

Oddities & Odysseys

THE DREAD TAILOR

BY KERRY JORDAN



A DUNGEONS & DRAGONS ADVENTURE FOR 1ST-2ND LEVEL CHARACTERS

A new threat preys on the local trade road. Rumored to have ties to the legendary undead wizards, Vecna and Acererak, Geoff the Dread Tailor has awakened to garner his revenge on the living. A group of stalwart heroes must arise to put an end to the Dread Tailor's depravations or all will be lost.

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Document History

Version	Date	Notes
2.00	November 14, 2017	Dungeon Masters Guild release
1.60	November 13, 2017	Tweaked text column format
1.50	November 13, 2017	Added interior art Added Afterword Updated small water elemental
1.10	February 22, 2016	Dungeon Masters Guild release
0.10	March 17, 2015	Initial draft

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *The Dread Tailor*, an introductory adventure for **DUNGEONS & DRAGONS** and part of the **ODDITIES & ODYSSEYS** line of game supplements.

This adventure is designed for **four to six 1st-2nd level characters**, and is optimized for **five 1st level characters**.

The adventure begins at an inn in the small village of Goodmeadow, but the characters will quickly leave the village to explore a ruin and caverns in the area. Completing the adventure requires 5-6 hours of game play. Consult the [Shortening the Adventure](#) sidebar in [Part 2](#) for advice on reducing play time to 4-5 hours.

PREPARATION

The Dungeon Master should become familiar with the entire adventure before play begins. If you are not the Dungeon Master, read no further.

ADVENTURE LOCATION

This adventure is designed to be easily customized for your home campaign. The exact geographic location has not been defined; you

PREPARATION: ADVENTURE STYLE

Several aspects of this adventure are a bit silly. However, if you prefer a more serious tone to your game, the sillier elements may be easily replaced.

Geoff the Dread Tailor becomes Ander the Dark Oracle, a talented illusionist with visions of the future. Such an innately skilled man would be a useful servant to a powerful lord; a servant whom an evil lich would not let go easily.

The ostriches required by Torath Dannell are replaced with sacks of rare seeds. The goblin raiders steal the sacks without understanding their value (leaving them to be found in [area 6](#) of the goblin lair just like the ostriches). The jousting goblins in [area 6](#) then ride **wolves** instead of large birds. A wolf does not attack on its own. It will flee the caves if the goblin rider is killed or knocked off. (Wolf game statistics can be found in [Appendix A](#) of the *Monster Manual*.)

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must decide where the village of Goodmeadow is located (or whether to replace it with another village in the campaign world). The key elements of the adventure location include:

- a rural village (Goodmeadow) with an inn (the Dreaming Boar)
- a knowledgeable wizard or sage (Torath Dannell)
- ravines or canyons in the area (these terrain elements may be rare)

GAME RESOURCES

To run this adventure, you should have the following resources available:

- [D&D Basic Rules](#) or *Player's Handbook* (rules of game play)
- *Dungeon Master's Guide* (optional suggestions for the Dungeon Master and magical items not found in [Appendix A](#))
- *Monster Manual* (creatures not found in [Appendix B](#))

BACKGROUND

Thousands of years ago, before he was betrayed by Kas the Bloody-Handed, the dreaded lich Vecna the Whispered One ruled over a great and terrible empire. Vecna ruled his domain through fear... and one cannot be feared if dressed foppishly. The lich lord had need of a good tailor and found one in a mortal servant named Geoff. Geoff was innately skilled as a clothing designer and stylist. For decades, many a living soul marveled at the exquisite cut of Vecna's robes before being slain. Geoff's talents were highly prized by Vecna and he would not allow the tailor to work for anyone but him. However, one of Vecna's former apprentices and a powerful lich in his own right, Acererak the Devourer, enticed Geoff away from the Whispered One with the offer of employee stock options and retirement fund contribution matching.

Geoff provided Acererak with many years of valuable service. Unfortunately for Geoff, Acererak eventually started on the path to become a powerful demilich, and as everyone knows, demiliches have little need for corporeal bodies (or wardrobes). Normally, Acererak would simply kill a servant who had out-lived his usefulness, but the lich worried that after a few millennia he might grow bored, return to corporeal form, and have need of a new wardrobe. Therefore, he built a small hidden tomb especially for Geoff and murdered the tailor during a magical rite, binding the man's spirit to the tomb and insuring Geoff would be available if the need arose. (More information about the liches as well as optional campaign background material is found in the [Vecna & Acererak](#) sidebar.)

The tomb remained hidden and unnoticed for centuries. A week ago, an underground stream finally eroded and collapsed a tomb wall. A small gang of goblins discovered the new tomb opening but were quickly chased away by the tomb's guardians. However, before fleeing in unabashed terror, the goblins managed to pilfer a magical cloak and release an elemental mephit from his imprisonment.

The mephit, called Hoover, saw the potential for mayhem and power with the goblins. He integrated himself with the goblin boss and within a day, developed a great con. Using the stolen cloak's magically ability to disguise the wearer and a makeshift frame, the goblins could impersonate an undead Geoff. With Hoover's innate abilities and a few tricks, the gang could start building an empire based on Geoff, the Dread Tailor of Vecna and Acererak! Who would want to face an undead wizard-tailor with those connections?

It didn't take them long to put the plan into action. The gang raided a merchant caravan... and it was a great success! The caravan was lightly guarded and ill-prepared for the goblin ambush, much less the appearance of a fake Geoff. The Dread Tailor imposter distracted the four guards from noticing the goblins hidden in the trees above them with bags of scorpions and rats. Once these vermin were dropped upon the guards, the rest of the goblins charged from the trees. Hoover even contributed a blast of scalding steam to the battle. Half of the guards were killed while the rest of the caravan fled in confusion, leaving the wagons behind. The goblins made off with quite a bit of loot, including two exotic birds that were a gift to a local wizard.

VECNA & ACERERAK

Both Vecna and Acererak have a long history with the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game and have made appearances in every edition. In the 5th edition, Vecna is listed as a deity of Greyhawk in the *Player's Handbook* and the lich-god's background is described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* under the *Eye and Hand of Vecna*. Acererak appears under **demilich** in the *Monster Manual*.

Although the default campaign setting for these books is the Forgotten Realms, Vecna and Acererak are not found in the official history of the realms. If you are hesitant to introduce them into your Forgotten Realms campaign, they can easily be replaced in this adventure with a legendary lich of your choice. Ythazz Buvaar, Velsharoon the Vaunted, or Larloch the Shadow King could have employed the Dread Tailor just as easily as Vecna and Acererak.



OVERVIEW

The adventure begins with the player characters waiting at a small village inn for an audience with a local wizard and sage, Torath Dannell. An ancient scroll rumored to lead to a valuable treasure fell into their possession and they need the sage's expertise to decipher the scroll's content.

The party is enjoying an evening meal and drinks when two haggard mercenaries enter. They are the surviving guards of a merchant caravan that was attacked by a lich and his minions. They fought wild goblins, insect swarms, and even a demon, losing two of their companions; they had no choice but to flee for their lives. Although the characters may be inclined to help, the innkeeper and other patrons will argue against any rash actions during the night. Nighttime is not the time to go chasing after goblins, liches, or demons.

Early the next morning, the party receives an invitation for breakfast with Wizard Dannell. After the meal, the sage examines the party's

scroll and explains that deciphering the ancient script requires at least a day.

