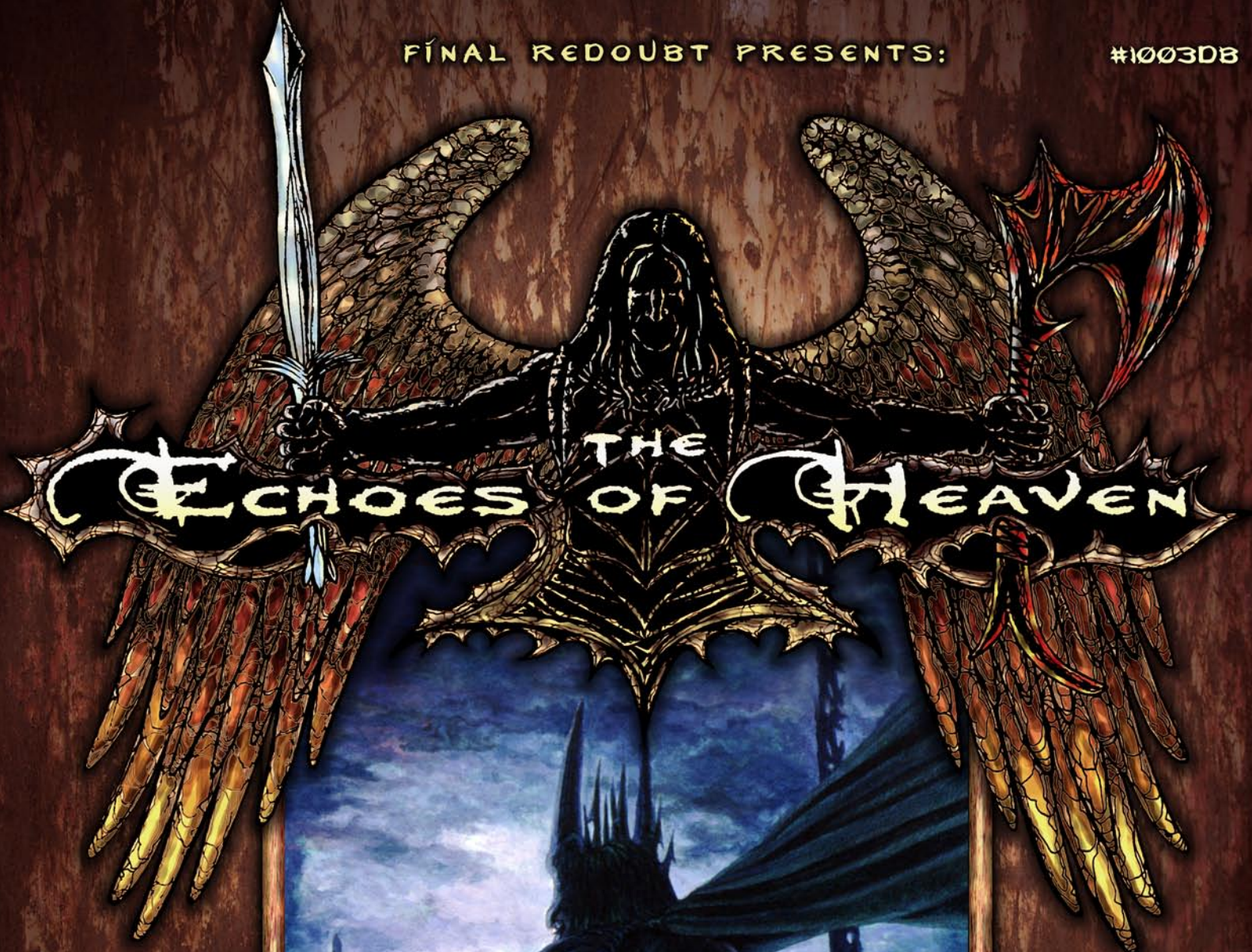


FINAL REDOUBT PRESENTS:

#1003DB



THE ECHOES OF HEAVEN

Requires the use of the Dungeons & Dragons Player's Handbook, Third Edition, published by Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

This product utilizes updated material from the v.3.5 revision.



On Corrupted Ground

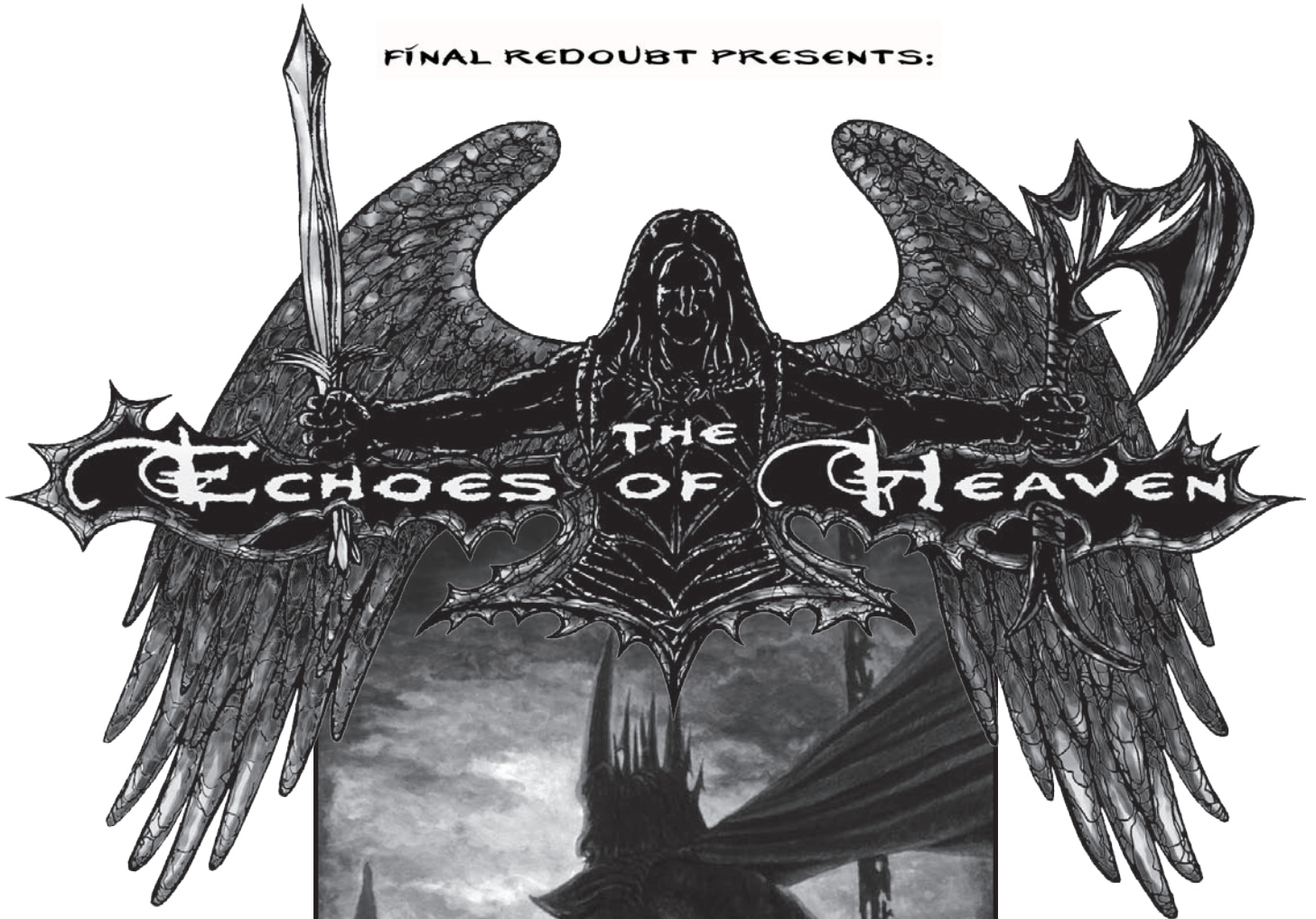
by Robert J Defendi

The fate of the world might rest in the hands of its greatest threat.

Part Three in the Epic Campaign *The Moving Shadow*.

For 6th level characters.

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With that, the festering pit of Hell opened, and the entire world quaked.
— *Parison 5:1*

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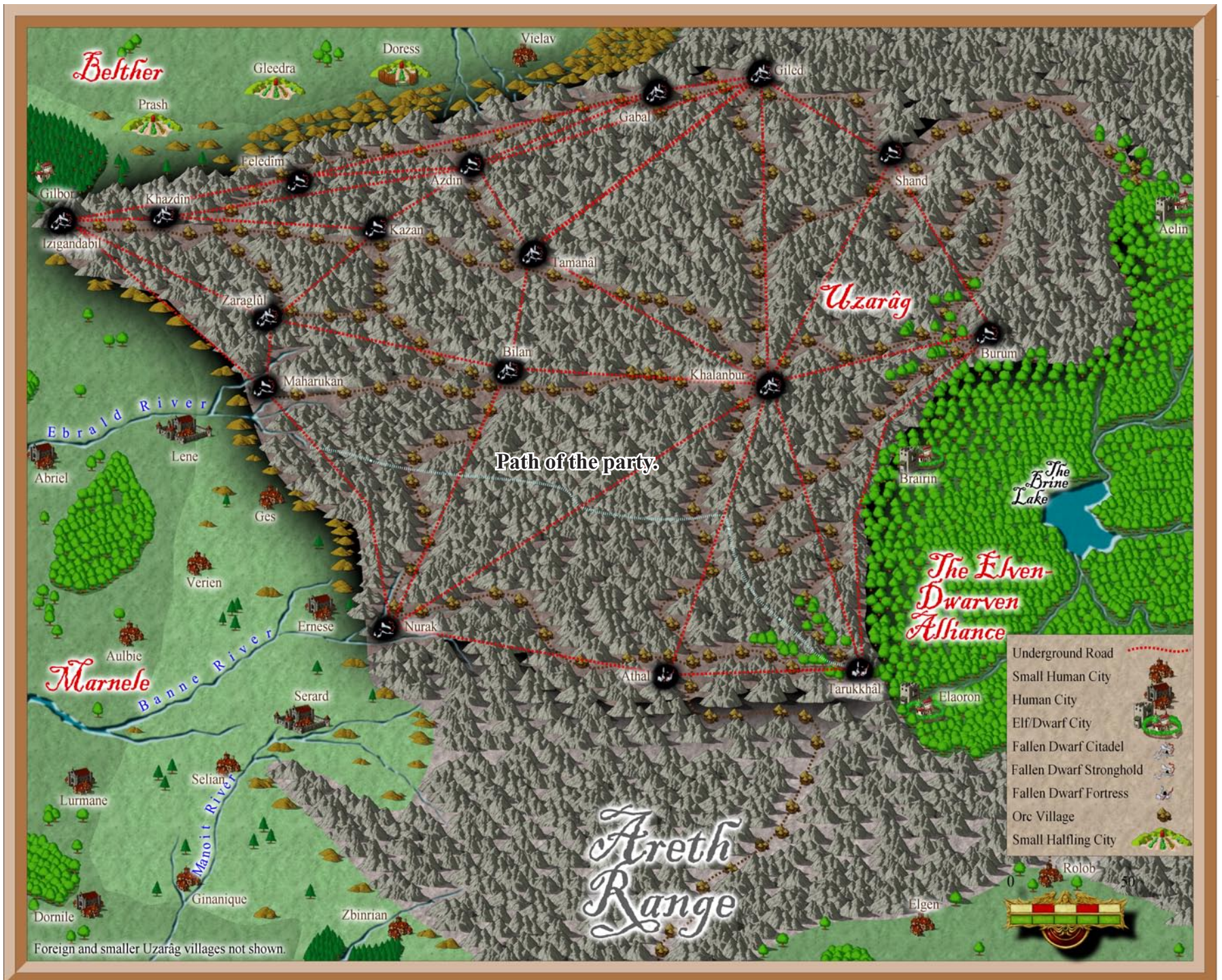
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Stock #1003DB



Belther

Uzarâg

Marnese

The Elven-Dwarven Alliance

Areth Range

Path of the party.

- Underground Road 
- Small Human City 
- Human City 
- Elf/Dwarf City 
- Fallen Dwarf Citadel 
- Fallen Dwarf Stronghold 
- Fallen Dwarf Fortress 
- Orc Village 
- Small Halfling City 

0 50



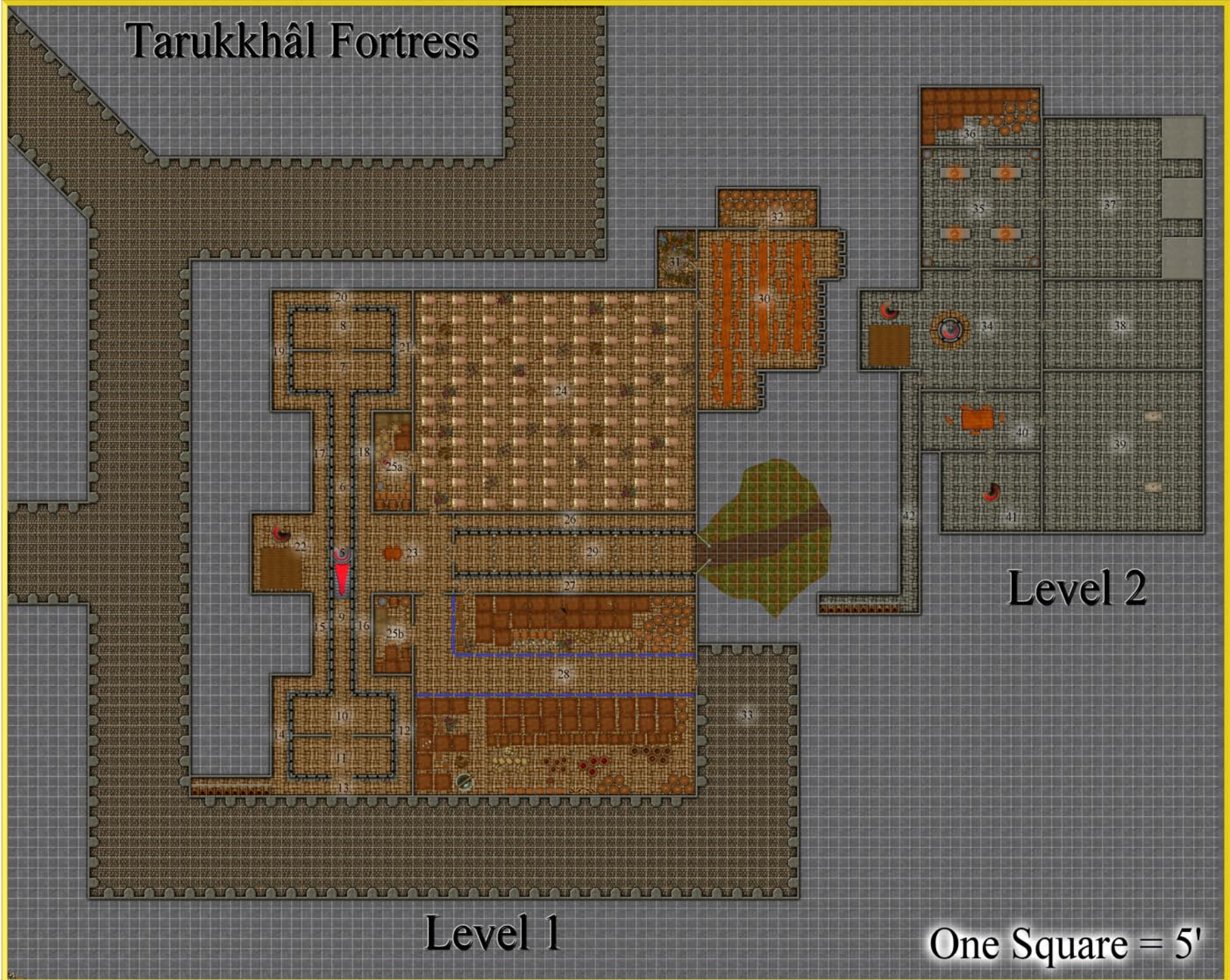
Foreign and smaller Uzarâg villages not shown.

Tarukkhâl Fortress Exterior

2



Tarukkhâl Fortress



Level 1

Level 2

One Square = 5'

Tarukkhâl Fortress



Level 3



Level 4

One Square = 5'

Tarukkhâl Fortress



Level 5



Level 6

One Square = 5'

Teaser

Introduction

Welcome to the third adventure in *The Moving Shadow* campaign. This adventure, *On Corrupted Ground*, is the third of a ten-part series that will take a group of characters through the Mortal Realm. Starting at 2nd level and taking the party to 20th, these adventures are a part of a campaign that will take the world to the brink of destruction. The actions of a few may save the many, and a band of heroes will stand between civilization and apocalypse.

This adventure is for 6th level characters. The Teaser uses 6th level characters as well, see the boxed text below.

Each adventure in the *Moving Shadow* campaign comes with a sourcebook. Included with *On Corrupted Ground* is *The Lost Kingdom of the Dwarves*, in which the reader can explore Uzarâg, one of the most fertile adventure locales in the world.

These adventures are statted with versions for four different games: the **D20 System** game, **HARP**, **HERO System**, and **Rolemaster**. This version of *On Corrupted Ground* is statted for the **D20 System** game.

To continue, you must first decide whether to run these adventures in the Mortal Realm or in another game world entirely. If you intend to run in the Mortal Realm, you should begin by reading *The Echoes of Heaven Campaign Setting*, paying special attention to the sections on Ulcers and the Church, as well as Uzarâg. Then you should read this adventure and carefully note the power level of the encounters. Some of these are meant to be difficult—nearly fatal—and you should be careful to make sure they are

not too tough nor too easy for your game. Even in two groups who use identical house rules the level of powers in the respective characters will vary, if only because of the way the GM adjudicates rule calls.

This adventure is the third in a series, but it's intended for characters at the 6th level of play. If you intend to run the Teaser, then they will still use the 6th level versions of their characters (which should puzzle the players who are paying attention.)

One final note. We've written these adventures with the novice GM in mind. Because of this, we take a bit of time to explain how to handle certain in-game issues, such as story construction and player free will. If you are not a novice GM, feel free to skip these sections.

Adventure Background

A millennium ago, the Warlord, one of the Great Fiends, attacked Uzarâg with an army of orcs. The Dwarves fell and scattered. Many settled in Felric's Redoubt. Others helped found the Elven-Dwarven Alliance. Others went to surviving Dwarven Kingdoms. The Diaspora of the Uzarâg Dwarves began.

More recently, just under five months ago, a party braved the Ulcer of Stanor Monastery. There they used what they thought was a Holy Relic, a diamond splinter of the throne of God, in an attempt to close the Ulcer. All they managed was to make the Ulcer stronger and help to complete one of the steps in the resident Demon's plans.

In casting this relic into the Ulcer, they discovered the Splinter was corrupted. Merging it with the growing power of the Ulcer increased the corrup-

Characters

In *The Throne of God*, you made 2nd level **D20 System** game characters but kept 1st level versions. You used those versions in the last teaser, which flashes back to how the characters met and shows the first steps in their adventure together.

The players will probably think this is a wonderful idea until the novelty wears off. By the time they reach this adventure, dropping back down to first level versions would be more of a bother than a point of interest. That won't be a problem, however. The characters *think* they were 1st level during their adventures before the fall of Heaven. They *think* they remember everything that happened.

They are wrong.

Teaser

tion of the relic. The Demon intended it to make the Ulcer permanent. What they accomplished was creating a power Relic of Heaven and Hell, one that could create Ulcers. The Demon didn't complete his plan to make the Ulcer permanent, and because of this, the Splinter remained in its corrupted form and wasn't folded into the power of the Ulcer.

The Splinter ended in the hands of a Demon of Gluttony named Azgúk. He used the Splinter to create an Ulcer in Felric's Redoubt, then hid the Splinter in Hell. He took control of the Bucklemaker's Guild and caused the guildmaster to go on a murder spree that nearly destroyed the city in hellish corruption and Infernal Taint. A party of adventurers, presumably the same ones who created the Splinter, tracked the murderer back to the Guildhall and killed Azgúk, destroying the Ulcer and saving the city.

But little did anyone know the Splinter's creation was not an accident. Morthorn, a Duke of Hell learned of the plot to use the Unholy Relic to strengthen the first Ulcer and he made some changes of his own. He had a plan for creating an Unholy Relic that could corrupt the fabric of the Mortal Realm, but it couldn't be created in his *own* lands, Ulcer or not. He could only create it by tricking a Demon and instilling it with power foreign to himself. He hatched an elaborate plan to further corrupt the Unholy Relic. He succeeded but lost the Splinter in the process.

Morthorn's servants waited for the Relic to be used and when the adventurers destroyed Azgúk, Morthorn pieced together the Demon's identity after the fact. Armed with that knowledge, he was able to track down the Demon's hiding places in Hell. He found the Splinter. The Demon, killed permanently in his own Ulcer, never knew its fate.

Armed now with the Unholy Relic he'd fought so hard to create, Morthorn launched his real plan at last. He started with a focus on Uzarâg.

There are many bands of Orcs in Uzarâg, and although they are all ostensibly under the Warlord's control, the Great Fiend's control is so without rival that he can rule with a light hand. He doesn't care who is the chieftain of the smaller bands of Orcs, allowing the internal politics to handle itself. Knowing this, Morthorn sent Vinis the Water Wraith, an

Undead agent already in the Mortal realm. Vinis moved into Tarukkhâl Fortress inside the southeast border of Uzarâg and established himself as the ruler. Carrying the Splinter, his job was twofold: to summon Morthorn so he could more easily enter the Mortal Realm and to begin Morthorn's plan of expanding Uzarâg. Morthorn could enter Tarukkhâl Fortress under his own power (there's a permanent gate there), but he combined the two events into a single ritual that would grant him effective invulnerability when he arrived.

But his worst fear was realized. While a Duke of Hell and a Water Wraith might have been able to hide themselves inside the Ulcer, the Splinter was another matter. The second Vinis entered with the Splinter, the Warlord sensed the Unholy Relic reacting with the Ulcer around it.

While Vinis built his power base and prepared his ritual, the Warlord searched. He found many issues of loyalty within Uzarâg, but he has yet to find a hint of Vinis's presence.

The plan? To use the Splinter *inside* an Ulcer. It will take more work than simply creating a new Ulcer inside an uncorrupted area of the Mortal Realm, but if it works, Morthorn believes he can cause Uzarâg to make a sudden surge outward, turning all Belkanâth, and maybe the entire world, into one Ulcer.

Hell itself.

Adventure Summary

This is an overview of how an average game group might experience this adventure. We've broken the adventure into a Teaser and three Acts, and each is listed below.

TEASER

The Teaser begins during the War in Heaven, in a flashback 10,000 years before the start of the adventure. This is before Heaven was Sundered into Heaven, Hell, and the Mortal Realm, and the characters have been behind enemy lines for weeks. They push ever deeper into the lands of the Fallen, meeting and killing some Undead.

Teaser

Pushing on, the characters happen on an above-ground Dwarven village. The villagers barely eke out an existence, but they wait for the front to shift, reclaiming their village into the lands of God. Inside, they find the place overrun by Undead.

They follow the Undead back to the village cemetery. There they find a dark priest creating the Undead, a skill never seen before in the history of Heaven (at least never seen by the Faithful). But this flashback reveals something more disturbing. This isn't the way the characters remembered the events before the flashback. Something is wrong with their memory.

ACT ONE

In the present, the characters are still in Felric's Redoubt after the last adventure. Here they are contacted by Lanie, a priest working for Cardinal Gleann of Belm. Lanie tells the characters the Cardinal has had a vision of the Splinter. He says it's in Tarukkhâl Fortress in Uzarâg.

The characters find a boat that's already chartered to cross the bay to the lands near Uzarâg. On the ship they meet a group of Dwarves heading into Uzarâg on vacation. The ship runs into a squall as it

crosses, but likely the characters all survive this and make it to land.

