



DRAGONSEED

SM4

Beneath the Darkshroud Peaks



By Stuart Marshall

Beneath The Darkshroud Peaks

An AD&D adventure for character levels 2-3

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INTRODUCTION

If the adventure is played as part of the series, the events of the preceding adventures (**The Spider Farm**, **The Melford Murder**, and **The Shrine of the Oracle**) will need to be taken into account. This adventure follows **The Shrine of the Oracle** in sequence.

In this case the player characters are assumed to be familiar with the village of Melford and its surroundings. They are also assumed to have access to the services of a 9th level cleric (Maenae from **Shrine of the Oracle**) at reasonable rates, should healing, cures, or even the raising of the dead prove necessary, and to have acquired a certain amount of experience and loot.

If the adventure is to be played alone, the DM will need to place this dungeon in his or her own campaign world near a suitable village. It is recommended that the player characters should have

access to clerical services if necessary, although these should certainly not be available for free!

The characters are assumed to be generally around 2nd or 3rd level when play begins. If played as part of the series, a reasonably successful adventuring party will be at the correct level and have obtained the correct amount of loot to continue. *The DM should note, however, that the level of challenge in this adventure has been significantly ramped up as compared to previous adventures from the series on the assumption that levels have been gained. Characters who are still 1st level may well struggle with the encounters presented herein.*

The DM should give the player characters a chance to spend some of their money upgrading their armour and weapons—if items that Melford cannot supply, such as plate mail armour, are required, then a trip to the Old Kingdoms will be necessary. This will be safe and uneventful.

STARTING THE ADVENTURE

Non-Series Start: Use this start if the adventure is being played as a stand alone. Use the alternative start (below) if the adventure is to follow on from the previous adventures in the series.

The player characters hear rumours of a barrow to the north that is supposed to house an evil mage and his minions! The players will certainly find great riches and danger in the dungeons beneath the barrow. Shortly after hearing of the barrow, a trusted person offers to give them (or sell them for some reasonable price) a map to the area where it can be found.

The hunt is on!

Series Start: The player characters are approached by one Jurgen Goole, a farmer from Melford. He has located the new lair of Magdalene Colerre (the pēnanggalan; cf. **The Melford Murder**) and asks the players to come and help him bring Magdalene to justice.

Magdalene has occupied a small cave near the edge of the town. (The DM may map this cave and place additional denizens if he or she wishes; if not, the cave is a small affair with only one room). Magdalene's stats are provided in **The Melford**

Murder, and she will likely prove no match for the player characters by this time.

It is up to the player characters whether they execute Magdalene or bring her to trial. In either case, they will undoubtedly search the various papers she has in her lair, if only to locate her spell book—which they will find, its contents being listed in **The Melford Murder**—but they will also find other documents which may be even more interesting to them.

Magdalene's papers include instructions from her master, a higher-level mage by the name of Zenegral Byle who has set up his laboratory in a disused (?) barrow in the Darkshroud Peaks to the north. He has been successful in suborning two tribes of goblins to his cause, and now he wants Magdalene to bring him precise details of the defences of the village of Melford!

The players should deduce that Byle is contemplating an attack on the town. (This is entirely correct). Fortunately, among the scrolls the players find one which contains a map showing the location of the barrow.

If the player characters do not figure this out for themselves, have Maenae (the High Priestess from **Shrine of the Oracle**) step in and tell them—the only way to save the town from imminent destruction is to raid the barrow and slay the wizard!

(DM Note: Even if the player characters have not advised Maenae of their finds among Magdalene's papers, she can still tell them this. She is, after all, dedicated to an oracular god and has mysterious and supernatural sources of information!)

At this time, a group of mercenary soldiers will become available for hire. There are ten of these mercenaries, and their services can be obtained for 2 gp per mercenary per day. The player characters will also be required to provide food, lodging, and equipment for them. The mercenaries, all of whom are 0-level men-at-arms, are proficient with spear, short sword, and sling and will require studded leather armour and bucklers (or better) before they will serve.

If played as part of a series, these mercenaries will arrive at the King's Head Inn in Melford and be

recommended to the PCs by one of the Sibyls, who is aware of their reputation as trustworthy and courageous fighters. (In fact, they receive a +10% bonus to their morale because they are well trained and highly disciplined. Their loyalty will be a function of the charisma, actions, and alignment of the hiring PC, determined in the normal way).

It is for the players to decide whether to hire these mercenaries, of course, and they should not be urged in favour of either course. However, the presence of the mercenaries will certainly make the adventures which follow less dangerous for the PCs!

Mercenary Roster

1. Urgan	5hp	Spear	LN
2. Puhcs	7hp	Halberd	LN
3. Regdor	4hp	Pike	LN
4. Scand	6hp	Sling	TN
5. Frosh	5hp	Short bow	LN
6. Kunkil	6hp	Spear	LN
7. Snork	4hp	Hand axe	LN
8. Pepila	7hp	Club	LG
9. Turys	5hp	Short bow	NG
10. Gurn	6hp	Sling	LN

THE JOURNEY NORTHWARDS

Full encounter tables and rosters for the journey north from Melford to the Darkshroud Peaks are included in **The Melford Murder**. If this adventure is not played as part of a series then the DM should use the relevant encounter tables and rosters for his or her own campaign world in the normal way.

The player characters will find an abandoned farmhouse a few miles' distance from the edge of the goblins' territory. This farmhouse is a safe place, and no random encounters will take place there unless the player characters leave an obvious trail leading to it. Describe it as very defensible, with stout stone walls and small high windows, set atop a low rise with good visibility several hundred feet in all directions. No map of this farmhouse is provided, as it is unlikely to become an adventure area. However, when searching it, the PCs will locate a clerical scroll containing three *cure light wounds* spells.

Goblin Territory: The player characters will note the edge of the goblins' territory because it is marked with a line of stakes. These project about a foot high

above the ground and are separated by a distance of at least fifty feet, so they serve no defensive purpose. To the east, the stakes bear a bird skull and black feathers, while the western ones are painted with some kind of rune in white. A PC who speaks Goblin will be able to interpret these as the markings of the Ravenskulls and the Greycloaks, two of the more infamous local goblin clans.

Locating the Dungeon: A brief search will quickly locate a low mound, probably a former barrow which has been enlarged by goblin activity, with three sets of steps which lead down into it. Two of the sets of steps (those leading down toward Areas A1 and B1 of the dungeon) are of relatively recent construction, while the third (which leads down toward Area C1) is much older and probably was a part of the original barrow.

A player character who is able to track will locate the spoor of many, many goblins using entrances A and B. Entrance C appears virtually unused.

DUNGEON KEY – LEVEL 1

Wandering Monsters: *No wandering monsters will be encountered on the first level of the dungeon. All of the monsters are listed on the rosters provided herein and move in the manner described in the text.*

A: Ravenskulls' Lair. The Ravenskulls are a largish clan of over 200 adult male goblins. They are organised into companies of 50 goblins which are further subdivided into squads of 10 goblins each. The chief, subchief, and their guards do not form part of this organisational structure and have their own separate units. Each goblin carries 2d6 sp in change.

Ravenskulls Roster - tick the boxes as each goblin is slain. Sergeants and corporals fight as 1HD monsters.

"A" Company

1st squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with spear and shield.

2nd squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with spear and shield.

3rd squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with sling and shield.

4th squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with sling and shield.

5th squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with pikes (AC 7).

"B" Company

1st squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with spear and shield.

2nd squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with spear and shield.

3rd squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with sling and shield.

4th squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with sling and shield.

5th squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with pikes (AC 7).

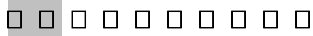
"C" Company

1st squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with spear and shield.

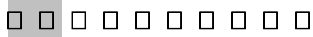
2nd squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with spear and shield.

3rd squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with sling and shield.

4th squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with sling and shield.

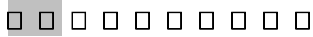


5th squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with pikes (AC 7).

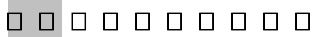


"D" Company

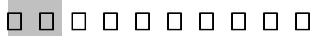
1st squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with spear and shield.



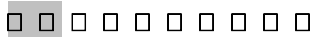
2nd squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with spear and shield.



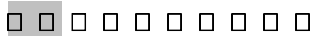
3rd squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with sling and shield.



4th squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with sling and shield.



5th squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with pikes (AC 7).

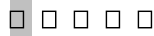


Other units

Chief: 1 chief (hp 14) with short sword and shield; 4 bodyguards (hp 7 each) with short sword and shield. The bodyguards fight as hobgoblins, the chief as a 2HD monster.



Subchief: 1 subchief (hp 10) with short sword and shield; 4 bodyguards (hp 7 each). The bodyguards fight as orcs, the subchief as a hobgoblin.



Ravenskull tactics: Note that the pike-armed goblins are capable of attacking from the second rank of a formation. The Ravenskulls will use this to full effect.

One squad (normally 1st squad, "A" company) will always be positioned at the entrance to the dungeon in Area A3. Two more squads (2nd squad, "A" company and 5th squad, "A" company) will be positioned in Areas A1 and A2, respectively, while missile troops (3rd and 4th squads, "A" company) are in reserve in Area A4.

When the player characters are detected, the goblins will immediately signal the alarm with a loud yammering. They have regular drills of the attack procedure and all know how to react.

They will attempt a holding action in Area A3. Goblin hand-to-hand troops will form a shield wall across the area to the north of the pit in this room, backed up by pikemen, while missile troops fire their slings across the pit at targets on the opposite side. Meanwhile, "B" company (which is off duty and resting in Areas A5 to A9) and the Subchief's squad (which is off duty and resting in Area A10) will be pulling on their armour, strapping on their shields, and preparing for battle.

"B" Company and the Subchief group will be available to provide additional reinforcements 3d6 rounds after the initial alarm is sounded. They will join the pitched battle, and the Subchief group will be deployed to try to force their way forwards into the player characters' front rank.

If the PCs defeat "A" Company, "B" Company and the Subchief's group at the entrance to the lair without causing a goblin rout, the Chief will arrange a holding action by "C" Company at the entrance to Area A11. "C" Company starts the scenario in Areas A11 and A12 and will be armed and ready 2d6 rounds after "B" Company goes into action, but the troops will not be sent in to provide reinforcements at the lair entrance. While "C" Company hold this location, the Chief and "D" Company will gather up the treasure and attempt to flee through Areas C8 to C1, although he will take casualties in the process. Because of the rivalry

between the Ravenskulls and the Greycloaks, the Chief will not call upon the Greycloaks for assistance.