Unfortunately, he does not have time for such work: the villagers asked him to investigate the caravan attack. However, Wizard Dannell offers a solution to the problem: he deciphers the scroll while the characters investigate the caravan attack. Additionally, he wants the party to retrieve a pair of rare birds, a gift from a friend far away, that were stolen from the caravan. Assuming the player characters agree, he directs them to the ambush site and mentions a ruin rumored to be haunted that could be connected.

Reaching the ambush site, the party finds the smoldering caravan wagons and the bodies of the two murdered guards. They may track the goblins back to their lair or focus on the nearby ruin for clues. The ruin is haunted, but by a nothic and not by ghosts. The nothic knows of the caravan ambush and the location of the goblin lair. In exchange for a magical secret, he leads the characters to the goblins.

Whether led there by the goblin tracks or the nothic, the characters delve into the caves claimed by the goblin raiders. After encountering goblin sentries and traps, the party discovers the tomb of the Dread Tailor. The tailor's specter tells them of his stolen magical cloak and the escaped steam mephit. If the player characters agree to return his cloak and capture the mephit, the spirit loans them a magical bottle capable of capturing the elemental as well as a copper key with magical powers.

Exploring deeper into the caves, the party encounters the main force of goblins and the goblin impersonators of the Dread Tailor. The characters recover the cloak stolen from the Dread Tailor and the ostriches belonging to Torath Dannell.

The characters eventually reach the goblin boss, who is enjoying a sauna with the steam mephit. Once the mephit is killed or captured, the party may collect their promised rewards and complete the adventure.



ADVENTURE HOOK

Before the adventure begins, the characters have already met, formed an adventuring party, and are in possession of an old treasure map. One or more of the characters inherited a chest of adventuring gear from a distant relative and discovered a scroll hidden inside. The scroll was brittle with age and written in an unknown tongue. However, written in Common along one edge were the words, "GARRET TOLD THE TRUTH: THE TREASURE HAS NOT BEEN CLAIMED." Careful research with various sages revealed that the language of the scroll was a cypher used by a long forgotten demon cult, but no one could decipher the text. The sages consistently referred the player characters to a single expert, Wizard Torath Dannell.

THE TREASURE MAP

The treasure scroll is not only an adventure hook for *The Dread Tailor*, but provides a purpose for the party's next adventure. Therefore, the scroll's contents have been left intentionally vague. You should consider the next phase in your campaign and decide where the clues on the scroll lead or if the scroll is actually meant to mislead the foolish.

For example, if you and your players would like to play the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS *Out of the Abyss* adventure, then the scroll was written long ago by a cult following the demon lord, Juiblex. The cult, called the Shades of Darkness, devised a ritual to bring about the end of the world by opening a gate for the Faceless Lord to enter Faerûn. However, the ritual limited Juiblex to one decade in the Material Plane. The cult leaders hoped to survive the Time of the Faceless Lord by hiding in a vault deep beneath the earth with their valuables and trusted allies. The scroll gives directions to the hidden vault as well as the cult's plans.

You can create a few traps and hazards (with oozes and slimes of course) for the characters to face as they delve deep into the earth in search of the vault. When they finally reach the dusty treasure room of the cult leaders, the party is captured by drow and begins *Out of the Abyss*.

PART 1: WELCOME TO GOODMEADOW

The town of Goodmeadow was founded roughly 200 years ago at the river ford of a major trade road. Farmers from the surrounding countryside quickly began to bring their produce to the Goodmeadow market for sale far and wide. Over time, the town grew into a village and now boasts a population of over 500 people.

A solid stone bridge spans the river next to the mill and modest wooden docks. The Goodmeadow trading post and warehouse are found next to the cleared market square (filled once a week with the clamoring of goods being sold and bartered on Market Day). Opposite the trading post is the village's sole inn, The Dreaming Boar—quite a lively place when the sun goes down on Market Day. The nearby jail house is overseen by the village's lone constable. At the edge of the village lie a quiet chapel and cemetery.

THE DREAMING BOAR

The player characters have been staying at the Dreaming Boar while waiting to meet with the Wizard Torath Dannell. The inn is a two-story wooden building with a large sign depicting a sleeping boar. It is owned and operated by the Amberway family: Norm, his wife, Kendri, and their three daughters.

The first floor contains the tavern, which converts to a common sleeping room after hours. The second floor houses private rooms for rent. A blanket on a bench in the common room can be rented for 4 sp per night. A private room costs 8 sp. Both of these prices include a free breakfast and evening meal.

Read or paraphrase the following to the players:

You arrived in the village of Goodmeadow seeking a meeting with the wizard and sage, Torath Dannell, but were politely turned away by his apprentice. Apparently, Wizard Dannell is a very busy man. You requested a meeting with him as soon as possible, but that was roughly two days ago and you haven't heard any news. You would have left by now if the wizard was not your last hope for translating the ancient treasure scroll that you discovered.

You and your friends are currently sitting at a table in the village's only inn, The Dreaming Boar, filling your bellies with tonight's main course, roasted chicken, and drinking tankards of beer or water as suits your individual tastes. A few of the other tables are occupied, but it appears to be just another quiet night.

Refilling your drinks, the innkeeper's wife, Kendri, whispers, "Don't be down, dearies. I heard earlier today that Wizard Dannell had a break-through with his work. I'm sure he'll be sending for you soon enough." She then bustles away to one of the other tables.

INN PERSONALITIES

The evening is still early and there are only a handful of other patrons, none of whom are renting rooms at the inn.

Hayden and Randal Miller. The local mill is operated by two brothers: Hayden and Randal. They are obviously related with a similar appearance: mid-20's, dusky-hued with short, dark brown hair, blue eyes, and muscular physiques. They are enjoying a dinner away from their wives and children.

Kendri Amberway. Kendri Amberway is the wife of Norm and co-owner of the Dreaming Boar. She is a friendly, portly woman and acts as the inn's hostess and cook. She is protective of her children and a good mother, although she often calls one daughter by her other children's names when flustered.



(“Rowan! Ranna! Reynee! Put that down and come here! Now!”)

Nomad. A lone man sits in the corner with his back to the wall, slowly eating his dinner. His slightly-pointed ears and stocky build reveal his half-elven heritage. Calling himself Nomad, he lives alone in the wilds, occasionally visiting Goodmeadow to trade his furs. He is always polite, albeit blunt as well, when meeting others. He does not seek to make enemies or friends.

Norm Amberway. Norm is the Amberway family patriarch and owner of the Dreaming Boar. He is a large man, bearded with grey hair, a pot belly, and a quick smile. His laugh fills the inn all by itself. He usually keeps behind the bar, filling drinks and welcoming guests.

Ranna Amberway. Ranna is the middle child of Norm and Kendri. She is a thin teenager with dark red hair and freckles. During meal times, she helps her mother in the kitchen and is rarely seen in the tavern. She wants to travel the world and is often caught day-dreaming instead of working.

Reynee Amberway. Reynee is the youngest of the Amberway daughters. At seven yours of age, she is full of questions and has little fear of asking them. Her dark hair bounces as she skips across the floor and her green eyes sparkle with a mischievous gleam. She recently lost a tooth, which she proudly brings up in almost any conversation. Her duties at

the inn include wiping the tables and sweeping the floor, but she is easily distracted.

Rowan Amberway. Rowan is a thin, dark-haired beauty almost 20 years of age. She is the oldest daughter of Norm and Kendri. She acts as a waitress and maid for the inn, helping her mother with the guests. Except when chastising her younger sisters, she is very quiet and shy.