On land, they push forward with the Dwarves. Although they fight a large group of Orcs they otherwise enter Uzarâg unhindered.

ACT TWO

Traveling through the underground roads is death and the patrolled surface roads are little better. Because of this, the Dwarves lead the characters across the top of the mountains through a bitter early winter.

The going is hard and the characters must brave Orcs, the weather, and the unnatural hazards of Uzarâg. Eventually they part ways with the Dwarves, heading cross-country on their own.

The characters arrive at the fortress and hopefully ignore the death trap of the front door and find the rear way in. They fight their way up through the fortress, meeting Orcs and other hazards.

But as they near the top, the Dwarves they previously traveled with reappear on the scene. They've been decimated by the Warlord, who seems to be following them. Now the characters are caught between the denizens of this fortress and the Warlord himself.

Ulcers

There is much talk in this adventure about Ulcers. Those who are new to *The Echoes of Heaven* might find this a bit confusing.

Ulcers are an infection in the Mortal Realm, where the nature of Hell has contaminated the land and the laws of nature break down. Anything can happen in an Ulcer and the shape of the place warps around the wishes and dreams of those inside. Some Ulcers become powerful puzzle traps, some fill with hordes of Cambionic creatures (such as Orcs and Hobgoblins). Others might fill with dream taken form.

Any adventure a GM might like to run can take place in an Ulcer. The sky's the limit, and it doesn't matter how outlandish, how improbable the nature of the adventure site is. Ulcers are, by their definition, not of this earth.

Ulcers are caused by evil. Worse, they are rooted in evil, but spells that detect good and evil only detect the Divine or Angelic sparks and the Infernal Taint in *The Echoes of Heaven*. There is no way to determine what evils anchor the Ulcer, and so the Witch-Hunters have a much more direct solution. When they find an Ulcer, they kill everything inside.

Period.

Uzarâg is a permanent Ulcer, and so it's a bit more sedate and "normal" seeming than a newer Ulcer. However, there's no set way to destroy a Permanent Ulcer, but even if there was, one would probably have to start by killing every Orc inside, and then the Warlord.

And the Warlord seems to be unkillable.

Teaser

They make their final push up through the defenses until they find the final redoubt. Here, they find Vinis conducting an elaborate ritual to summon Morthorn and expand the Ulcer. Morthorn whose summoning is already technically complete, senses the party and opens the gate and steps through.

ACT THREE

All seems lost, and at that moment things seem to get worse as the Warlord arrives on the Party's tail. Sandwiched between the Warlord and a Duke of Hell, the party can only pray as these two titans clash, but the Warlord can't hurt Morthorn, and the ritual seems to be the reason.

There's only one thing to do. The party attacks Vinis and the people conducting the ritual, killing them one by one. Finally, the party stops the ritual and the Warlord kills Morthorn, who disappears to Hell with the Splinter.

The Warlord, not seeing the party as a threat, allows them to escape in repayment for their help. The party retreats and leaves Uzarâg, heading into the Elven-Dwarven Alliance.

Troubleshooting

The most important element in any adventure is free will. You cannot railroad a party into doing what you want and still produce an ideal adventure. Therefore it's important that you never try to force the party along the adventure path described above.

So what do you do if they strike off on their own?

It takes a gentle hand to keep a party and a story line on the same path. The primary thing to remember is not to try to force them back along the way, that is the intention of the Dramatic Purpose descriptions, outlined below.

If a party decides to go the wrong way, the easiest way to kick them back on path is to have someone talk to them. In the early part of the adventure, Lanie could still be around to make sure the party takes the quickest route to get to the adventure. Later, the Dwarves will be there to consult on the adventure, at least until the two groups separate. Just because a character is an NPC doesn't mean he's stupid.

If that doesn't work, try to entice them back. Smoke on the horizon always gets a party's attention. Ruins of Orcish raids are also good.

But if the party insists on doing their own thing, let them. It can take a while to get them back on track but don't let that stop you. Bring them back gently, in stages.

The worst thing you can do is say, "Because the adventure says so." If the party figures something out too early, so be it. If they miss clues but continue in the right direction, let them. Never put them in a situation where the plot of the story is more frustrating than interesting. Above all, let them have fun. If they figure out a way to discover the secret of Vinis and his ritual too early, don't force Act Two as written. Think of this entire adventure as a guideline, not as a script.

A final note, the characters in this adventure will need to understand the speech of Orcs to get the full effect of the plot. Try to make sure at least one of them speaks Cambionic. If they don't, get them a magic item or the like that grants them the ability.

Dramatic Purpose

Every major event in this adventure has a dramatic purpose. These are there so the GM can better decide what to do if the party goes off book. If an encounter's dramatic purpose is important (like the Act Two twist) then the GM will know that it *has* to happen somehow. If it's less important, he'll know he might be able to skip it or replace it with something else.

One thing to remember about dramatic purposes is even the small ones are important. If you run an adventure with no easy combats, the players will feel exhausted, maybe even desperate, and they might stop enjoying the game.

If a group diverges wildly from the written adventure, let them. Take the dramatic purposes of the encounters they are skipping and invent new encounters that serve the same purpose. If the party has somehow skipped all the easy fights, or Heaven forbid messed them up so badly they weren't easy

Teaser

anymore, invent some *new* easy fights and drop them in the party's path.

Maybe the party abandons the adventure entirely and refuses to go back. If so, who are any of us to say they did wrong? Take the remaining dramatic events and create new ones for the party, following their new path. It might not be this adventure, but it will be *an* adventure, and it will be a lot more fun than arguing about whether the party is ruining the GM's plans.

Of course, then the world will begin to end, but at least there are good adventures in that as well.

As long as all the purposes are served, you will have a workable story, probably even a good one. It doesn't matter if it isn't the story you set out to tell. Gaming is a collaborative effort, after all.

Running the Campaign

This adventure is part three in a ten-part, ongoing campaign. This brings up some issues one wouldn't have in a stand-alone adventure.

DOWN TIME

It's possible that someone will want to run these adventures before the entire series has been released. It's likely that a game group may finish an adventure before the next one is available.

We've taken this into consideration. You can't run a ten-part adventure and not expect to take some side trips. Don't worry if this is your intention. We've built downtime into the story between each

adventure. Near the end, it might be nice to run the adventures concurrently, but there's no point in this series where one adventure *must* be played directly after the one before.

EXPERIENCE AND TABLE PACING

If you're running these adventures in a series, then the issue of experience will come into play. Some groups might want to do the adventures one right after another. Others might have ten sessions between each adventure (especially if they meet frequently while waiting for the next release).

The thing to remember about experience is that it's all arbitrary. Many GMs ignore official experience guidelines. Some have home systems. Some just assign experience by story points, some by number of sessions, regardless of session content.

The important thing to remember is that no experience system is set in stone. If you have multiple adventures in this series and you wish to run them back to back, then a party will need to gain two levels in a single adventure. If you want to run eight adventures in between, then they need to average a fourth of a level each time experience is given. It doesn't matter how fast a group advances as long as everyone understands what to expect and *why* to expect it. If you tell a party you want to game every single night but the next adventure isn't out for two more weeks, they'll understand they might need to advance more slowly.

The Dirty Little Secret of Good Storytelling

Not many people will admit to it, but most GMs have done it. We lie. We fudge a dice roll, we influence a result. There's nothing wrong with that, as long as it makes the adventure more—and not less—enjoyable.

For instance, in one of the play tests of this adventure, the GM forgot the effect of Ulcers on divination spells. One of the characters began to use divination to discover the rough locations of every Orc in the fortress. The GM didn't try to cover up the fact, he told the party that he'd made a mistake and he explained what the mistake was. Then he told them that they would assume those previous spells had worked because the doors between had been cracked or fully open at the time, allowing the spell access. He explained that from then on they'd be playing that adventure as written and the players were happy to accept that their divinations suddenly became less effective. Above all he didn't try to force the issue or take away things the party had already discovered.

Teaser

Playing in Another Game World

If you wish to run this adventure in another world, whether one you own or one produced by another company, that's okay as well. It might take a touch more work, however.

Changing Felric's Redoubt to be a major city in your world should be easy. As for the church, try to find a mostly good or neutral church. A little corruption wouldn't hurt the flavor of the campaign as a whole. The biggest problems are fitting Uzarâg and the Warlord into the adventure. Uzarâg could be an undiscovered site, but there needs to be someone like the Warlord living there. Two obvious choices are to borrow another bad guy from your world or simply bring the Warlord over and work him into your history. It's important that the idea of corruption fits in your world, and there is a way for corruption to be hidden from the magic of Good.

Those are the hard parts, because they are what the party must interact with most often.

What would seem, at the first, to be the most difficult issue is the easiest. Ulcers are an everyday occurrence on Meridrin, but in another world, they might be alien. If that's the case, all you need to do is come up with a way for the church to know this might be coming. Priests have prophetic visions . . . maybe one foresaw it. All that leaves is the root cause of the Ulcer.



But in the overarching sloop of the story, the characters will come to realize that Vinis is not the one behind all this. With a Duke of Hell (or whatever plane you'd like) working behind the scenes, it isn't hard to imagine the final nemesis hatching a plan that would begin with this little piece of Hell on earth. Perhaps he's the only one to figure out a way to make an Ulcer. Perhaps he's even done it before, and no one has ever noticed. There is much evil in most game worlds. It might take some time to recognize an Ulcer for what it is.

To Tease or not to Tease

If you've decided to run this adventure in the Mortal Realm, you must decide whether to run the Teaser. The Teaser is optional. Each adventure comes with one, and through them, you will play out a ministry that maps out the character's adventures in Heaven.

So you must decide if the Teaser is right for your group.

By running the Teaser, you have placed your characters in a different frame of reference than anyone else in the world. They will have a unique perspective on events, on customs, and on the nature of the Church. They won't know anything intellectually that others don't (except for irrelevant details, like the street names in the Holy City). The Teaser will not make them any more powerful.

But for those who would like this Teaser, there is a powerful element of wish fulfillment. These people are veterans of the greatest war ever fought. They've known Angels personally. They've witnessed one of the greatest eras of history.

It all boils down to that. If you think your game group would find those wish-fulfillment aspects appealing, then run the Teaser. If you think it's not their thing, then it will probably come off as a silly gimmick. Let your group be your compass.

Assorted Names

In any adventure, the party will run across several people who aren't listed in the text. The GM might

Teaser

have to come up with several names in a single local. Because of this follows a list of some general Dwarven and Orcish names. Feel free to use them on characters the party meets along the way.

Dwarvish names: Ageddān, Andul, Andum, Aragūm, Arbhun, Atharāg, Azin, Birāg, Biraglad, Bunar, Burum, Dabuzūn, Danāl, Danbu, Dūlun, Felad, Felān, Felandūl, Felid, Felunūr, Gabal, Galak, Ganur, Gilad, Gind, Gūlad, Gulin, Gūnar, Ibil, Inzur, Iramīm, Irgal, Izunāl, Izunār, Khālad, Khalāg, Khalanūr, Khālig, Khālush, Khazār, Khazin, Khīm, Khīmal, Khulunāl, Khuzad, Kūn, Malād, Mandabul, Mazag, Mazān, Nārak, Nargu, Nulak, Nūr, Ragul, Ruzag, Sharak, Sharam, Sharum, Shinar, Sigal, Sigin, Sigun, Tamil, Tamun, Tarāg, Tarazdam, Thalud, Tharāg, Thūr, Turak, Turam, Undūl, Urbhun, Ushman, Zagin, Zind, Zunāl, Zūrag, Zūrum.

Orcish names: Aglūb, Agramph, Agūr, Amborz, Arzugdū, Ashnat, Bagdūl, Bagronk, Barag, Bashnarz, Bazgob, Bog, Bogakh, Bogdub, Boghash, Bogronk, Bogūl, Bor, Buglarz, Bulam, Bulfish, Bumph, Bura, Burgat, Būrkūl, Būrn, Burz, Dugak, Dul, Dulob, Dūm, Durkūl, Durn, Durog, Dushak, Gharz, Ghorish, Glarag, Glarkūm, Glorbam, Glurzug, Golū, Gothmuf, Grul, Gūmboth, Khagdul, Lagrish, Lambush, Lob, Lorz, Luftharn, Lūmbur, Lumorz, Lumūk, Lūronk, Magduk, Magob, Mol, Morag, Morash, Morz, Muzorz, Mūl, Mūrkūlg, Murn, Nadbuk, Nargob, Narog, Nāsh, Ogdur, Ogrash, Olarz, Rogūmph, Rolfim, Shag, Shagdūl, Shagdur, Shak, Shakh, Shar, Sharul, Shel, Shelat, Shugrak, Shular, Shulurkūl, Shumug, Snagarz, Snākh, Snarub, Snatūm, Snazur, Ughol, Ughor, Uglara, Uglor, Urbog, Ushnarz, Ushnat, Uzgama, Uzog, Uzoth, Yam, Yamūr, Yatū.

Adventure Difficulty

As we said before, the power level of every game table is just a little different. So although this adventure has been play tested, it's impossible to test the difficulty of the adventure against the exact power level of an individual table (without playing it).

It's difficult to affect the challenge level of an encounter in the middle. However, a *great deal* can

be done between battles. A GM should adjust encounters if he feels that they've been too easy or too hard. As long as the game remains fair, a little adjustment on the fly can be a good thing.

One final note. It's generally best to leave the final battle be once it's started. This is usually the most dangerous part of the adventure and players *need* to feel like they can die. So although some fast and loose play can be a good thing during most of play, when the climax comes, the GM should probably let the chips fall where they may.

Campaign Cartographer

All maps in this adventure were designed using Profantasy's *Campaign Cartographer*. You will find versions of the maps built with both Campaign Cartographer 2 and 3 included with the PDF version of this product and some on our web site (www.FinalRedoubt.com) as well. This will allow you to print these maps at any scale, including 1"=5' for miniature use. If you don't own the program, Profantasy provides printing and viewing software on their website that you can use to print these maps. Go to www.Profantasy.com.

Campaign Cartographer is a trademark of Profantasy Software Ltd.

Teaser

The teaser begins ten thousand years before the rest of the adventure. The War in Heaven has raged for a millennium and the forces of Heaven believe they're winning. Only the Five Prophets and God Himself knows that a second Fall looms on the horizon, and when it comes, Heaven will fall with it.



Teaser

The player characters met during the last Teaser. They've been sent into the lands of the Fallen Angels, deep behind enemy lines. Although the forces of the Host have the Fallen on the ropes, one Fallen Angel still plots and plans. The party is to find out as much information as they can without getting killed. Their job is reconnaissance, not attack. The Fallen Angel's name is Mathos, the name God gave him when he fell.

Dramatic Purpose

The Dramatic Purpose of the Teaser is to hook the players in, hopefully before even a single die is thrown. In a television show, the Teaser is the part of the episode that comes before the credits, lasting anywhere from thirty seconds (for shows like the defunct *Enterprise*) to more than ten minutes (for shows like the also defunct *Alias*). The Teaser is (relatively) short, to the point, and usually set up to end in a cliff hanger to keep the viewer from changing channels.

Our Teaser serves much the same purpose. In it the characters start in a unique environment . . . the final days of the War in Heaven. This will be a brief and sometimes violent opening that will hopefully set a tone for the rest of the campaign . . . if it's used. The Teaser of this adventure (and the other adventures in the same series) create a storyline, not quite told in order, of the characters and their battles in the last days. The Teaser is optional.

It was the last days of the War in Heaven. You have left the lands of the Faithful behind. This was the time before the sun and the moon, the time before night and day. Only the Holy See, in the distance, shone light for the world. A constant light, gentle and even, no matter how far one traveled from the Holy City.

Except for here.

Here are the lands of the Fallen, the lands of the damned Angels and the heretic Mortals who follow them. Here the light never shines and the oppression is unrelenting. Here, you will likely die.

But you have a mission, given by the Archangel Areniel. You are to penetrate as deeply as possible, to find the home of the Fallen Angel Mathos.

The armies of Heaven seem to have won, and yet Mathos continues his plans undisturbed. While all other Fallen despair, Mathos plots on. He is up to something, and it's your job to discover what.

The road is dark, lit only by infernal fires burning here and there on the horizon, casting everything in a sinister orange glow. You travel down a beaten path, the leafless trees around you clawing at the infinite black sky.

As you travel along the road you see a body in the distance. Lying athwart the path, it is short and stocky, a Dwarf or a large Gnome or Halfling perhaps.

It isn't moving.

Hand the characters their character sheets. They should probably be expecting the 1st level versions, but hand them the 6th. This should lead to questions, as the characters were 2nd at the end of the War in Heaven.

Answer their questions. No, this isn't a mistake. No, they don't ever remember being this level. Yes, that is strange. Assume that at this point in their experiences they had roughly the same gear as they do in the present. This isn't merely for ease of play, but there is a parallelism between the past and the present that's intentional. You can even allow the character to have the same magic items, unless the characters have something unique.

The body has been killed by Undead. If the party lingers too long, it will start to animate. This can be stymied by taking the head.

INTO THE FALLEN LANDS

When play begins, read or paraphrase the following:



Teaser

This would be a good time to mention that the dead rise spontaneously, raised by the Noferatus. No one understands how.

Empowered Dwarf Zombie: CR 2; Medium undead; HD 6d12+3; hp 42; Init -1; Spd 30 ft.; AC11, touch 9, flat-footed 11; Base Atk/Grp +3/+5; Atk +5 melee (1d6+2 slam); Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+2 slam); SA -; SQ Single actions only, damage reduction 5/slashing, darkvision 60 ft., undead traits; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +5; Str 15, Dex 9, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Skills and Feats: Toughness.

Possessions: Ruined equipment.

Dramatic Purpose

The purpose of this scene is to introduce the characters back into the Teasers and to allow them a little time to roleplay their way back into their pre-Sundering characters.

THE WALKING DEAD

After the party travels a bit down the road, read or paraphrase the following:

The road twists and turns. As you approach a bend, you hear a dry, shuffling sound. Creeping forward, you can just make out the bone-white gleam of human remains. Unfortunately, they stand under their own power.

The party meets as many Undead as they have members:

Empowered Dwarf Zombie: CR 2; Medium undead; HD 6d12+3; hp 42; Init -1; Spd 30 ft.; AC11, touch 9, flat-footed 11; Base Atk/Grp +3/+5; Atk +5 melee (1d6+2 slam); Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+2 slam); SA -; SQ Single actions only, damage reduction 5/slashing, darkvision 60 ft., undead traits; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +5; Str 15, Dex 9, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Skills and Feats: Toughness.

Possessions: Ruined equipment.

Dramatic Purpose

This is a basic challenging fight. It's meant to stretch the character's abilities. It's also meant to allow them to test their new skill, as they likely advanced in level just before starting this adventure.

MAZABAL

As the party continues down the road, read or paraphrase the following:

Ahead you make out the lights of a village, the lights of torches and fires twinkling in a dozen points. The surrounding fields shine in the light of a dozen blazes, the feeble light doing little to nourish faded and dwindled crops.

You can dimly make out broken silhouettes in the distance, short and blunt, their forms hanging loose as if on stretched puppets stings. These forms move about in a hopeless shuffle.

The party will probably think that this is an Undead town. It isn't. It's a town full of Dwarves that moved aboveground to better bask in the light of God.

Allow the characters to enter the village and interact with the residents. The place is being overrun by Undead. At the moment, things are okay, but Undead flow out of the cemetery in waves. The Dwarves have tried to stop it, but they lost most of their warriors long ago. They are currently planning a new foray, but everyone knows this one will mean the end of the village, killing the last of the able males.

Hopefully, the party will do the right thing and venture into the cemetery in their stead.

Dramatic Purpose

This encounter allows the characters a chance to roleplay and generally play the part of heroes.

THE CEMETERY

When the party investigates the cemetery, read or paraphrase the following.

Teaser

The Dwarves do not bury their dead. Instead, they have raised a series of tombs in large, stone mausoleums. The wind blows cold and hard through the structures, howling around walls and corners. As you slink across the dead earth, you can hear snatches of sound in the distance.

Creeping forward, you can just make out the voice as it moves from broken hints into coherent chanting. At least, it is mostly coherent. You've never quite heard words like this before.

Peering around the last tomb, you see a man raising one arm as the chanting stops . . . the other arm is missing. Then you hear a thump, and another. The door of the tomb in front of him shudders, then teeters and tips forward with a thunderous boom. Standing there are the animated remains of a Dwarven family, flesh still putrefying off yellowed bones, eyes gazing out of vacant sockets.

For a moment, you're stunned. If you didn't know better, you'd think this man had just commanded the dead to rise, but only the Nopheratus can do that. No mortal alive could harness this force, and if they could . . .

. . . Well that changes everything. They could raise the dead by the dozens. The scores. The hundreds. They could raise an army.

An army big enough to threaten all of Heaven.

There are as many Undead as party members:

Empowered Dwarf Zombie: CR 2; Medium undead; HD 6d12+3; hp 42; Init -1; Spd 30 ft.; AC11, touch 9, flat-footed 11; Base Atk/Grp +3/+5; Atk +5 melee (1d6+2 slam); Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+2 slam); SA —; SQ Single actions only, damage reduction 5/slashing, darkvision 60 ft., undead traits; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +5; Str 15, Dex 9, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Skills and Feats: Toughness.

Possessions: Ruined equipment.

XUNDOST

Xundost is the necromancer raising the dead. For his full stats see NPC section at the end of Act Three. The power of the Nopheratus is strong here, greatly enhancing both the Undead and the number Xundost can control.



Dramatic Purpose

The purpose of this scene is to give the characters a sense of how they altered the War in Heaven and discovered the part of the plot that led to the army they fought in the first teaser. At this point, they know they've uncovered one of the great secrets of the enemy. It's meant to intrigue them and to make them look forward, hopefully, to the next Teaser.

Act One

Act One

Ten Thousand years have come and gone. The Five Prophets split Heaven into Heaven, Hell, and the Mortal Realm. The endless march of time has wrought a world laboring under the myopic guidance of monolithic racial churches and feudal brutality. Mortals have fallen a long way since the days when they rubbed elbow-to-knee with the greatest angels in Heaven.

How Act One begins depends on whether you've run the previous adventures. See below for more details.

Dramatic Purpose

The dramatic purpose of the first act is to introduce all the major characters, the plot, and the setting elements. Act One can be difficult to handle because it often gets a bit ho hum if the GM isn't careful. The act should end with the character's entering a "new world," meaning that they are going out to take care of some problem or to fulfill some new role.

This is an adventure, though, not a movie. A GM should make sure that they don't use this notion of movie structure to railroad characters.

IF THE PARTY PLAYED THE PREVIOUS ADVENTURE

When you are ready, read or paraphrase the following:

Some time has past since the destruction of the Demon of Gluttony in Felric's Redoubt, and the first bite of an early winter has hit the city. Meanwhile, the city reeled from the guildmaster's murder spree and the formation of the Ulcer. It's been a time of healing, a time of rebirth.

Now you walk through a street in the Sea Quarter, browsing the storefronts as a warm sea breeze blows over the wall from Bay of Orbean, sweeping away the cold, carrying the smell of salt air and fish, the voices of dockworkers, and the screech of seagulls.

As you walk down the damp, unpaved road, a cry goes up in front of you. Ahead, the door of a dockside tavern explodes outward, and a man tumbles out into the street. You hear screams and shattering wood from inside the building.

If the characters investigate, move on to *A Brawl*, below.

Dramatic Purpose

This scene allows the characters to get back into the mode of play. It also gives them a motivation to rush forward immediately.

IF THE PARTY DID NOT PLAY THE PREVIOUS ADVENTURE

When you are ready to begin, read or paraphrase the following:

Felric's Redoubt is one of the grandest cities in the world, and in the past weeks you've found it rife with intrigue and adventure. Now, however, things have calmed down. An early winter has begun, and you've been wondering whether you should spend the winter here.