Conversion note: DMs considering converting this adventure to other game forms will need to have regard to the rule that fighters have one attack per level against the goblins. DMs should also pay close attention to the morale rules. A PC victory in this scenario depends on them killing enough goblins, fast enough, that the goblins break and run. *If your rule system does not allow for this, the PCs are very likely to be overwhelmed by sheer numbers.*

CONTINGENCIES

- **REAR ATTACK:** If the player characters have already broken into the dungeon from areas "B" or "C" then they will be in a position to attack the Ravenskulls from the opposite direction, entering the lair via Area A16. The goblins have not drilled for this contingency and are unprepared. However, the Chief (if he survives) or the Subchief (if not) will attempt to organise a defence along the same lines as described above, save in the opposite direction.
- A1. GUARDROOM:** 2nd Squad, "A" Company begins the scenario in this room. They have 1d6 goblin females with them who are providing entertainment to alleviate the boredom of guard duty. These females will remain behind if the alert is sounded. They have 2 hp each, are AC 9, and will not fight unless attacked. A search of the room will reveal 3d6 silver pieces among the goblins' personal possessions.
- A2. GUARDROOM:** 5th Squad, "A" Company begins the scenario in this room. They have recently been taken to task over their equipment, which is supposed to be maintained to military standards, and so are busily removing rust from their pikes, polishing their buckles, and otherwise making ready for an inspection. A search of the room will reveal 3d6 silver pieces among the goblins' personal possessions.
- A3. ENTRANCE CHAMBER:** 1st Squad, "A" Company begins the scenario in this room. They have been given this dull duty as a punishment and are keen to redeem themselves. Thus they will be in a state of high alert at all times. There is no loot here.
- The pit in this chamber is a defensive feature and is kept empty and clear. It is quite obvious, and there is no risk that the PCs will fall into it accidentally. The bottom of the pit is lined with sharp stakes, and the sides are smooth and difficult to climb. Anyone attempting to cross the pit in the face of goblin missile fire will find that there is nowhere in the pit where they can take cover from the sling stones.
- A4. COMMUNAL CHAMBER:** This room is occupied by the 3rd and 4th squads of "A" Company at the start of the adventure. They are lounging around telling coarse tales to one another. The room is cluttered with their bedrolls and personal possessions. A search of these would reveal 6d6 silver pieces and a rather nice iron cooking pot (looted

from a nearby farmhouse) in which the goblins are brewing tea; this pot might be sold for 25gp.

A5. GUARDROOM: When the scenario begins, 1st Squad, "B" Company is resting here while off duty. They are sleeping, and their armour and weapons rest up against one wall. A search of their possessions will reveal that they have 3d6 silver pieces. In addition, one of the goblins has several pieces of chalk and a rather high-quality writing slate (more plunder from the human locals) which bears a rather badly drawn, but still distressingly graphic picture of an unclothed female goblin.

A6. GUARDROOM: At the start of the scenario, 2nd Squad, "B" Company is resting here while off duty. They are being served dinner (roast dog with mixed vegetables) by 2d6 goblin females. As with Area A1, these females will remain in this room if the alert is sounded. They have 2 hp each, are AC 9, and will not fight unless attacked. A search of the room will reveal 3d6 silver pieces among the goblins' personal possessions.

A7. GUARDROOM: 3rd Squad, "B" Company is here when the adventure begins. They are sleeping, and their armour and weapons are in an untidy heap against one wall. Another wall is covered with goblin graffiti (which, if translated, will prove to be largely obscene). A search of the room will reveal 3d6 silver pieces among the goblins' possessions.

A8. GUARDROOM: 4th Squad, "B" Company starts the scenario in this room. They have just come off duty and are removing their armour and weapons, stretching, scratching, and swearing. A search of the room will reveal 3d6 silver pieces among the goblins' personal possessions.

A9. GUARDROOM: 5th Squad, "B" Company starts the adventure here. They think of themselves as elite troops, and they are exercising (push-ups) with their equipment neatly stored on weapon racks. A search of the room will reveal 3d6 silver pieces among their gear, and the goblin leader wears a silver thumb ring worth 50 gp.

A10. SUBCHIEF'S ROOM: The Subchief and his squad are here at the start of the scenario. They have captured a villager and are interrogating him about his village's defences. A search of the room will reveal 4d6 silver pieces, while the subchief himself wears a

bronze armband inlaid with a dragon which is worth 80 gp.

A11. COMMUNAL CHAMBER: This room is occupied by the 1st, 2nd, and 5th squads of "C" Company at the start of the adventure. They are drilling in spear and pike tactics but, although fully armed, are not wearing their armour. A search of the room will reveal 9d6 silver pieces among the goblins' personal possessions.

A12. COMMUNAL CHAMBER: This room is occupied by the 3rd and 4th squads of "C" Company at the start of the scenario. They are demonstrating close combat techniques to a group of 5d6 young goblins. The young have 1 hp each, are AC 10, and will not fight unless attacked. They will remain here if they hear the alarm. A search of the room will reveal 6d6 silver pieces among the goblins' possessions.

A13. COMMUNAL CHAMBER: 3rd, 4th, and 5th squads of "D" Company are here when play begins. They are off duty and sleeping, and their armour and weapons are stacked untidily in a corner. A search of their possessions will locate 9d6 silver pieces.

A14. COMMUNAL CHAMBER: 1st and 2nd squads of "D" Company are here when play begins. They are off duty and relaxing, trading boasts about their combat prowess, and their armour and weapons are arranged along one wall. A search of the room will reveal 6d6 silver pieces. Additionally, one of the goblins has a decorated brass cloak pin which might fetch 15 gp on the open market.

A15. PRISON: The eight cells off this chamber are occupied by assorted human villagers who are being held for ransom. If released the value of their wergild will be paid to the player characters, in the sum of 25 gold pieces per prisoner. Each villager has 4 gp and is capable of fighting as a 0-level human if given a weapon, but note that the goblins' armour will not fit them. The DM may wish to permit some of these humans to be used to replace any men-at-arms who have been killed in the fighting, although in this case full wages should be paid.

A16. FEMALES' AND WHELPS' AREA: This room is very cramped owing to the huge number of females and whelps who are obliged to share it. They are noncombatants and conform to the statistics provided for such creatures elsewhere. The females

are hard at work at the laundry, but will flee if they get wind that the clan may be defeated in battle.

Owing to the unceasing menial, manual labour which these females are obliged to do in service to the clan, they are strongly pushing for the goblin males to obtain more captives which can be used for slave labour. Any character who surrenders or is otherwise captured by the goblins will find him- or herself given over to the females as a slave, and will find them very hard taskmasters.

A17. CHIEF'S ROOM: The chief and his four bodyguards are here when play begins. They are making plans to attack another human farmstead. The chief has a locked strongbox (he keeps the key on a chain around his neck) which contains 344 gp, 2,013 sp, 11,610 cp, a citrine worth 220 gp, a piece of amber worth 105 gp, a piece of quartz worth 20 gp, a piece of shale containing a curious fossilised bird worth 125 gp, and a fur stole worth 50 gp.

AFTERMATH

Monsters which flee will not return and may be considered as defeated for the purposes of xp, but if the chief flees with the treasure, then the treasure xp should be considered lost.

This lair is a proving ground for the party. If they are forced to surrender or flee, they are not ready for the greater challenges which await deeper in, and should be encouraged to adventure elsewhere until they have gained more experience.

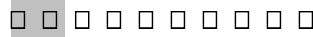
B: Greycloaks' lair. The Greycloaks are a smallish clan of just over 120 adult male goblins. They are organised into platoons of 30 goblins which are further subdivided into squads of 10 goblins each. The chief, shaman and their guard do not form part of this organisational structure and have their own separate units. Each goblin carries 2d6 sp in change.

Smaller in numbers than the Ravenskulls and unsupported by pikemen, the Greycloaks compensate through superior guile and cunning.

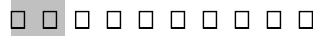
Greycloaks Roster—Tick the boxes as each goblin is slain. Sergeants and corporals fight as 1HD monsters.

"A" Platoon

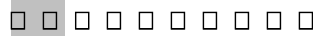
1st squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with spear and shield.



2nd squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with spear and shield.

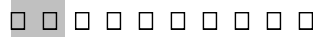


3rd squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with sling and shield.

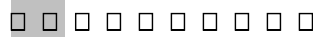


"B" Platoon

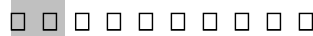
1st squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with spear and shield.



2nd squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with spear and shield.

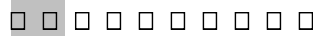


3rd squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with sling and shield.

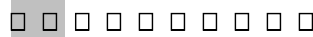


"C" Platoon

1st squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with spear and shield.



2nd squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with spear and shield.



3rd squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with sling and shield.

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"D" Platoon

1st squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with spear and shield.

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2nd squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with spear and shield.

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3rd squad: 1 sergeant (hp 7) with short sword and shield; 1 corporal (hp 6) with short sword and shield; 8 privates (hp 4 each) with sling and shield.

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Other units

Chief: 1 chief (hp 13) with short sword and shield; 4 bodyguards (hp 7 each) with short sword and shield. The bodyguards fight as hobgoblins, the chief as a 2HD monster.

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Shaman: 1 shaman (hp 9) with club and shield; 4 bodyguards (hp 7 each). All fight as orcs. The shaman is 2nd level and has two *cure light wounds* spells memorised.

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Greycloak tactics: One squad (normally 1st Squad, "A" Platoon) will be positioned in Area B1. They have a small ballista which they will fire down the corridor towards the stairs (see below). Meanwhile, the 2nd Squad of "A" Platoon will move up from their starting position in Area B2 to support them, and 3rd Squad will open fire on the party with slings through the arrow slits from Area B5. The shaman and his group begin the scenario in Area B3, so the goblins will have strong and effective leadership from early in the encounter. If the opposition seems strong, the shaman will organise an early retreat into Area B4

where he will be able to manoeuvre his troops more effectively.

"B" Platoon is situated in Area B4 and will be ready to fight in 2d6 rounds, while "C" Platoon is in Areas B6–B8 and "D" platoon in Areas B10–B12; these latter two platoons will take a further 2d6 rounds to prepare for combat. The shaman will try to have his troops make a stand in the northern part of area B4 while the other platoons approach from the west and south; his intention will be to surround the PCs in this relatively open territory. When the chief arrives on the scene, he will also act in accordance with this plan.

This plan will likely spell doom for the player characters if they permit it to be followed. However, intelligent players will not try to fight the goblins in wide open spaces and will locate an area they can easily hold. In this case, the goblins will attempt to stand off and defeat the players with missile fire.

The shaman will retain his *cure light wounds* spells for himself and the chief, not wasting them on the ordinary goblin troops, among whom major casualties are expected.

As with the Ravenskulls, victory for the PCs against the Greycloaks depends on the players' front rank comprising far superior fighters with multiple attacks who hit the goblins so fast and so hard that their morale is broken. DMs contemplating a conversion of this scenario to some rule formats should read the conversion notes presented under the Ravenskulls' section of the lair.

CONTINGENCIES

1. **RETREAT:** When the player characters realise the number of goblins facing them they may attempt a fighting withdrawal. (Judging from play-testing results, this is quite likely.) The stairs are a more defensible position for the PCs, and the shaman will simply continue to commit troops until one side breaks and runs.
2. **FLIGHT:** If the player characters flee, they will find themselves harried by fast-moving goblin missile troops. These troops will definitely pursue until driven off or slain, unless the PCs surrender.