Travok Gerst. Travok is a middle-aged dwarf (183 years young) with a carefully braided beard and a shaved head. He is both the village mason and the constable. He is also a bachelor, which will be subtly mentioned by Kendri Amberway to any female dwarves in the party. Travok is enjoying his evening meal alone, but is not adverse to company (although he is not actively seeking any romantic attachments).

THE DREAD TAILOR STRIKES!

Give the characters time to settle in and get a feel for the inn before reading or paraphrasing the following:

Suddenly, the inn's door bursts open with a bang! A boy stands at the entryway, gasping for breath as he scans the tables. His eyes quickly settle on the bald dwarf and he rushes over. After a brief, hushed conversation, the burly dwarf stands, declares “Norm, Kendri: excellent as always. Duty calls.”, drops a few coins on the table and hurriedly follows the boy out the door, slamming it shut behind them.

This scene causes rampant speculation at the inn. The Millers suggest that the well-known rivalry between a pair of local farmers finally erupted into a confrontation that required the constable. On the other hand, Kendri believes that a farmer who returned three days early from a trip abroad finally discovered what his wife was doing while he was away. Reynee even pipes up with her own theory: a big dragon snatched up a bunch of cows! When the conversation dies down, Nomad quietly pays and leaves.

Read or paraphrase the following:

The half-elf has only been gone a few minutes when the door to the inn bursts open again! A disheveled man and woman in well-worn studded leather armor stumble in and quickly collapse into empty chairs.

The man's strained voice breaks through the stunned silence: "Kendri! Norm! Beer... please!"

The woman adds, "Oh gods, yes!"

Norm quickly fills two mugs and Kendri rushes them over to the table.

The couple down their mugs in one long pull.

When the empty mugs finally drop, Kendri asks, "Powel, Nora, what happened?"

Powel, the man, exclaims, "We were attacked by a lich!"

The two continue to explain what happened, occasionally interrupting each other with details. They have the full attention of the room. The guards divulge the following details during their story:

- The name of the female guard is Nora and the male guard is Powel. They are often on the road, but are known to Kendri and Norm.
- Powel has an arrow wound to his bicep and Nora has several painful welts from scorpion stings but neither is seriously injured.
- The two work as caravan guards for the owner of Goodmeadow's trading post.
- The caravan was travelling to Goodmeadow when it was attacked by the lich. The skeletal wizard appeared in their path and announced himself as Geoff, the Dread Tailor of Vecna and Acererak. He then called down a rain of scorpions and rats on the wagons as his goblin minions attacked from the roadside. He even sent a demon of steam against the guards.
- Two guards were killed in the attack. Powel, Nora, and the two drovers abandoned the wagons and fled to Goodmeadow.
- Powel and Nora already told their story to the village constable and their boss.

If the characters express an interest in helping, Kendri and Norm suggest they wait

until the morning and speak with the constable. They are certain that Constable Gerst will not do anything rash like marching off into the night to fight an undead wizard with unknown powers and his pet goblins. He is certain to form an investigative party and possibly call upon the help of Wizard Dannell.

As the evening passes, more patrons arrive at the Dreaming Boar and the story of the attack is repeated often. It is the talk of the town. Eventually, the crowd dies down and the tavern closes for the night.

MEETING TORATH DANNELL

Early the next morning, the characters are awakened by Doron, apprentice to Wizard Dannell. He is a young man with long, blonde hair neatly bound in a ponytail and wearing a blue robe. He apologizes for the early hour and short notice before inviting the party to breakfast with the sage in one hour at his home. (The characters visited his home when they first arrived in town so they know the location.)

As the party arrives for the breakfast meeting, read or paraphrase the following:

The gravel path crunches under your boots as you stride up the hill to the sage's home. It is a well-maintained, two-story stone house, surrounded by beautiful flower beds and a low, rough stone wall. The door promptly opens when you knock and you are greeted by the wizard's apprentice, Doron. He leads you through the house to the back patio where a table is set for breakfast.

A dusky-hued, older man with a carefully trimmed white beard and a green robe covered in arcane symbols rises from his seat. With a warm smile, he says, "I am Wizard Dannell. Welcome to my home. I'm glad we are finally able to meet. I trust your wait at the Dreaming Boar was pleasant; Norm and Kendri are excellent hosts. Please, have a seat."

As an expert on demonology, Torath Dannell delves deeply into the chaotic nature and history of demons. Such research has driven

many a sane man mad. As a form of self-defense, Wizard Dannell is a stickler for etiquette. In essence, being civilized keeps him sane.

He remains standing until the characters are seated and holds chairs for any women. Once everyone is seated, Doron brings a bowl of warm, soapy water and a small towel to the table. Each diner is expected to wash his hands in turn. Once Wizard Dannell washes his hands, Doron leaves with the bowl and returns with breakfast: a small assortment of diced fruit, bread seeped in wine, and smoked trout.

Torath makes pleasant conversation during the meal and is unwilling to discuss business or the problems of last night. Such topics are not appropriate for meal conversations.

Torath is very forgiving about etiquette mistakes made by his guests, but he always corrects them and expects the characters to make an effort to follow civilized behavior. Following the rules of etiquette requires a successful DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check; any character who fails is asked to leave the sage's home. (If all characters fail the check, then the most successful character is allowed to stay.)

After breakfast, Doron clears the table. Brandy and cigars are offered to the guests. Wizard Dannell lights a pipe and once everyone is relaxed, brings up the party's scroll. It takes him only a few minutes to recognize the scroll's language and confirm that he is able to decipher the script. However, he needs to reference his personal library and invest a significant amount of time to do so; time he does not have since Constable Gerst asked him to investigate the recent caravan attack.

The sage offers a possible solution for this conflict. Wizard Dannell offers to translate the scroll if the characters investigate the caravan attack, bringing those responsible to justice if possible. He also asks the party to retrieve two exotic birds, preferably alive, that were being transported by the caravan. The birds are large flightless birds (ostriches), a gift from a

REFUSING THE BREAKFAST INVITATION

The characters may be insulted by the long delay and refuse to meet with Wizard Dannell. In this case, Doron will politely explain that no insult was intended and that their table places will still be set in case the party change their minds (which he hopes will be the case).

A small time later, the village constable, Travok Gerst, finds the characters (if curiosity hasn't cause them to seek the dwarf themselves). He asks for their help; the trouble from last night is really beyond his experience. He explains that Torath Dannell is investigating the situation and he asks that the party coordinate with him. If the characters complain, Travok defends the wizard; the sage is well-respected in Goodmeadow. As far as Travok is concerned, if Torath told them he was busy, he truly was busy with important matters.

If the characters still do not want to meet with Wizard Dannell then proceed as you see fit. The party does not need official approval to investigate the caravan attack. If they resolve the situation, they may still be rewarded by the sage with the translation of their scroll (although it requires another day since he isn't translating the scroll while the party investigates the Dread Tailor).

friend far away.

If the characters agree to his offer, the sage explains that the caravan raiders were a gang of goblins, possibly led by a wizard. The wizard proclaimed himself to be Geoff, the Dread Tailor of Vecna and Acererak. Vecna and Acererak are legendary liches, but Wizard Dannell has never heard of Geoff. He personally doubts the power of any wizard that requires the assistance of goblins to handle two wagon drovers and four guards. The sage also provides the party with exact directions from Goodmeadow to the ambush location, six miles away on the north trade road.