You walk through a street in the Sea Quarter, browsing the storefronts as a warm sea breeze blows over the wall from Bay of Orbean, sweeping away the cold, carrying the smell of salt air and fish, the voices of dockworkers, and the screech of seagulls.

As you walk down the damp, unpaved road, a cry goes up in front of you. Ahead, the door of a dockside tavern explodes outward, and a man tumbles out into the street. You hear screams and shattering wood from inside the building.

If the characters investigate, move on to *A Brawl*, below.

Dramatic Purpose

This scene allows the characters to get back into the mode of play. It also gives them a motivation to rush forward immediately.

A BRAWL

A bar fight has broken out at the tavern called the Rotting Gull. If the party investigates, they discover that things have progressed a bit too far, and a group

Act One

of men have drawn weapons. They're in a frenzy of killing and can't hear reason. The party will have to stop them, one way or another.

There are five brawlers:

Frenzied Brawlers: human warrior 7; CR 5; Medium humanoid; HD 7d8+14; hp 48; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC11, touch 11, flat-footed 9; Base Atk/Grp +7/+10; Atk +10 melee (1d8+3/19-20, longsword); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d8+3/19-20, longsword); SA –; SQ –; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb 13, Intimidate 9, Swim 13; Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Cleave, Great Cleave.

Possessions: Longsword.

Very little investigation is necessary to discover the men have been drinking Darlan Gok, Dwarven ale. It's illegal to sell Darlan Gok to non-Dwarves, but this bar's been doing it anyway. Homicidal rages are a known side effect.

The city watch will show up around the time the party winds down their investigation. They're grateful to the party for helping, and if the party are heroes of the city, they hero-worship just a bit.

Dramatic Purpose

This is a straightforward fight. It's meant to stretch the characters' abilities.

FOOTPADS (OPTIONAL)

This is an optional encounter that illustrates fallout from the last adventure. Only run it if you ran *The Festering Earth*.

Read or paraphrase the following:

You're walking down a narrow street, all but an alley, when men step out in front of you. You hear footsteps behind and know you're surrounded. The first footpad steps forward.

"Give us all your money and . . . wait. You're them!"

The footpads wouldn't dream of robbing the heroes of Felric's Redoubt. If the party has them ar-

rested for trying to rob them, the encounter ends there. If the party doesn't turn them in, one of the footpads turns up later that night with gifts. They're knitted winter gear from his grandmother, who's been making gifts for the party since they saved the city but hasn't found a way to deliver them.

Tailor the clothing to the party member. They are all accessories such as hats, gloves, and scarves. They are of exquisite workmanship.

The clothing isn't just well-made, though. The grandmother has perfect faith and when she makes something out of love, it is touched by her connection to the Divine. When wearing these articles, the person receives a +2 holy bonus to saves vs. cold.

Footpads: human expert 7; CR 5; Medium humanoid; HD 7d6+7; hp 34; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC15, touch 13, flat-footed 12; Base Atk/Grp +5/+6; Atk +6 melee (1d4+2/19-20, dagger); Full Atk +6 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger); SA –; SQ –; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Balance 13, Bluff 11, Climb 11, Gather Information 11, Hide 13, Intimidate 13, Move Silently 13, Search 14, Sleight of Hand 17; Improved Initiative, Persuasive, Deft Hands, Investigator.

Possessions: leather armor, dagger.

Dramatic Purpose

This scene is meant to test the character's mercy. If they attack, it's a straightforward fight, with little reward. If they show mercy, then they're rewarded with minor magical gear (complete with personal history) that will help later in the adventure.

THE MESSENGER

Shortly after the tavern incident, this next encounter occurs. If the characters ignored the tavern, this still happens if they played the previous adventure. If not, the GM will need to come up with some other deed that makes them heroic enough the Church would seek out the characters to investigate the Splinter. Read or paraphrase the following:

Act One

When you move back out onto one of the main streets, someone shouts your name. You look out across the bustling throngs of the street and see a young priest pushing toward you. He's tall, good looking with dark, wavy hair.

"Cardinal Gleann sent me," he shouts as he approaches. "We need your help."

If the party knows the cardinal, this shouldn't seem strange. If not, then the cardinal sent Lanie out to find the heroes of the city on the assumption that they had prior experience with the Splinter. He found the party either on the merits of their saving Felric's Redoubt or because of their recent heroic actions.

Lanie tells them the Cardinal had a vision. The Splinter has reappeared (this might be the first the party has heard of it), this time inside an existing Ulcer (Tarukkhâl Fortress in Uzarâg). This has terrifying implications. It seems the Warlord has it, and as one of the Great Fiends, he is unbeatable. Still, the party must try. Felric's Redoubt was bad, but who knows what the Splinter could do in a full-blown Ulcer?

The party hopefully accepts this mission. If not he'll beg, offer them rewards, whatever it takes. If they accept, he reminds them the Warlord is a Great Fiend, invincible and sends them on their way. They shouldn't try to face him in a straight-up battle. Armies have fallen before him.

Dramatic Purpose

This scene gives the characters their quest.

A BOAT TO UZARÂG

You can get to Uzarâg by sea. At least most of the way. Any other path will take much longer, so the characters need a boat because time is of the essence. For instance, taking a boat around Dientor to Köhler can take weeks this time of year, due to the winds.

When the party heads to the docks, read or paraphrase the following:

The docks bustle and explode with activity. Two and three-masted ships, some with more than one-hundred oars, line the piers. Men throw cargo into holds, and heave bags up gangplanks. Seagulls screech and wheel overhead. In the distance, two oxen pull on ropes attached to a large crane, swinging a crate over a waiting ship.

There is only one ship heading in that direction. It's called Kregan's Hope. The party can book passage for 1 PP each. The ship will set sail in three days.

Dramatic Purpose

This is a straightforward connective scene. It gets the characters on to the next encounter.

THE VACATION

When the party boards the ship to leave, read or paraphrase the following:

The Proreus cries out orders and men around the deck jump to. Sailors cast off lines and scramble aboard. The gangplank is pulled in and rowers man the sweeps. The giant oars pull the ship out of the dock and out into the harbor. Topsmen scramble up the shrouds to the mast and heave on the lines. The sail unfurls, catching the wind and pulling the ship forward.

The hold opens and a squat, bearded person scrambles up a ladder, followed by another and another. Soon, ten stout Dwarves stand on the deck, swaying like drunks. Slightly green, they stare out across the sea.

Dwarves at sea. Somehow, the sight is disconcerting. Probably more to the Dwarves than to you.

The Dwarves are from Felric's Redoubt. They've been saving their money for some time and have now all managed to pay their own wergild. It's tradition for Dwarves to pay their clans for their own death before they're allowed to undertake any risky personal business.

So having paid, the Dwarves have embarked on a vacation. For these and many Dwarves, this means reclaiming their people's treasures from Uzarâg.

Act One

But there's more to it than that. The Warlord killed Saint Kûlan, and the story is known as Kûlan's Lament. Every Dwarf wants to make the Warlord pay for this. It's known as the Great Revenge.

There are about forty Dwarves. Their leader is named Khelinûl.

Allow the characters to roleplay this first meeting as much as they'd like.

Dramatic Purpose

This scene is about role-playing and mood. Here we set the scene for the sea voyage to come. The characters also have a bit of opportunity to meet the minor players in the story and interact.

You're belowdecks when a sudden, whistling rise in wind hits. The ship heaves sideways in the water as lines and canvas snap and crack in a sudden gale. A moment later the rain hits, drumming on the deck above you with a steady beat.

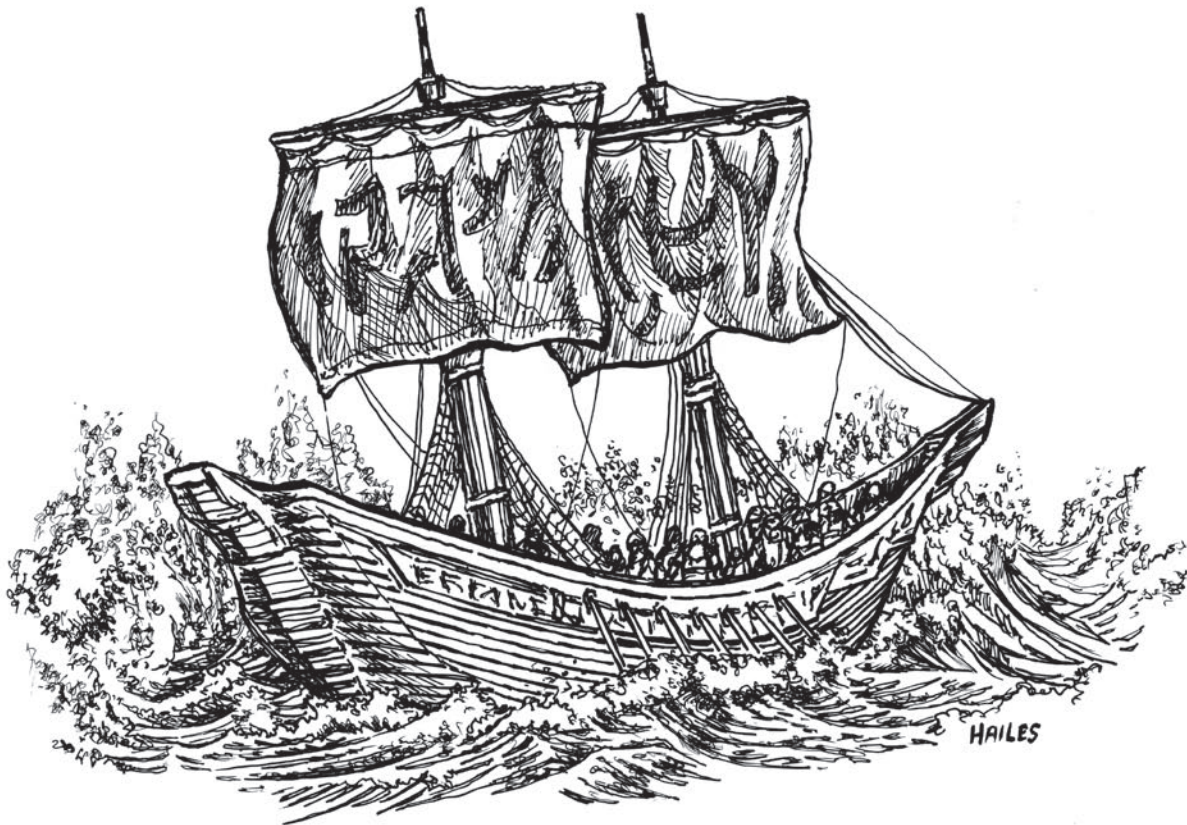
Give the players an opportunity to go above deck. For those that do:

The wind whips the sea into larger and larger waves, spraying a stinging spray across the already-slick deck. In the tops, five sailors try to furl the sails as the men below heave on lines. Other sailors rush about stowing gear. Ten lone oarsmen work the sweeps, fighting to keep the ship facing the wind.

THE SQUALL

After two days of sea travel, read or paraphrase the following:

The players can help save the ship if they like. The Dwarves are smart enough to stay belowdecks where they can't make matters worse.



Act One

The waves are wild. It's a Reflex Save (DC 15) to keep on the deck while trying any other task. They must make these Saves during the first few rounds, while trying to help the sailors.

If someone goes overboard, there are two chances to throw them a line, which is a Ranged Attack (AC 15). It's a Climbing Check (DC 20) to hold on long enough to make it onboard. Those in the water must succeed in a Swimming Check (DC 20) to stay up for each throw.

After they are on deck a few rounds, one of the spars snaps, sending one man crashing to deck and two into the sea. Like most sailors, they can't swim, and the one on deck will slide off if no one saves him. It takes a Balance Check (DC 25) to get to him in time, and a Reflex Save (DC 15) to keep from going overboard. Use the rules above if characters try to save the ones in the water. Since they can't swim, there's only one chance.

As the storm progresses, the ship starts to founder and one of the men on the pump goes down with a snapped ankle. It takes a Reflex Save (DC 15) to make it to the pump and a Strength Check (DC 5) to work the station.

As soon as that settles, a large surge slams the whipstaff into the pilot, nearly sending him overboard. A Balance Maneuver (DC20) with a corresponding Reflex Save (DC 15) will get the character there in time.

Finally, the squall ends.

Dramatic Purpose

This is a dramatic skill-oriented scene. It gives the characters the opportunity to be heroic in a set piece that doesn't involve mundane combat.

A QUIET MOMENT

Some time during the voyage, when the characters are resting, read or paraphrase the following:

As you sit there, alone in your thoughts, Khelinûl walks up to you, a cask under one arm, flagons tied on a string hanging from a hand. He sets the keg down and pulls out the bung, replacing it with a spout. He then pours an ale and hands it over.

"Don't worry," he says with a wide smile. "It ain't Darlan Gok."

Roleplay this conversation as much as the characters like. The Dwarf is in the mood to talk about Uzarâg and its history. This band follows a rumor of the most powerful Dwarven artifact, the Fell Hammer. Legend says the Warlord carried it while conquering Uzarâg.

This is a great opportunity to talk a bit about the difference between a fortress and a dungeon. If your players are the type to set off an alarm and get themselves killed, here's a good opportunity to make sure they're warned.

Dramatic Purpose

This is a roleplaying scene. It allows characters to bond with the Dwarves on a more personal level, so their eventual plight means something. It also gives players new to the world some time to gather information relevant to the adventure without weathering painful exposition.

FINALLY, LAND

When the characters are ready to move on, read or paraphrase the following:

After three days of sailing, you hear the cries of birds in the air. Climbing up on deck, you find several seagulls circling.

The wind isn't favorable at the moment and the sails are furled. All the sailors man the sweeps, pulling the ship forward heave after heave. You squint off into the distance and out there, you can just make out the mouth of a river.

Apparently, the captain is a fine navigator.

The ships pull for two days up the river, then stops. The captain tells the party this is the end of the line.

The Dwarves share the same path as the Player Characters. They're happy to travel together, will even suggest it. They feel a bit responsible for non-Dwarves entering Uzarâg.

Dramatic Purpose

This is another connective scene. It moves the plot forward onto the next encounter.

Act One

ORCS

After the characters have traveled a bit, read or paraphrase the following:

The path into the mountains is long and hard, but the Dwarves show you the way expertly, as if they've done this before. Leading you carefully up defile and pass, around the major cities, they pull the group along, deeper into these frozen waves of crinkled stone, into the heart of their fallen kingdom.

On the third day, the sun falls slowly behind glaciated peaks, bathing the entire area in oranges, then reds, then indigos. Soon, night falls.

Just as you prepare camp, one of the Dwarves calls out in alarm. You look to the east and can make out a horde of Orcs boiling out of depressions and around corners. Their numbers are breathtaking, at least one-hundred strong. The Dwarves scream and cry, banging hammers against shields, rushing joyously into battle.

Veteran Orcs: orc warrior 3; CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 3d8+3; hp 16; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; Base Atk/Grp +3/+6; Atk +7 melee (1d8+3/19-20, longsword); Full Atk +7 melee (1d8+3/19-20, longsword); SA –; SQ Darkvision, light sensitivity; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will -1; Str 17, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Listen +1, Spot +1; Alertness, Weapon Focus (Longsword).

Possessions: Breastplate, Heavy Wooden Shield, Longsword.

After the PCs have killed twenty Orcs, the battle ends. The Dwarves kill the wounded Orcs, unless the party argues. The Dwarves will argue back, as they feel killing Orcs is a duty to God and Mortality.

The Orcs have little of value.

Dramatic Purpose

This encounter allows characters a fun, easy fight. With these, the players feel like their characters are powerful and accomplished, which has wish-fulfillment purposes. The argument with the Dwarves is the only place where real trouble is likely.

ON CORRUPTED GROUND

As they continue the next day, read or paraphrase the following:

As the sun reaches noon, you crest a ridge of mountains. For a moment, you all stand there, the wind blowing glacial snow around you, buffeting you without whistling. Scouring exposed flesh like a blacksmith's file.

In front of you, ridge after folded ridge of mountains stretch, purpling in the distance. The peaks gleam white and pristine in the cool, high air, the valley's bumpy carpet of green so brilliant it hurts the eyes.

And yet a pall hangs over the entire sight. This is a permanent Ulcer. There is no doubt. You've crossed the border from the Mortal Realm.

You are now officially in Hell.

When the party pushes forward, move on to Act Two.

Dramatic Purpose

In most adventure fiction, the hero must venture into a new world. This scene serves that purpose, with the party entering the "new world" of Uzarâg and it marks the end of Act One. The story is in place. It's time to see how it plays out.

Why Such Primitive Ships?

Many game worlds use Age of Sail ships, but those ships only evolved after the invention of gunpowder, when cannons revolutionized sailing. Magic in *The Echoes of Heaven* isn't prevalent enough to pick up the slack. Therefore, the ships here are of medieval design, which means little better than Greek ships. That's why we use Greek nautical terms in *The Echoes of Heaven*. For instance, kubernetes pilots the ship and acts as master, a keleustes is in charge of the rowers, and the proreus is an officer that assists the captain.

Act Two

Act Two

Act Two contains everything that happens from the moment the characters start their trek through Uzarâg until the last moment before the final fight for the Ulcer. The majority of the adventure will probably take place in this act.

Dramatic Purpose

Act Two is the confrontation of the story. It's also been called the "blue collar work" of storytelling. In Act Two we cover all the meat of the adventure, everything that happens from the actual adventure beginning until the climax. Act Two should start with a complication, early on, to make matters worse than the characters initially thought. Typically, there's an Act Two twist at about the halfway point. This carries the story in a new direction. Act Two usually ends with a disaster or a revelation, the purpose of which is to destroy the character's carefully-laid plans and take things to the edge of despair.

AN ORCISH CAMP

The journey across Uzarâg is long and painful. The characters can take neither the underground roads (they probably couldn't get to them anyway) nor the surface roads. To start the act, read or paraphrase the following:

After you pass into the Dwarven kingdom, those of you without the Divine Spark find your sleep fitful. It's as if you are plagued by nightmares you can't remember.

After two excruciating days of mountain climbing, one of the Dwarven scouts comes running back. He speaks with the Dwarven leadership for some time in harsh whispers before Khelinûl waves you over.

You trot up to the conference, snow crunching under your boots, and Khelinûl nods at you. "More Orcs," he says.

The Orcs are sleeping. The Dwarves want help butchering them in their sleep. What the party does is up to them. Let the moral dilemma play out as it will.

There are twenty orcs:

Veteran Orcs: orc warrior 3; CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 3d8+3; hp 16; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC12, touch 10, flat-footed 17; Base Atk/Grp +3/+8; Atk +9 melee (1d8+3/19-20, longsword); Full Atk +9 melee (1d8+3/19-20, longsword); SA –; SQ Darkvision, light sensitivity; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will -1; Str 17, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Listen +1, Spot +1; Alertness, Weapon Focus (Longsword).

Possessions: Breastplate, Heavy Wooden Shield, Longsword.

When the fight is over, regardless of its nature, the Dwarves divvy out the loot. The party's cut is 600 GP.

Dramatic Purpose

This is a relatively easy fight. It's meant to allow the players to feel powerful and to attach their wish fulfillment to their characters.

PLANNING

After the fight, read or paraphrase the following:

That night you camp in a wide defilade sprinkled with tall pines. The Dwarves set guards, although after the rest drift asleep, you wonder if the raucous snoring distracts the sentries.

You've just settled in when Khelinûl walks over to your section of the camp. He heaves himself, down onto a rock.

"You'll need to do the last section of this journey alone. I'm sorry. I don't know for sure if you can manage it."

The Dwarves are headed to the capital, which is far from the fortress. He's willing to go somewhat out of their way, but they don't have time to travel all over the country. He's telling the characters now

Act Two

because it has occurred to him that they might wish to head home if they knew.

Dramatic Purpose

This is the Act Two complication. So far, things have been easy with the help of the Dwarves, but that won't last for long. Soon enough, they'll be on their own.

Dramatic Purpose

This is an easy fight. It's meant to allow the characters to feel powerful and to allow the players to attack their wish-fulfillment.

THE TORTURED DWARF

After the characters finish roleplaying the last encounter, read or paraphrase the following:

You walk across a rolling snowfield, high in the glaciers of Uzarâg. You push through drifts of waist-high snow like freezing pits of quicksand, pulling at your legs and dragging you down. Even with an army of Dwarves, it pulls, drags, and weighs on your boots with giant sheathes of snow.

You drive yourself over a rise and can make out a splash of scarlet in the next depression between drifts. Moving forward, you see a horrific sight in the snow.

This Dwarf was tortured by the Orcs and tossed out here to die, which he did. Now he's a Zombie, and the party is the first victim. Whoever approaches the creature first will be suddenly attacked. The Zombie's entire goal seems to be killing one individual to get revenge on the living.

Empowered Dwarf Zombie: CR 2; Medium undead; HD 6d12+3; hp 42; Init -1; Spd 30 ft.; AC11, touch 9, flat-footed 11; Base Atk/Grp +3/+7; Atk +7 melee (1d6+2 slam); Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+2 slam); SA —; SQ Single actions only, damage reduction 5/slashing, darkvision 60 ft., undead traits; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +5; Str 15, Dex 9, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Skills and Feats: Toughness.

Possessions: Ruined equipment.

The Zombie has no treasure.

PARTING WAYS

When you are ready, read or paraphrase the following:

Days later, Khelinûl stops and goes down on one knee ahead of you. He's near the top of a snowy ridge, staring over the crest. The wind is stronger here, whipping snow crystals that sting the face and eyes. Khelinûl looks back at you and you can see that the ice has already built up on the left side of his hair and beard. He gestures for you to come forward, but also to stay down.

You creep up to the ridge in the crouch and look over. Although you expect to see an entire army below, all you see is a pass, the floor just under the snowline. Along it is a road, beaten and well traveled, heading north and south.

"This is where we part," Khelinûl says.

The party is now ten theoretical days from their destination. So far things have been easy because the Dwarves have several expert mountaineers. Now the party must go it alone.

The character with the highest skill may make one climbing check a day. They need to achieve a total DC of 200, with each check adding to a cumulative total. If they can achieve 200 in five days, that's when they arrive at the fortress. If it takes them fifteen, then so be it.

The winds average 10 MPH and the temperature on this part of the glacier averages 20 degrees, which with wind chill makes an effective temperature of -17 degrees. That equates to a Fortitude save once every 10 minutes (DC 15, +1 per previous check), taking 1d6 points of nonlethal damage on each failed save. A character who has the Survival skill may receive a bonus on this saving throw and may be able to apply this bonus to other characters as well (see the skill description). Characters wear-

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ing winter clothing only need check once per hour for cold and exposure damage.

A character who takes any nonlethal damage from cold or exposure is beset by frostbite or hypothermia (treat him as fatigued). These penalties end when the character recovers the nonlethal damage he took from the cold and exposure.

Magical protection from cold, such as by the clothing from Act One, can aid the Fortitude save.

Dramatic Purpose

This is the moment of truth for the characters. From here on out, the characters are on their own.

THE DREAMING

On the second night after the parting, pick a character with no Divine Spark and read or paraphrase the following:

In your dreams a thousand savage weapons slash in a thousand savage hands. Vicious teeth tear at your flesh, a howling wind at your soul. After an endless torment contained in the moment between blinks, you begin ripping at your clothes, your flesh, anxious to flay yourself alive if only it will bring the end nearer. As the flesh comes away, you find only the foul hide of a Cambion Demon.

You scream.

This happens to *all* characters without the Divine Spark. After you read the description to one, let the players of other affected characters know they have similar dreams.