3. **IF THE GOBLINS BREAK:** From play-testing, a failed morale check on the part of the goblins is the key to a player victory. In this case the goblins will flee back through the lair, not stopping to collect their possessions, and attempt an escape through areas C8 to C1, taking further casualties in the process.
4. **INFILTRATION:** In play-testing it was not possible for the PCs to manage a successful infiltration of this area, because the goblins in B5 were always able to observe the PCs and sound the alarm. If infiltration is somehow managed, the players are very likely to be able to break the goblins' morale and cause them to flee, resulting in a relatively easy victory.
5. **REAR ATTACK:** If the player characters have already broken into the dungeon from Areas A or C then they will be in a position to attack the Greycloaks from the opposite direction, entering the lair via Area B13. The goblins have not drilled for this contingency and are unprepared. However, the Chief (if he survives) or the Shaman (if not) will attempt to organise a defence along the same lines as described above, save in the opposite direction.

B1. GUARDROOM: 1st Squad, "A" Platoon will be situated here at the start of the scenario. They are alert and ready for trouble. Upon sighting the players, they will immediately yell to sound the alarm. The squad is equipped with a small ballista (2–8 damage). This ballista requires a crew of three goblins to load, and will take one round to load and aim prior to firing. *Having fired the ballista, the goblins will disable it to ensure that it cannot be captured and used against them.* A search of the room will reveal 3d6 silver pieces among the goblins' personal possessions. There are also four javelins (ballista ammunition) leaning against the east wall of the room.

B2. GUARDROOM: 2nd Squad, "A" Platoon will be situated here at the start of the scenario. They are on duty, fully armed and armoured, and are playing a game of cards. When the alarm is sounded will take only 1d3 rounds to arrive in area B1. A search of the room will reveal 3d6 silver pieces among the goblins' personal possessions.

B3. SHAMAN'S ROOM: The Shaman's group begins the adventure here. The Shaman is relating a goblin parable about the exploits of the goblin deity, to his squad which is fully armed and armoured. When the alarm is sounded, these goblins will take only 1d3+1 rounds to arrive in area B1. A search of the room will reveal 4d6 silver pieces among the goblins' personal possessions. There are also religious artifacts (wooden totems, blocks of foul-smelling incense, clay idols and so on) which are of no value, but a good-aligned cleric, paladin or other religious character could gain 100 xp by destroying them.

B4. COMMUNAL AREA: All three squads of "B" Platoon are situated in this room when the scenario begins. They are squatting and kneeling on the floor, eating a meal (stewed horse with buttered cabbage) which is being served by 3d6 goblin females (hp 2 each, AC 9, unarmed, and noncombatant). The females will flee any fighting and will only take up weapons in self-defence. A search of the room will reveal 9d6 silver pieces among the goblins' personal possessions.

B5. GUARDROOM: 3rd Squad, "A" Platoon begins the scenario in this room. They are alert and ready for trouble. Upon sighting the players, they will immediately yell to sound the alarm if this has not already been done. The room has arrow slits which open onto the players' area and grant the goblins 50% cover against any return missile fire. From this vantage point, they will fire their slings into the player characters' rear ranks. Note that the arrow slits are too narrow for any player or goblin to squeeze through. A search of the room will reveal 3d6 silver pieces among the goblins' personal possessions. There is also a beautifully decorated bronze cauldron, liberated from a human farmhouse, which the goblins are presently using as a chamber pot. If emptied and cleaned it would be worth 45 gp.

B6. GUARDROOM: 1st Squad, "C" Platoon begins the adventure here. They are off duty and relaxing, swilling cups of a dark and very mildly alcoholic brew. Their weapons and armour are piled in a heap in one corner of the room. A search will reveal 3d6 silver pieces among the goblins' bedrolls.

B7. GUARDROOM: 2nd Squad, "C" Platoon will be located here at the beginning of the adventure. They are off duty and sleeping. Their weapons and armour are arranged along one wall of the room. A search will discover 3d6 silver pieces among the goblins'

personal possessions. Additionally, one of the bedrolls will prove to contain a pouch of 4d6 gold pieces.

B8. GUARDROOM: 3rd Squad, "C" Platoon will be situated here when the adventure begins. They are off duty and watching a wrestling match between two of the squad members. Their weapons and armour are in a pile in the middle of the room. A search will reveal 3d6 silver pieces among their gear.

B9. COMMUNAL AREA: This room is very cramped owing to the huge number of females and whelps who are obliged to share it. They are noncombatants and conform to the statistics provided for such creatures elsewhere. The females are hard at work preparing another meal (baked swede with mixed fungus), but will flee if they get wind that the clan may be defeated in battle.

As before, owing to the unceasing labour which these females are obliged to do in service to the clan, they are strongly pushing for the goblin males to obtain captives which can be used for slave labour. Any character who surrenders or is otherwise captured by the goblins will find him- or herself given over to the females as a slave, and will find them very hard taskmasters.

B10. GUARDROOM: 3rd Squad, "D" Platoon begins the adventure here. They are off duty and are bullying one of the members of their squad by forcing him to lick their boots. Their slings and armour are in a pile in one corner of the room. A search will reveal 3d6 silver pieces among the goblins' personal possessions; one of their number also has a pouch containing 12 silver sling bullets (value 3 sp each if sold).

B11. GUARDROOM: 2nd Squad, "D" Platoon will be here at the start of the scenario. They are off duty and sleeping. Their weapons and armour are neatly arranged at the foot of each bedroll. A search will reveal 3d6 silver pieces among the goblins' gear.

B12. GUARDROOM: 1st Squad, "D" Platoon will be here when the adventure begins. They are off duty and sleeping. Their weapons and armour are in a pile in a corner. A search will reveal 3d6 silver pieces among the goblins' gear.

B13. CHIEF'S CHAMBER: The Chief's squad will be here when the adventure begins. The squad are

listening to a motivational speech by the Chief. Their weapons and armour are to hand.

B14. CHIEF'S BEDROOM: The Chief's bedroom contains two unclad goblin females (hp 2, AC 9) who are noncombatants and will attempt to flee or hide. There is also a locked strongbox (the key is hidden under a loose flagstone nearby, detect as a secret door) which contains 599 ep, 1,902 sp, 8,451 cp, fourteen severed dwarf beards, a crystal decanter with four matching glasses worth 150 gp, and a **magic-user scroll** of *knock*.

AFTERMATH

Monsters which flee will not return and may be considered as defeated for the purposes of xp, but if the chief flees with the treasure, then the treasure xp should be considered lost.

This lair is a proving ground for the party. If they are forced to surrender or flee, they are not ready for the greater challenges which await deeper in, and should be encouraged to adventure elsewhere until they have gained more experience.

QUESTIONING A GOBLIN: This section applies to both the Ravenskulls and the Greycloaks. If the player characters are successful in capturing a prisoner, good players will wish to interrogate the creature.

When interrogation is performed, the DM obviously needs to watch alignment behaviour closely.

Any captured goblin will lie. These creatures are expecting to be ransomed back to their clan and will not wish to betray them. They will exaggerate the numbers of the goblins, claim to be supported by numerous ogres or bugbears, and otherwise say whatever they feel will discourage the player characters from pressing the attack.

If the player characters are somehow successful in forcing the goblins to tell the truth, note that the goblin minions (i.e., all save the Chief and Subchief of the Ravenskulls and the Chief and Shaman of the Greycloaks) do not know who is coordinating their activities. They believe that their chiefs are simply daring and cunning raid leaders, and the large quantities of loot which they have recovered from the human settlements are in their chiefs' possession. The only useful information which can be extracted from a goblin minion is the approximate number of goblins in its tribe and the approximate layout of the lair.

If the player characters are successful in capturing one of the goblin chiefs, the Subchief, or the Shaman and force their captive to tell the truth, then the goblin leader believes that their activities are really coordinated by a powerful human magic-user by the name of Zenegral Byle. They believe that Zenegral dwells deeper in the dungeon on one of the lower levels, and is guarded by gnolls. However, they are unclear on the size or layout of the dungeon and have never ventured into it. They will also be able to confirm that most of their loot is now in the possession of this Zenegral Byle.

C: The Barrow. The Barrow, which is the final resting place of a human barbarian chieftain from ages past, is now haunted by ghouls. These creatures, despite their cunning, are too deranged and chaotic to react to attack in a coordinated fashion and will simply charge the PCs in waves.

Ghouls' Roster: Tick the boxes as each ghoul is slain. There are seventeen ghouls, all of which have 9 hp.

C1. THE BARROW: The superstitious goblins have not dared to venture into this chamber, and so it has remained untouched throughout the centuries. It contains an assortment of grave goods which are apparently now rotting, rusting, and useless. There are the ruins of three swords, a battleaxe, a mace, a conical helm, and a mail shirt; and three pottery jars containing a noisome, foul-smelling liquid. Anyone even sipping this stuff must save vs. poison or be incapacitated for 1d6 days with horrible stomach cramps—but one of the jars has a bone wand at the bottom which is shaped like a snake. This wand has the command word *pagipot* inscribed on one side in Common. (It is a **wand of paralyzation** with 11 charges remaining). There is also a sarcophagus in the centre of the room which contains two inanimate human skeletons. Under the skeletons are four clay tablets inscribed with runes. (These clay tablets are simply a variant kind of **scroll**; they crumble to dust upon use. All are clerical, and they contain *remove paralysis*, *hold person*, and two *cure light wounds*). The secret door which leads into the ghouls' tunnels is detectable in the normal way—but there is also a 1 in 6 chance per turn that the PCs spend in this area that the ghouls from Area C2 will smell them and come through the secret door to attack.

C2. CATACOMB: This chamber contains 5 ghouls from the roster. Each turn that the party spends in Area C1, there is a 1 in 6 chance that the ghouls will smell them and come through the secret door to feast. If turned, they will flee to Area C7.

The east and west walls of this chamber are lined with small cubbyholes which are filled with human remains. A careful search of the cubbyholes will result in the searcher disturbing a tiny, poisonous spider (like a black widow) and receiving a very nasty bite. A successful saving throw vs. poison will avoid the effects; otherwise, the bitten character will be incapacitated by the poison for 2d6 days.

C3. CATACOMB: This chamber contains 3 ghouls from the roster. Loud noises in nearby rooms (Areas C2 or C4) will have a 1 in 6 chance of causing them to come and investigate. If turned, they will flee to Area C7.

The north and south walls of this chamber are lined with small cubbyholes which are filled with human remains, as in Area C2. One of the remains is the body of a former evil high priest, and his spirit will not appreciate his bones being disturbed. The character who conducts the search of these cubbyholes will be *curse*d (saving throw vs. spells applies) with horrible nightmares, and as a result will require roughly fourteen hours' sleep a night before being properly rested. Any night when the character has less than this amount of sleep will result in him or her receiving a -1 penalty on all "to-hit" rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws the following day owing to fatigue. This curse can only be removed with *remove curse*.

