Fearsome Forbus and the Unknown Wizard disappeared? Which Zamzomarr was beheaded for allying with the Dragon Army? What connection does the wyrdstone have to any of this?

I envy you finding out. My players never did.

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Custom Rules



Caver

A New Compendium Class

When you have successfully mapped a large cave complex, or been instructed in the techniques of caving by an expert, the next time you level up you can choose to take this move:

Dungeon Crawl

When you **defy danger to get through a difficult or dangerous passageway**, you handle yourself well. •On a 10+, you may also bring one of your companions through with you safely. •On a 7-9, you may sacrifice a piece of your gear to ignore the consequences—whichever piece is most readily at hand or makes the most sense. If this is adventuring gear that is still undefined, say what it is now.

When you have **dungeon crawl**, these moves count as level 2-5 class moves and you can choose to take them when you level up:

Bug Eater

When you **make camp in a cave, or undertake a perilous journey through a cave**, you do not need to consume any rations. If you act as quartermaster, you automatically succeed as if you had rolled a 10+, and you may take on a second job as well.

Lynx-Eyed, Like Burning Coals

Your eyes cut through the night and you need bring neither lamp nor torch to see in even the most Stygian darkness.

Mental Map

You have perfect recall of the places you have explored. You can always find your way back to an underground location you have been to, without considering it a perilous journey. If anything has changed since your last visit, you spot it right away.



Rope Tricks

With time and room to use your rope, you can safely traverse a dangerous environment (don't roll) and take others with you, provided they follow your instructions. You can also use your rope as a weapon (reach, near, forceful) that does stun damage.

Tremors

You can feel vibrations echoing through the earth. You can never be ambushed or surprised underground, even in the dark. When an enemy, trap, or accident would get the drop on you, you get to act first unless they never touch the earth.

When you have dungeon crawl, these moves count as level 6-10 class moves for you:

Cavedancer

When you **use the natural formations of a cave to your advantage**, take +1 to defend and defy danger.

Cavespeaker

Requires: Tremors

When you **ask a cave about someone or something else inside it**, roll+INT. •On a 10+, the cave tells where it is, what it's doing, and answers any one question you ask about it. •On a 7-9, the cave tells you either where it is or what it's doing.

Strange Medicine

Requires: Bug Eater

When you have time to gather supplies in a natural cave, you can prepare a poultice that will heal one debility next time you make camp.

Caver Specialty Option

If you want to start as a caver at level 1, you can replace one of the following starting moves with dungeon crawl:

- **Cleric:** Turn Undead, but you deity's domain must be knowledge and hidden things or what lies beneath.
- **Fighter:** Armored.
- **Paladin:** Armored.
- **Ranger:** Called Shot.
- **Thief:** Backstab or Poisoner.
- **Wizard:** Spell Defense.

If you start as a caver at level 1, you may choose one of the following race options instead of those offered by your class:

Elf

Only the darkest and most violent of elves would willingly seek their fortunes underground. Choose a weapon. In your hands, weapons of this type have the precise tag, just as if you were the fighter.

Halfling

You know how to take advantage of your small size underground, where you get +1 armour if you're at all able to defend yourself.

Orc

Lynx-Eyed, Like Burning Coals is a starting move for you, not an advanced move.



Engineer

A New Compendium Class

When you have received training in the principles of structural engineering and passed all the tests, the next time you level up you may choose to take this move:

Land Surveyor

When you **search or survey a location underground or in a built environment**, roll+INT. •On a 10+, you may ask the GM three questions from the list below. •On a 7-9, ask two. •On a miss, ask one anyway, but you may not like the answer much. Take +1 forward when you act on the answers.

- How could this place be ruined?
- Is there a way out, past, or through?
- Is there treasure hidden here?
- What here could cause someone harm?
- Who else has been here and what were they doing?

When you have **land surveyor**, these moves count as level 2-5 class moves and you can take them when you level up:

Academic Credentials

When you **recruit from an academic institution**, you succeed as if you had rolled a 10+. All hirelings you recruit have +1 skill points, wherever you recruit them from.

Mining Engineer

When you **discern realities underground**, the GM will also tell you about any natural hazards nearby, such as flooding, gas, or the risk of a cave in.

Mother of Invention

When you **build a machine**, the GM will name one requirement for each function the machine will perform:

- It will take a long time.
- You need help or someone else's expertise.
- You need materials above and beyond what you have now.
- You need to build something else first.
- You need to take something else apart to build it.

Once you **meet the requirements**, roll+INT. •On a hit, it works like you want it to, as far as the materials it is made out of can handle, but on a 7-9, there is also a flaw in your design. The GM will tell you what. •On a miss, it does not work the way you want it to.

When you have land surveyor, these moves count as level 6-10 class moves for you:

Demolition

When you **prepare alchemical compounds in order to demolish or destroy a location**, the GM will choose one or two requirements:

- These compounds will have to be applied very carefully.
- These components will have to be transported very carefully.
- You need arcane ingredients to harm this location.
- You need to spend a lot of coin on these ingredients.

Meet the requirements and your compounds will get rid of this location or change it irrevocably.