It starts that night. It begins as a Fortitude Save (DC 14). If the character fails, he gains a -1 penalty. If he succeeds, this increases to DC 15 the next week, 16 the week after, etc. Every time the character fails his save, it resets to 14. Each time the character fails, the penalty increases by -1. The characters get worse and worse until they get a good night's sleep. They must succeed with a natural 20 to get good night's sleep inside Uzarâg.

Dramatic Purpose

This is one of the major challenges of Uzarâg. Here it attacks the characters for the first time.

THE HOWLING

On days five, seven, twelve, fifteen, twenty, twenty-three, and every day after that, the Howling strikes if the characters remain outside. Read or paraphrase the following:

As you cross a ridge, the wind suddenly surges around you, screaming and roaring in your ears, blowing straight through the warmest clothes. On the wind, you can just make out the sound of a scream.

The first attack hits as a ten foot fall. The characters must make a Tumbling or Dex Check (DC 20) or actually fall another thirty feet off the ridge.

Every time the Howling hits outside, the damage increases by five feet.

Dramatic Purpose

This is one of the most immediate threats of Uzarâg. The Howling can kill the party instantly if they don't avoid high-risk areas.

THE ICE CLIFF

At the halfway point, read or paraphrase the following:

You stumble forward in a wind that seems to drain the heat straight from your bones. The ice crystals sting your eyes as they blow in a blinding mist off the ridge ahead of you. You stumble forward, only just seeing the edge in time and staggering to a halt.

In front of you a large cliff looms, made out of blue, crystalline ice, like wavering glass. Below, you can just make out a snow field, hundreds of feet below your perch.

The cliff merges into even more icy mountains on either side. If you were to go around, it would add days, if not weeks, to your journey.

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It takes four Climbing Checks to make it down the wall. Due to the ice, the DC is 30. If they use ropes and cut hand holds and spikes, it takes 1 minute per piton, and one piton is needed per 3 feet of distance. As with any surface that offers handholds and footholds, a wall with pitons in it has a DC of 15. In the same way, a climber with a handaxe or similar implement can cut handholds.

If someone falls, the next person on the line must make an immediate Climbing Check to hold on (DC + 10). Success indicates that they catch the falling character, but his or her total weight, including equipment, cannot exceed the catcher's heavy load limit or he automatically falls. If he fails his Climb check he fails to stop the character's fall and begins falling as well. The next person in line can attempt to stop the fall, but all characters falling add their weight together. It's a DC 10 reflex save to cut the rope, -1 for each additional character pulled clear before the fall reaches the cutting character.

The cliff is 200 feet tall.

Dramatic Purpose

This is a very difficult obstacle and there's a decent chance that a party member could die here. It shows that not all threats in Uzarâg involve Orcs.

TARUKKHÂL FORTRESS

When the characters arrive at the fortress, read or paraphrase the following:

Tarukkhâl Fortress. From the descriptions of the Dwarves, you can make it out, but to an untrained eye it would look like any other ruin in the mountain chain. The sides of the peak are rugged but in places surmountable. Steam and smoke rises from vents in the side, looking for all the world like natural geysers. Ice and snow turn the granite bones white. A broken wall lies in rubble around the perimeter.

This is it. All of your journeys have brought you to this place. Inside is the Splinter, and the end of your quest. But as the souls of a thousand dead Dwarves can tell you, inside also lies death.

History of the Fortress

Built toward the tail end of the Dark Ages. The Dwarves completed the primary construction 2732 PI. After that, several additional projects increased or decreased the size of the fortress, mostly in the form of outbuildings.

These outbuildings, long since lost and fallow, played a large role in the Age of War. During this period Tarukkhâl often served as the rallying point for attacks into the lands of the Elves of the Brine Sea to the east (now the Elven-Dwarven Alliance). At times, thousands of Dwarven soldiers mustered here, and there were stretches where the defenses were tested every year.

After the Age of War the Dwarves tore down many of these outbuildings and external fortifications. But just because they presented less of an aggressive front didn't mean that the place was easy to defeat. With its well-defended stair and massive walls, only the most determined attack could make it inside, and there were determined armies. Time after time, the Elves to the east brought war to Uzarâg, and vice versa. Even after the Elves learned

You Aren't Dead Until You're Warm and Dead

There's one little fact that might come into play in Uzarâg. As modern doctors say, "You aren't dead until you're warm and dead." If characters would die out in the cold during this adventure, you might allow them to eke by just long enough for a magical healer to arrive. They might be beyond help with medical skill, but hypothermia could very well keep them alive long enough for magical healing. This isn't a certain thing, but it can make for a vivid scene from a story standpoint.

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the secret of the rear entrance, determined assaults weren't enough to make it through the Dwarven-engineered death zones.

But when the Warlord came, all of that changed.

The Warlord blasted through Uzarâg, seizing everything in sight. The Dwarves made their famous exodus and the Elves their even more famous rescue. In the end the entire kingdom fell to the Warlord, becoming an Ulcer over time.

Since then the Warlord, for all his fury and military bent, has ruled with a relatively light hand. He knows Orcs too well to try to manage the day to day politics of their tribes. Add to this his long life and one realizes why he rarely knows the names of any but the most powerful chieftains. His underlings can handle the details. As long as tribes continue to pay tribute and answer his battle-calls, he couldn't care less who ruled them.

This is the only reason Vinis has been able to take over Tarukkhâl. The Warlord knows vaguely that something Undead rules the fortress now, and his advisors know Vinis's nature and name, but since he's taken command, he's paid tribute early and answered the one call to arms quickly and efficiently. The Warlord, as much as he's aware of the Water Wraith, likes him.

And that could mean the fall of everything.

Heating and the Smelters

Dwarves are relatively resistant to heat and cold and so there are few fireplaces inside the fortress. Instead, the smelting furnaces channel their heat out into vents throughout the fortress. The smelters are low in the building and the rising heat circulates air pulled in from the outside. It's not particularly efficient and most of the heat is lost through the exhaust. In addition, the top floor is often 30–40 degrees warmer than the bottom, but this puts it well within the comfortable range for most Dwarves.

Fortress vs. Dungeon

Tarukkhâl is a fortress, not a dungeon. Characters may think of it as they would a dungeon because it's mostly underground. However, if they attack it one room at a time, they'll almost certainly die (unless they are very powerful).

In a fortress, all of the defenses are set up to bring their force to bear quickly and lethally on an opposing force. If the characters can take out people quietly until they've eliminated most of the guards, they should be okay. If not, then all the mobile defenses of the place will rally to stop them.

At the end of this act is a roster of all the foes in the fortress, divided out by response troops and stationary troops. Check off the troops that die, so that when the final alarm does sound, you'll know exactly how many troops there are. Stationary troops will hold to their posts no matter what.

It takes about a minute for the guards on a given level to respond. If it seems tactically sound for them to come in piecemeal, you can stagger them in waves. If not, they'll gather and as much as possible come en mass.

Guards one level away take two minutes to respond. Guards farther take an additional minute for every level of distance.

After the alarm has sounded, make sure to check the room before placing Orcs there. If the Master Fortress Foe List at the end of the act shows that they are dead, then there are no Orcs present.

Sleep is probably unwise in the fortress. The characters might be able to hole up safely for a few hours once they've defeated all the response troops, but for the most part, they need to try to finish the entire thing without replenishing spells and the like.

Finding a Way In

It might escape the players, but going in through the front door of a fortress is a very bad idea. Like the gate of a human castle, this is actually the most difficult place to penetrate. If the characters try this, allow Spot Check (DC 15) to spot the defenses. If the players want to try it, so be it, but make sure the characters had the appropriate opportunity to make informed decisions.

The rear entrance is vastly better because it's designed to allow large freight into the fortress. Of course, it's hidden.

Features of the Fortress

The fortress itself is fairly straightforward. Uzarâg has certain features that will affect the adventure, however.

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Reread the section on Ulcers in *The Echoes of Heaven Campaign Setting* if possible. If you don't own that book, the most important fact (aside from the fact that Ulcers are a bit of Hell) is that divination will not work where Ulcers are concerned. Divinations about the Ulcers themselves fail, but also detection spells and the like can't penetrate a surface in an Ulcer. If the characters want to detect something in the next room they might be able to do so through arrow loops and cracked doors, but wide scale divination will be impossible.

There is an average of 50' between floors in the fortress.

Note: *The Dwarves were understandably worried about Elves teleporting inside their fortress. Because of this there are rune throughout that stop any kind of gating or teleporting. Unless the Ulcer itself creates the effect (like the door to hell and the ritual at the end) any spell that transports a character instantly into the fortress will fail. A spell can use the fortress as a starting location, but not an ending location.*

The Changing

All within the borders, except those with a Divine Spark, feel the corrupting energy of the Ulcer. It slowly builds an Infernal Taint in their hearts. If a person is here long enough, he begins to turn into a Cambion. For every week underground, roll a Fortitude Save (DC 11). Every week it increases +1 DC. When the character fails, all stats move one step toward the stats of the cambion associated with his race. They change physically as well.

See *The Lost Kingdom of the Dwarves* for more details.

The Dreaming

The Dreaming comes as horrible nightmares that plague a character in his sleep. Over time, the character will become groggy and exhausted from the lack and this will affect his abilities during the day.

It begins as a as a Fortitude Save (DC 14). If the character fails, he gains a -1 penalty. If he succeeds, this increases to DC 15 the next week, 16 the week after, etc. Every time the character fails his save, it resets to 14. Each time the character fails, the penalty increases by -1. The characters get worse and worse until they get a good night's sleep. They must succeed with a natural 20 to get good night's sleep inside Uzarâg.

The Howling

The Howling attacks the characters throughout the adventure, until the Warlord actually sees them and decides to give them protection for the remainder of their stay. Any time a character enters a room, there is a 5% chance the Howling will find them at some point while they are inside. If they stay in a room long, roll every half hour. When it hits, treat it as a fall along the longest axis of the room or corridor.

The Raging

This is a manifestation of the Warlord's battle rage. All can feel it, a deep anger, buried in their hearts when in the kingdom and underground. Those with the Infernal Taint gain a +2 to all attacks inside the border. Those with the Divine Spark gain a -2 penalty with the rage clashing against their Divine center, distracting and sickening them. All have a worsening of temper.

This bonus is already figured into all enemy stats.

If the Characters are Captured

Unfortunately, it's not unlikely that the characters will lose at some point during this assault. If that happens all is not lost. Vinis suspects the party is coming (they or someone like them has shown up for every other major event in the Splinter's brief history). He wants to question them, but he won't have time until after the ritual is complete. That means the Orcs need to take the party prisoner.

The Orcs will bind what wounds they can and if the party has healing magic, the Orcs will stand over

The Divine Spark

The Divine Spark is a spiritual trait special to *The Echoes of Heaven*. If you are playing in that world, see the *Campaign Setting*, Chapter 2, for more details. If not, you can just assume no characters have it.

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the healer with swords, but they'll let him work. They take the character's weapons, and they try to threaten the characters into giving up their armor, but more complicated armor types they won't try to remove by force (you can't take plate armor off a determined foe without killing him). Eventually they tie the characters up and if the character's have cleared a side room, they put them there with a ten-Orc guard. Otherwise, they put them in the barracks with a guard of the same size. They don't have cells (the dungeon is being used as housing), so the characters should, with careful planning and a little luck, be able to escape and continue the adventure.

The Ritual

Morthorn's plan is to use the Splinter inside an existing Ulcer, creating a runaway effect that will cover the entire world. When it's done, the world will be an Ulcer and Morthorn its lord. Essentially, there will be a new Hell and Morthorn will be the new Bamon, but the Mortal Realm is much closer to Heaven and therefore the new Hell and its new lord will be that much more powerful.

To start the clock at the beginning of Act One would be to declare the characters successes or failures based on how much they'd developed their Climbing Skill. That isn't exactly good storytelling.

So the clock begins seven hours before the characters first lay eyes on the fortress. The ritual takes forty-nine hours to complete. After five hours, the portion that summons Morthorn is done. It's an optional summons, though, and so he won't come unless he senses the ritual ending or someone he doesn't recognize in the ritual chamber. Essentially, he doesn't feel like watching a two-day ritual but he'll come the moment the party or the Warlord appears in the ritual room.

If the party doesn't get there before the ritual ends, Vinis completes it and most likely the world ends. See Act Three for details.

Environs

The fortress sits inside a relatively isolated peak (as isolated as a mountain in a mountain range can be.) When the characters arrive on the scene, sketch out the rough details and allow them to investigate.

1) The Road and the Dungeons of Tarukkhâl

When they first see the road, read or paraphrase the following:

A narrow road creeps up the mountainside through the crumbling remains of an ancient wall. While snow and ice cover the ground on either side, the road itself is cleared, beaten earth. Light steam seems to rise from the surface. A lone Orc trudges up the road as you watch, his thick, powerful legs making an easy task of the climb.

The road splits near the top of the mountain, curling around the side to a low, dark cave. Smoke trickles from the cave mouth.

This is the road up the side of the mountain. Allow the characters to explore the road and the cave as much as they'd like. They'll probably be worried about lookouts, but with the fall of the wall, there aren't many good places for that. And it's cold. A loud enough ruckus will carry into the mountain through the vents and the defenses are fairly solid, so the Orcs haven't bothered with an external sentry.

The Dwarven vents fill shafts under the roads with hot smelter exhaust. Because of this, the roads are clear of snow. This is also why they steam. The roads are warmer than the surrounding area, and pleasant after the trek across the winter peaks.

There is a hidden road that branches off the main. It's hidden by a built-up ridge along the outside and a fake hedge the Orcs still maintain. It leads to the Postern Door (Location 4). Spot Check (DC 28) will spot steam from the hidden road.

It's a Search Check (DC 20) to spot the gate. If they do, read or paraphrase the following:

A slight distortion of heat and perhaps a hint of steam catches your attention. Looking to the left you see the heating effects extend beyond the road, through dense bushes. Something isn't right there.

The bushes are clever works of art, further hidden by the rime of frost. They are very strong and the characters can push on branches without risking snapping any. They swing open on a cleverly

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painted gate to reveal the hidden road that leads to the postern (location 4).

If the characters head to the cave, it's an easy approach. When the characters draw near, read or paraphrase the following:

The cave entrance is wide and low, dark in a deep, sinister way. A foul stench, something the likes of which you've never smelled before, bel-lows from the entrance. A trickle of smoke creeps up from the peak of the entrance.

These were once the dungeons of the fortress (the Dwarves think it's silly putting your dungeons inside, where an escaped prisoner can get the run of the place). Since then the Orcs have turned them into breeding caves, and here are all the females and children of the warriors in the fortress.

There are 200 females and 600 young crammed in the huge chamber 300x300 foot chamber. Once lined with cells, this is now the home of the orc brood.

Female Orcs: orc warrior 1; CR ½; Medium humanoid; HD 1d8+1; hp 5; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC10, touch 10, flat-footed 10; Base Atk/Grp +1/+5; Atk +5 melee (1d6+2, club); Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+2, club); SA –; SQ Darkvision, light sensitivity; AL CE; SV Fort 3, Ref +0, Will -2; Str 14, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Listen +1, Spot +1; Alertness.

Possessions: Club.

Young Orcs: orc warrior 1; CR ½; Small humanoid; HD 1d8+1; hp 5; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC11, touch 11, flat-footed 11; Base Atk/Grp +1/+4; Atk +4 melee (1d2+1, unarmed); Full Atk +4 melee (1d2+1, unarmed); SA –; SQ Darkvision, light sensitivity; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will -2; Str 12, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Listen +1, Spot +1; Alertness.

Possessions: None.

There's nothing of real value inside.

Dramatic Purpose

This is a bit of a red herring. There is a great body of fiction and game materials, almost all of it derivative, that depicts a dangerous guardian at the gate of an underground kingdom. Nothing like that is going on here, and yet upon seeing that cave, most players are going to go straight to "dragon's lair." Throwing off the characters' balance here by upsetting their expectations should help heighten the sense of the unexpected in the adventure to come.

2) Lair

When the characters enter the lair, read or paraphrase the following:



Uzarâg Is Not Moria

Uzarâg is in this game world because it's hard to imagine that all the Dwarven kingdoms would survive when many kingdoms of other races haven't. Logically, the Dwarves had to have at least a couple fallen kingdoms. However, when a surface nation falls, the land goes fallow or is taken over by those who conquered it. When a Dwarven nation falls, the halls and forges remain and something, be it conqueror or Cambion, will eventually take over. That's why it's in this world.

It's in this adventure because it's such an irresistible adventure site.

Of course some parallelism is inevitable, whether intentional, logical, or accidental.

The bottom line is don't allow players to trump you with Tolkien trivia. This isn't Middle Earth. It's your game setting. Make it your own. Still, that being said, this product is yours once you purchase it, and we encourage you to spin facts in any way that heightens your enjoyment of the game.

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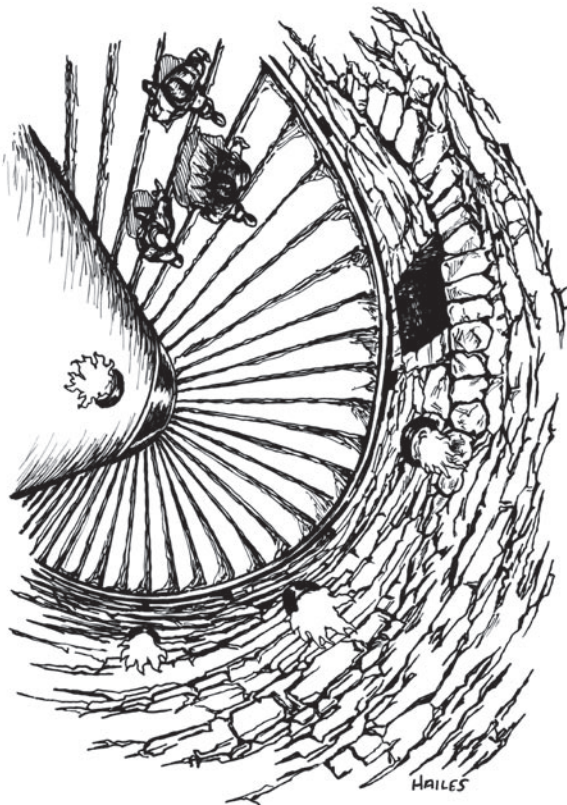
The entrance of the cave is small and cramped, perhaps five feet high and about as wide. When you peer inside, you can smell offal and musk: the smell of animals in close quarters. Whatever the purpose of this cave once was, now something is using it as a home.

Inside live twice as many Dire Boars as the party has members. The Orcs use these boars as mounts. They're domesticated, but only to Orcs. The smell of Mortals sends them into a rage.

Dire Boars: CR 4; Large animal; HD 7d8+21; hp 52; Init +0; Spd 40 ft.; AC15, touch 9, flat-footed 15; Base Atk/Grp +5/+17; Atk +12 melee (1d8+12, gore); Full Atk +12melee (1d8+12, gore); SA ferocity; SQ low-light vision, scent; AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +8; Str 27, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Listen +8, Spot +8; Alertness, Endurance, Iron Will.

Possessions: None.



The boars have no treasure.

Dramatic Purpose

This is a straightforward fight. It's meant to stretch the characters' abilities.

3) Main Gate

When the characters approach the door, read or paraphrase the following:

The gate is imposing.

Built of heavy stone and covered with runes of warding, these double doors rise fifteen feet above you and span ten feet in either direction. No dust or frost touches their surface, and they fit perfectly into worked frames. You have no doubt that these gates could hold off an army of dragons.

They're actually open. The Orcs only seal them when under attack. It takes too much effort to slide the steel bar. They haven't oiled it in centuries.

Going in this way is still a veritable death trap.

Dramatic Purpose

This door entices the characters. The fact that it's open makes it appear to be easy. This gives the players the opportunity to sense a trap solely with their own intellect and hunches, rather than their characters'.

4) Postern Door

When the characters approach the gate, read or paraphrase the following:

This door is huge.

It is made of stone and stands thirty feet high and twenty feet wide. The stone is inscribed with protective runes and the hinges are large and seem to be of exceptional quality. They are inscribed as well.

This door is ajar as well. A child could push it open. This leads to location 29.

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Dramatic Purpose

This is the easy way in. Again, it puts the choice on the abilities of the players not their characters, allowing them the opportunity to personally shine.

“It’s clear. You’re jumpy.”

“They were supposed to be here yesterday. What’s keeping them?”

“Don’t worry. The adventurers will show up soon. The boss hasn’t lied to us yet.”

Level One

This includes everything on the bottom level as well as the stairs that connect the main gate at the top of the fortress to the death traps on the first floor.

5) The Death Stairs

When the characters enter the stairs, read or paraphrase the follow:

The stairs twist down, wide and easy along a central stone pier. Shining brass sconces line the walls, old runes likely protecting them against tarnish and age. Runes line the walls and stairs as well, although you can probably descend without touching any of them.

In the ceiling above you is a large section of smooth stone that looks to be a door, swinging down like an attic stair. You see no latch, but a long, sturdy hinge, also reinforced by runes.

Below, on the wall, you can just make out an arrow loop at the edge of the turn, crossletted for crossbows. You can smell a foul stench of unwashed bodies, neither Human nor Dwarven.

If this is the first entrance of the characters into the fortress, they hear a conversation between two Orcs. The following is in Cambionic. The characters might need to use spells to understand it. Read or paraphrase the following conversation:

Two orcs speak, their voices low, excited.
“What was that?”
“Nothing.”
“I thought I heard something.”

At this point they will look out through the arrow loops. If the characters avoid being seen, the conversation continues.

The characters, who probably still think the Warlord is behind this, will likely assume this means the Warlord lies in wait for them. In actuality, it’s just Vinis, being paranoid, but the party is expected, the fortress ready.

The Orcs are reasonably wary. Once discovered, characters will find themselves pelted with crossbows all the way down. The Orcs are the ones stationed in locations 22, 34, 43, 68, and 88. Once the Orcs in 88 think the entire party is in the stairs, they drop the ball of oil:

It’s a huge wooden ball formed of carefully fitted pieces, and it’s hollow, filled with oil. It attacks as +40 melee (2d10 damage). It must make a Save (DC 10, no bonus) for every person it rolls over. If it breaks it covers them in oil. If ignited, it causes 2d6 fire damage every round for ten rounds. Orcs from 22, 23, 34, 44, 69, and 88 can attack through arrow loops, and all have at least one arrow treated and ready to be flaming. More come in case of alarm.

Dramatic Purpose

This is the Act Two Twist of the main story and it perpetuates the red herring that the characters are up against the Warlord, though it doesn’t state it directly. Now the characters have moved from taking the initiative to losing the initiative. They thought they were the surprise attack, but in reality they are walking into an ambush.

6) The False Hall

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

The stairs open out into a long, ten-foot-wide hall of dull gray stone. Arrow loops lining the walls make this into a gauntlet of enemy fire. At the end of the hall, an iron portcullis stops further progress.

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If the ball hits down here, it must resist at a DC 15 or explode as above. If it explodes, it covers the floor in oil down to 7. If they make it this far, the Orcs from 24 will come to reinforce the arrow loops. If the arrow ignites and the characters are merely standing in it, it causes 1d6 damage every round. The ball must succeed an additional Save (DC 13) if it hits the portcullis.

Lifting or breaking the portcullis is a Strength Check (DC 40).

7) False Kill Zone

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This room is rectangular and bare, surrounded by arrow loops. On the far side, a metal portcullis stands.

Except for shape, this area is the same as area 6.