If you wish to include the optional [haunted ruin](#) in [Part 2](#), Wizard Dannell adds that he has heard rumors of a haunted ruin not far from the ambush location. It is an old stone house in the middle of the woods to the southwest of the road. The sage has often heard it mentioned in local traveler tales about mad laughter and a dark shape in the night.

PART 2: TRACKING THE DREAD TAILOR

It takes two hours of walking for the characters to reach the caravan ambush site on the north road.

Once they arrive, read or paraphrase the following:

Smoke still rises from the charred remains of the merchant caravan. A trio of buzzards flies away from bloated bodies at your approach. A lone coyote also flees, carrying away a fortunately unidentifiable piece of bloody meat in its mouth.

Its movement draws your attention to two severed heads mounted on sharpened stakes at the edge of the road. Under the heads is a broken wooden plank with the words, "BEWAR DA DRED TALER," crudely carved and spelled in the Common tongue.

The caravan's two wagons are smoldering in the middle of the road. Lying near them are the bodies of the two beheaded guards as well as a dead draft horse. The bodies are completely stripped of any clothing or equipment and are both male. One is human while the other is an elf. Scavengers have obviously been at the bodies, but anyone examining them and succeeding on a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Medicine) check determines that the men were killed by small, slashing blades—weapons favored by goblins.

A careful search of the area reveals several broken, black-fletched arrows and a couple of crude leather sacks caught in tree branches above the smoldering wagons. The grass and dirt around the site have been trampled by many feet. A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check allows a character to confirm that the attackers were goblins, at least five in number. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check allows a character to pick out the tracks of large birds in the jumble as well as the goblin tracks leading away to the southwest. There is no sign of the demon reported by Nora and Powel.

If the haunted ruin encounter is being skipped (see the [Shortening the Adventure](#)

SHORTENING THE ADVENTURE

The haunted ruin is included as a fun role-playing encounter. It can easily be skipped if play time is running short without adversely affecting the adventure story. Skipping the encounter reduces the adventure play time by 30-60 minutes.

sidebar), then the characters easily follow the goblin trail to their lair described in [Part 3](#). Otherwise, after following the goblin tracks for a couple of miles through the forest (roughly 40 minutes later), the trail is lost in a gravel creek bed. A successful DC 20 Wisdom (Survival) check is required to find the goblin tracks again. Failure indicates that the trail is completely lost, but the ruin of an old cottage can be seen at the top of a small hill nearby.

THE HAUNTED RUIN

Only two miles away from the ambush site and near the path to the goblin lair is the ruin of an old stone house. It sits atop a clearing on a forlorn hill. No trees grow in the area; only scrub grass and thorn bushes are found there.

If the characters decide to explore the ruin, read or paraphrase the following:

The ruin of the house sits atop the bare hill next to an old stone well. The roof rotted away long ago and the walls have started to crumble. The only doorway stands empty as well as the windows. Vines and thistles cling to the old stones, claiming the ruin as their own. As you approach, you hear the wind softly moan through the many cracks and holes. You have seen few places so forlorn.

The house is paved with large stones and only has two rooms, both of which are scattered with old leaves and other detritus. The fallen remains of a fireplace and chimney lie in the largest room. The smaller room contains bits of fur and bones from a long dead raccoon. One of the paving stones in the large room is engraved with a small human

skull. The engraving is noticed by a character with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 18 or higher, or a character actively searching and succeeding with a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check. Lifting the stone allows access to the hidden basement.

SECRET BASEMENT

A three-foot-wide tunnel under the house's marked paving stone leads straight down to the basement. The walls of the tunnel as well as the basement are composed of clay bricks. The tunnel is lined with handholds and footholds and quickly opens into the hidden chamber. The ceiling of the basement is 10 feet high and the square room is 15 feet in length.

The basement appears to have been some sort of lab. Broken beakers, smashed furniture, and pieces of destroyed equipment harder to recognize are scattered throughout the room. A large rotting wooden table holds the skeleton of a halfling in the center of the room. Scraps of ripped paper litter the floor before a couple of rotted bookcases, one of which has toppled forward. On a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check, a character deduces that the damage to this room was done long ago, probably before the wooden items had rotted.

Bookcases. Anyone examining the fallen bookcase and succeeding on a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check finds a small gold bracelet. Small cryptic markings cover the inside of the band. It is not magical, but at the Dungeon Master's discretion, the markings could provide clues to a future adventure. Most merchants will be willing to pay 25 gp for the bracelet.

A character examining the other bookcase and succeeding on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check will find an unbroken and wax-sealed glass vial between the bookcase and the wall. The vial is unmarked and contains a red liquid that smells of peppermint and glimmers when agitated. A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check identifies the liquid as a *potion of healing*.

Paper fragments. The paper is very old and covered with strange symbols. A character who

succeeds on a DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check recognizes the symbols as common in alchemical formulae; however, it is impossible to determine their intended purpose(s).

Table. The table is so rotted that it collapses at the slightest touch, sending the halfling bones rolling across the floor.

TREASURE

A gold bracelet worth 25 gp and a *potion of healing* may be found near the bookcases.

VOICE IN THE WELL

A crumbling, 3-foot-high stone wall surrounds the well, which drops 30 feet before reaching water. A **nothic**, the former resident of the house, lives in a side tunnel a few feet above the water line. He hid here when he noticed the party approaching.

The nothic was once an alchemist who delved too deeply into areas reserved by the gods. As punishment for his transgressions, he was transformed into a new horrible form. His mind mutated as well as his body and he remembers little of his former life. He only knows that this area is his home and he is still able to speak Common. Confronting too much of his old life fills him with confusion and anger so he avoids entering the cottage ruin. He destroyed his secret lab many years ago in a fit of rage.

If anyone investigating the well succeeds on a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check or the party starts to leave the hill, read or paraphrase the following:

What was that? You stop and listen, holding completely still. You could be mistaken, but you thought you heard <i>something</i> in the well. Just as you start to give up and move again, you hear it: a harsh, odd little giggle. It is <i>definitely</i> coming from inside the well.

If the party hails the well, the nothic greets them and introduces himself as Sir but is unwilling to leave the safety of the well. He is also unwilling to speak of the old house but

prefers to talk about the party's quest to find the Dread Tailor. (He garnered this information from his own strange magical insight.)

Sir has seen the goblins and knows where they lair. He offers to guide the party to the goblins if a character gives him a magical item or secret. If a character agrees, the nothic climbs out of the well to receive his payment.

Climbing the crumbling walls of the well normally requires a successful DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check, but Sir has lived here for decades, learning the well's nuances, and has sharp claws. He automatically succeeds on his check.

The nothic is able to magically detect any lie so the offered magical secret must be true or he will attack in a rage. With the Dungeon Master's agreement, the secret may be created by a player on the spot and retroactively become part of his character's history. A spell from a wizard's spell book also satisfies Sir's requirement for a magical secret. (Letting Sir read the spell book does not damage the book in any way.)

The nothic also accepts the gold bracelet or *potion of healing* from the house's basement as payment. However, after examining the item, he realizes the origin and violently throws it down the hill while complaining that he was tricked. The item was not the character's secret but *his* secret! He still lives up to the agreement, but is obviously upset and refuses to speak further. He also invokes his *weird insight* ability on the sneaky character.