C4. CHAMBER: This chamber is empty of monsters. The walls are inscribed with detailed markings in an ancient (human) tongue. If translated, these will prove to be the life story of the barbarian chieftain interred in Area C1, and they relate in sycophantic and wearisome detail the number of foes he slew, the number of captives he took, the number of men he led, the number of battles he won, and the number of wives he married and subsequently had executed for being too fat, too thin, too talkative, too old, or just too boring.

A careful search of the room might reveal a secret compartment in the ceiling (detect as a secret door). Concealed therein is a **dagger +1, +3 vs. orcs, goblins, and hobgoblins**. This dagger is worth 500 xp and could be sold for perhaps 2,000 gp.

C5. CHAMBER: This chamber contains 4 ghouls from the roster. Loud noises in nearby rooms (Areas C4 or C6) will have a 1 in 6 chance of causing them to come and investigate. If turned, they will flee to Area C7.

The north and south walls of this chamber are lined with sarcophagi. Here were interred the former clan nobles of the chieftain whose corpse the characters have probably exhumed in Area C1. These clan nobles arose as the original twelve ghouls of these catacombs, and so the sarcophagi are now empty.

C6. CHAMBER: This chamber contains the remaining 5 ghouls from the roster. Loud noises in nearby rooms (Areas C5 or C7) will have a 1 in 6 chance of causing them to come and investigate. If turned, they will flee to Area C7.

The east and west walls of this chamber are adorned with the more valuable gifts given to the chieftain by his tribe. Although the tapestries are now rotten to worthlessness and the wooden and leather goods have not survived, considerable treasure remains. There are four pieces of ivory (value 200 gp each, weight 200 lbs. each), an electrum belt buckle worth 50 gp, a tarnished silver ceremonial knife (of no combat value owing to its softness) studded with peridots worth 450 gp, a large piece of amber containing a beautifully preserved chrysalis worth 220 gp, and 832 archaic silver pieces which are worth 90% of the value of a modern silver piece (i.e. they could be sold as a lot for 750 sp.)

C7. LARGE CHAMBER: Any ghouls which have been turned by a cleric will be encountered here. If the cleric manages to turn them again, they will flee to Area C8; on no account will they run away down the stairs.

The walls of this chamber are lined with hand-painted ceramic tiles. Each tile contains a prayer, written by the individual members of the chieftain's clan. Most of the prayers are addressed to the Chaotic Evil god Tulkann (who is no longer worshiped) and are of no interest or value to the player characters. However, it appears that a significant number of the clansmen worshiped the Oracle (cf. **Shrine of the Oracle**) in ages past, and a number of prayers which have since

been forgotten are inscribed here. There are 61 such tiles, and if these can be removed without being broken, the Sibyls of the Shrine will pay 5 pp for each of them.

Removing the tiles from the walls is a delicate and tricky job. A non-thief has a 10% chance of removing each tile intact, while a thief has the same chance of so doing as his or her chance to remove traps.

DMs wishing to run this adventure as a standalone should substitute appropriate religions from their own campaign or else simply rule that the tiles are unreadable or of no value.

There are two staircases which lead down from this room. If a light is shined down either, the staircase to the north will seem almost to absorb the incoming light. That to the south will be apparently normal. The air in both directions is still, and no sound can be heard.

C8. DISUSED TEMPLE: This was a temple to the forgotten god Tulkann. It was looted by Zenegral Byle, and virtually nothing remains of its former luxury. However, it retains its sanctification to that accursed deity, so the very rocks are still alive with evil. Clerics and paladins will find that they cannot *turn* the ghouls in this room, so any that flee here will need to be destroyed in melee or somehow sealed in.

It is not possible for a player character, even an evil cleric, to revive the worship of Tulkann. All extant copies of his holy books and prophecies were destroyed centuries ago, and the religion cannot flourish without them.

A player character who sanctifies this unclean place (by means of a *bless* spell, sprinkled holy water, or, if *Unearthed Arcana* is used in play, a *ceremony*) will earn 100 xp.

If the temple is sanctified by the activities of the player characters and all the ghouls have been slain, the characters will find that some of the goodly gods have a long memory and do not remember Tulkann with fondness. A mysterious glow will light the room, driving away the shifting shadows, and when it is gone, a clerical scroll of *raise dead* will have appeared.

DUNGEON KEY—LEVEL 2

Any player character dwarf or gnome will note that the construction of Level 2 of the dungeon is centuries older than Level 1. It seems clear that the barrow must have been raised atop a much earlier delving, into which the player characters are now descending.

If this adventure is being played as part of the series, a learned character will be able to use this information to deduce that the characters are entering a construction which dates back to the ancient Vermil empire. The Vermil collapsed into demon-ridden decadence centuries ago, and their sites are associated with great evil. If the adventure is being played as a standalone or inserted into another campaign, the DM should obviously ignore this section or replace it with information appropriate to his or her own milieu.

Wandering Monsters: Wandering monsters should be checked for every 3 turns. Checks should also be made if the player characters make loud noises or otherwise act in a way likely to attract attention. Such monsters appear on a 1 on 1d12 normally; this chance may be varied down to 1 in 6 or up to 1 in 20 depending upon how stealthy the characters' approach might be.

There are limited numbers of wandering monsters on Level 2. Tick the box each time a wandering monster is slain; when their numbers are depleted, no more wandering monsters of that type will appear (treat any such result as "no encounter"). Roll 1d6 to determine what kind of creature appears:

1 - 2d4 Ghouls (hp 9 each).

2 - 1d3 Shadows (hp 16 each).

3 - 2d4 Stirges (hp 6 each).

4 - 1 Giant Spider (hp 21). This is an unintelligent variety (intelligence: non-) but otherwise conforms to the normal characteristics of giant spiders.

5 - 2d6 Giant Centipedes (hp 1 each).

6 - 1 normal-sized, highly poisonous Spider (like a black widow). This creature has dropped onto a backpack or landed on a party member's armour and will bite 1d6 turns later, or when disturbed. See Area C2 for the effects of its bite.

D: Chambers of Darkness. These rooms are now the home of a pack of nightcreepers (q.v.) which have been attracted and placed by Zenegral Byle.

This area of the dungeon is very dark and shadowy. The walls, ceilings and floors are formed of very dark stone, and the air is still and quiet. It seems almost to absorb light. While adventuring in this area, the radius of light emitted by the players' torches, lanterns, etc. is halved, such that torches now only illuminate a 20' radius and magic swords only 15' around. Even the beam of a bullseye lantern can only penetrate 40' into the gloom.

Infravision functions normally here, save that it will not detect the nightcreepers, and this is the most likely way in which the characters will navigate the darkness. Attempts to keep the lamps lit or the torches burning in the presence of the nightcreepers will most probably be frustrated.

Notes on this sublevel: The most successful way of handling Area D will be for the players to figure out that the nightcreepers are after their light sources and

are not otherwise hostile. If the party works this out and chooses not to engage the Nightcreepers in battle, they will find the area relatively easy and will be able to collect considerable quantities of loot with relatively little difficulty.

This part of the dungeon is intended to be eerie and creepy, and the DM should seek to ensure that the player characters are jumpy and nervous throughout.

If the party tries to hack their way through, they are likely to find themselves fighting in pitch darkness. Characters without infravision are at risk of hitting friendly party members instead of enemies, particularly those using large weapons; spells and missile fire are also likely to go astray. The DM will need to determine the chance of this occurring according to the circumstances which prevail.

Nightcrawler Roster: There are 29 nightcreepers in Area D. Each has 9 hp. Tick a box each time a nightcrawler is slain:

The nightcreepers are unintelligent and will not react to the players' presence in a coordinated fashion.

D1. NIGHTCREEPERS' CHAMBER: The player characters' footsteps echo hollowly as they descend the steps. Their light sources appear to grow dimmer and dimmer in the gathering darkness.

When Zenegrul Byle has finished with a captive, it is his practice to chain the unfortunate to the wall in this room and leave them to die in the darkness. There are several (inanimate) human skeletons lying around here, the flesh stripped from their bones by the feasting of the dungeon vermin, and assorted manacles are still attached to the walls. There appear to be many more skulls than corpses (22 skulls as opposed to 8 corpses, if anyone counts) and there is a good chance that a player character will inadvertently kick a skull and send it skittering across the room. Searching the room will reveal nothing else of interest.

Each turn that the player characters spend in this room, there is a 1 in 6 chance that a group of 2d4 nightcreepers will be attracted and enter the room from one of the adjoining passageways. The DM should choose which entrance is appropriate to the

circumstances, or determine it randomly if desired. The first the players will hear of their approach will be the soft pattering of their feet, then suddenly shadowy humanoids will appear from the darkness and the PCs' lights will begin to go out.

The doorway to the north of Area D1 (which is between the characters and the staircase down) is made of stout oak bound with iron, and it is locked. Zenegrul Byle (q.v.) has a key, and there is another in Area D10.

The PCs will be unable to break down this door by sheer force. Either a thief must pick the lock or a key must be found.

D2. NIGHTCREEPERS' CHAMBER: There is an 85% chance of encountering 2d4 nightcreepers (from the roster) here if any remain. This room contains an array of eight *continual light* spells cast on the south wall, although these will not be functioning when the characters arrive because of the feeding activities of the nightcreepers. If the PCs keep the room clear of nightcreepers, these spells will reactivate in 2d4 turns (check each spell separately).

Reactivation of a *continual light* spell will attract 1d4 nightcreepers per round until the roster is empty.

There is nothing else of value or interest in the room.

D3. NIGHTCREEPERS' CHAMBER: There is an 85% chance of encountering 2d4 nightcreepers (from the roster) here if any remain. This room contains an array of seven *continual light* spells cast on the south wall, although these will not be functioning when the characters arrive because of the feeding activities of the nightcreepers. If the PCs keep the room clear of nightcreepers, these spells will reactivate in 2d4 turns (check each spell separately).

Reactivation of a *continual light* spell will attract 1d4 nightcreepers per round until the roster is empty.

A thorough search of the room will reveal a **scroll** lying in one corner (accidentally dropped by Zenegrul Byle and lost in the darkness). This is a scroll of one magic-user spell: *web*.

D4. DARK CHAMBER: There is a 25% chance of encountering 2d4 nightcreepers (from the roster) here if any remain. Otherwise the chamber will be empty.

D5. DARK CHAMBER: The passage to the south of this room contains the inanimate skeleton of an incautious goblin (from the first level) which decided to explore down here.

This room is avoided by the nightcreepers because they have learned that it contains a trap. The central 10' square of the room features a concealed pressure plate which will, if triggered, blast the triggering character with a jet of frost from the ceiling (2d6 damage, save vs. wands for half damage).

DM Note: Do not forget to impose item saving throws against frost for each of the triggering character's items if he fails his own save!

D6. OTYUGH CHAMBER: This room contains a small otyugh (6 HD, 19 hp). This creature is very old and senile, only semi-intelligent, with 1 bite attack which inflicts 2d4 damage; its tentacles are too weak to be useful in combat. The nightcreepers are afraid of it and leave it alone.