8) Dead End

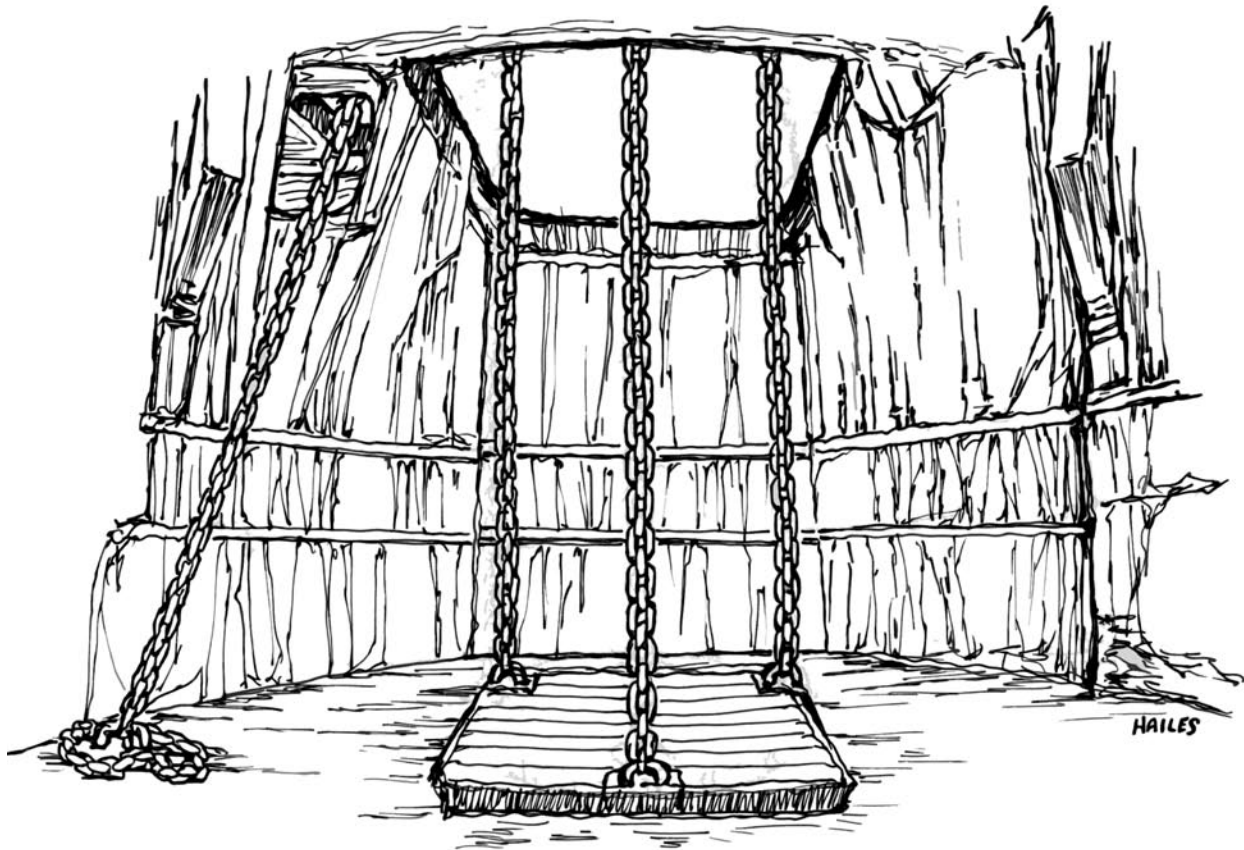
When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This room's bare walls are peppered with arrow loops. On the far side, a metal portcullis leads to safety.

The portcullis is fake, or rather it's real but built solidly into the wall. It doesn't rise. Conceivably, the characters could destroy it, but to do so they'll need to figure out that they should even try.

9) The Real Hall

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:



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Shallow stairs lead down into a ten-foot-wide hall of dull gray stone. Arrow loops lining the wall make this hall into a gauntlet of enemy fire. At one end of the hall, an iron portcullis stops further progress, on the other, a short flight of steps lead to the obvious backside of a secret door.

If the party makes it this far, the Orcs from 24 will come to reinforce the arrow loops.

Lifting or breaking the portcullis is a Strength Check (DC 40).

10) The Real Kill Zone

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This room is rectangular and bare, surrounded by arrow loops. On the far side, a metal portcullis stands.

Except for the shape, this is the same as area 9.

11) And Out

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This room's bare walls are peppered with arrow loops. On the far side, a metal portcullis leads out.

Except for shape, this is the same as area 6. The portcullis is real.

12–21) Guard's Walk

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This nondescript hallway has crossletted arrow loops along the inside, facing out into a kill zone. A platform gives defenders elevation on people on the other side.

These halls are empty unless the enemy is defending the fortress.

There are garderobes off 13.

22) Lift

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This room has arrow loops along the east wall, facing into a kill zone. A platform about three feet high allows defenders elevation on people on the other side of the loops. Hallways lead north and south along the east wall.

Along the south wall, a large wooden section of floor hangs from the ceiling by chains. Rails run from the wooden section up through the hole in the ceiling. A heavy cable of rope hangs through the ceiling in the southwest corner.

Just north of that a large spiral stair leads up through a bore in the stone of the mount.

There are eight Orcs here. See the Master Fortress Foe List at the end of this act for more details. They carry 104 PP between them. The large cable of rope raises the lift. The lift itself weighs 500 pounds and the lift grants a 5 to 1 mechanical advantage, meaning people pulling the rope must pull five times farther than the lift rises, but they lift only one fifth the weight. Usually, several Orcs man it at once so the weight of the materials lifted isn't too great.

23) Guard Room

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This room centers around a table and six chairs. Halls lead out the north and the south, along the left wall.

On the east wall, steel double doors stand with a huge reinforced bar with smaller doors on either side. To the north a single door stands near the east wall. Opposite, a huge wooden double door stands, also with a huge bar.

There are eight Orcs here. See the Master Fortress Foe List at the end of this act for more details. They carry 8 CP, 16 SP between them.

24) Barracks

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

Act Two

The stench in this room is incredible, a reek of unwashed bodies, almost like rotting feces and mold. This room is huge and the series of bunks, three high, stretches off into the darkness.

There are twenty Orcs here. See the Master Fortress Foe List at the end of this act for more details. Between the Orcs and various belongings, there are 615 GP.

25 A and B) Closet

This is a simple closet, filled with old equipment the Orcs didn't want to carry out.

26) North Guard Walk

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This hall has a raised platform along the south wall, running in front of a series of crossletted arrow loops. Three cranks, spaced along the wall, seem to be made to lift something heavy.

There are three Orcs here. See the Master Fortress Foe List at the end of this act for more details. They carry 3 CP and 27 PP between them.

27) South Guard Walk

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This hall has a raised platform along the north wall, running in front of a series of crossletted arrow loops. Two cranks, spaced along the wall, seem to be made to lift something heavy.

The cranks hold a series of portcullises recessed into the ceiling above the postern hall. The Orcs only drop them in case of assault.

There are three Orcs here. See the Master Fortress Foe List at the end of this act for more details. They carry 30 CP, 165 GP between them.

28) Storeroom

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This door opens into a wide hall, flanked on either side by curtains, faded blue and heavy with age. They stretch out into the darkness, but you can make out a left turn in the distance.

Usually unguarded, there are currently 10 Orcs here, listening for movement on the road. Lots of supplies here too.

See the Master Fortress Foe List at the end of this act for more details. The Orcs carry 750 SP and 650 GP between them.

These Orcs were set here by Vinis to guard the door into the Underground Road. He's afraid that the Warlord will come investigate their work here. The Orcs aren't happy about it, but they don't think the Warlord will kill them. He'll have no reason to suspect anything amiss unless he discovers the ritual.

29 Postern Hall

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This is a long hall, wide and worked in fine, smooth stones. Horizontal banners hang across the hall, adorned with Dwarvish clan sigils. Under each banner you can see a long, thin crease in the floor. Runes line the wall along the ceiling and floor.

The banners hide the portcullises, and the creases are where they fit into the floor. See area 26. All the portcullises are up.

If this is the first entrance of the characters into the fortress, they hear a conversation between two Orcs. The following is in Cambionic. The characters might need to use spells to understand it. Read or paraphrase the following conversation:

Two orcs speak, their voices low, excited.

"What was that?"
"Nothing."
"I thought I heard something."

At this point they will look out through the arrow loops. If the characters avoid being seen, the conversation continues.

Act Two

“It’s clear. You’re jumpy.”

“They were supposed to be here yesterday. What’s keeping them?”

“Don’t worry. The adventurers will show up soon. The boss hasn’t lied to us yet.”

The characters, who probably still think the Warlord is behind this, will likely assume this means the Warlord lies in wait for them. In actuality, it’s just Vinis, being paranoid, but the party is expected, the fortress ready.

The Orcs haven’t had to fend off a real assault from this entrance in years. Other than the above conversation, they aren’t very alert.

Dramatic Purpose

This is the other way to discover Act Two Twist of the main story, and it perpetuates the red herring that the characters are up against the Warlord, though it doesn’t state it directly. Now the characters have moved from taking the initiative to losing the initiative. They thought they were the surprise attack, but in reality they are walking into an ambush.

This large hall is filled with long tables and benches. The stink of unwashed Orcs drifts through the air, and a series of large fireplaces line the far wall. On the same wall is the door you just used and on the left wall, doors leads out. This room seems to be designed more for utility than comfort or design.

There are twenty Orcs here. See the Master Fortress Foe List at the end of this act for more details. They carry 663 GP between them.

31) Guard’s Pantry

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

The reek flows over you in a wave the moment you open this door. It’s so powerful you choke, and even breathing through your mouth just makes it feel sick and slimy. Your eyes water as you stare inside and it isn’t long before you can see what’s making the smell. Bodies.

Most of them are the bodies of animals, but there are some older remains that you aren’t sure about. It looks like they might not have had four legs before death.

30) Soldiers Hall

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

There is nothing further of note here.



Act Two

32) Guard's Buttery

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

Barrel after barrel fills this otherwise unadorned room.

This is mostly brackish water and rancid ale, but there is one cask of Darlan Gok hidden in back, containing 100 gallons.

33) The Underground Road

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This large, wide road leads off into the darkness. The roof is arched and paved in tightly-fitted stone, so well knit that they barely show a seam.

Looking closely, you see that every tenth stone or so is inscribed with a rune. You aren't sure the full purposes of these runes, but considering the quality of the road, they must have preservative powers.

This leads off to other fortresses and cities. Anyone venturing out onto it is certain to be killed by the Howling.

Dramatic Purpose

From this point on, most of the Dramatic Purposes will be handled on a level by level basis, instead of room by room.

This level is about the front line fortress defenses. Here the characters must find a way through the opening defenses. This level is about characters using their tactics to overcome the guards one group at a time without setting off the alarm. If they do, then this level becomes about the hard lesson of fighting an entire fortress at once.

Level Two

This level is devoted to more practical industrial purposes. Here are the fortresses smelting furnaces, smithy, and armory.

34) Lift

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

Along the south wall, a large open section of floor stands with chains hanging through from above. Rails run from the wooden section up through the hole in the ceiling. A heavy cable of rope hangs through the ceiling and floor in the southwest corner.

Just north of that a large spiral stair leads down through a bore in the stone of the mount.

To the east there is a simple room that seems to be designed around a wide stone column in the middle. There must be a stairway or the like running through because a circle of tiered platforms allows archers to fire through arrow loops at whatever is inside.

A large double door leads out to the north. Smaller single doors lead out to the south and east.

There are two Orcs here. See the Master Fortress Foe List at the end of this act for more details. They carry 240 GP between them.

35) Smithy

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

The hot smell of burning coals pervades this room, the vapors leaving through vents in the top of the arched roof. Four large forges and a dozen anvils are positioned around this room. Barrels with various cooling fluids stand in the corners. A door leads out through the north wall and again on the east.

Standing in this room, sullenly working the billows and forges, hammering on the anvils, stand four bedraggled dwarves. Their clothes hang in tatters, their beards wild and untamed. Their eyes are dark hollows in their skull. They look up when you enter, but your presence doesn't seem to register. They go back to work.

These Dwarves are slaves. See the Master Fortress Foe List at the end of this act for more details.

Act Two

The Dwarves aren't really fit to fight, but they will if given the chance.

36) Storage

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This wide, shallow room is filled with crates and barrels. Piles of scrap metal line one wall. Fresh bar stock stands in the corner. It doesn't take more than a cursory glance to realize these are the supplies for the smithy.

There is nothing more of note in this room.

37) Smelter Furnaces

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

Three large furnaces stand against one wall. Low piles of coal and wood lean against the northern wall, and if the coal marks are any indication, they are getting very low. Six bedraggled dwarves work the one running furnace.
This room swelters in a near-unbearable heat.

The Dwarves who built the fortress weren't satisfied with forging pre-refined metals. They preferred to smelt their own, and since the smelters heat the fortress the Orcs have kept it going.

There are six Dwarf slaves here. See the Master Fortress Foe List at the end of the act for more details. These Dwarves aren't really fit to fight, but they will anyway.

The Dwarves have been here long enough to know something is up. The Orcs don't usually keep Dwarven slaves for long, and the ones here seem to be disappearing, but still, it's as if the Orcs are saving them for something. The Dwarves aren't disappearing quickly enough for it to be Orcish sport. The Orcs are holding back for some reason.

38) Armory

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This long room is filled with weapon racks and armor trees. Most of them are empty, but there are still a few pieces on the racks. Most of these are rusted or moldering.

There is a full suit of Dwarven plate, shield and a hammer in one corner. No one without a Divine Spark can see it. For everyone else, their eye just slides past and their mind edits out the image. The same is true for the sense of touch.

Dwarves have cleared out this room before, but a year ago a Dwarven Paladin was trapped on this level. He knew about the effect in the room from stories told by the Dwarves who'd first discovered it on entering. Knowing he was going to die, he took off his armor, shield, and weapon, which he'd had blessed, and put them here. He didn't want them touched by Orcs, and he knew he wouldn't survive. He fought his way out with backup weapons and died on level one.

+2 *Dwarven Full Plate*, +2 *Heavy Metal Shield*, and a +2 *Dwarven Warhammer*.

39) Interrogation Room

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This room reeks of unwashed bodies and waste, but the stench of unwashed Dwarf bodies seems almost pleasant. Pallets of rotting cloth and straw form makeshift beds in the corners. A waste bucket leans against one wall, overflowing. Empty racks by the walls and two tables with restraints seem to indicate a more sinister use for this room.

Three dwarves lie on scattered pallets. They don't turn or look at you and clotted blood and burns mark their limbs. You can just make out the smell of untended wounds, now that you see them.

These are three wounded slaves. It takes 20 HP to heal each, double that for Healers. Any healing magic will keep them from dying.

See the Master Fortress Foe List at the end of this act for more details. These Dwarves aren't fit to fight, even healed, but they will anyway.

Act Two

40) Guard Room

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

A large table dominates the center of the room, lined with benches. Patches of crude leather are scattered on the table. A door leads out the other side.

The patches are crude playing cards. There are six Orcs here. See the Master Fortress Foe List at the end of this act for more details. They carry 214 SP, 209 GP between them.

41) Stairs

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This bare room has a single, large spiral stair, leading up into a bore through the rock of the ceiling.

There is nothing special about this room.

42) Garderobes

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

The hall leads off into the darkness, and as you walk, you make out a familiar smell. Garderobes.

There is nothing special about this hall.

Dramatic Purpose

This level is about making the fortress a living, breathing place. Here we see some of the important rooms necessary for making the fortress run, and it therefore makes the fortress seem more realistic. The opposition here is pretty straightforward.

Level Three

This level once housed all the guest and officer quarters for the fortress. The Orcs mostly use it to house their Sergeants.

43) The Lift

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This room opens into a larger room to the east.

Along the south wall, a large open section of floor stands with chains hanging through from above and rails run up through the hole in the ceiling. A heavy cable of rope hangs through the ceiling and floor in the southwest corner.

Just north of that a large spiral stair leads up through a bore in the stone of the mount.

For details on the lift, see area 22.

44) Sitting Room

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This large room opens into a slightly smaller open area to the west. In the center, a long column of stone rises. Risers surrounding the column allow access to arrow loops facing inward.

A single door stands near the center of each of the north, south, and east walls. They are sturdy and made from fine wood. Reinforcing runes seem to have preserved them against age.

Reliefs on the walls have stood against an unknown number of attempts to mar them, the effects still visible in faint scratches along the surface. A large hearth burns in the northeast corner. The room would have a comfortable, friendly look if it had furniture.

The reliefs are guarded against damage. Only long, concerted effort can even scratch them.

There are eight Orcs here. See the Master Fortress Foe List at the end of this act for more details. They carry 815 GP between them.

45–47) Halls

When the characters enter these areas, read or paraphrase the following:

This hallway is clean, the stones perfectly fitted so as to allow comfortable passage in the slightest slippers. The ceiling is arched and runes line the top and bottoms of the wall. They look more decorative than magical.

Act Two

There is nothing special about these halls.

48–56) Guest Rooms

When the characters enter these areas, read or paraphrase the following:

This room seems to be some form of bed chamber. You don't know the room's original purpose, but now the bare place has a small bed and bedding piled up in one corner. The rest of the place contains piles of debris, clothing, and trinkets so hodge-podge that it's impossible to be certain what is trash and what is treasure. The place reeks of Orcs and bodily waste.

Each of these rooms belongs to one Orc sergeant. Roll a die. High means the sergeant is present, low means he's in area 57. For the money possessed by each, see the chart below:

48: 10 CP

49: 75 GP, 10CP

50: 175 GP

51: 10 CP, 55 GP, 75 GP smokey quartz, 75 GP black coral.

52: 75 SP

53 5 PP, 110 GP

54: 10 CP

55 1 CP, 15 GP, 5 PP

56: 100 GP, 5 PP

57 Seneschal's Chambers

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This wide room is decorated with carefully carved sigils and decorative runes. This contrasts the crude table and chairs that have turned it into some sort of communal dining area. A hearth on one side has a spit inside. Debris and improvised dice lay scattered about the place, giving it a used and unkempt look.

This room has no permanent residents. Roll for each of the sergeants and the captain. There's a 50% chance they are here.

58) The Captain's Chamber

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This room is different to the previous areas. The runes and sigils in the walls are, if not polished, at least dusted. A large bed and a thick carpet rest on the floor. A cabinet on one side stands closed. A writing desk leans against the wall to the left. The carpet is obviously new and the bedding is a patchwork of rags. The room is in remarkably good condition. Not only does the current resident take care of this place, every former resident did as well.

The captain lives here. Roll a die. High means the captain is here, low means he's in 57. See the Master Fortress Foe List at the end of this act for details. He carries 55 GP.

59–62) Halls

When the characters enter these areas, read or paraphrase the following:

This hallway is clean, the stones perfectly fitted so as to allow comfortable passage in the slightest slippers. The ceiling is arched and runes line the top and bottoms of the wall. They look more decorative than magical.

There is nothing special about these halls.

61) Garderobes

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

The hall leads off into the darkness, and as you walk, you make out a familiar smell. Garderobes.

There is nothing special about this hall.

63) Guest Room

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

Act Two

This room seems to be some form of bed chamber. You don't know the room's original purpose, but now the bare place has a bed and bedding piled up in one corner. The rest of the place contains piles of debris, clothing, and trinkets so hodgepodge that it's impossible to be certain what is trash and what is treasure. The place reeks of Orcs and bodily waste.

This room belongs to one Orc sergeant. Roll a die. High means the sergeant is present, low means he's in area 57. He carries 10 CP, 90 GP.

64) Stairs

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

You come up through the bore and into a bare room that is adorned only with the all-pervading Dwarven runes and sigils.

There is nothing special about this room.

65) Guest Room

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This room seems to be some form of bed chamber. You don't know the room's original purpose, but now the bare place has a bed and bedding piled up in one corner. The rest of the place contains piles of debris, clothing, and trinkets so hodgepodge that it's impossible to be certain what is trash and what is treasure. The place reeks of Orcs and bodily waste.

This room belongs to one Orc sergeant. Roll a die. High means the sergeant is present, low means he's in area 57. He carries 10 CP, 65 GP.

66) Storeroom Portal

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

As you open this door you expect to see another room. Instead, the door opens out high in the air over an alien landscape. Twisted and blackened spires of rock tower over an ochre and red blotchy stretch of baked desert. Flames and gouts of foul gasses rise from twisted vents in the earth. In the distance, something flies on leathery bat wings, a silhouette of black on a mud-colored sky. The doorway seems to be suspended about a hundred feet above the blasted plain.

This is a portal to Hell. Characters who go through can come back the same way if the door is open and they can fly. Side adventures into Hell are beyond the scope of this work.

67) Guest Room

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:



Act Two

This room seems to be some form of bed chamber. You don't know the room's original purpose, but now the bare place has a bed and bedding piled up in one corner. The rest of the place contains piles of debris, clothing, and trinkets so hodgepodge that it's impossible to be certain what is trash and what is treasure. The place reeks of Orcs and bodily waste.

This room belongs to one Orc sergeant. Roll a die. High means the sergeant is present, low means he's in area 57. He carries 1 CP.

Dramatic Purpose

This will likely be a major second line of defense for the fortress. If the party plays their cards right, they have a decent chance of shattering the defenses on the first level while only putting an alarm out at the very end. If this happens then the Orcish noncoms on this level will need to make their stand here. Once the party gets through this level, the fortress becomes more of a standard dungeon crawl.

Level 4

This level was dedicated to the more cherished elements of Dwarven life, such as art and worship. The Orcs have corrupted or ignored the purpose of most these rooms.

68) The Lift

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

You come in through bored stairs in the floor. Along the south wall, a large open section of floor stands with chains hanging through from above. Rails run up through the hole in the ceiling. A heavy cable of rope hangs through the ceiling and floor in the southwest corner.

To the east, large double doors stand closed. To the west, a smaller door.

The lift operates the same as in 22.

69) Waiting Room

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This room has a wide column of stone running up through the center of the room. Tiered platforms surround this column, granting access to inward-facing arrow loops.

Around this central feature, a large, comfortable room sprawls. The furniture here is a far step above the things you've seen so far. Ornate wooden chairs line the walls and padded stools sit under the tiered platforms. Statues of Dwarven heroes stand in the corners, but someone has added crude plaques to the bottom written in Cambionic.

Ornate double doors, covered in Dwarven runes, stand in the middle of each wall.

Eight shuffling forms, dwarven slaves, evidently, wander around this room.

This room has eight Dwarven Zombies. See the Master Fortress Foe List at the end of this act for more details. These Dwarves were used in Vinis's current experiments to cause the Changing to infect those with the Divine Spark. These are the rejects. They have no treasure.

Dwarven protective runes guard the statues.

After the party finishes with the Zombies, read or paraphrase the following:

Suddenly you hear a commotion of clanking armor and grunted curses. You turn to look through the open doors to the west, hands on your weapons. Before you can move or react, you see a form emerging up the stairs. It takes a moment to recognize it. It's Khelinûl, his armor rent and dented, blood matting his beard. He has a desperate, haunted look, and with him, only three Dwarves remain.

Things have not gone well for the Dwarves. They arrived at the capital only to find the Warlord looking for them. They've never heard of that happening before. The Warlord let them into the capital and then ambushed them with an army of Orcs. Khelinûl and ten Dwarves were all that made it out alive.

Act Two

They escaped into the Underground road, the one that led to this fortress. The Howling hit them again and again, but somehow these survived. Orcs still pursued them, so they decided they had to find the party. If they left, the party would be swarmed by the pursuing Orcs.

It should be obvious that the Dwarves likely just got the party killed. What's slightly less obvious is that all of this was a trap for the party all along.

The Warlord knows that something is going on in his domain (it's an Ulcer, and he's connected to it, after all). He also knows that several people with the Divine Spark entered shortly thereafter, though he doesn't know where or who. The coincidence seemed suspicious.

He sent word to all his armies that outsiders were to be harassed and attacked, but not completely butchered. When the Dwarves showed up at his capital, he knew he didn't have the right group, and he almost despaired, but he decided to send them running to find out where they'd go. The Dwarves fought their way to the underground road that led here. The Warlord could now identify the Dwarves' position well enough to protect them from the Howling. He made sure it only killed seven of them before they made it here.