ROLEPLAYING SIR THE NOTHIC

As a result of his transformation into a nothic, Sir no longer thinks coherently for any length of time. He is driven by memories and emotions he doesn't quite understand. As such, he mumbles to himself constantly. During conversations, he shifts topics and even the character with whom he is speaking randomly.

Sir does not remember his old life and discussing it only serves to frustrate him. Initially, he simply smashes nearby objects to vent his anger when the topic is broached, but if the subject is not dropped, he attacks. The nothic could very well kill a 1st level character so the players should be given plenty of warning before combat is initiated.



PART 3: THE GOBLIN LAIR

The goblin tracks or the nothic lead the characters to a 20 feet deep ravine from which a shallow, underground stream flows. The ravine is roughly five miles from the ambush site (an hour of travel from [The Haunted Ruin](#) in [Part 2](#)).

GENERAL FEATURES

Ceilings. Most of the caves and passages have ceilings that fluctuate between 10 and 15 feet from the rough ground.

Light. The goblins and mephit have darkvision so they have no need to keep their tunnels lit. The rare exceptions to this rule are mentioned in the area descriptions.

Stream. The stream that flows through the cave system is only two feet deep. It is very cold and slow moving, but has made the rocks very slippery. It acts as difficult terrain for anyone wading through it.

1. CAVE MOUTH

The north end of the ravine ends at a cave mouth roughly five high and six feet wide. A cold, shallow stream flows from the tunnel. The mud on the sides of the stream is heavily churned by the passage of many feet. The height of the tunnel from the cave mouth to [area 2](#) remains fairly constant at five feet, but quickly expands to 15 feet once it reaches that chamber.

2. GUARD POST

The entrance tunnel widens here. The ceiling reaches a height of 15 feet and has a few scattered stalactites that drip cool water from the moisture in the air. An almost vertical slope leads to a ledge ten feet from the cave floor.

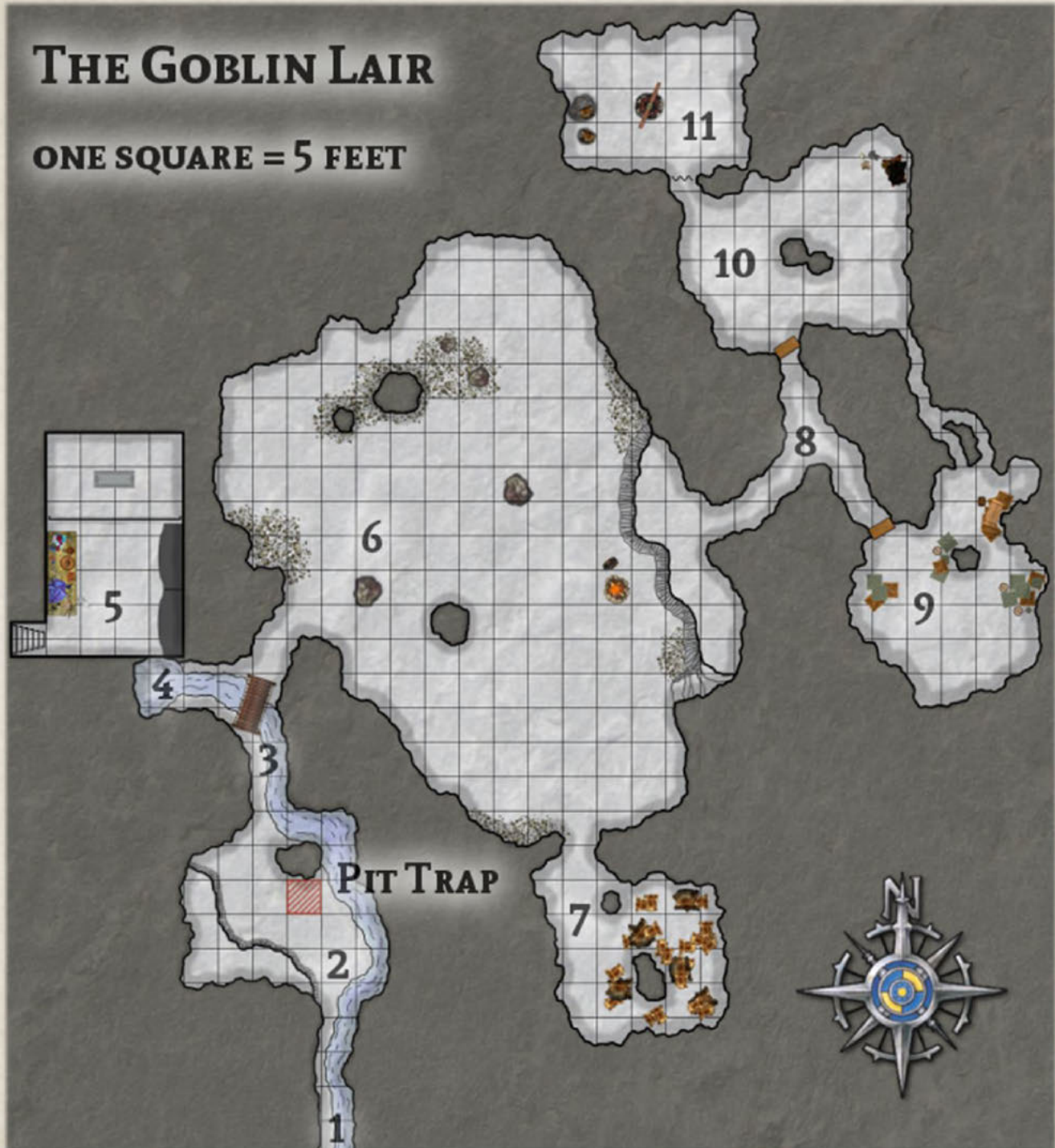
Two **goblin** guards are posted on the ledge. They are not particularly attentive, but if the characters make a lot of noise in [area 1](#) or bring in a light source, the goblins hide and try to ambush the party at an opportune time.

DEALING WITH A GOBLIN

Goblins are not known for their bravery so it is possible that one or more goblins will be captured or magically charmed by the characters. The following information is known by all of the goblins in the lair:

- The gang is controlled by “Da Boss,” the biggest and meanest goblin.
- Only exceptional goblins can count so the exact number of goblins in the lair is unknown. “Lots and lots” is the common answer to any question about the total number of goblins.
- All of the goblins are male. As they become more successful bandits, they hope to attract females with their riches.
- Many days ago, some goblins found a “dead place” in the tunnels near the waterfall. They went in and brought out Da Boss’s “new bestie,” a creature of steam who likes to tell the goblins what to do almost as much as Da Boss. A few goblins died in the dead place so now no one enters.
- A successful DC 18 Charisma (Intimidation) check is required to force a captured goblin to reveal the truth about the caravan attack and the Dread Tailor scam. Otherwise, the goblin tries to frighten the characters into leaving with tales of the undead wizard’s powers. The whole goblin gang was involved in the raid on the merchant caravan. A couple of goblins acted as the Dread Tailor to stop the wagons long enough for others to drop scorpions and rats on the guards from the tree branches. The gang then attacked, killing two guards.
- Most of the gang is in the “da big cave where da cookin’ pot is, playing wid da big birds.”
- The traps in [area 2](#) and [area 3](#) are known to all goblins, but a goblin will not mention them until it is too late and later claim he forgot.

Note that a goblin prefers deception over the truth. Only fear of injury will keep one (mostly) honest. Even then, he will present himself in the best light possible. For example, although all goblins were involved in the raid, the captured goblin will state that everyone BUT him went on the raid. HE knew it was wrong to hurt people, but he is only one goblin; what else could he do?