The otyugh is hungry and will attack, but it can be distracted with food.

There is a pile of refuse in the northern corner of the room in which the otyugh dwells. If this pile of refuse is searched, it will prove to contain a new and rather sharp knife, which has a 50% chance of cutting the searching character's skin. While this does no damage in game terms, if this happens, the DM should determine the risk of a disease (cf. DMG, "disease") resulting from the filth in the character's wound. The knife is worth only 1 gp; but there is also a rotten cloth bag containing 343 gp in the refuse which the searching character will find.

D7. DARK CHAMBER: There is a 50% chance of encountering 1d6 nightcreepers (from the roster) in this chamber if any remain. Otherwise the chamber will be empty.

D8. DARK CHAMBER: There is a 75% chance of encountering 2d4 nightcreepers (from the roster) in this chamber if any remain.

Lying in a forgotten corner here is a beautifully wrought silver earring set with a jasper (value: 85 gp).

D9. DARK CHAMBER: There is a 75% chance of encountering 2d4 nightcreepers (from the roster) in this chamber if any remain.

There is a sack against the north wall, mouldering and rotten. It contains 1,033 cp, 219 sp, and 13 ep. The sack also contains a silver-headed mace with a bronze handle. This weapon is non-magical but can be used to hit creatures which are vulnerable to silverweapons. It could be sold for perhaps 80 gp.

D10. DARK CHAMBER: There is a 75% chance of encountering 2d4 nightcreepers (from the roster) in this chamber if any remain.

On a shelf in the west wall in the chamber are a cluster 14 of small clay jars. Their contents are as follows:-

- 12 platinum pieces.
- A small quantity of white crystals. (This is rock salt and has no resale value).
- Half-full of dirty water. (This is unholy water. It will inflict damage on a paladin as if he or she were an undead creature hit with holy water. Other characters will find it safe to handle).
- Filled to the brim with human teeth.
- Quarter-full of vinegar.
- Contains the key which opens the door to the north of Area D1.
- Holds three tiny crystal rods. (These are of no resale value but can be used as the material component of a *lightning bolt* spell).
- Contains fifteen small, downy feathers. (A druid will recognise these as being owl feathers, of no particular value).
- Contains a small chain fashioned of tiny silver links. (This is a necklace worth 140 gp).
- Three-quarters full of blue sand.
- Holds 113 dried centipede legs (these are from normal-sized centipedes).
- Contains a golden embroidery needle which pierces a piece of rotting cloth (value: 15 gp).
- Holds a small block of beeswax.

- Quarter-full of red pigment. (This is cochineal, an ingredient in the dyeing of expensive cloth; its resale value is 35 gp).

D11. DARK CHAMBER: There is a 75% chance of encountering 2d4 nightcreepers (from the roster) in this chamber if any remain. The chamber will otherwise be empty.

E: The Screaming Statues. The original builders of this complex placed many bronze statues in the corridors connecting these rooms. It has pleased Zenegral Byle, who is rather chaotic, to cast a *magic mouth* spell on each statue, such that it will emit eldritch wails, screams, or other harrowing sounds when any creature over 2' tall passes by it unless Zenegral Byle himself is present.

The statues are not otherwise dangerous or animated in any way. They are made of solid bronze, far too heavy to move, and even if they are somehow extracted from the dungeon, will not prove to be of any significant resale value. Brief descriptions of each statue are provided; the DM may need to elaborate upon this if the players prove to be curious about them.

Area E is also home to an assortment of undead creatures. None of these are capable of reacting to the presence of the player characters in a coordinated fashion and hence no tactical information about them is provided.

E1. CORRIDOR: There are six bronze statues in this corridor, all of humans with the heads, forepaws, and tails of dogs, clad in archaic scale armour. Those on the east side of the corridor are male, the west, female. Nothing will come to investigate the statues' screams.

E2. ZOMBIE CHAMBER: This room contains the animated corpse of a giant bugbear (monster zombie, turned as a ghastr, AC 6, HD 6, dam 4d4, hp 24). This zombie is programmed as follows:

- Attack any creature over 2' tall which enters the room, unless it says the password "Zenegral Byle"
- Attack any creature which attacks the bugbear with a missile weapon, even if it is standing outside the room

- Ignore any creature which lies on the ground, provided the bugbear has hit it at least once
- If given a choice of things to attack, hit the target which is closest to it

The DM should note that a gnome will receive a -4 AC bonus against this creature, just as it would if the bugbear were alive. If it is successfully turned, the zombie bugbear will flee southwards. It has no treasure.

E3. NECROPHIDIUS CORRIDOR: There are six bronze statues in this corridor, all of humans with the heads, hind limbs, and tails of cats, clad in archaic scale armour. Those on the north side of the corridor are male, the south, female. Lurking on a stone shelf over the archway to Area E2 is a necrophidius (death worm) (hp 11). This creature will drop onto the first creature passing through the arch, surprising on a 3 in 6, and bite it to paralyse. Only then will it execute its *dance of death*.

On the necrophidius's shelf, the player characters will find its treasure: a cloth pouch containing 23 pp.

E4. TRAPPED CHAMBER: This room is apparently empty. A Good-aligned character with a WIS of 14 or more will find the area vaguely disturbing, but will not be able to explain his unease.

The 10' x 10' square just before the northern exit of this chamber is trapped such that three spears will fire from the west wall of the chamber and impale the door opener. Each spear attacks as a 2 HD creature, and inflicts 1d6 damage if it hits; otherwise they will land harmlessly against the east wall.

E5. CORRIDOR: The six bronze statues in this corridor are of humans with the heads and wings of gigantic bats. Those on the west side of the corridor are male, the east, female. Nothing will come to investigate the statues' screams.

E6. DEAD END CHAMBER: This room contains two zombie bugbears (hp 26, 22), each with exactly the same programming as the zombie in Area E2. A gnome PC will receive his or her normal combat bonuses against them. If successfully turned, they will flee to the northern edge of the room. The 22 hp zombie has a large axe embedded in its spine. This is a **battleaxe +1, +2 vs. undead**.

E7. CORRIDOR: The six bronze statues in this corridor are of humans with the heads and hind legs of horses. Those on the east side of the corridor are male, the west, female. One of the eastern statues is missing an arm. The arm lies upon the ground nearby. Replacing it will have no apparent effect and it will simply fall down again. The arm is heavy, bulky, and enormously encumbering, so reduce the movement rate of any PC who insists on carrying it around by 3".

E8. CHAMBER: This chamber contains a pile of broken children's toys: a rocking horse with a broken leg, a doll without a head, a toy knife with a broken blade, and so on. These were formerly the child-wraith's property (see Area E10).

E9. CORRIDOR: The six bronze statues in this corridor are of humans with the heads and hind legs of cattle, appearing vaguely minotaur-like. Those to the north of the corridor are male, those to the south, female. Nothing will come to investigate the statues' screams.

E10. CHILD-WRAITH'S CHAMBER: Any Good-aligned character with a WIS of 14 or more will feel a sense of foreboding as this room is approached. The whole chamber radiates evil.

This chamber was outfitted as a child's bedroom, but the furniture and other contents are mildewed and decayed. There is a clay jug and goblet on a wooden platter beside the bed. The child-wraith (hp: 23) will be hiding in the clay jug when the players approach. If the jug is investigated, it will burst out and attempt to scare the players away.

In the long distant past, as a living human child, this creature was a member of a peaceful culture and swore an oath against harming others save in self-defence. In death, its Lawful nature has caused it to keep this oath, and it will not attack any character which has not attacked it first.

Note, however, that the creature is very evil and it remains highly intelligent. It will attempt to circumvent its oath in order to feed on the players' life force, either by advancing on them in a threatening manner in the hope that they will attack or, if this fails, by taking advantage of its childlike appearance and tearfully begging the characters to touch it "because that's the only way to release my soul." Any such touch will, of course, cost the

character an experience level just as if struck by the wraith in melee.

The wraith's treasure (944 gp, 1,017 sp, a perfect albino wolf pelt worth 500 gp, and a **ring of warmth**) is concealed in the mattress of its bed.

E11. CORRIDOR: The six bronze statues in this corridor are of humans with the heads and hind hooves of goats. Those to the east of the corridor are male, those to the west, female. Nothing will come to investigate the statues' screams.

E12. CORRIDOR: The six bronze statues in this corridor are of humans with the heads and hind legs of boars. Those to the south are male, those to the north, female. One of the male statues is missing an arm, which lies on the ground in front of the statue (see Area E7). Replacing the arm will have no effect and it will simply fall down again. The arm is heavy, bulky, and enormously encumbering, so reduce the movement rate of any PC who insists on carrying it by 3".

If the arm from Area E7 is touched to the shoulder of the statue in Area E12, or vice versa, then it will fuse to the shoulder in question and the statue will be made whole. If this is done to the damaged statues in both rooms, the secret door in the north wall of Area E18 will open (whether or not the PCs have detected it yet).

E13. CHAMBER OF SILENCE: This area is empty. It is under the effect of a permanent *silence* spell which affects the entire room. (The spell was cast many centuries ago by those who built the barrow, and its purpose has long been forgotten. For the purposes of *dispel magic* attempts and the like, the level of magic use may be considered to be 18th.)

E14. CORRIDOR: The six bronze statues in this corridor are of humans with the heads and tails of rats. Those to the east of the corridor are male, those to the west, female. Nothing will come to investigate the statues' screams.

Partway down the corridor there is a patch of green slime (hp: 6) on the roof. Any character incautiously passing underneath has a 75% chance of being hit by the falling slime and suffering the consequences; this chance should obviously be reduced if the PCs are particularly alert and cautious, and if the PCs become

aware of the slime and avoid it, they will not be subject to attack.

E15. CHAMBER OF THE MASTERS: Zenegral Byle has discovered the secret of creating magic-using skeletons, and these are his early experiments. The two magic-using skeletons domiciled in this chamber appear like normal skeletons, but with eyes and tongues. Although they fight as normal skeletons, they have two hit dice (hp 9, 7). Each has one first level magic-user spell per day. The stronger of the two can cast *sleep*, the weaker, *magic missile*, and they will cast these spells at the party on sight.

These creatures have no treasure save for their shared spell book, which contains *read magic*, *detect magic*, *sleep*, *burning hands*, *magic missile*, *enlarge*, *affect normal fires*, and *invisibility*.

E16. CORRIDOR: The six bronze statues in this corridor are of humans with the heads and wings of eagles. Those to the north of the corridor are male, those to the south, female. Nothing will come to investigate the statues' screams.

E17. CORRIDOR: The six bronze statues in this corridor are of humans with the heads and wings of owls. Those to the west of the corridor are male, those to the east, female.

The two statues to the very north of the corridor have magical effects within their screams. The male statue's scream will *slow* the party; the female's scream will *weaken* them (both effects operate as the relevant spell). They will scream in unison.