Now the Warlord is coming.

Ten minutes after the Dwarves find the party, eight Orcs come up the stairs and attack. Use the Greater Orc stats from the Master Fortress Foe List at the end of this act. The Orcs carry 80 CP and 558 GP between them.

Dramatic Purpose

This is the Act Two Twist of the side plot of the story, involving the Dwarves on vacation in Uzarâg. Here the characters also discover that they aren't up against the Warlord, which gives them a real hope of winning, but they learn at the same time that the Warlord is coming, giving them a very real clock over their heads, as opposed to the nebulous one of the Splinter.

70) Hall of History

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This wide, high hall has a tremendous vaulted ceiling of crossed arches. The keystone in the center of these arches has had the center replaced with a stone that glows softly with yellow runes, illuminating the entire hall.

The floor of the vault is formed of a diagonal pattern of interlocking stones, perfectly smooth. The walls are built with column-like protrusions that support the ends of the overhead arches. Sigils line the columns and arches.

Statues of Dwarves, eight-feet-tall, line the walls. Seven of the ten statues have gaping wounds, one on its side, one on its throat and so on. Very real blood flows from these stone wounds. The statues clutch these wounds with one hand and they lurch forward, the other hand out, bloody and cupped palm facing upward.

These are seven Stone Golems. See the Master Fortress Foe List at the end of this act for details. They block the party from passing and won't attack unless the party forces the matter. If everyone in the party drips blood into one of their palms, each Golem will withdraw after the offering and won't bother that person again. Each party member must give blood to each of the Golems to get by.

This wasn't a feature of the original fortress and it wasn't made by the Orcs. The Golems slowly gained life after years inside the Ulcer's effects. The Orcs just give them their blood and can ignore them from then on.

There's no treasure here.

71) Gallery

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

Act Two

This octagonal room is lined with great Dwarven works of art. Statues of heroes, paintings, jeweled cups and decorative armors and pedestaled weapons. None of these have been touched by orcs. Runes surround each item.

A stair spirals up out of the center of the room, through a bore in the ceiling.

The runes stop the party members from touching the items. Nothing the party could reasonably bring to bear can break the spell. The Orcs have been trying for one thousand years.

72 Chapel/War Room

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This room has a barrel vault for a ceiling. Reliefs of Dwarven heroes surround sculptures of Ziruk-Nurak, the Dwarven Savior. Sigils and runes cover the walls and the ceiling.

An altar stands at the far head of the room. Above the altar is the Dwarvish holy symbol. The altar and room are otherwise unadorned.

A single door leads out through the east wall. Two lead out the west, one centered and one to the north.

You can hear, distantly, the sounds of screams and chanting.

The screams are coming from behind the altar. Since the door is secret, the party will need a Search Check (DC 20).



Act Two

This was once the Temple/War Room for the Dwarves. Most Orcs avoid the place. It makes them uncomfortable.

73) Rune Room

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This room is bare and roughly square. Every surface is covered in inscribed runes. Even the roof is flat.

Tables stand inside the room, obviously added later. On each of the four tables a dwarf has been chained. They scream and moan as fell energies flicker across the runes, arcing down into the bodies of the dwarves.

In the center, an Orc shaman stands, screaming chants at the ceiling.

This shaman is trying to convert these Dwarves by making them susceptible to the Changing. If he succeeds, the Dwarves will become Orcs. All he's managed to do so far is kill them and turn them into Zombies (it takes a few days for them to rise).

For the shaman's stats, see the Master Fortress Foe List at the end of this act. The shaman can cast lightning bolts from the ceiling which attack one person for 4d6 damage (Reflex DC 13).

He wears a 120 GP necklace.

74) Hospital

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This long room has stone slabs along the walls. It looks like once they had some sort of bedding on top, but that has long-since rotted away. Now, dead Dwarven bodies lay on three of the stones.

The bodies are awaiting their spontaneous rise as Undead. Their death in the Rune Room makes this inevitable but takes a bit. It won't happen until after the party is gone.

75) Guard Room

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This simple room has a disused table and four chairs, all crudely made. There's a door in the far wall.

This room fell into disuse when the Zombies were put out front. Now there's nothing of interest.

76) Hallway

This hall leads to the garderobes.

77) Great Hall

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This long hall has a flat ceiling, supported by a row of inscribed pillars, painted in a long fresco of Ziruk-Nurak, surrounded by what appears to be Dwarven lords. The floor is smooth black marble, veined in gold, polished to a mirror finish. On either side, beyond the pillars, tapestries hang, depicting what appears to be the history of the noble line of this fortress.

On the far end is a throne, carved in sigils and runes. Sitting on the throne is an Orc in ornate robes. Cords rise from the Orc's wrists, ankles, knees, shoulders and head, attaching to a hook in the ceiling far above. The Orc hangs limp on these strings.

Vinis did this to him to show the Orcs they couldn't put a king above him. He's either dead or in some kind of stasis.

The architect of this room was ordered to place pillars inside, but he maintained that his construction was so sound it didn't need them. The lord made him anyway, but to show that he was right, none of the pillars actually touch the ceiling. Characters must look closely to tell.

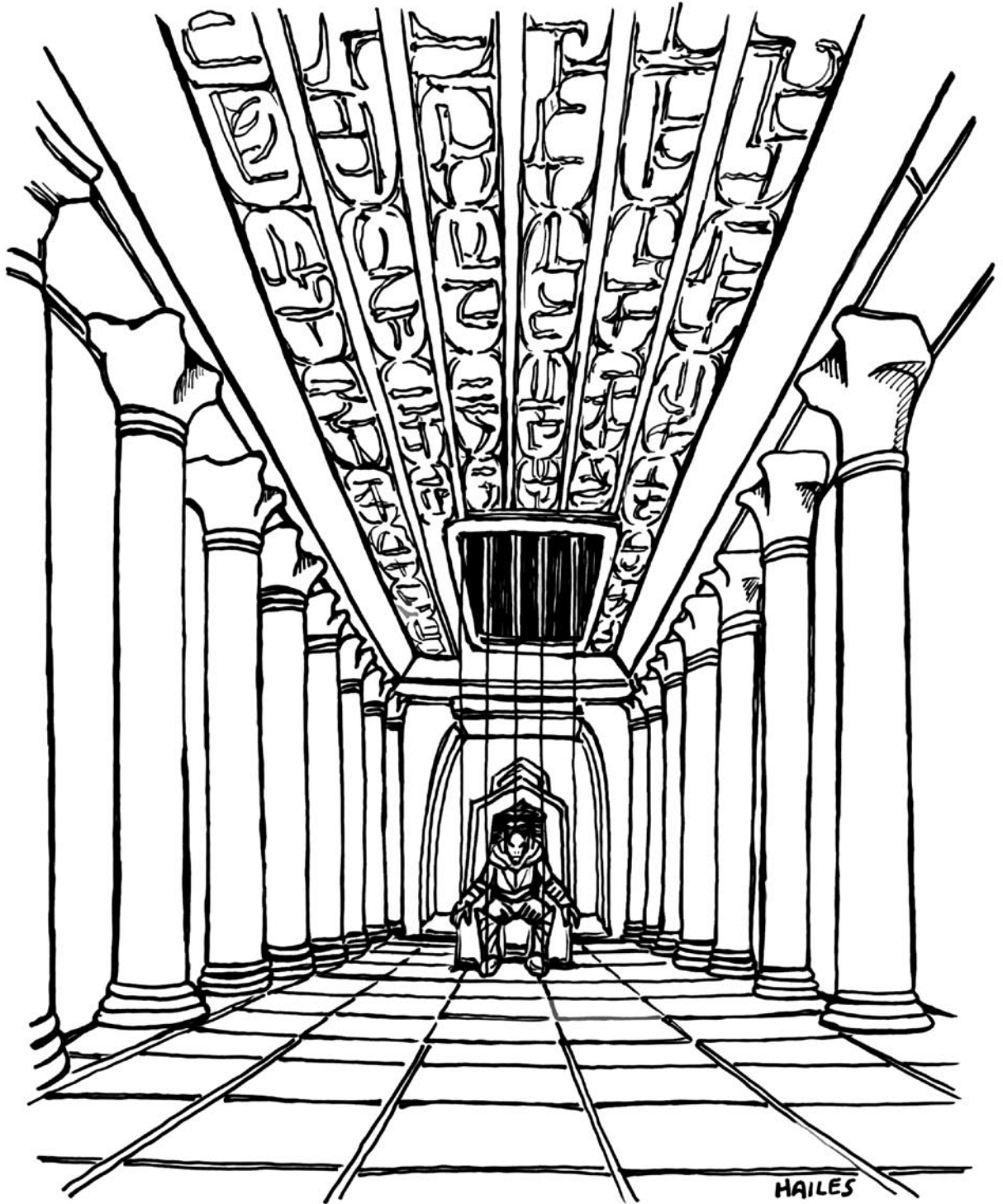
78–79) Side Wings

These wings are used to store tables and benches, for feasting.

80–81) Entryways

These rooms serve as portals into the rooms beyond.

Act Two



Act Two

82) Lesser Hall

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

Two fireplaces and a large oven line the east wall. Shelves of stone cover every surface, covered in beaten crockery, ladles, and knives. A large, filthy table fills the center of the room, evidently used for food preparation. There are doors out through the north and west.

There is nothing special about this room.

83) Buttery

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

Casks and kegs fill this room.

Good ale and a large keg (25 Gallons) of Darlan Gok are the main features of this room. There is also a large water barrel.

84) Pantry

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This room is filled with sides of beef and pork, kegs of salt and spices, sacks of potatoes and more.

This is good food. The party can resupply if they like.

85) The Lord's Armory

This door appears normal, but when a character without a Divine Spark touches it, they feel a force stopping them from contacting the door. A character with a Divine Spark can touch and open the door.

This vault seems empty except for the skeletons of four Dwarves. Rents in rusted armor and clothing show that these Dwarves must have come here to die. One of the Dwarves, resplendent in armor, leans against the far wall, one hand raised inexplicably toward the door. A moment after the door opens, the arm falls limp to the Dwarf's side.

The Dwarves died here, but the Dwarven priest managed one final act of supreme faith, sealing the door. This happened years ago, but some of the treasure is still good.

Dwarf 1: Potion of Cure Moderate Wounds, 150 GP sapphire quartz.

Dwarf 2: Potion of Cure Light Wounds, battle axe (non magical but salvageable) 40 PP, 100 GP lazulite gem.

Dwarf 3: Potion of Cure Moderate Wounds, Potion of Cure Light Wounds, 240 SP, 48 GP, 40 PP.

Dwarf 4: +3 *full plate armor*.

86) Map Room

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

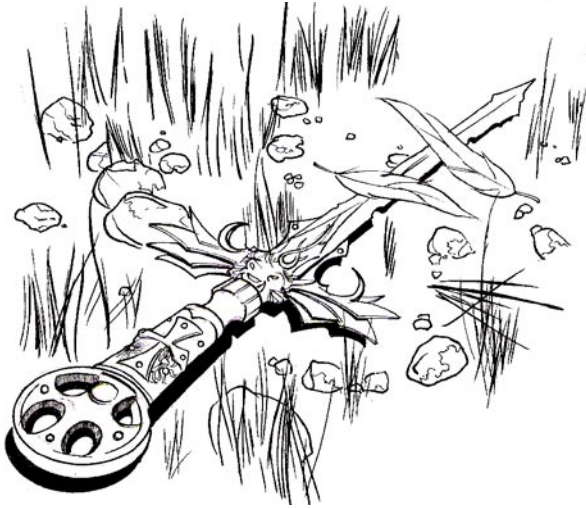
Shelves on the walls of this room are filled with moldering papers and parchments. It smells of rotting documents.

As you step inside, a swirling light appears in the center of the room, expanding until it forms the image of mountains, overlooking a lush valley, full of trees and streams. You can just make out the tops of buildings in the distance.

Illusionary map looking down on the Elven-Dwarven Alliance. It takes a Will Save (DC 15) to move the map. Opposed Will Saves are necessary if conflicting mental orders are given. This whole thing is an Ulcer effect. The original room was just a mundane map room. It can only show the Elven-Dwarven Alliance because almost all of the plans



Act Two



made in this room involved attacking or defending against the Elves of the Brine Sea.

Dramatic Purpose

Now that the fortress defense aspect of the adventure are out of the way, on this level the characters are reminded that they are really in an Ulcer. Here we also explore some of the problem-solving elements that are traditionally associated with dungeons.

Level 5

This level was dedicated to the finer aspects of fortress life. Here the lord and lady lived and the nobles socialized.

87) The Lift

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

You come in through double doors. Along the south wall, a large open section of floor stands with chains hanging through from above. Rails run up through the hole in the ceiling. A heavy cable of rope hangs through the ceiling and floor in the southwest corner.

In the center of the room, a ladder climbs upward.

88) Sitting Room

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This room has a wide column of stone running up through the center of the room. Tiered platforms surround this column, granting access to inward-facing arrow loops. A lever sticks from the column.

Two huge chairs sit against the east wall. Ornate scrollwork runs up the back of the chairs and stain and lacquer causes them to shine darkly. Wooden footstools sit in front of them.

Tapestries hang on the walls, depicting a series of battles with Elves. It seems that in each of the battles, the Dwarves won.

Ornate double doors, covered in Dwarven runes, stand in the middle of the north and west walls. A smaller door faces south.

The lever is the trigger for the wooden ball trap in the death stairs. If the characters throw it and the trap is still set, the ball releases.

There are two Orcs here. See the Master Fortress Foe List at the end of this act for more details. They carry 20 CP and 110 GP between them.

89) Guard Room

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This is a plain room with a crude table and six crude chairs.

There are six Orcs here. See the Master Fortress Foe List at the end of this act for more details. They carry 6 CP and 6 GP between them.

90–92) Hallways

These are normal hallways.

93) Final Stairs

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

These stairs rise to a wide, room decorated in sigils and runes. A hallway exits to the south.

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There is nothing special about this room.

The room contains nothing of real value.

94) Lady's Solar

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

Chairs and benches line the walls of this room, old, but repaired over and over again. Shafts from the surface shine brilliant light down into this room, and unless the sun is perfectly positioned, some system of mirrors must be responsible for the light.

The room is covered in dust, as if it's currently unused.

This room hasn't been used for some time. No one currently in the fortress likes the light. This room was used by the lady of the fortress for sewing, back when the fortress was controlled by Dwarves. Despite their good eyes, Dwarven ladies prefer to make tapestries in natural light.

There's nothing special here.

95) Lady's Wardrobe

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

Wooden rods run the length of the walls, about two feet out. They currently contain nothing but some sort of hanger, presumably for clothes. Whatever clothes were once here are currently moldering in piles of rotting cloth on the floor.

This room hasn't been used for some time. There's nothing special here.

96) Lady's Chamber

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This bed chamber has an old, dusty bed with rotted bedding. A couple of wooden chairs, intricately carved, rest against one wall. Some sort of dressing table sits against another, a chair slightly askew in front of it, as if the inhabitant just left for a moment.

97) Lord's Solar

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This room is clean and well kept. Five chairs and two benches rest against the walls. A desk, obviously not made by the same hand (probably not even the same race) rests against one wall, a padded stool in front of it. There are no papers on the desk, but a book rests there, open.

The book is an Elven treatise on the nature of the Nopheratus. It is worth 2,000 GP.

98) Lord's Wardrobe

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

Rods of wood run the length of this room. Sparsely hanging from them are about twelve different pieces of human sized clothing, all of a high middle-class quality.

This is the Water Wraith's wardrobe. There's nothing special here.

99) Lord's Chamber

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:



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This room has a comfortable bed with clean and new-looking bedding. A dressing table sits against one wall, the metal mirror hammered into warbling distortions, as if by an angry hand. The chairs in the room look old and often-repaired.

This is the Water Wraith's bed chamber. Despite the fact that he doesn't sleep, he still lies in the bed when he's relaxing. There's nothing special here.

100–101) Hallways

These are normal halls

102) False Treasury

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This small room has three large chests, all of them smashed open, their contents long gone.

A Spot Check (DC 20) shows that it's strange there's no dust in here. A Search Check (DC 20) finds the secret door.

103) Real Treasury

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This room is large and mostly covered in heavy dust. A path leads through the dust and to a single chest. Although the place is mostly empty, it seems someone still finds a use for it.

This was the real treasury of the Dwarves. The Water Wraith uses it now. It contains 50 SP, 10,000 GP, and +4 *full plate*.

Dramatic Purpose

This level was about allowing the players a moment of respite to heighten tension. Here they explore empty, high-end rooms. They know that there has to be the end soon. The lack of conflict here allows them to think about what's to come and worry.

Level 6

This was the last line of defense of the fortress. Here the lord could make his final stand while his family escaped to safety.

104) Final Redoubt

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

The ladder rises to a large, metal trap door. A murder hole sits in the center of the door. Holes in the wall open into channels tunneled up through the stone, allowing people above to pour liquids down into this narrow chimney.

The trap door opens easily into a room with large barrels in the corner. The room is bare and functional, a door leading out to the east.

This was the final defensive location of the Dwarves. If the fortress were to fall, the lord and his family would retreat here with the remaining guard. There is nothing special here.

105) Final Battle

When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This is a large, open cavern with glittering quartz in the walls and ceiling, amplifying and reflecting the light, giving the entire place a shining shimmering feeling. On the far side, an opening leads out, a bit larger than a man.

In the center of the room a man stands in full plate armor. His helmet is open-faced and his skin is bloated and ruined. In his hand, a glowing shard of diamond flashes and glares. Light streams from the ceiling, grounding into his palm, then spewing out the other side and into the floor, roaring with power.

Around him, ten orcs stand, positioned in a perfect circle. Flashes of energy arc from the splinter to the orcs, making them twitch and sway.

If the characters played the first adventure, read or paraphrase the following:

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Despite the sound and the glare, he turns to you, his voice carrying strangely through the noise. “I have to thank you,” he said. “Without your help, the Ulcer of Uzarâg would have stayed the same size for centuries.”

If the characters didn’t play the first adventure, read or paraphrase the following:

Despite the sound and the glare, he turns to you, his voice carrying strangely through the noise. “You’ve arrived for a momentous event. Soon, you’ll see the effects of this Splinter. Without it, the Ulcer of Uzarâg would have stayed the same size for centuries.”

Either way, continue with the following:

Then the fabric of space rends open, and between you and the man, you see into the face of Hell.

The thing on the other side is large, some ten feet tall. He looks like a man, a beautiful man with pale, glossy skin. As the fires of Hell swirl around him, he steps from a world of blackened spires and ochre planes into the room in front of you. He wears blackened plate and carries a two-handed sword in one hand, a spiked and twisted shield on his arm. He looks almost completely human, except for a pattern of gray scales at his temple. He isn’t a man, but a devil.

But only the most powerful devils look like this. This isn’t a rank and file warrior.

It’s a Duke of Hell.

Here is Vinis and his group of warrior shaman. They are performing the ritual, which hopefully has some time left. See the Master Fortress Foe List for stats. You can find a full NPC write-up of Vinis in the NPCs at the end of Act Three.

The Orcs carry 150 GP and 50 PP between them.

106) Escape Tunnel

This escape tunnel leads to a hidden opening miles away.

This ends Act Two. As soon as the characters confront Vinis and Morthorn, begin Act Three.

Dramatic Purpose

This is the end of Act reveal. Here, we learn something of the real truth behind this entire adventure. The end of act reveal should change the nature of the story and rocket the characters into the final dramatic climax.

FORTRESS CHARACTER BLOCKS

There are many foes in the keep. Here you will find their character blocks. In the next section, you’ll find the master list with the most critical stats, for ease of use during play.

The named characters have full character write-ups at the end of Act Three. Look for them there.

1st Level Veteran Orcs: orc warrior 1; CR ½; Medium humanoid; HD 1d8+1; hp 5; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; Base Atk/Grp +1/+6; Atk +6 melee (1d8+3/19-20, longsword); Full Atk +6 melee (1d8+3/19-20, longsword); SA –; SQ Darkvision, light sensitivity; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will -2; Str 17, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Listen +1, Spot +1; Alertness.

Possessions: Breastplate, Heavy Wooden Shield, Longsword.

2nd Level Veteran Orcs: orc warrior 2; CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 2d8+2; hp 11; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; Base Atk/Grp +2/+7; Atk +7 melee (1d8+3/19-20, longsword); Full Atk +7 melee (1d8+3/19-20, longsword); SA –; SQ Darkvision, light sensitivity; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will -2; Str 17, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Listen +1, Spot +1; Alertness.

Possessions: Breastplate, Heavy Wooden Shield, Longsword.

3rd Level Veteran Orcs: orc warrior 3; CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 3d8+3; hp 16; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; Base Atk/Grp +3/+8; Atk +9 melee (1d8+3/19-20, longsword); Full Atk +9 melee (1d8+3/19-20, longsword); SA

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–; SQ Darkvision, light sensitivity; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will -1; Str 17, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Listen +1, Spot +1; Alertness, Weapon Focus (Longsword).

Possessions: Breastplate, Heavy Wooden Shield, Longsword.

4th Level Veteran Orcs: orc warrior 4; CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 4d8+4; hp 22; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; Base Atk/Grp +4/+10; Atk +11 melee (1d8+4/19-20, longsword); Full Atk +11 melee (1d8+4/19-20, longsword); SA –; SQ Darkvision, light sensitivity; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will -1; Str 18, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Listen +2, Spot +1; Alertness, Weapon Focus (Longsword).

Possessions: Breastplate, Heavy Wooden Shield, Longsword.

3rd Level Orc Leader*: orc war2 brb1; CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 2d8+1d12+3; hp 18; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; Base Atk/Grp +3/+8; Atk +9 melee (1d8+3/19-20, longsword); Full Atk +9 melee (1d8+3/19-20, longsword); SA –; SQ Darkvision, fast movement, light sensitivity, rage 1/day; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +0, Will -2; Str 17, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate -1, Listen +2, Spot +2; Alertness, Weapon Focus (Longsword).

Possessions: Breastplate, Heavy Wooden Shield, Longsword.

*Includes sergeants and captains.

4th Level Orc Leader*: orc war2 brb2; CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 2d8+2d12+4; hp 26; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; Base Atk/Grp +4/+10; Atk +11 melee (1d8+4/19-20, longsword); Full Atk +11 melee (1d8+4/19-20, longsword); SA –; SQ Darkvision, fast movement, light sensitivity, rage 1/day, uncanny dodge; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +0, Will -2; Str 18, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate 0, Listen +3, Spot +2; Alertness, Weapon Focus (Longsword).

Possessions: Breastplate, Heavy Wooden Shield, Longsword.

*Includes sergeants and captains.

5th Level Orc Leader*: orc war2 brb3; CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 2d8+3d12+5; hp 33; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; Base Atk/Grp +5/+11; Atk +12 melee (1d8+4/19-20, longsword); Full Atk +12 melee (1d8+4/19-20, longsword); SA –; SQ Darkvision, fast movement, light sensitivity, rage 1/day, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +1, Will -1; Str 18, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate 1, Listen +4, Spot +3; Alertness, Weapon Focus (Longsword).

Possessions: Breastplate, Heavy Wooden Shield, Longsword.

*Includes sergeants and captains.

Empowered Dwarf Zombie: CR 2; Medium undead; HD 6d12+3; hp 42; Init -1; Spd 30 ft.; AC11, touch 9, flat-footed 11; Base Atk/Grp +3/+7; Atk +7 melee (1d6+2 slam); Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+2 slam); SA –; SQ Single actions only, damage reduction 5/slashing, darkvision 60 ft., undead traits; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +5; Str 15, Dex 9, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Skills and Feats: Toughness.

Possessions: Ruined equipment.