THE GOBLIN LAIR MADE WITH DUNDJINNI SOFTWARE, [HTTP://WWW.DUNDJINNI.COM](http://www.dundjinni.com).

The goblins can drop prone behind the edge of the ledge and not be seen by anyone on the cave floor. However, even if the goblins are hidden, a slight shuffling from their movements can be heard by a character with a

passive Wisdom (Perception) score higher than the Dexterity (Stealth) check of the goblins.

Ledge. The cave ceiling is only five feet from the ledge floor. Anyone falling prone on the ledge cannot be seen by those on the cave floor. A hemp rope, coated with dirt and dust to

blend with the cave wall, is tied to a stake on the ledge and dangles to the cave floor in the shadows of the north corner. A successful DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check is required to notice the rope. It is also possible for a Medium-sized character to reach the ledge by performing a high jump and pulling himself up with a successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check.

Pit Trap. Hard leather, carefully dusted and blended with the color of the cave floor, covers a 10 foot deep pit in this chamber. A single silver piece, slightly obscured with dirt, lies on the middle of the leather. Any character with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 10 or more notices the coin. The edges of the leather are spotted on a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check.

Anyone falling into the pit will take 3 (1d6) points of falling damage as well as 2 (1d4) points of piercing damage from the wooden spikes at the bottom. The spikes are coated with a poison that causes 3 (1d6) points of damage if a DC 10 Constitution saving throw is failed.

DEVELOPMENTS

If hiding, the goblins wait until a character falls into the pit trap or begins to leave the room before attacking with their bows. When they attack characters on the cave floor, they rise from the prone position, fire their arrows and then drop prone again, giving them full cover from any retaliation. Any character wishing to engage the goblins with ranged attacks probably has to resort to Ready actions. The goblin position on the ledge does not provide an easy escape route. Once only one goblin is alive, he will surrender if outnumbered and given the opportunity.

TREASURE

The bait for the pit trap is one silver piece. Each goblin has a small, filthy pouch containing 7 (2d6) cp and 2 (1d4) sp. One pouch also contains a wolf's fang.



ENCOUNTER DIFFICULTY

This is an easy encounter. If the majority of characters are 2nd level, add an additional goblin.

3. BRIDGE

A ramshackle wooden bridge with uneven handrails crosses the stream. The tunnel to the northeast (area 6) slopes gently down. Sharpened wooden stakes are planted into the ground on either side of the stream in the east tunnel just past the bridge. The stakes are angled to the east (area 4) and an old rope is strung across the tunnel amidst them. The rope is lined with dangling bones, stones, rusty arrowheads, and even an old dagger. These precautions are meant to warn the goblins of any incursions by the tomb's undead guardians and are not an obstacle to a careful party.

Tripwire. A thin string hung across the bridge at ankle height causes a hidden heavy crossbow to fire if broken. The crossbow makes a ranged attack with a +4 bonus against the character who broke the line and

causes 5 (1d10) piercing damage. The tripwire is spotted on a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check. A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check is required to deduce the location of the crossbow hidden in a nearby alcove behind its camouflaged curtain. The crossbow is in extremely poor condition and breaks apart after firing once.

4. WATERFALL

The underground stream falls from an opening roughly five feet from the cave floor, creating a small pool before flowing through the rest of the cave. The work of the water eroded the tunnel wall, causing it to collapse and providing an opening to the ancient tomb in [area 5](#).

Pool. This pool is five feet deep and filled with cold water.

Tomb Opening. The tomb opening is three feet in diameter. The rubble from the collapse is wet and slippery. Anyone attempting to enter the tomb must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or slip and fall into the pool. On a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation or Nature) check, a character deduces that erosion from the waterfall caused the wall collapse and that it occurred within the last month.



5. THE TOMB OF GEOFF

Geoff, valued tailor to both Vecna and Acererak, was buried in this simple tomb long ago.

Read or paraphrase the following:

You peer through the tunnel opening into a rectangular room with polished stone walls that gleam in your torchlight. Two large stone wardrobes with demon faces line the wall next to you. A stone table littered with various strange items sits next to the opposite wall. Near the table, stairs climb upwards, all the way to the ceiling without any exit.

Directly across from you is a stone sarcophagus on a raised dais. Carved skulls decorate the sarcophagus and words are engraved into the side. There is a dark carmine stain of what could be dried blood directly before the dais. The tomb is eerily dust and cobweb free.

The height of the ceiling is precisely ten feet. The stone stairs were used during construction of the tomb but then sealed by the servants of Acererak. Any character examining the carmine stain and succeeds on a DC 10 Wisdom (Medicine) check verifies that it is indeed dried blood and realizes that most creatures would die after losing that much blood. (A goblin was killed by the tomb's skeletal guardians and has since animated as a zombie.)

Sarcophagus. The stone sarcophagus sits atop a one foot tall dais. It is three feet high, three feet wide and six feet long. A carved skull decorates each corner of the sarcophagus. Words are engraved into the side. At first glance, the engraved letters are undecipherable, but quickly transform into a language understood by the viewer. The text reads: "Here lies Geoff the Tailor. Loyal servant of the great Acererak the Devourer. Do not disturb."

Table. The table holds several metal instruments of unknown purpose as well as two irons, a set of needles, spools of thread in miraculously good condition, a [key to the](#)

paths of the dead, and two *bottles of elemental imprisonment* (one painted blue and the other red). A white, empty clay bottle lies on the floor next to the table. The bottle's cork is lying nearby. The bottle is also a *bottle of elemental imprisonment*. It was a prison for the steam mephit before he was released by curious goblins. Geoff used the mephit to steam-clean clothing.

The blue *bottle of elemental imprisonment* contains a **small water elemental** (for washing cloth) while the red bottle contains a **magma mephit** (for drying). The creature inside is released if the cork is removed and cannot be captured again without the proper key phrase (unknown to the characters). Both the elemental and mephit are angered after their long years of imprisonment and attack if released. If released together, they attack each other over any other targets. The red bottle feels slightly warm while the blue bottle is slightly cool to the touch. Any character holding the red bottle up to his ear can hear the mephit inside grumbling about his state in Ignan, the language of the Plane of Fire (very similar to the popping and crackling of fire). The mephit cannot hear anything outside the bottle.

Wardrobes. The wardrobe doors are emblazoned with the faces of demons (similar to the famous demon face appearing in the classic *Tomb of Horrors* adventure). The handles for the wardrobe are found in the demons' mouths. A door to one of the wardrobes was left slightly ajar by the previous goblin exploration. Both wardrobes contain exquisite robes and cloaks, most with dark colors and a death motif, although there is one extremely comfortable pink bathrobe.

DEVELOPMENTS

If anything in the room is touched or anyone steps upon the dais, two **skeletons** and a goblin **zombie** (same stats as zombie but Small size) arise from behind the sarcophagus and attack.

If the skeletons and zombie are defeated, the **specter** of Geoff rises through the lid of his sarcophagus. Unlike most specters, Geoff retains some restraint toward the living and does not immediately attack (neutral alignment). He is also able to speak an ancient form of the Common tongue. In a hollow voice, he demands to know who dares to interrupt his rest. If the characters explain themselves, he does not attack but instead seeks to enlist their aid. He tells them that a robe was stolen from his wardrobe and that a steam mephit named Hoover escaped from his bottle. Geoff will forgive the characters for their trespass and reward them for their efforts if they retrieve his robe and the mephit. The mephit can be captured with his bottle and use of the magical activation phrase: "clato barrata nicko." Geoff also offers to loan the characters his *key to the paths of the dead* and instruct them on its use. If the party does not agree to Geoff's deal, he attacks.