E18. CHAMBER: This chamber contains four normal zombies (hp 9, 9, 7, 6) and a zombie bugbear (hp 23) which is exactly similar to those encountered elsewhere on the level, save that they are also programmed to attack anything in Area E17 upon hearing the two northernmost statues scream. Note that these zombies are outside the area of effect of the statues' screams and will not suffer the detrimental effects therefrom.

The secret door to the north of this chamber can be detected in the normal way, but it can also be opened by the method detailed under Area E12. The stairs beyond it lead to Area G1.

F: Zenegral Byle's lair. Area F comprises one huge, multi-level room in which the wizard Zenegral Byle dwells with his gnoll guardsmen. The walls of this area

are decorated with the pelts of many animals—and in places, the skins of humans, elves, dwarfs, halflings, and gnomes.

Notes on this sublevel: The part of Area F which is situated on Dungeon Level 2 is, in fact, only accessible by travelling through Dungeon Level 3. Effectively, Areas F1–F7 comprise a balcony which looks down on the remainder of Area F. From here, Byle's gnoll guardsmen will attempt to fire bows down on the player characters. Safety from this fire may be gained if the PCs shelter beneath the balcony areas, but the gnolls will (of course) try to move so that they have a line of fire.

Zenegral Byle, level 6 magic-user, S10 I17 W12 D13 C10 Ch16, hp 17, alignment Chaotic Evil. Spells memorised: *magic missile*, *sleep*, *shield*, *protection from good*, *web*, *mirror image*, *monster summoning I*, *slow*. Byle obviously has no armour but wears a **ring of protection +1**. He also carries a **scroll** of *haste* which he will save for use on himself if too many of his gnolls are killed and he feels the need to flee.

Byle carries his spell book in a pouch around his neck. It is magically enchanted such that it shrinks to the size of a normal d6 but returns to normal size on command. A player character could take Byle's very useful spell book and use it for him- or herself if he is defeated. It contains all the spells which Byle has memorised, plus 2d6 randomly determined first-level spells, 2d4 randomly determined second-level spells, and 1d4 randomly determined third-level spells.

Gnoll Roster:

- 5 Chieftain with a two-handed sword, hp 22
- 5 chieftain's guards with battleaxes, hp 20 each
- 5 gnoll leaders, armed with halberds, hp 16 each
- 15 gnolls with longbows, hp 9 each
- 35 gnolls with halberds, hp 9 each
- 15 gnolls with two-handed swords, hp 9 each
- 20 gnolls with battleaxes, hp 9 each
- 15 gnolls with morning stars, hp 9 each

F1. GNOLL STATION: A patrol of 2d6 gnolls with hand arms (from the roster) will initially be stationed here. Their orders are to guard against attackers coming up the stairs.

F2. GNOLL ARCHERS: 2d6 gnolls with longbows will initially be positioned here. Their orders are to fire down from the balcony on any attackers.

F3. GNOLL STATION: The gnoll chieftain and his five guards will initially be positioned here. They will move to reinforce the area which is most heavily under attack.

F4. ZENEGRAL BYLE: The wizard Zenegral Byle will initially be situated here. He will send summoned monsters at the PCs in the first instance, then use ranged attack spells from the balcony.

F5. GNOLL STATION: The five gnoll leaders begin here. They will move to flank the player characters if possible, descending the staircase which they are not taking. If the PCs are coming up both staircases at once, these gnolls will move to reinforce the staircase which the gnoll chieftain and his band are not protecting.

F6. GNOLL ARCHERS: All those gnolls with longbows who are not situated at F2 will be here at the start. Their orders are similar to those of the gnolls in Area F2.

F7. GNOLL STATION: A patrol of 2d6 gnolls with hand arms (from the roster) will initially be stationed here. Their orders are to guard against attackers coming up the stairs.

DM Note: Area F is split across two levels, and Areas F8–F12 are described under Dungeon Level 3.

DUNGEON KEY – LEVEL 3

As on to Level 2, any player character dwarf or gnome will note that Level 3 of the dungeon is centuries older in construction than Level 1. It is of similar age to Level 2, except in the cavern areas, which appear slightly more recent.

Wandering Monsters: Wandering monsters should be checked for every 3 turns. Checks should also be made if the player characters make loud noises or otherwise act in a way likely to attract attention. Such monsters appear on a 1 on 1d12 normally; this chance may be varied down to 1 in 6 or up to 1 in 20 depending upon how stealthy the characters' approach might be.

There are limited numbers of wandering monsters on Level 3. Tick the box each time a wandering monster is slain; when their numbers are depleted, no more wandering monsters of that type will appear (treat any such result as "no encounter"). The creatures are identical to those featured on Level 2, but the numbers are somewhat greater. Roll 1d6 to determine what kind of creature appears:

1 - 2d6 Ghouls (hp 9 each).

2 - 1d4 Shadows (hp 16 each).

3 - 2d4 Stirges (hp 6 each).

4 - 1 Giant Spider (hp 21). This is an unintelligent variety (intelligence: non-) but otherwise conforms to the normal characteristics of giant spiders.

5 - 3d6 Giant Centipedes (hp 1 each).

6 - 1 normal-sized, highly poisonous Spider (like a black widow). This creature has dropped onto a backpack or landed on a party member's armour and will bite 1d6 turns later or when disturbed. See Area C2 for the effects of its bite.

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F8. GNOLL STATION: A patrol of 2d6 gnolls with hand arms (from the roster for Level 2) will normally be stationed here. They will move to form a shield wall against the player characters as soon as these are detected.

F9. GNOLL STATION: Another patrol of 2d6 gnolls with hand arms (from the roster) will normally be stationed here. They will move to join the shield wall initiated by the gnolls at F8.

F10. ALARMED DOOR: This door is formed of massive steel and embossed with runes. A *comprehend languages* spell is necessary to decipher these, which will prove to be an egomaniacal rant which purports to justify taking whatever is desired through force of arms. It is signed, *Zenegril Byle*.

The door is both locked and trapped. The trap will trigger an alarm, alerting the gnolls and causing them to prepare for battle, while the lock must simply be picked. If the players are unable to pick the lock, a total combined strength of 50 or greater will be necessary to force the door open, unless a battering ram of some kind can be obtained.

Note, however, that the rust monsters (from Area G18–19) can rust the door to bits in a matter of a couple of rounds if released. Such rusting will *not* trigger the alarm.

F11. GNOLL STATION: Another patrol of 2d6 gnolls with hand arms (from the roster) will normally be stationed here. They will move to join the shield wall initiated by the gnolls at F8.

F12. GNOLL STATION: All the remaining gnolls from the roster not assigned anywhere else (if any) will be situated here. Those with hand arms will move to join the shield wall initiated by the gnolls at F8, while any with missile weapons will seek to climb to the balcony.

G. Lower Chambers: These chambers and caverns are the home of a variety of creatures. The most dangerous group to the player characters—and

potentially the most helpful also—is a group of rust monsters who are trapped in Areas G18–20. Zenegril Byle uses the secretions of these creatures in the creation of magic potions (his laboratory is situated at G4), but they hate him and are naturally capable of posing an enormous danger to his troops!

The other creatures which inhabit this area are Byle's noncombatant servants and minions, and there is little combat challenge in this section, for the players will likely find more than enough hack and slash to satisfy them elsewhere in the adventure.

Areas G1–G10 are among the oldest parts of the dungeon. However, a dwarf or gnome character will be able to determine that areas G11–G20 are very recent additions.

G1. STORAGE CHAMBER: This 20' x 30' room is filled with boxes, crates, chests, sacks, barrels, and other containers of all kinds. A cursory inspection will reveal that they contain some of the provisions necessary to keep the dungeon supplied, so there are sacks of grain, barrels of water and small beer, loaves, cheeses, and other such items. A thorough search, which will require at least 3 turns to execute, will reveal a homonculous (hp 8) hiding in one of the chests. The critter sneaked away to have a quiet rest in this room, hiding in a chest so as not to be caught. If found, it will attempt to bite as it flees.

Note that the homonculous will not sound the alarm because if it did it would have to explain why it was here in the first place.

G2. STORAGE CHAMBER: This square room is filled with spears, shields, helmets, and daggers, plus many dozen neatly stacked sheaves of arrows and piles of sling stones, all of the kind used by goblins. A careful inventory of the room will reveal that there are a gross (twelve dozen) shortbow arrows, a gross of sling stones, six dozen spears on racks, three dozen helmets on pegs, three dozen small wooden shields (unpainted as yet) in a neat pile, and three dozen daggers. None of these items are magical or of exceptional value.

G3. STORAGE CHAMBER: This larger chamber is filled with supplemental food and water supplies designed to be of use if the barrow is besieged. It is noticeably colder here than elsewhere in the dungeon.

There are many sacks of oats and beans, many waxed cheeses, barrels of small beer, containers of jerky, etc. A careful search of the room will reveal that one of the barrels is filled with good quality brandy (value: 75 gp) and one of the coffers is a **chest of refrigeration**, having the property of keeping anything stored within it at a temperature slightly below the freezing point of water, provided the lid is shut and the ambient temperature outside is not unusually great. This item is worth 500 xp, and could be sold for perhaps 1,000 gp on the open market.

Such a search will also reveal that several of the leather sacks are filled with brown mold, which is the main reason for the prevailing low temperature in the room. (The brown mold has been placed here deliberately in order to maintain the low temperature and thus prevent food from spoiling). Thus, the searching character is 90% likely to suffer a brown mold attack before locating the **chest of refrigeration**.

G4. WIZARD'S LABORATORY: The entrance area to this large chamber contains a trap. If the threshold is crossed without pressing a secret catch in the wall (detect as a secret door), a poisoned dart will fire from an aperture in the west wall, aiming at the first character into the room. The dart attacks as a 4 HD monster, inflicting 1 hp of damage if it hits, and the target character must save vs. poison or die. The trap is then ineffective until reloaded.

The laboratory is a huge room, comprising several areas which are outlined in turn.

Potion-making area: This area contains several work surfaces, alembics, distillation jars, burners, tripods, beakers, test tubes, and so forth. These items are worth a total of perhaps 1,000 gp but are highly fragile, and almost any impact will shatter them! Open on the desk is a treatise on how to manufacture a homonculous (value: 250 gp).

Library/study area: This area contains research books, diaries, and journals. There are no spell books (for Zenegral Byle keeps his on his person), but there is a treasure trove of other works, including:

- An atlas of the area with detailed maps, approximately 100 years out of date (value: 50 gp);

- A history of the dwarvish citadel of Morrikul Zane, situated a little way to the north of the barrow within the Darkshroud Peaks (no value, but of potential interest in subsequent adventures in this series);
- A journal of Zenegral Byle's recent activities (of no monetary value, but including sufficient evidence to ensure that he is convicted if brought to trial);
- A Goblin-Common/Common-Goblin dictionary (value: 30 gp);
- *A Grammar of the Goblin Tongue*, by Zerment, the renowned Goblin scholar (value: 50 gp) – the preceding two works, if studied together, can halve the usual time it takes to learn the Goblin language.