Flawed Stone Golem: CR 8; Large construct; HD 10d10+30; hp 85; Init -1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 26, touch 8, flat-footed 26; Base Atk/Grp +7/+20; Atk +15 melee (2d10+9 slam); Full Atk +15 melee (2d10+9 slam); SA –; SQ Construct traits, dark vision 60 ft., immunity to magic, low-lite vision; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 29, Dex 9, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 1.

Skills and Feats: —.

Possessions: —.

Shaman: orc war1 Adp4; CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 1d8+1d6+5; hp 27; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC

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10, touch 10, flat-footed 10; Base Atk/Grp +3/+9; Atk +9 melee (1d8+4 longsword); Full Atk +9 melee (1d8+4 longsword); SA –; SQ Darkvision, light sensitivity; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +6; Str 18, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +5, Listen +5, Spot +5, Alertness, Combat Casting.

Possessions: Longsword.

Spells: Detect Magic, Touch of Fatigue x2, Burning Hands, Command, Sleep, Mirror Image.

1st Level Dwarves: dwarf warrior 1; CR ½; Medium humanoid; HD 1d8+2; hp 6; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC10, touch 10, flat-footed 10; Base Atk/Grp +1/+0; Atk +0 melee (1d3+1, unarmed); Full Atk +0 melee (1d3+1, unarmed); SA dwarf traits; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits; AL LG; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will -1; Str 13, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Appraise, +2, Craft (Blacksmith) +3, Craft (Stonemasonry); Weapon Focus (Warhammer).

Possessions: none.

2nd Level Dwarves: dwarf warrior 2; CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 2d8+4; hp 13; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC10, touch 10, flat-footed 10; Base Atk/Grp +2/+1; Atk +1 melee (1d3+1, unarmed); Full Atk +1 melee (1d3+1, unarmed); SA dwarf traits; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits; AL LG; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will -1; Str 13, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Appraise, +2, Craft (Blacksmith) +3, Craft (Stonemasonry) Listen +0, Spot +0; Weapon Focus (Warhammer).

Possessions: none.

3rd Level Dwarves: dwarf warrior 3; CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 3d8+6; hp 19; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC10, touch 10, flat-footed 10; Base Atk/Grp +3/+2; Atk +2 melee (1d3+1, unarmed); Full Atk +2 melee (1d3+1, unarmed); SA dwarf traits; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits; AL LG; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 13, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Appraise, Skill Focus (Blacksmithing), +2, Craft (Blacksmith) +7, Craft (Stonemasonry); Weapon Focus (Warhammer).

Possessions: none.

4th Level Dwarves: dwarf warrior 4; CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 4d8+8; hp 26; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; Base Atk/Grp +4/+4; Atk +5 melee (1d8+2, warhammer); Full Atk +5 melee (1d8+2, warhammer); SA dwarf traits; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits; AL LG; SV Fort +6, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Appraise, Skill Focus (Blacksmithing), +2, Craft (Blacksmith) +8, Craft (Stonemasonry); Weapon Focus (Warhammer).

Possessions: Chainmail, Heavy Metal Shield, Warhammer.

5th Level Dwarves: dwarf warrior 5; CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 5d8+10; hp 32; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; Base Atk/Grp +5/+5; Atk +6 melee (1d8+2, warhammer); Full Atk +6 melee (1d8+2, warhammer); SA dwarf traits; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits; AL LG; SV Fort +6, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Appraise, Skill Focus (Blacksmithing), +2, Craft (Blacksmith) +9, Craft (Stonemasonry); Weapon Focus (Warhammer).

Possessions: Chainmail, Heavy Metal Shield, Warhammer.



Loc	Name	Race	Lvl	HP	Init	Spd	AC (T, F)	BA/Grp	Fort	Ref	Will	Atk	Full	Dam	Dead?
23)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
23)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
23)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
23)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
23)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
23)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
23)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
34)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
34)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
40)	Veteran Orc	Orc	1	5	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+1/+6	+3	+0	-2	+6	+6	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
40)	Veteran Orc	Orc	2	11	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+2/+7	+4	+0	-2	+7	+7	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
40)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
40)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
40)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
40)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
40)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
69)	Undead	Dwarf	6	42	-1	30 ft.	11 (9, 11)	+3/+7	+2	+1	+5	+7	+7	(1d6+2)	<input type="checkbox"/>
69)	Undead	Dwarf	6	42	-1	30 ft.	11 (9, 11)	+3/+7	+2	+1	+5	+7	+7	(1d6+2)	<input type="checkbox"/>
69)	Undead	Dwarf	6	42	-1	30 ft.	11 (9, 11)	+3/+7	+2	+1	+5	+7	+7	(1d6+2)	<input type="checkbox"/>
69)	Undead	Dwarf	6	42	-1	30 ft.	11 (9, 11)	+3/+7	+2	+1	+5	+7	+7	(1d6+2)	<input type="checkbox"/>
69)	Undead	Dwarf	6	42	-1	30 ft.	11 (9, 11)	+3/+7	+2	+1	+5	+7	+7	(1d6+2)	<input type="checkbox"/>
69)	Undead	Dwarf	6	42	-1	30 ft.	11 (9, 11)	+3/+7	+2	+1	+5	+7	+7	(1d6+2)	<input type="checkbox"/>
69)	Undead	Dwarf	6	42	-1	30 ft.	11 (9, 11)	+3/+7	+2	+1	+5	+7	+7	(1d6+2)	<input type="checkbox"/>
69)	Undead	Dwarf	6	42	-1	30 ft.	11 (9, 11)	+3/+7	+2	+1	+5	+7	+7	(1d6+2)	<input type="checkbox"/>
69)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
69)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
69)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
69)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
69)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
69)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
69)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
69)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
70)	Statue	Stone Golem	10	85	-1	20 ft.	26 (8, 26)	+7/+20	+4	+3	+4	+15	+15	(2d10+9)	<input type="checkbox"/>
70)	Statue	Stone Golem	10	85	-1	20 ft.	26 (8, 26)	+7/+20	+4	+3	+4	+15	+15	(2d10+9)	<input type="checkbox"/>
70)	Statue	Stone Golem	10	85	-1	20 ft.	26 (8, 26)	+7/+20	+4	+3	+4	+15	+15	(2d10+9)	<input type="checkbox"/>
70)	Statue	Stone Golem	10	85	-1	20 ft.	26 (8, 26)	+7/+20	+4	+3	+4	+15	+15	(2d10+9)	<input type="checkbox"/>
70)	Statue	Stone Golem	10	85	-1	20 ft.	26 (8, 26)	+7/+20	+4	+3	+4	+15	+15	(2d10+9)	<input type="checkbox"/>
70)	Statue	Stone Golem	10	85	-1	20 ft.	26 (8, 26)	+7/+20	+4	+3	+4	+15	+15	(2d10+9)	<input type="checkbox"/>
70)	Statue	Stone Golem	10	85	-1	20 ft.	26 (8, 26)	+7/+20	+4	+3	+4	+15	+15	(2d10+9)	<input type="checkbox"/>
73)	Shaman	Orc	5	27	+0	30 ft.	10 (10, 10)	+3/+9	+4	+1	+1	+9	+9	(1d8+4)	<input type="checkbox"/>
88)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
88)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
89)	Veteran Orc	Orc	1	5	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+1/+6	+3	+0	-2	+6	+6	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
89)	Veteran Orc	Orc	1	5	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+1/+6	+3	+0	-2	+6	+6	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
89)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Loc	Name	Race	Lvl	HP	Init	Spd	AC (T, F)	BA/Grp	Fort	Ref	Will	Atk	Full	Dam	Dead?
89)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
89)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
89)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
105)	Vinís	Water Wraith	11	92	+7	20 ft.	29 (11, 28)	+6/+13	+5	+6	+12	+14	+14/+9	(1d8+7)	<input type="checkbox"/>
105)	Warlord	Half Orc	50	1000	+17	40 ft.	38 (12, 38)	+50/+65	+37	+30	+26	+74	+76/ +71/+66/+61	(1d8+23)	<input type="checkbox"/>
105)	Morthorn	Devil	33	530	+14	40 ft.	46 (10, 45)	+33/+50	+29	+24	+26	+54	+54/ +49/+44/+39	(2d6+19)	<input type="checkbox"/>
105)	Veteran Orc	Orc	1	5	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+1/+6	+3	+0	-2	+6	+6	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
105)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
105)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
105)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
105)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
105)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
105)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
105)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
105)	Veteran Orc	Orc	3	16	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+3/+8	+3	+0	-1	+9	+9	(1d8+3)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Friendlys

35)	Smith	Dwarf	1	6	+0	20 ft.	10 (10, 10)	+1/+0	+4	+0	-1	+0	+0	(1d3+1)	<input type="checkbox"/>
35)	Smith	Dwarf	2	13	+0	20 ft.	10 (10, 10)	+2/+1	+4	+0	-1	+1	+1	(1d3+1)	<input type="checkbox"/>
35)	Smith	Dwarf	2	13	+0	20 ft.	10 (10, 10)	+2/+1	+4	+0	-1	+1	+1	(1d3+1)	<input type="checkbox"/>
35)	Smith	Dwarf	2	13	+0	20 ft.	10 (10, 10)	+2/+1	+4	+0	-1	+1	+1	(1d3+1)	<input type="checkbox"/>
37)	Smelter	Dwarf	1	6	+0	20 ft.	10 (10, 10)	+1/+0	+4	+0	-1	+0	+0	(1d3+1)	<input type="checkbox"/>
37)	Smelter	Dwarf	2	13	+0	20 ft.	10 (10, 10)	+2/+1	+4	+0	-1	+1	+1	(1d3+1)	<input type="checkbox"/>
37)	Smelter	Dwarf	2	13	+0	20 ft.	10 (10, 10)	+2/+1	+4	+0	-1	+1	+1	(1d3+1)	<input type="checkbox"/>
37)	Smelter	Dwarf	2	13	+0	20 ft.	10 (10, 10)	+2/+1	+4	+0	-1	+1	+1	(1d3+1)	<input type="checkbox"/>
37)	Smelter	Dwarf	2	13	+0	20 ft.	10 (10, 10)	+2/+1	+4	+0	-1	+1	+1	(1d3+1)	<input type="checkbox"/>
37)	Smelter	Dwarf	3	19	+0	20 ft.	10 (10, 10)	+3/+2	+5	+1	+0	+2	+2	(1d3+1)	<input type="checkbox"/>
39)	Wounded	Dwarf	2	13	+0	20 ft.	10 (10, 10)	+2/+1	+4	+0	-1	+1	+1	(1d3+1)	<input type="checkbox"/>
39)	Wounded	Dwarf	2	13	+0	20 ft.	10 (10, 10)	+2/+1	+4	+0	-1	+1	+1	(1d3+1)	<input type="checkbox"/>
39)	Wounded	Dwarf	2	13	+0	20 ft.	10 (10, 10)	+2/+1	+4	+0	-1	+1	+1	(1d3+1)	<input type="checkbox"/>
—)	Khelinûl	Dwarf	7	79	+5	20 ft.	21 (11, 20)	+7/+7	+11	+3	+2	+10	+10/+5	(1d8+4)	<input type="checkbox"/>
—)	Dwarf	Dwarf	4	26	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+4/+4	+6	+1	+0	+5	+5	(1d8+2)	<input type="checkbox"/>
—)	Dwarf	Dwarf	5	32	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+5/+5	+6	+1	+0	+6	+6	(1d8+2)	<input type="checkbox"/>
—)	Dwarf	Dwarf	5	32	+0	20 ft.	17 (10, 17)	+5/+5	+6	+1	+0	+6	+6	(1d8+2)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Permission granted to copy this table for personal use.



Act Three

Act Three

The stage is set, the players are in place. It's time for the final battle. But all is not as it seems. The Warlord has yet to arrive.

Dramatic Purpose

Act Three starts the minute the characters' plan collapses and they begin the final battle, in whatever form it might take. Act Three contains the climax and any falling action necessary to resolve the story.

ENDGAME

The party is facing unbeatable odds. Worse, the ritual is robust; it can handle all the members breaking off long enough to kill the party. Still worse, the full power of the Splinter, the ritual, and the Ulcer have all fused into Morthorn at the moment. He is invulnerable and any attacks hitting him flare with power that arcs up from the floor of the ritual area.

Vinis hands Morthorn the Splinter. If something interferes, The Duke of Hell will act to retrieve the Splinter.

When he has the Splinter or you've determined the scene needs to progress, read or paraphrase the following:

The Orcs, the Duke of Hell, and the man in plate spread out in front of you. You knew that you were in a bad situation, but it's just become much worse.

Then you hear a commotion behind you, and a Half-Orc with dull gray skin and spiked armor rises up the stairs. You can hear what sounds to be an army of Orcs beneath him.

The Half-Orc smiles, and he seems to vibrate with power. You hear a howling wind, as if at a great distance, echoing his every smallest move.

"Morthorn," the Half-Orc says.

"Warlord," the Duke of Hell replies.

Worse and worse.

The Orcs below struggle to reach the final redoubt but major Ulcer effects have greater power over the Infernal, and they are barred by the ritual. Only the Warlord was strong enough to enter. This is still his Ulcer.

If the party tries to stop the Warlord with a guard, adjust the events here accordingly, but he shouldn't have trouble with any party resistance.

Don't Steal the Party's Thunder

It's easy to approach this climax in such a way that makes the party helpless onlookers. *Don't*. The party has *all* the power in this scene. They can decide, by disrupting the ritual or not, who wins this fight. Morthorn and the Warlord are like clashing elemental forces. Draw it in the player's mind like this. Picture the characters adrift in a storm. Just because they can't make the clouds clear doesn't deduct from their heroism.

That said, find out how the party is leaning and play the scene that way. They *should* side with the Warlord, and the encounter has been designed with that in mind. If they do, dramatically play out their fight then describe the fight between Morthorn and the Warlord. The Warlord should probably be uninjured at this point and one, maybe two hits will end the fight.

If they side with Morthorn, you won't be able to run the fight without making the PCs into glorified cheerleaders. In this case, narrate the fight quickly, describing how Morthorn nickels and dimes the Warlord to death (eventually his healing power will fail him as the ritual mounts). Describe the rising power of Vinis as well, and give the players a chance to change their minds. If they waffle, play up the suspense and tension. If they don't, so be it, let Morthorn win. Despite the fact that this violates a World Thread. Perhaps you can come up with a way to bring the Warlord back later.



Act Three

The Warlord and Morthorn fight, but Morthorn is immune to all attacks. From the flares of energy to the ritual space the party should realize that he's protected by magic. The astute might even notice the energies seem to resonate with Vinis and the ten Orcs.

As the fight continues Morthorn slowly wears the Warlord down. Hopefully, the party will attack those grounding the magic. Every time they kill an Orc or Vinis, the power of the protection on Morthorn diminishes.

Lightning shoots from the walls to the Orcs as the fight mounts. Anyone in melee with an Orc takes a 1d6 Lightning Bolt every round.

The Dwarves will help in this battle.

When Vinis and all the Orcs are dead, Morthorn and the Warlord can fight normally. Morthorn doesn't have a chance.

Dramatic Purpose

This is the big dramatic fight. Play it up.

A DEVIL FALLS

When the Warlord beats Morthorn the Duke won't die immediately because of the residue of the ritual. Read or paraphrase the following.

With a final smashing blow, the Warlord smashes the Devil to the ground. Morthorn looks up and places his hands out in a warding gesture, the Splinter grasped.

Then he screams and the echoes seem to tear space asunder. Morthorn wavers for a moment, then space seems to fold and twist, and he's gone. The Warlord turns to you.



Dramatic Purpose

Here the villain escapes with the Splinter, which is essentially the story's McGuffin (an object that motivates everyone in the plot). If at all possible, he needs to escape with the Splinter, and it doesn't seem likely the characters could get it from him, but if they come up with something that really earns them the Splinter, let them have it. You'll need to come up with a way to continue, but there are several options there. The Splinter could be stolen again (if you haven't already used this trick). Morthorn might not need it anymore (maybe the ritual transferred its power and the Splinter isn't important anymore). You'll need to do some rewriting for the rest of the series, but if the players earn it, you should give them their due. If they come up with something fabulous enough, you can end the series right there. The story at your table is *far* more important than the story on the page.

MOMENT OF TRUTH

When the battle is over, read or paraphrase the following:

The Warlord stares at you calmly. More and more Orcs pour up through the trap door into the final redoubt. There must be thirty up here now, but still they come and meanwhile, the Warlord watches, the hatred and malevolence rolling off him in waves.

Already the wounds from the battle with Morthorn have faded. Already he's back to full strength when even a wounded Warlord could shatter you all.

He draws his sword.

And he salutes.

"Go," he says. He gestures at the exit to the east, stepping to one side.

The Warlord is a creature that respects strength. He doesn't kill without reason, and there's no reason to kill the party. They represent no actual threat. In addition, they just saved him his Ulcer. Letting

Act Three

them go is the right thing to do, and even evil can do the right thing.

Dramatic Purpose

This is the dramatic last image of the climax.

IF THE PARTY FAILS

Likely, if the party fails they are either dead or nowhere near the final redoubt. Read or paraphrase the following:

A wave of terrible nausea bends you in two and a moan escapes your lips. Something terrible has happened, and you're afraid it means you are too late.

This is essentially the end of the world. The ritual completes, and Uzarâg begins to expand to take over the entire world. There are a few ways you can continue from here.

You can end the campaign. You can continue as a postapocalyptic campaign. Perhaps the best way to go would be to skip ahead in *The Moving Shadow*. Episode four involves the characters chasing Morthorn. Episode five has an event similar to this ending that finishes Act One. You could run the Teasers of four and five concurrently and then sprinkle in the couple of important events from Act One of episode five. If the characters can survive episode five at the character level of episode four, that would be a nice price to pay for losing here. They still have a chance to win, but it's much harder than if they won in this adventure.

Dramatic Purpose

Stories need a result of failure. This is it.

DENOUEMENT

The denouement is the falling action of a story. In it, the bad guys get punished, the good guys get their rewards, and all loose ends are tied up.

Oh, and it's pronounced dā'nū'män.

Dramatic Purpose

The dramatic purpose of the entire denouement is to give the character's a feeling of completion, to let the story wind down and wrap up naturally.

The Elven-Dwarven Alliance

The characters are close to the Elven-Dwarven alliance. After hours of traveling through the escape tunnel (without the Howling . . . the Warlord is letting them escape), they come out into the pass leaving Uzarâg. Within a day, they can make it more or less out of Uzarâg. Read or paraphrase the following:

The path out through the mountains is easy, almost pleasant, and before long you see a rich forest stretching out in front of you. Elven towers and bridges reach out above the tops of the trees, but you can see elements of sturdier workmanship as well.

The Elven-Dwarven Alliance.

Though you can't see much of the Dwarven construction, you know it's there. These Elves took in refugees from the Dwarven kingdom, and they've lived in harmony for a thousand years. This is what you are fighting for. This is what you saved.

Roleplay the character's welcome into the Alliance. The Elves and the Dwarves are all interested in the adventures of people in Uzarâg and the characters can broker their stories into weeks of free drinks. If you have time, give them some opportunity to revel in their glory and if you don't, start the next session with their just rewards. This is what poetic justice is all about. Heroes should get some time to bask in their glory.

Experience

Each character receives 3,000 experience for foiling Morthorn's plan. If Khelinûl survives, they receive an extra 1,500 experience. For each other Dwarf characters save, the party receives 300 experience. If the characters separated from the slaves they rescued, assume the Dwarves fled through one of the entrances and made it out to the Alliance.

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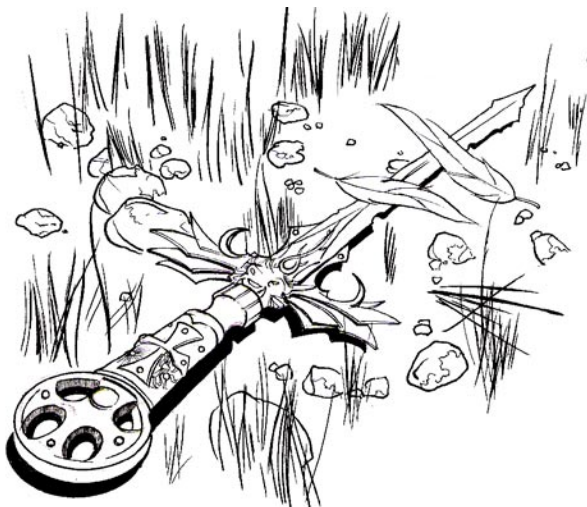
In addition, each character should receive a bonus of 100 to 300 XP for each clever idea or roleplaying moment they had. If they made the group laugh or created a vivid scene, that should especially receive a bonus.

Finally, if you intend to play the next adventure, *The Tainted Tears*, without any interlude, you should probably give a bonus chunk of experience, enough to get the group up to an average of 8th level. Otherwise, it might be too difficult.

Playing the Next Adventure

If you intend to play *The Tainted Tears*, how you proceed from here depends on when exactly you intend to play it. If you wish a little time between adventures, allow the characters to get some play in and around The Elven-Dwarven Alliance. Make one or two simple adventures for them there. Try to time the adventures so they'll end when you are ready for *The Tainted Tears* (If, for instance, you are waiting for it to release). Otherwise, just have fun and let the play continue. *The Tainted Tears* doesn't begin until spring, so you can have as many sessions as you'd like with the characters wintering in this country.

The Tainted Tears begins in Elven-Dwarven Alliance. It's possible to adjust the beginning to start elsewhere, but it would be better to bring them back for the opening. If not, putting them somewhere east of Gaerydd would have them positioned at least in the right general area, but really, the Elven-Dwarven Alliance is best.



If you intend to run the next adventure immediately, just follow the instructions in the Experience section.

MONSTERS

There is only one new monster in this adventure, and that's the Water Wraith. While a Duke of Hell is probably a monster, he's treated as an NPC as he is a wholly unique creature.

Elemental Wraiths

The Elemental Wraiths are the most valued soldiers of the Nopheratus. Whereas other Undead are either mindless or possessing of their own agenda, Elemental Wraiths serve the will of the Nopheratus directly.

All Elemental Wraiths were once Mortals who subjected themselves to the conversion process while still alive. There are seven tiers of Elemental Wraith and each requires a new ordeal of one-hundred-and-one days.

Water Wraith

	Medium Undead
Hit Dice:	10d12 (65 hp)
Initiative:	+6
Speed:	20 ft. (4 squares)
Armor Class:	29 (+10 Armor, +4 Shield, +1 Dex, +4 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 28
Base Attack/Grapple:	+5/+9
Attack:	Magic Longsword +12 melee (2d8+6)
Full Attack:	Magic Longsword +12 melee (2d8+6)
Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	Spell-like Abilities
Special Qualities:	Undead traits
Saves:	Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +9
Abilities:	Str 18, Dex 15, Con —, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 14
Skills:	Concentration +13, Diplomacy +15, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (Arcana) +8, Listen +15, Spot +15
Feats:	Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (Longsword), Power Attack, Cleave
Environment:	Any

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Organization:	Solitary
Challenge Rating:	10
Treasure:	+2 armor, +2 weapon, +2 shield, standard coins, standard goods, standard items
Alignment:	Lawful Evil
Advancement:	11-24 HD (Medium)
Level Adjustment:	+4

Background/History: A Water Wraith is created by taking a Wind Wraith and subjecting it to the Ordeal of Water. The Wraith in question is placed in a special necromantic vault for one-hundred-and-one days, where it is tormented by a constant buffeting of violent waters. The Wind Wraith still has the habits of Mortality, so although it doesn't need to breathe, it can still *feel* like it's drowning. At any time, the subject can beg for death and receive it. If it endures the entire one-hundred-and-one days, it emerges as a Water Wraith.

Personality/Motivation: Water Wraiths are the second-lowest free-willed servants of the Nopheratus. They organize the Undead legions, often with Wind Wraiths as sergeants beneath them. They are the lieutenants in the war against Mortality and still common enough that Mortals encounter them from time to time. Water Wraiths are trusted to control free-willed living troops, whereas the Wind Wraiths typically only control mindless Undead.

Powers/Tactics: Water Wraiths are often difficult to reach, stationed behind large organized groups of troops, often with a few Wind Wraith lieutenants. In combat, a Water Wraith will start by softening the group up with spells before closing and fighting hand to hand. They also try to raise fallen enemies as Undead, expecting this to demoralize enemy ranks. Water Wraiths usually have a +2 magical weapon and +2 armor and shield.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will – command undead (DC 14); 5/day – cause fear (DC 13), obscuring mist (DC 13); 4/day – fog cloud (DC 14); 3/day – sleet storm (DC 15), 2/day – control water (DC 16), solid fog (DC 16), 1/day – ice storm.

Campaign Use: When on crusade, a Water Wraith spends its time building its power base and infiltrating Human organizations. As one of the only Elemental Wraiths who can pass as a Mortal (if a damaged

one) they also are the only ones to routinely enter Mortal settlements.

To scale a Water Wraith, increase or decrease their its level. This increases or decreases its attacks, and hit points.

Appearance: A Water Wraith looks much like the Mortal it was in life. The only exception is its skin, which is bloated and ruined, as if the Wraith had drowned and lay underwater for some time (which isn't far from the truth).

Water Wraiths wear full plate armor and carry a sword. They usually cloak themselves in heavy black cloth.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTER

There are five Non-Player Characters in *On Corrupted Ground*. Their simple stats are detailed in the encounters above, but here you'll find the full details of their characters.

Khelinûl Bloodstone

Male Dwarven fighter 7

Age: 58. **Eyes:** Brown. **Hair:** Brown. **Build:** Powerful. **Height:** 4'10". **Race/Sex:** Dwarf/M. **Skin:** Ruddy. **Demeanor:** Driven. **Dress:** Dwarven Plate Armor. **True Attitude:** Thoughtful and calculating. **Home:** Felric's Redoubt.

LG medium humanoid

Str: 14	Int: 9
Dex: 12	Wis: 11
Con: 19	Cha: 10

Init: +5 **Senses:** Listen +0, Spot +0, Darkvision 60'

Languages: Ludremonian, Dwarven, Elven, Marolodo

AC: 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20

hp: 79

Resist: +2 racial bonus on saving throws against poison, spells, and spell-like effects. +4 Dodge bonus against monsters of the giant type. Stability.

Fort: +11, **Ref:** +3, **Will:** +2

Speed: 20 ft (4 squares)

Melee: Warhammer +12/+7 (1d8+4/x3)

Missile: Throwing Axe +11 (1d6+4)

Base Attack: +7; **Grp** +7

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Attack Options: +1 racial bonus against cambions.

Combat Gear: Potions and the like

SQ: +2 racial bonus on Appraise and Craft checks that are related to stone or metal.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Warhammer), Great Cleave, Cleave, Great Fortitude, Leadership.

Skills: Climb -5, Intimidate +2, Jump -9.

Possessions: Axe +2 (Throwing), Warhammer +2, Full Plate, Outfit (Traveler's), Shield (Heavy/Metal).

Background/History: In Felric's Redoubt clan Bloodstone gravitates toward private caravan security and the city guard. Khelinûl took an even more clannish tack, perfecting his weapon skills and hiring on as a personal guard for the clan patriarch. He has served for many years, guarding clan property and training clan youth. When he became an adult, he scarred his face and took on the title of Unwed. Since then, he has served with honor and honed his skills, all the while dreaming of the day he could make his foray into Uzarâg.

Personality/Motivation: Khelinûl is a driven Dwarf, dedicated to the hammer and shield, training constantly, studying, perfecting his craft. He presents a gruff and intense front, but all the time he's thinking, always thinking, planning his next move. If he had a better tactical mind, he'd be a force to reckon with. Khelinûl is stubborn, even for a Dwarf, and he is truthful to a fault.

Quote: "I smell a battle."

Powers/Tactics: Khelinûl has one tactic, go straight at them. He's just smart enough to find a defensible position, but that's the extent of his maneuvers.

Campaign Use: Khelinûl will escort the party through the mountains of Uzarâg and generally try to help the party in every way possible. He is gung-



ho and ready to fight, but after his disaster in the capital, he's more than willing to follow the party's lead.

To scale Khelinûl, change his level.

Appearance: Khelinûl is powerful-looking Dwarf with long hair, beard, and diagonal scars across his face. He wears armor much of the time and walks with a hunched, predatory posture.

Morthorn, Duke of Hell

Male devil outsider 33

Age: 12,000 **Eyes:** Black. **Hair:** Black. **Build:** Muscular. **Height:** 10'0". **Race/Sex:** Devil/M. **Skin:** Pale with gray scales. **Demeanor:** Confident. **Dress:** Ornate plate armor. **True Attitude:** Absolutely evil. **Home:** Hell.

LE large outsider

Str: 32	Int: 31
Dex: 22	Wis: 26
Con: 32	Cha: 28

Init: +14 **Senses:** Listen +44, Spot +44, Darkvision 90', Low-light vision.

Aura: Immolate (SU): Morthorn can wreath himself in flames. Anyone in melee takes 3d6 fire damage every round. Everyone touching him take 6d6 fire damage

Languages: Any, telepathy

AC: 46, touch 10, flat-footed 45

hp: 530

Resist: air 10, acid 10, and electricity 10. DR 25/Good. SR 35.

Immune: Fire, cold, and water attacks.

Fort: +29, **Ref:** +24, **Will:** +26

Speed: 40 ft (8 squares)

Melee: Longsword +52/+47/+42/+37 (2d6+19/19-20)

Base Attack: +33; **Grp** +48

Attack Options: Bane (SU): Demons gain a +2 enchantment bonus and +2d6 damage vs. anything with the Divine or Angelic Spark.

Special Actions: Soul Sense (SU): Morthorn can sense any Mortal's greatest temptation.

Spell-Like Abilities: 9/day — Disguise Self (DC 20), Ghost Sound (DC 19), Shield (DC 20), Silent Image (DC 20), Ventriloquism (DC 20); 8/

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day — Blur (DC 21), Invisibility (DC 21), Minor Image (DC 21), Mirror Image (DC 21); 7/day — Displacement (DC 22), Major Image (DC 22); 6/day — Hallucinatory Terrain (DC 23), Illusory Wall (DC 23), Greater Invisibility (DC 23), Phantasmal Killer (DC 23); 5/day — Dream (DC 24), False Vision (DC 24), Mirage Arcana (DC 24), Nightmare (DC 24), Persistent Image (DC 24), Seeming (DC 24); 4/day — Misperceive (DC 25), Permanent Image (DC 25), Programmed Image (DC 25), Veil (DC 25); 3/day — Mass Invisibility (DC 26), Project Image (DC 26); 2/day — Scintillating Pattern (DC 27), Screen (DC 27).

Feats: Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Mounted Combat, Weapon Focus (Longsword), Epic Weapon Focus (Longsword), Ride-By-Attack, Deflect Arrows (from sword), Cleave, Great Cleave, Superior Initiative, Trample.

Skills: Appraise +20, Balance +1, Bluff +45, Climb +15, Diplomacy +57, Disguise +11, Escape Artist +10, Forgery +10, Gather Information +45, Hide +6, Intimidate +49, Jump +19, Knowledge (Arcana) +46, Knowledge (Geography) +46, Knowledge (History) +46, Knowledge (Nobility and Royalty) +46, Knowledge (Religion) +46, Knowledge (The Planes) +46, Move Silently +10, Profession (Military) +36, Ride +42, Search +46, Sense Motive +44, Swim +13, Use Rope +7.

Possessions: Morthorn has several special items of note.

Imgarthiel: Imgarthiel is a two-handed sword that Morthorn can wield in one hand because of his great size (he can wield it in a smaller form one-handed as well). It is composed of an unknown material, thought to be priceless even in its native Hell. It is a +8 weapon evil-aligned, +3d6 Unholy (evil) damage and one negative level on anyone with a Divine or Angelic Spark. On a critical hit it deals +3d6 additional Unholy damage and bestows 1 additional negative level.

Kormeon: This armor is made from the same material as Imgarthiel. It is light enough to allow the Duke to swim while wearing it. Once a day, it can cast heal on the wearer. It's +8 full plate.

Glirium: This heavy/metal shield is also made from that same, exotic material. It can deflect arrows once per round. It grants a +8 bonus.

Background/History: Twelve thousand years ago, a third of the Heavenly Host took a stand against God. They won the battles, but in the Sundering, lost the war. When they found themselves in the new Hell, they slowly organized, building power groups and splitting into factions. As the new power groups solidified, Morthorn ended on top, serving Bamon as one of his Dukes. Since then he connived and plotted and planned for the day he would usurp Bamon as the most powerful Devil in Hell. He has realized the way to accomplish this isn't to overthrow Bamon, but to build a Hell of his own.

Personality/Motivation: Morthorn is a plotter and a planner. He is quiet but exudes power with every gesture and movement. He is driven by power and the need to dominate others. Morthorn has vowed to never again bow before God.

Quote: "You have something for me?"

Powers/Tactics: Morthorn is used to being invincible, but he's also a planner. He looks ahead and lays his plans. The arrival of the Warlord in this adventure seems to put him in a bad place, but even that he foresaw, strengthening the power linkage between him, the ritual, and the Ulcer to make him invulnerable to the Warlord's attacks. When greatly angered, Morthorn will sometimes change into a horrific form.

Campaign Use: Morthorn is the master behind the plans in *The Moving Shadow*. He is the overarching villain that drives the entire plot.

To scale Morthorn, adjust his hit dice.

Appearance: Morthorn is large, some ten feet tall. He looks like a man, a beautiful man with pale, glossy skin. He wears blackened plate and carries a two-handed sword in one hand, a spiked and twisted shield on his arm. He looks almost completely human, except for a pattern of gray scales at his temple.

That is his fair form.

When truly stressed, Morthorn transforms into his horrific form. He grows two feet, broadening at the shoulder and hunching almost like a gorilla. Gray scales, tinged with green mold, cover his en-

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tire body. His head becomes a monstrous skull with massive bull horns. He has reptilian hands and feet with massive black claws. His armor and weapon transform to fit his new form.

Note: *Morthorn's horrific form only comes into play under extremely stressful situations. As he believes in this adventure he has won hands down, even during the lion's share of the fight with the Warlord, it shouldn't come up yet.*

Vinis

Male water wraith undead 10/fighter 1

Age: 56 **Eyes:** Green. **Hair:** Bald. **Build:** Thin but well-muscled. **Height:** 6'9". **Race/Sex:** Water Wraith/M. **Skin:** Pale. **Demeanor:** Quiet and still. **Dress:** Sculpted plate armor. **True Attitude:** Zealously Evil. **Home:** Uzarâg.

LE medium undead

Str: 21	Int: 20
Dex: 17	Wis: 20
Con: —	Cha: 20

Init: +7 **Senses:** Listen +18, Spot +18, Darkvision 60'

Languages: Ludremonian, Marnench, The Divine Tongue, Elven, Cambionic, Dwarven, Infernal

AC: 29, touch 11, flat-footed 28

hp: 92

Fort: +5, **Ref:** +6, **Will:** +12

Speed: 20 ft (4 squares)

Melee: Longsword +14/+9 (1d8+7/19-20)

Base Attack: +6; **Grp** +11

SQ: Undead traits

Feats: Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (Longsword), Power Attack, Cleave, Great Cleave.

Skills: Climb +0, Concentration +13, Diplomacy +11, Intimidate +19, Jump -6, Knowledge (Arcana) +19, Knowledge (Religion) +18, Knowledge (The Planes) +19, Ride +4, Spellcraft +21.

Possessions: Full Plate +2, Longsword +2, Outfit (Traveler's), Shield +2 (Heavy/Metal).

Background/History: Vinis was a Devil worshiper from Ludremon who turned himself over to the Nopheratus some thirty years ago. He endured the horrors of conversion and became a Wind Wraith,

and since few people worship the Nopheratus alone, he kept his alliance with Morthorn. In the intervening years he has distinguished himself as a major force in Morthorn's plans in the Mortal Realm. In reward, Morthorn recently allowed him to undergo his transformation to Water Wraith. This is one of the reasons Morthorn put him in charge of the operation. Another was that he feared a more powerful minion would attract the attention of the Warlord. Finally, Vinis's unique combination of magical ritual knowledge and combat focus made him an ideal candidate.

Personality/Motivation: Like most Elemental Wraiths, Vinis is extremely driven. One doesn't withstand two ordeals without a certain strength of character. He also has become slightly unhinged by the ordeals. Now he obsesses about his tasks, sometimes for days at a time without a break. He has something of a phobia about work, in fact, becoming increasingly agitated and even panicked if kept from his work.

Quote: "I have this under control."

Powers/Tactics: Vinis tends to array his troops for maximum defensive capabilities, if possible inside a fortification, such as the fortress. He tends to assign strict duties to all his troops so as not to be fooled by diversions.

Campaign Use: Vinis will hold back during the adventure, trusting his troops to handle matters for the most part. After the first few hours, he'll also know that Morthorn is available as a backup, and at that point (likely before the party arrives) he will consider the risk passed. Because of this, while the party makes its assault, he doesn't concern himself with their progress.

To scale Vinis, adjust his level.

Appearance: Vinis wears black plate and a shield. His face is bloated and ruined like a drowned corpse.

The Warlord

Male half-orc fighter 50, Divine Rank 0

Age: Unknown, but more than 1,000 years. **Eyes:** Black. **Hair:** White. **Build:** Massive. **Height:** 6'0".

Race/Sex: Half-Orc/M. **Skin:** Gray. **Demeanor:** Megalomaniacal. **Dress:** Plate armor. **True Atti-**

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tude: Driven and angry. **Home:** Uzarâg.

LE medium humanoid

Str: 26

Int: 16

Dex: 28

Wis: 20

Con: 30

Cha: 14

Init: +17 **Senses:** Listen +5, Spot +5, Darkvision 60’.

Languages: Imperial, Nephilim, Cambionic, Infernal

AC: 38, touch 12, flat-footed 38

hp: 1000

Resist: DR 10/–, Fire Resistance 5, SR 32

Immune: Acid (Ex), Cold (Ex), Electricity (Ex), Energy Drain (Ex), Mind-Affecting (Ex), transmutation (Ex).

Fort: +37, **Ref:** +30, **Will:** +26

Speed: 40 ft (8 squares)

Melee: Longsword +74/+69/+64/+59 (1d8+23/17-20+1d6)

Base Attack: +50; **Grp** +63

Attack Options: Precise Blows (+10d6 damage to all melee attacks), Devastating Critical (DC43)

SQ: Orc Blood, Regeneration 200 (Unknown weakness), Immortality. The Warlord does not have the ability to grant spells to worshipers.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Mounted, Combat, Ride-By Attack, Weapon Focus (Longsword, Warhammer), Weapon Specialization (Longsword, Warhammer), Greater Weapon Specialization (Longsword, Warhammer), Overwhelming Critical (Longsword), Deflect Arrows (from shield), Epic Weapon Specialization (Longsword, Warhammer), Cleave, Great Cleave, Devastating Critical, Trample, Spring Attack, Whirlwind Attack, Epic Weapon Focus (Longsword, Warhammer), Penetrate Damage Reduction (Epic, Evil, Lawful). Armor Skin, Damage Reduction (x5), Improve Critical (Longsword), Combat Expertise, Superior Initiative, Epic Prowess (x5), Improved Whirlwind Attack, Dodge, Mobility.

Skills: Intimidate +55, Jump +37, Profession (Military) +26, Ride +53, Swim +53.

Possessions: The Warlord has a few unique items:

Vorthane: This +7 longsword. It is evil-aligned, +3d6 Unholy (evil) damage and 1 negative level bestowed to a target with the Divine or Angelic

Spark. On a critical hit deals +3d6 additional Unholy damage and bestows 1 additional negative level.

Dorak: This +7 heavy/metal shield with arrow deflection.

Tormun: This is a +10 breastplate.

Amulet of the Tongues: Allows the wearer to understand, speak, and write any language.

Background/History: The Warlord, Losius, was the second in command to the Lord High Marshal of the last Emperor. Something happened in the last days of that war, and many think it’s linked somehow to the Chaos. Whatever the case, it created the Warlord and the other Great Fiends. The Warlord gathered an army of Orcs quickly, likely from the remnants of the Imperial army. He then took over Uzarâg, and legends say he carried the Fell Hammer. Since then, the Dwarven kingdom has become an Ulcer, and the Warlord has gained in strength and power. Many people believe the world won’t end in the Chaos, like most people think, but the Ulcer will come from Uzarâg, as the Warlord conquers outward.

Personality/Motivation: The Warlord is a powerful individual, driven, with an equal talent for detail and the big picture. Still, he spends most of his energy on the big picture, not because this is his preference, but because his Orcish nation runs better if he allows them to take out their aggression in violent internal politics.

Quote: “It is time.”

Powers/Tactics: The Warlord thinks his tactics through, some believe years ahead of time. In fact, one theory states that the Warlord’s past failures are a myth. He hasn’t failed, but when looking at the world, he realized early on that if all the nations united he’d face unbeatable odds. This theory claims the Warlord has a longer-range plan, and that each of these failures is a stage in a plan that no one in the world has yet to fathom. If so, the Warlord might be more dangerous than anyone thinks.

Campaign Use: The Warlord is more an elemental force than an opponent. While it might be appropriate to instigate a campaign based around his armies, except in special circumstances, he’s too powerful to be a direct foe.

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You shouldn't ever have to scale the Warlord, but if you do, increase his level, skills, and feats. *Never* scale the Warlord down.

Appearance: The Warlord stands six feet tall, huge for a Half-Orc. He has gray skin and a bitter, hateful appearance. He wears plate armor and carries a shield and weapons at almost all times. He carries a long, spear-like staff of office as well, but this isn't actually a weapon.

Xundost

Male human cleric 7

Age: 33 **Eyes:** Gray. **Hair:** White. **Build:** Wiry. **Height:** 5'9". **Race/Sex:** Rural Man/M. **Skin:** Pale. **Demeanor:** Quiet. **Dress:** Dark robes. **True Attitude:** Cunning and zealous. **Home:** Hell.

NE medium humanoid

Str: 15	Int: 13
Dex: 12	Wis: 16
Con: 12	Cha: 10

Init: +5 **Senses:** Listen +3, Spot +3

Languages: Divine Tongue

AC: 14, touch 11, flat-footed 13

hp: 42

Fort: +6, **Ref:** +3, **Will:** +8

Speed: 30 ft (6 squares)

Melee: Longsword +7 (1d8+2/19-20)

Base Attack: +5; **Grp** +7

Special Actions: rebuke undead – 7/day, turn check 1d20+2, level 7, 2d6+7 damage.

Combat Gear: Potions and the like

Spells: 0 (DC 13) — Create Water, Cure Minor Wounds, Detect Magic (x2), Light, Read Magic; 1 (DC 14) — Bane, Cause Fear, Cure Light Wounds, Detect Good, Detect Undead, Protection From Good; 2 (DC 15) — Cure Moderate Wounds, Death Knell, Hold Person (x2), Remove Paralysis; 3 (DC 16) — Animate Dead (x2), Create Food and Water, Speak with Dead; 4 (DC 17) — Cure Critical Wounds, Death Ward.

SQ: Spontaneous casting, Death Domain, Evil Domain

Feats: Improved Initiative, Martial Weapon Proficiency (Longsword), Extra Turning, Combat Casting.

Skills: Concentration +11, Knowledge (Arcana) +11, Knowledge (Religion) +11, Spellcraft +13.

Possessions: Longsword.

Background/History: Xundost was born in the province of Hell, in the lands of the Fallen before the Sundering. There he studied under the dark priests of the Nopheratus and was one of the instrumental students in the order who pioneered the art of Necromancy. He can raise the dead by tapping the power of the Nopheratus directly. Now he is one of many agents operating in the lands of the Fallen, raising the dead in the attempts to create an army with which to siege the walls of the Holy City itself.

Personality/Motivation: Xundost is a zealot and he sees himself as a martyr for his cause. He volunteered to work near the border, knowing that this might put him in danger of meeting scouts of God.

Quote: "We know the way now. It's so clear."

Powers/Tactics: Xundost fights with his Inflict Wounds spells and his risen dead, but in a pinch he's an accomplished swordsman.

Campaign Use: Xundost is a forward agent of the Nopheratus, working in Dwarven villages to see if the Dwarves produce more powerful Undead when raised.

To scale Xundost up, increase his level, spells, and feats.

Appearance: Xundost is young looking, but his face can age and take on crags and valleys when contorted in fury. His hair is white from prolonged exposure to Necromantic energies. He has only one arm.

This ends Act One of *The Moving Shadow*.



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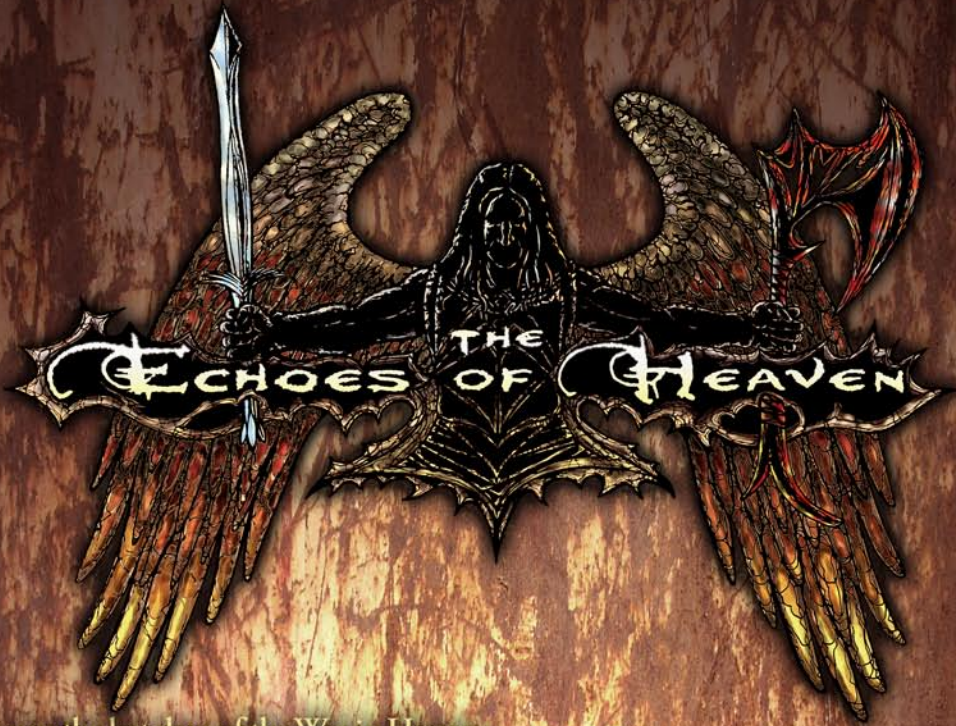
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It was the last days of the War in Heaven.

You have left the lands of the Faithful behind. This was the time before the sun and the moon, the time before night and day. Only the Holy See, in the distance, shone light for the world. A constant light, gentle and even, no matter how far one traveled from the Holy City.

Except for here.

But you have a mission, given by the Archangel Areniel. You are to penetrate as deeply as possible, to find the home of the Fallen Angel Mathos.

Here are the lands of the Fallen, the lands of the damned Angels and the heretic Mortals who follow them. Here the light never shines and the oppression is unrelenting.

Here, you will likely die.

Welcome to the third adventure in the *Moving Shadow* campaign. This adventure, *On Corrupted Ground*, is the third of a ten-part series that will take a group of characters through the Mortal Realm. Starting at 2nd level and taking the party to 20th level, this campaign will take the world to the brink of destruction.

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