If the characters return the *Robe of the Dread Tailor*, the key, and the captured mephit, the specter rewards them with their choice of an exquisite pair of soft leather boots, a black leather bag with small silver skull adornments, or a dark blue cloak that shimmers in the light. All are magical, but Geoff does not remember their powers. He was always more concerned with style than the power. The characters must choose without touching the items. The boots are *boots of elvenkind*, the bag is a *bag of holding*, and the cloak is a *cloak of protection*. If the characters return without the robe or mephit, but have a reasonable excuse, Geoff still rewards them with a beautiful silver brooch, embedded with black opals, worth 100 gp.

Neither Geoff nor the tomb's guardians can leave the tomb. Any dead bodies left in the tomb will rise as the tomb's new guardians (zombies) after only an hour.

TREASURE

The goblin zombie has a leather pouch containing 10 (3d6) cp and a rabbit's foot. It is unlikely but possible that the characters may

steal *bottles of elemental imprisonment* containing an uncontrollable water elemental and magma mephit. It is more likely that the party is loaned the use of a *bottle of elemental imprisonment* to capture the steam mephit, Hoover, and the *key to the paths of the dead*.

As a reward for retrieving his lost items, Geoff will present the characters with *boots of elvenkind*, a *bag of holding*, a *cloak of protection*, or a brooch worth 100 gp.

ENCOUNTER DIFFICULTY

This encounter has a medium difficulty. If there are only four characters, remove a skeleton. If the majority of characters are 2nd level, add three additional skeletons.

6. COMMON AREA

This large chamber is lit by torchlight and echoes with the hoots and howls of four **goblins**. Two of the little beasts are watching the others ride the captured **ostriches**! The ostrich riders are armed with sharpened wooden stakes and are charging back and forth at crude stuffed dummies.

The room is overlooked by a ledge 15 feet above the floor. A tunnel on the ledge leads deeper into the lair. The ledge's steep and crumbling escarpment requires a successful DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check to climb. However, a better option to reach the ledge is to climb the natural staircase nearby (which does not require a check).

The ceiling of the chamber is 30 feet high at its tallest point. The ground is dotted with stalagmites large enough to be used as cover. Some areas are covered with loose gravel and crumbling rock that act as difficult terrain.

Cooking fire. A metal shield, beaten into the shape of a bowl, is hung over a large fire. A stew of various unidentifiable ingredients is bubbling in the makeshift pot. The stew is edible by the characters, but tastes horrible. Next to the fire are a bent ladle and a small empty cask marked as beer in dwarvish. The beer was the first spoils of war enjoyed by the goblins the night before.

DEVELOPMENTS

If the characters are noticed, the goblins attack! The mounted goblins are armed with simple lances that only cause 1d10 points of piercing damage instead of the normal 1d12 points. Additionally, the ostriches are not trained as mounts so the goblins only gain the following benefits for mounted combat:

- The rider has advantage on melee attack rolls against any unmounted creature that is smaller than his ostrich.
- On a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check, the goblin may direct the ostrich to perform one of three different actions: Dash, Disengage, or Dodge.

TREASURE

The majority of goblins have small, filthy pouches containing 7 (2d6) cp and 2 (1d4) sp each. One of the goblin riders has a pouch containing 3 (2d6) cp and 10 (3d6) sp. Two of the pouches also contained a broken candle and a wooden spoon respectively.

ENCOUNTER DIFFICULTY

This is a hard encounter. If there are only four characters, remove a watching goblin. If the majority of characters are 2nd level, add three watching goblins.

7. BARRACKS

This cave acts as a barracks for most of the goblins. Lice-infested furs are piled haphazardly across the floor, but the room is otherwise empty.

8. WANDERING GOBLIN

A **goblin** happens to walk around the corner with an empty bucket as the characters approach this intersection. Allow the players to roll initiative, but the goblin acts first. He drops the bucket, races to [area 9](#) and bars the door.

9. THE DREAD TAILOR

This cave is a storage room for the goblins. Warned by the fleeing goblin from [area 8](#), the

two **goblins** in the room prepare the Dread Tailor for the characters. The barred wooden door cannot be broken down in less than two turns. Breaking the door open requires two successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) checks. The door may also be hacked down. The door is AC 15 and has 20 hit points.

When the characters finally gain entry, read or paraphrase the following:

You scramble through the remains of the door into a small cavern stacked with wooden crates. Looming before you is a horrible skeletal apparition in a brilliantly glowing robe. The flames in the skull's eyes burn with an intense malice.

"Leave now, foolish mortals, or face the wrath of Geoff, the Dread Tailor of Vecna and Acererak!" warns the figure in a booming voice.

The goblin from [area 8](#) is hiding behind a crate with a bag of **scorpions** (found in Appendix A of the *Monster Manual*). He attempts to surprise a character with the scorpions if the Dread Tailor is attacked. He

may only fling the contents of the bag five feet and must succeed in a ranged attack to hit his target. If successful, the target is covered with the ten scorpions from the bag; however, not all of the scorpions are agitated enough to attack the character. Roll 1d4 for the number of scorpions that attack. The next round the scorpions flee.

Crates. These wooden crates contain the merchandise stolen from the merchant caravan. Except for a small barrel of salt and a large metal mirror, the contents are all farm tools such as shears, nails, hammers, axe handles, etc.

Dread Tailor. In reality, the goblin's Dread Tailor is a specialized costume. A makeshift frame allows one goblin, wearing the *Robe of the Dread Tailor*, to stand upon the shoulders of another. The upper goblin paints his face with the juice from a phosphorescent mushroom to appear as a skull. He also holds two wooden arms that end in bone hands with sharpened talons. He then invoke the robe's *disguise self* ability to appear as a skeletal wizard. When the characters enter the room,



both the *disguise self* and protection abilities of the robe have been activated.

During a combat turn, the upper goblin may attack with one of the costume arms, causing 1d4 points of slashing damage on a successful hit. If the upper goblin takes damage in combat, he must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or the costume's makeshift frame collapses and he falls prone behind the lower goblin. If the two goblins separate, the *disguise self* spell ends.

Goblin Tunnels. Two small tunnel mouths can be found in this cave. A goblin fleeing the battle may crawl into one to escape. The tunnels are not wide and only a Small creature can fit. The two tunnels join together after roughly ten feet and continue to [area 10](#).

TREASURE

After the battle, the characters will have possession of the *Robe of the Dread Tailor*. The stolen merchandise in the crates can be returned to Goodmeadow for a 75 gp reward. These goblins are the lieutenants of the band and as such, own a better share of the gang's loot. Each goblin has 14 (4d6) sp.

ENCOUNTER DIFFICULTY

This encounter has a medium difficulty. If there are only four characters, remove the goblin with the scorpions. The goblin from [area 8](#) will instead be the lower goblin in the Dread Tailor costume. If the majority of characters are 2nd level, add three additional goblins hiding behind crates. However, these goblins do not have any scorpions.

10. DA BOSS'S CHAMBER

This private room is claimed by the goblin boss. The wooden door is not barred and no one is inside. A pile of furs and a soiled pillow lie on the floor next to a pile of goblin clothes, a helm, and a filthy, slightly-rusted chain shirt. (The helm is in decent condition and can later be identified in Goodmeadow as belonging to one of the slain caravan guards. The chain shirt belongs to the goblin boss in [area 11](#).)