Necromancy area: This section is clearly devoted to the study of corpses, containing a number of partly dissected humans and an assortment of surgical implements for a variety of disgusting and repulsive purposes.

Material-spell-component area: There are several shelves containing material spell components, all neatly sorted and labelled. Most of these are of no value (there is little market for bat guano among non-mages), but of potential interest are the material components for casting a *find familiar* spell (value: 100 gp), the pearl and live miniature carp for *identify* (value: 100 gp), and the ink for *write* (value: 200 gp).

G5. WORKSHOP: This area is used for making repairs to any damaged equipment. It is filled with work surfaces, tools, raw materials (such as patches, hobnails, hafts, etc.), and an assortment of damaged items which are under repair. None are of interest or value, but it will take 3 turns to search this area thoroughly and determine this for sure.

The corridor to the south is lined on both east and west walls with pegs and garment hooks. Items waiting for repair hang on the east wall, while those which have been repaired and require collection hang on the west.

G6. DOORWAY: This iron-bound wooden door will be closed when the players approach it. It has a crude notice affixed to the north side, which reads in Common, Goblin, and Gnoll: "*Private! No entry.*" If any creature opens the door without saying the word

"Curannog," a *magic mouth* will scream "Intruders!" ten times.

Actually, this *magic mouth* has been malfunctioning of late and sometimes shouts for no reason. Thus its yells will not really attract any attention.

G7. WAITING AREA: This area is used by creatures which are awaiting an audience with Zenegral Byle. It contains a seating area (hard wooden benches) and a number of grisly reminders of Zenegral Byle's authority—notably Byle's collection of unusual skulls and an entire goblin skin which is used as a rug.

G8. HOLDING PEN: Many sets of manacles line the walls here. If a party member has been taken prisoner and is being held for ransom, he or she will be found here; otherwise the area will be empty.

G9. MINE ENTRANCE: This room contains various picks and tools which have been used to enlarge the dungeon complex into Areas G11–G20. These newly fashioned areas are very roughly hewn, having been hacked out by lazy goblins, and Zenegral Byle is waiting until he has an adequate number of slaves before finishing them. Aside from the picks and tools, the area is empty.

G10. DOORWAY: This iron-bound wooden door will be closed when the players approach. It has a notice affixed to the south side, reading in Common, Goblin, and Gnoll: "*Hatchery - no admittance for any reason. This means you.*"

G11. CAVERN: A roughly hewn area, G11 is uneven and damn, sloping downwards noticeably from north to south, and the footing is treacherous. A dwarf, gnome, or thief can keep his or her feet automatically, but other characters have a 1 in 6 chance of falling and sliding to the southern edge of the room (taking 1d3 damage in the process) unless they take appropriate precautions.

G12. CAVERN: This cavern appears to be empty. However, a thorough search of the most extreme northern point of the cavern will reveal a tiny crevice concealed near the roof. Inside this crevice is an uncut agate (worth 5 gp, but capable of being cut by a skilled gemcrafter to a value of 150 gp)—the object having been found in the mining process and concealed here by the goblin who did not wish to share the treasure with its rulers and chieftains, and plans to return to collect it later.

G13. CAVERN OF THE WORMS: There will always be 3d6 cave worms (cf. **The Melford Murder** for stats) in this cavern. They are used to supplement the diet of the various creatures which dwell in the barrow. If left undisturbed, there is a 90% chance that they will not attack.

The spur of the cave which lies to the northwest contains several dozen cave worm eggs.

G14. FUNGUS FARM: This damp cavern is faintly phosphorescent, containing various pools of still water and an enormous number of varieties of fungus. None of these fungi are harmful, and a number are rather tasty. They are used to supplement the diet of the inhabitants of this place.

G15. MISTY CAVERN: This cavern has a putrid reek which is detectable within 20' of the cave itself. The upper part of the cavern is filled with a thin mist which is mildly poisonous (any character whose head is over 4' above the ground must save vs. poison or be rendered unconscious for 1d3 turns). A dwarf or gnome has a 50% chance of knowing that the smell indicates the presence of harmful gas.

This cavern slopes upwards towards Area G16.

G16. MISTY CAVERN: This cave is filled with the same gas that permeates the upper portion of Area G15, save the gas is even denser, restricting visibility to 20'. A character of any height must make a save or be affected as listed under Area G15, and a 1 on the saving throw die indicates death due to inhalation of toxic fumes. Further, anyone carrying a lit torch, lantern or candle into this cavern has a 20% chance of igniting the gas, inflicting damage as a 5-dice fireball (save for half damage applies).

The extreme northeastern corner of the cavern contains a small vent which is the source of this gas. If ignited, it will slowly refill over the course of the subsequent 6 hours (36 turns) until it reaches the same concentration described before.

G17. RUST MONSTER FEEDING CAVERN: This cave contains a number of discarded items of ferrous metal, such as bent spearheads, dented helms, etc., which are beyond repair. The corridor to the west is sealed with a grillework of 6-inch-square pieces of wood, which are rotting slightly in the damp atmosphere (but are still very strong). A bend bars/lift gates roll would be necessary to remove this

grillework. Alternatively, the player characters could employ tools to cut through it (those found in Area G5 would work well).

On the other side of the grillework are small piles of rust. If a player character pokes a discarded metal item through the grille, there is a 50% non-cumulative chance per round that a rust monster will approach to feed.

Also in this room are two nets of strong rope. These can be used to capture a rust monster, each being capable of holding one such monster safely. The DM should determine the chances of the net successfully trapping a rust monster according to the plan employed by the player characters, but the chances should generally be good and the DM is encouraged to look favourably on any reasonably intelligent plan.

G18–19. CAVERNS OF THE RUST MONSTERS: These two caverns each contain three rust monsters (Area G18: hp 25, 23, 22; Area G19: hp 23, 21, 18). Zenegral Byle occasionally collects their secretions for use in potion ingredients, and he also believes they may be useful when his plan matures a little further and he is able openly to attack the lands of men.

Although the rust monsters are unintelligent, they have felt little but cruelty at Zenegral Byle's hands and desire revenge upon him. Player characters who show them kindness will be able to gain their dim and slow-witted loyalty.

G20. RUST MONSTER EGG CHAMBER: This cavern contains a huge female rust monster (hp: 34). She is exhausted, having recently laid 9 eggs, and both moves and attacks as if under the influence of a *slow* spell. (If the player characters leave and return later, this effect will of course have worn off; it will wear off in any case 6 turns after the players first enter this cave).

There is a small market for rust monster eggs, and each egg could be sold for 100 gp, although Melford is too small a town to contain a prospective purchaser and the player characters will need to venture to a large town or city in order to locate a suitable buyer.

H: The Hatchery. Area H is where Zenegral Byle is in the process of manufacturing more creatures to serve him. When this work is complete, Byle will feel able to begin the next phase of his deprivations.

Each of the chambers from H2 through H11 contains creatures in the process of incubation. Not all of Zenegral Byle's creations have been successful—some are less powerful than he had envisaged, and others are less tractable to his will—but he is persevering with the process.

Notes on this sublevel: Many of the creatures here are immature or incomplete in some respect. As a result, they are less powerful than a normal adult of their species (and this is just as well, for a full adult of some of the creatures listed herein would be more than capable of making a horrible mess of the party for whom this adventure is designed!) *The DM is encouraged to read the creature descriptions with particular care before attempting to run this section of the adventure* because the monsters differ, in many cases, from a normal creature of their type.

The entrance areas to the various hatcheries are enchanted to keep the creatures inside. In every case, the 10' square adjacent to the corridor is the affected area. Each of these entrance areas contains a force field equivalent to a *wall of force*, which is *permanent* (unless deactivated by pulling the levers in Area H1). However, there is a 1' "slot" at the top of each *wall of force*, through which meat and drink may be thrown to the creatures in each hatchery.

If the player characters release several creatures at once, then there is a 25% chance per creature released that it will attack another released creature (determine which one randomly)—except that it will not attack its own kind. Otherwise, it will wander around the area aimlessly, looking for something to eat. Eventually, the creatures will dissipate up the staircase (into Area D of Level 2) or through the doors off Area H1 if these have not been sealed, attacking any non-hatchery creature encountered until slain.

H1. HATCHERY ENTRANCE: The doors to the south and east of this entrance chamber will always be closed but not locked. However, there are *very* stout (foot-thick) wooden bars which can be dropped into place to close them from either side; if this is done, a character on the other side cannot open them by force, no matter how much strength is employed. They are designed to withstand the creatures who dwell in the hatchery, and only a *knock* spell, a **chime of opening**, or similar magic will suffice to open them from the side opposite the bar.

There are two levers on the western wall here. Both are marked, in Common, Goblin, and Gnoll with urgent-sounding notices: *"DANGER! Leave these levers alone. Do not pull them under any circumstances! This means you!"* Both levers are in the "up" position when the characters enter.

North Lever: This lever toggles the entrance area to each hatchery which is affected by the other lever. When the player characters enter, it is set to Area H2; if they pull it, it will set to area H3, then H4, then H5, etc. until it reaches H11. Pulling it again will set it to H2 once more.

South Lever: This lever toggles the enchanted entrance areas "on" and "off." All of them begin in the "on" setting. Thus, if the player characters pull the south lever without pulling the north lever, the entrance to Area H2 will be deactivated. If they pull it again, it will be reactivated.

H2. BASILISK HATCHERY: There are two fully grown basilisks in this room (hp 31, 28). Because of the dangers of keeping basilisks, these have had their eyes put out, and have no gaze attack; their blindness causes them to attack at -4 on the die. However, they are immune to *darkness* and take no further penalty for fighting foes who are *invisible*.

H3. CHIMERA HATCHERY: This hatchery contains an immature chimera (as an adult, but HD 6, hp 27, and its breath causes only 2-16 points of damage). Because it has been reared in isolation from its kind, this chimera does not speak any languages.

H4. GRIFFIN HATCHERY: This hatchery contains an adolescent griffin (as an adult, but HD 6, hp 34, and 1d3/1d3/2d6 for damage). Although not yet an adult, the beast is too old to be trained.

H5. HYDRA HATCHERY: This hatchery contains a fully grown 5-headed hydra (hp 40). It is a Lernaean hydra and will regenerate two heads for each one that is cut off (taking 1d4 rounds to do so) unless fire is applied to the stump. It can never have more than 16 heads, but of course a 16-headed hydra would be more than sufficient to eradicate every other creature in the dungeon!

H6. LAMIA HATCHERY: This hatchery contains an adolescent lamia (as an adult, but no spell-casting powers as yet, and only HD 7, hp 33). She is highly intelligent, speaks Common fluently, and will claim to be a centaur who has been mutated by Zenegral Byle's magic. She will agree to join forces with the party until Byle is defeated, being careful not to betray her true nature, but as soon as he is down, she will certainly attack the players the moment she can be sure of achieving surprise.

The lamia does not understand how the levers which control access to her hatchery function.

H7. MANTICORE HATCHERY: This hatchery contains a fully grown manticore (hp: 28). The beast has shed all of its tail spikes in frustrated attempts to attack things through the *wall of force* which seals its lair, so it is only capable of melee.

H8. WORM HATCHERY: This hatchery holds an immature purple worm (as an adult, but HD 8, hp 39, and bites for only 2d8 damage. The creature is too small to swallow whole, and saving throws against its poison are made at +2).

H9. SLUG HATCHERY: This hatchery contains a young giant slug (as an adult, but HD 7, hp 37, and its acid is weak, causing only 10 hp of damage).

H10. WYVERN HATCHERY: This hatchery contains an adolescent wyvern (as an adult, but HD 5+5, hp 26, and saving throws against its poison are made at +1).

H11. SCORPION HATCHERY: This hatchery contains a fully grown giant scorpion (hp 31).

Aftermath: A party which successfully kills Zenegral Byle is to be congratulated! Slaying the wizard is no small achievement. They will have saved the village, and they should have received no small amount of booty from their exploits in addition to the experience they have earned. DMs who rigorously enforce the training rules for gaining a level of experience may wish to have the Village Council (or Maenae) present the party with a purse of a thousand gold pieces for their part in saving Melford from the depredations of the goblins.

NEW MONSTER

NIGHTCREEPER

FREQUENCY:	Very rare
NO. APPEARING:	4-40
ARMOUR CLASS:	6 or 2
MOVE:	12"
HIT DICE:	2
% IN LAIR:	90%
TREASURE TYPE:	Nil
NO. OF ATTACKS:	1
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1-6
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	See below
SPECIAL DEFENCES:	None
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Standard
INTELLIGENCE:	Animal
ALIGNMENT:	Neutral
SIZE:	M
PSIONIC ABILITY:	Nil
Attack/Defence modes:	Nil
LEVEL/XP VALUE:	II/20+2/hp

Nightcreepers are humanoid creatures, apparently unintelligent, which somehow derive sustenance from light. Their touch will extinguish torches, candles, or lanterns and dispel *light* spells. More permanent sources of light such as fire beetle glands, *continual light* spells, or magical swords or daggers will lose their light-emitting properties for 2d6 turns, although they will suffer no other ill effects from the nightcrawler's touch.

Nightcreepers are susceptible to sunlight, however, which is very debilitating to them. This means that they will only normally be found underground or in other places completely shielded from the sun. Normally, nightcreepers will seek to dwell near *continual light* spells or other magic which they can tap for a constant source of nourishment. These spells will not be functional as illumination in the presence of nightcreepers, of course.

These creatures are very hard to see. They are visible in normal light but invisible to infra- or ultravision. They can also *hide in shadows* with a 75% chance of success.

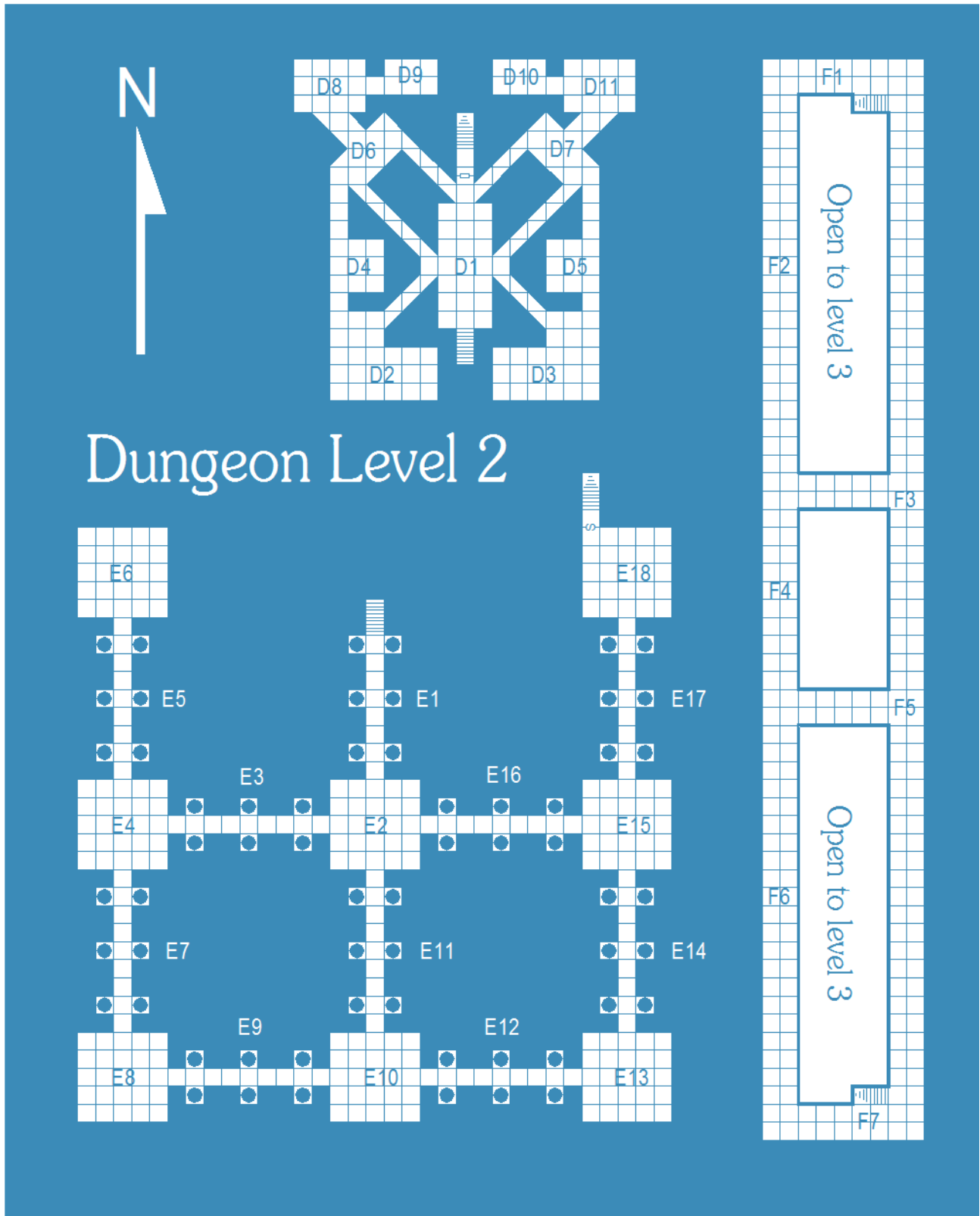
The behaviour of a pack of nightcreepers will usually be to swarm over the light-bearing characters in a party of adventurers and attempt to touch the light to feed from it. Large light sources, such as lanterns or torches, are easy for the nightcreepers to hit and are treated as AC8; candles or magic swords are AC6; and magic daggers which shed light might be as low as AC4.

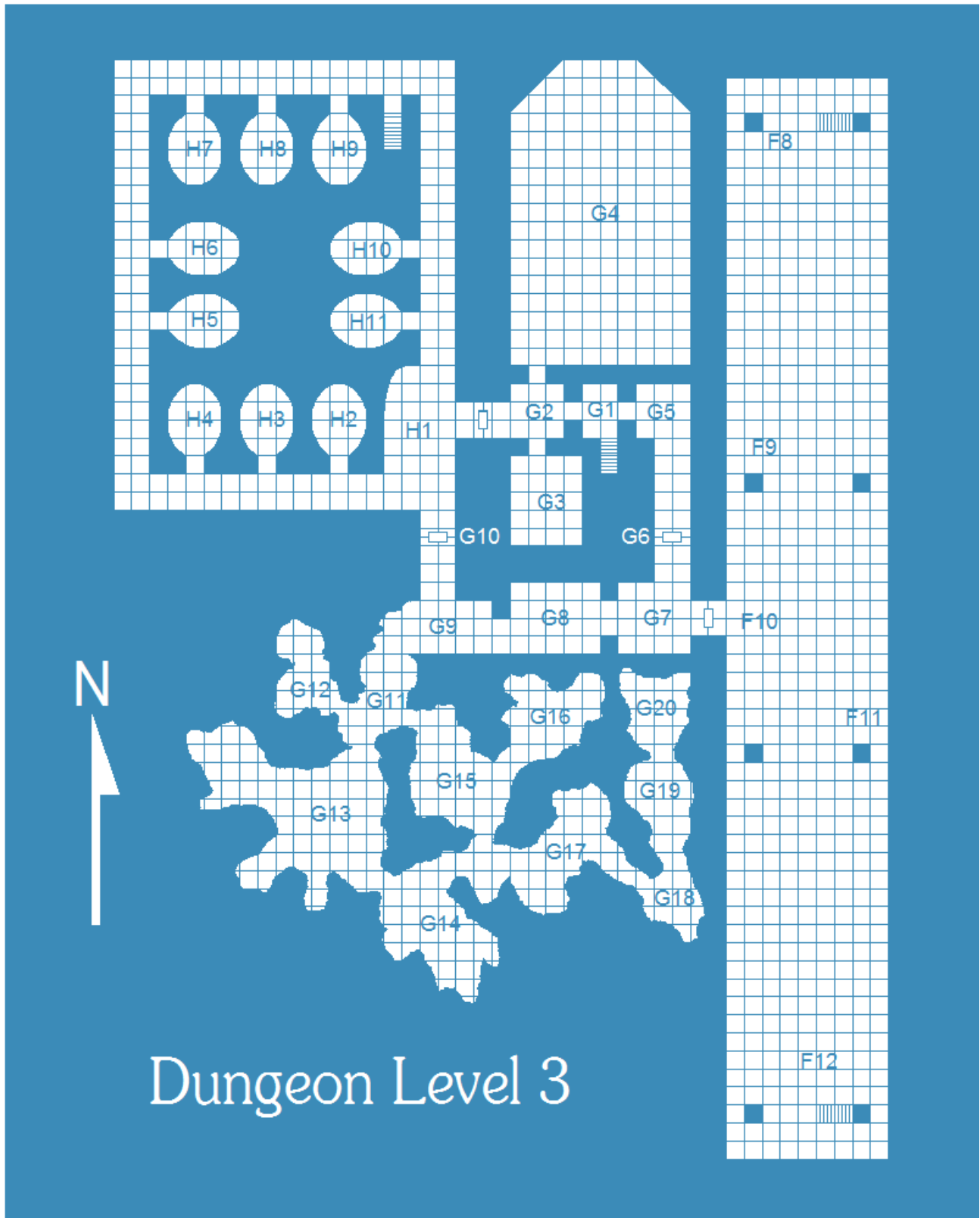
The nightcreepers will defend themselves if attacked but will not otherwise seek to harm humanoids save as necessary to get to their light sources. They are AC6 in the light but AC2 once all light sources have been extinguished.

These creatures have superior (120') infravision and also use a form of echolocation (similar to a bat's sonar) which helps them to navigate the darkness. They often make a high-pitched chittering noise, like a rapid series of staccato chirps, to facilitate this.

Description: Nightcreepers are rarely seen and always seem shrouded in shadow. They are hairless, naked, and entirely jet black in colour, including their hair and eyes.







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Beneath the Darkshroud Peaks

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