Renovation

When you **make alterations to an existing structure**, natural or built, roll+INT. •On a 10+, choose two. •On a 7-9, choose one:

- Your work contains hidden elements.
- Your work is artfully done, exquisite, or extravagantly grand.
- Your work is durable and will last.

If you have spent either a great deal of coin or an unreasonable amount of time, you can choose one extra option.

Specialty Option

If you want to start as an engineer at level 1, you can replace one of the following starting moves with land surveyor:

- **Cleric:** Turn Undead, but your deity's domain must be bloody conquest or civilization.
- **Fighter:** Armored or Bend Bars, Lift Gates.
- **Ranger:** Animal Companion or Called Shot.
- **Thief:** Backstab or Poisoner.
- **Wizard:** Ritual or Spell Defense.

If you start as an engineer at level 1, you may choose one of the following race option instead of those offered by your class:

Dwarf

Gold and gems are what you crave, so much so that you can smell them! When you **use the land surveyor move**, the GM will always tell you if there's treasure here without you asking.

Human

When you **use an engineer move that lets you ask the GM questions**, you may also ask how you can make things more comfortable for humans and less hospitable to non-humans.

Tomb Robber

A New Compendium Class

When you have found a way to protect yourself from the magic that guards the tombs of ancient lords, the next time you level up you may choose to take this move:

Ward of Protection

You have a device that is proof against arcane magic. This could be something you wear, like a bracelet or an amulet, or it could be a procedure of limited duration—a potion you prepare, symbols painted on your skin, etc. When you **are targeted by magic while under the protection of your ward**, roll+CON. •On a 10+, you are unaffected by the magic. •On a 7-9, you can either suffer the effect to a lesser degree or exhaust yourself and mark a debility of your choice.

When you have a ward of protection, the following count as level 2-5 class moves and you can choose from them when you level up:

Appraisal

When you **examine an important item (your call) for the first time**, roll+INT. •On a 10+, ask three questions from the list below. •On a 7-9, ask two. •On a miss, ask one question anyway, but you might not like the answer. If you act on the answers while using the item, take +1 forward.

- Does this have magical properties?
- How much is this worth and to whom?
- What has been done to this or with this?
- What is it for?
- Who made this and how old is it?

Life, Death, and Greed

When you have a great and valuable treasure in your possession, you deal +1d6 damage.



Sympathetic Ward

Your ward of protection also guards anyone you touch; they resist any magic you do. •On a 7-9, they choose between the lesser effect and a debility for themselves.

Ward Against the Dead

When you **use your ward or wards against the undead**, select another living target and roll+CON. •On a 10+, all undead present pursue the other target instead of you. •On a 7-9, only mindless undead pursue the other target. Intelligent undead are too clever, and will do what they want.

When you have a ward of protection, these moves count as level 6-10 class moves for you:

Greed is Good

When you **obtain a great and valuable treasure for the first time**, gain 1d6 temporary hit points. Damage is applied to these temporary hit points before harming you.

Looting the Wizard's Tomb

Requires: Appraisal

When you **use a magical item and force it to obey your will**, instead of using its effects as written, roll+INT. •On a 10+, you control the degree and extent of its effects. •On a 7-9, you direct its effects, but choose one:

- You break it and its beneficial properties cannot be used again until it is fixed.
- You lose control, producing additional, unwanted effects.

Protection Most Excellent

Requires: Sympathetic Ward

When your ward protects you, on a 12+, the magic rebounds onto its caster, affecting them instead of anyone else.

Ward Against Monsters

Replaces: Ward Against the Undead

When you **use your wards against monsters**, select another living target and roll+CON. •On a 10+, all monsters present pursue the other target instead of you. •On a 7-9, only mindless monsters pursue the other target. Intelligent monsters are too clever, and will do what they want.

Specialty Option

If you want to start as a tomb robber at level 1, you can replace one of the following starting moves with ward of protection:

- **Bard:** Charming and Open.
- **Cleric:** Turn Undead.
- **Fighter:** Armored or Bend Bars, Lift Gates.
- **Ranger:** Called Shot.
- **Thief:** Backstab or Poisoner.
- **Wizard:** Spell Defense.

If you start as a tomb robber at level 1, you may choose one of the following race option instead of those offered by your class:

Elf

Only the darkest and most violent of elves would willingly seek their fortunes underground. Choose a weapon. In your hands, weapons of this type have the precise tag, just as if you were the fighter.

Halfling

You know how to take advantage of your small size underground, where you get +1 armour if you're at all able to defend yourself.

Human

As a child of the greediest of all races, you can treat all treasures that are 2 weight or heavier as if they were 1 weight lighter than they are.



The Dungeoneer

A New Character Class

The Dungeoneer is a new base class—a combination of all three of the previously-described compendium classes. Utilizing the skills of the caver and the engineer, along with the magical protection of the tomb robber, the Dungeoneer is the pre-eminent explorer of dangerous underground areas.

Names

Dwarf: Balin, Dis, Durin, Khîm, Narvi, Sallah, Thorin.

Elf: Amarië, Aredhel, Caranthir, Eöl, Felagund, Irimë, Maeglin, Mahtan, Orophin, Saeros.

Halfling: Bridget, Colin, Lovelock, Nikola, Ofelia, Reeves, Short Round, Skinner, Susan.

Human: Afzul, Ayisha, Belloq, Elsa, Evelyn, Hawklin, Indy, Kirby, Marion, Montresor, Ralibar, Vogel, Wilhelmina.

Orc: Azog, Gorgol, Grishnákh, Mauhúr, Muzgash, Othrod, Ufthak, Uglúk.

Look

Choose one for each:

Attired for Travel, Disguised as a Local, or Dressed Like an Idiot.

Calculating Eyes, Cold Eyes, or Greedy Eyes.

Covered Head, Straight Hair, or Unruly Hair.

Dark Skin, Pale Skin, or Rough Skin.

Stats

Your base damage is d6.

Your maximum HP is 6+Constitution

Starting Moves

Choose a race and gain the corresponding move:

Elf

Only the darkest and most violent of elves would willingly seek their fortunes underground. Choose a weapon. In your hands, weapons of this type have the precise tag, just as if you were the fighter.

Dwarf

Gold and gems are what you crave, so much so that you can smell them! When you **use the land surveyor move**, the GM will always tell you if there's treasure here without you asking.

Halfling

You know how to take advantage of your small size underground, where you get +1 armour if you're at all able to defend yourself.

Human

As a child of the greediest of all races, you can treat all treasures that are 2 weight or heavier as if they were 1 weight lighter than they are.

Orc

Lynx-Eyed, Like Burning Coals is a starting move for you, not an advanced move.

You start with these moves:

Dungeon Crawl (caver, page 92).

Land Surveyor (engineer, page 97).

Ward of Protection (tomb robber, page 100).

Alignment

Choose an alignment:

Evil

Use something you found underground to harm another.

Good

Remove a threat to others that emanates from underground.

Lawful

Return a treasure to its rightful owner or give it to a museum.

Neutral

Recover something from underground that is useful even though it is not valuable.

Gear

Your load is 10+STR. You have adventuring gear (1 weight) and dungeon rations (5 uses, 1 weight).

Choose your armament:

- Dagger (hand, 1 weight).
- Mace (close, 1 weight).
- Short sword (close, 1 weight).
- Whip (reach, forceful on a 10+, stun damage, 1 weight).

And choose three:

- Antitoxin (0 weight) and dungeon rations (5 uses, 1 weight).
- Bandages (0 weight).
- Lantern (1 weight), tinderbox, and a flask of oil (0 weight).
- Leather armour (1 armour, 1 weight).
- Rope, grappling hook, and climbing spikes (1 weight).
- Ten foot pole (1 weight), notebook, and pencils (0 weight).

Bonds

- _____ is even greedier than me, I'll need to keep an eye on that one.
- _____ knows about secret things buried in the earth. I must earn their trust.
- _____ needs my help to find something that is lost.
- I will show _____ that the underground world can be as beautiful as it is dangerous.

Advanced Moves

When you gain a level from 2-5, choose from these moves:

- Academic Credentials (engineer, page 97).
- Appraisal (tomb robber, page 100).
- Bug Eater (caver, page 92).
- Life, Death, and Greed (tomb robber, page 100).
- Lynx Eyed, Like Burning Coals (caver, page 92).
- Mental Map (caver, page 92).
- Mining Engineer (engineer, page 97).
- Mother of Invention (engineer, page 98).
- Rope Tricks (caver, page 94).
- Sympathetic Ward (tomb robber, page 102).
- Tremors (caver, page 94).
- Ward Against the Dead (tomb robber, page 102).

When you gain a level from 6-10, choose from these moves or the level 2-5 moves:

- Cavedancer (caver, page 94).
- Cavespeaker (caver, page 94).
- Demolition (engineer, page 98).
- Greed is Good (tomb robber, page 102).
- Looting the Wizard's Tomb (tomb robber, page 102).
- Multiclass Dabbler (choose a move from another class).
- Protection Most Excellent (tomb robber, page 102).
- Renovation (engineer, page 98).
- Strange Medicine (caver, page 94).
- Ward Against Monsters (tomb robber, page 103).

Miscellanea

A Custom Deity

The Muse Melanoë

She is the mistress of dark and mysterious places, of that which is hidden underground, driving her followers to recover what has been lost and restore it to the light. Her hymns and epic songs recall the discovery of fire, the sun, and before them the very souls of the living from the darkness that was chaos.

Domain: What Lies Beneath.

Precepts: Although they delight in displaying the riches of their museum in the city of Adelida, the priesthood of Melanoë is cultish and insular (add Petition: Gaining Secrets).

Boons Granted: Melanoë will grant her priests visions of treasures underground, directions towards the artisans who will aid in their retrieval, and occasionally a ward or shield against the dangers that lie beneath the earth.

A New Spell

Mirror Shield

LEVEL 3

ONGOING

You are protected by an almost-invisible shield. When you are attacked, either the effects are reflected back upon the attacker and the mirror is shattered, ending the spell, or you take $-1d_4$ damage, your choice. While this spell is ongoing you take -1 to cast a spell.

The End.