Goblin Tunnel. A small tunnel in the corner of the cave leads to [area 9](#). The tunnel is not wide and only a Small creature can fit.

TREASURE

Hidden under the furs is a sack filled with the gang's entire treasure hoard: 14 (4d6) cp, 35 (1d6 x 10) sp, 3 (1d6) gp, and a costume white gold and diamond necklace worth 5 gp.

11. SAUNA

Wisps of steam escape around the corners of the fur hung before the doorway to this room. The **goblin boss**, Da Boss, and the **steam mephit**, Hoover, are relaxing on fur-padded boulders inside. Hoover is like most steam mephitis but has learned to speak Common as well as Aquan and Ignan. Da Boss is drinking from a silver ewer in the shape of a swan. It contains the last of the dwarven beer mentioned in [area 6](#). The goblin is nude and lying next to him is his scimitar and wooden shield. Da Boss has the same stats as a goblin boss except he is only AC 14 and has 28 (8d6) hit points.

Large hot stones are piled in a shallow pit in the center of the room. A bucket hung over the pit is attached to a rope held by the mephit. Every so often, the mephit will give the rope a quick tug and send a small amount of water onto the hot rocks, generating a wave of steam.

DEVELOPMENTS

When the characters enter, Da Boss scoops up his scimitar and shield while Hoover dumps the bucket onto the hot rocks and fills the entire room with thick steam. All creatures other than Hoover suffer disadvantage to attack rolls and vision is reduced to five feet. Being the embodiment of steam, Hoover is invisible until the steam dissipates after two rounds.

Cornered, the goblin boss fights to the death. Hoover will only fight to the death if the characters have his *bottle of elemental imprisonment* from [area 5](#). If they do not and the goblin boss is killed, the mephit offers to lead them to the tomb in exchange for his

freedom, claiming that there are numerous treasures buried there.

TREASURE

The silver ewer of the goblin boss is worth 25 gp.

ENCOUNTER DIFFICULTY

This is a hard encounter. If there are only four characters, the goblin boss is still recuperating from the caravan ambush, losing his *multiattack* ability and 7 hit points. If the majority of characters are 2nd level, add three goblins.

CONCLUSION

After retrieving the ostriches, defeating the goblin boss and Hoover, and taking the *Robe of the Dread Tailor* from the goblins, the characters are hailed as heroes by Torath Dannel. He will translate their scroll as well as host a banquet in their honor at the Dreaming Boar.

If the characters agree to the terms offered by Geoff in his tomb but do not honor the agreement, they have made a new enemy. Although he cannot leave the tomb, he will get his revenge. The *key to the paths of the dead* acts as a beacon to undead. Trouble follows the party as long as they have the key in their possession.

REWARDS

Award standard XP for defeated foes. The characters should also be awarded for overcoming the following challenges:

- For burying the bodies of the murdered merchant guards: 100 XP.
- For locating and disarming traps: 100 XP per trap.
- For convincing the nothic to show the way to the goblin lair: 250 XP.
- For sharing a personal secret to convince the nothic: 100 XP to the character.
- For honoring the agreement with the specter: 200 XP.

- For capturing the steam mephit in his bottle: 50 XP.
- For retrieving the ostriches: 100 XP.
- For ending the threat of the Dread Tailor: 150 XP.

Assuming a party of five characters, the minimum total award for each character participating in this adventure is 60 experience points. The maximum total award for each character participating in this adventure is 410 experience points.

The average amount of treasure collected from the minimum number of encounters is 8 cp, 4 sp, and 2 gp. The average amount of treasure collected from the maximum number of encounters is 2 cp; 4 sp; 13 gp; crates of goods worth 75 gp; a costume gold bracelet worth 5 gp; a gold bracelet worth 25 gp; a silver ewer worth 25 gp; a *bag of holding*, *boots of elvenkind*, a *cloak of protection*, or a brooch worth 100 gp; and a *potion of healing*.

AFTERWORD

This adventure represents well over 80 hours of work and I hope you enjoyed it..

Thank you for your purchase!

Kerry Jordan
November 2017

APPENDIX A: MAGIC ITEMS

The following magic items are referenced by this adventure and are found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*: *bag of holding*, *boots of elvenkind*, *cloak of protection*, and *potion of healing*. This appendix describes the new magic items appearing in the adventure. They are all items found or taken from the [tomb of the Dread Tailor](#).

BOTTLE OF ELEMENTAL IMPRISONMENT

Wondrous item, rare

The mouth of this clay bottle is engraved with arcane symbols. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check determines that the symbols allow an elemental creature to be captured and held prisoner within the bottle as long as the bottle remains sealed.

Each *bottle of elemental imprisonment* is keyed to a specific elemental being and has a unique magical activation phrase. To capture the keyed being, you must be within 10 feet of the target and use an action to aim the bottle at the target and recite the activation phrase. You must then make an Intelligence (Arcana) check contested by the target's Constitution. A success prevents the target from moving in any direction away from the bottle until the end of your next turn. Using a second action on your next turn and succeeding on another check forces the target into the bottle, which may then be sealed with a cork or other material.

KEY TO THE PATHS OF THE DEAD

Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)

The head, or bow, of this large copper key is shaped like a skull and the three key teeth have sharpened edges. It always feels cold to the touch. Once a day, while holding this copper key, you can use an action to cast the *misty step* spell without using a spell slot or any components. Once the spell has completed, you cannot regain hit points until the start of your next turn.

During attunement, you must sacrifice a drop of your blood to the key. (This blood loss is not significant enough to cause any hit point damage.) The key magically absorbs the blood, leaving no trace behind. It is also possible to attune the key to you within 10 minutes by sacrificing 2 hit points worth of your own blood.

ROBE OF THE DREAD TAILOR

Wondrous item, unique (requires attunement)

This beautiful red robe has five charges. It regains 1d4 + 1 expended charges daily at sundown. While you wear it, you may use an action and expend 1 charge to cast the *disguise self* spell. Optionally, you may expend 1 charge and cause the garment to display a shifting pattern of dazzling hues as a simple object interaction. Until the end of your next turn, the robe sheds bright light in a 15-foot radius and dim light for an additional 10 feet. This effect grants you a +1 bonus to AC and saving throws against opponents that can see you. These two powers may not be invoked during the same turn, but the effects may overlap.

APPENDIX B: CREATURES

The following creatures may be encountered in this adventure and are described in the *Monster Manual*: goblin, goblin boss, magma mephit, nothic, scorpion (Appendix A), skeleton, specter, steam mephit, wolf (Appendix A), and zombie. New creatures not found in the *Monster Manual* are presented here.

OSTRICH

Large beast unaligned

Armor Class 10
Hit Points 19 (3d10 + 3)
Speed 50 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Senses passive Perception 10
Languages —
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

ACTIONS

Kick. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target *Hit:* 4 (1d8) slashing damage

SMALL WATER ELEMENTAL

Small elemental neutral

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 32 (9d6)
Speed 30 ft, swim 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Damage Resistances acid
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft, passive Perception 10
Languages Aquan
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Water Form. The elemental can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. It can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Freeze. If the elemental takes cold damage, it partially freezes; its speed is reduced by 20 feet until the end of its next turn.

ACTIONS

Slam. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage

