



THUNDERHOLD

CASTLE OF THE DWARVEN KING

BACKGROUND

The Dwarves of Thunderhold originated at the Majestic Fastness, deep in the Majestic Mountains. They were forced from their ancestral home by the great dragon, Analegorn, and its three young some 400 years ago. The Dwarves journeyed north to the region of the Sunstone Caverns, rumored to possess a lode of mithral. There the dwarves found an army of gnolls who held the caverns and the adjacent castle.

In those early days, the dwarves lived in caves near the castle and warred often with the gnolls. They befriended several bands of Moonrakers (see "Common Orichalan" in the Characters chapter of the *Player's Guide to the Wilderlands*), descendants of the ancient Orichalan Dragon Lords who it is said built the castle. The dwarves and Moonrakers traded with each other and formed an alliance, but that alliance waned in the face of outside invaders and increased attacks from the gnolls of the castle and caverns. Eventually, the gnolls came to be led by an evil wizard named Lychin and a minotaur-priest named Bragash, who mobilized the gnolls to war. The dwarves defeated the gnolls and the wizard, but Bragash fled deep into the Sunstone Caverns. His forces continue to trouble the dwarves to this day.

Zephrus Iron-Helm, then the leader of the dwarves who were occupying the castle, led a band to the City State in answer to the Overlord's call for help against a marauding

dragon and her brood. Afterwards, the Overlord rewarded Zephrus with the resources of the City State to help gather the remnants of the dwarves and establish Thunderhold as their new home. Zephrus Iron-Helm was made king and his descendents have ruled ever since.

In honor of their old alliance, the dwarves allowed the Moonrakers to live in the castle. Thunderhold is one of the few places where descendants of the Orichalans live in peace and are not hunted. There are some 600 Moonrakers living in the castle and surrounding lands. The dwarves of Thunderhold now number over 2000.

At present, the Dwarves' attempts to clear more of the Sunstone Caverns and the other caves have proceeded slowly. In addition to strengthening the castle's defenses, they have started tunnels beneath the central keeps.

The Dwarven King maintains close ties and trade with the City State. For example, he supplies armorers to the City State, workers for the mines to the northeast, and crack dwarven troops. Although not a Tributary Lord, the King gets a vote in the Senate of eight and has a mutual protection alliance with the Invincible Overlord.

The Dwarves of Thunderhold generally worship Goibhnie, Blacksmith of the Gods (N; symbol: giant mallet over sword; favored weapon: spear and hammer; domains: Earth, Fire, Strength). His temple is the large temple in the western portion of the castle. There is

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also a temple to Dunatis and Kazadarum (see the *Player's Guide to the Wilderlands* for information on the latter two gods).

Barracks for the Border Warders are located outside the castle proper (see area T, below). Barracks inside the castle hold the common soldiers (Ftr1-3s) as well as barracks for the Axe Banner Legion, a group of 300 elite dwarven axemen (N mountain dwarf Ftr3; dwarven waraxe or masterwork longswords) who occasionally patrols with Onar and the Border Warders. They are led by Valiant Bakalin (N mountain dwarf Ftr4; SL 7; +1 *morning star*), the Hero of the Axe Banner Legion.

It is rumored that a god called "Emig XXV" died near Thunderhold two years ago and gave birth to a mortal named "Defect." The mortal and a portion of the dead god Emig was supposedly sold to the Overlord for a considerable sum. This rumor was probably started to explain the fire which began leaping from the Cryptic Citadel in the City State to kill any flying creature venturing over it, since the mortal was also supposed to have inherited a magic limb of Emig, named "Autocannon." The dwarves of Thunderhold have always produced superior weapons, but the Legion Blades of the Axe Banner Legion of recent make are attributed to the corpse of Emig.

The Dwarves have lately regained some territory from the Giants living west of them, and it is also rumored that they are preparing a strike against Analegorn the great dragon that drove them from their home in the Majestic Fastness.

THUNDERHOLD (City): Conventional; AL LG; Tech Level: 9; 3,000 gp limit; Assets 750,000 gp; Population 8,000 (Able bodied men: 2,600); Integrated (human 37% [mostly Common Orichalan, Tharbrian and Alryan], dwarf 20%, halfling 18%, elf 10%, gnome 7%, others 8%); Resources: Gems.

NOTABLE NPCs

Unless otherwise noted, the following NPCs are all Mountain Dwarves (see the *Player's Guide to the Wilderlands*) and are male. SL stands for "Social Level" and is measured on a scale equivalent to that presented in the *City State of the Invincible Overlord*.

Nodre Iron-Helm (N Ftr6/Ari2; SL 15; +2 *war hammer*, +2 *mithral full plate*), the current king of the dwarves is stormy and quick to anger. He dreams of retaking his ancestral home in the Majestic Fastness from the dragon Analegorn. He keeps good relations with the City State and maintains racial peace between the dwarves and men in the castle.

Squire Zotik (N Ftr2/Ari1; SL 10; shortsword) is the

mannerly Mayor of Thunderhold who runs the day to day business of the city and castle.

Wenegbon (N Ftr4; SL 6; morning star, masterwork full plate) is the Gate Sentinel for the castle. He trumpets the arrival of important visitors or events.

Sable Wik (LG female Clr5; SL 7; staff) is the dwarf-mother and generous priestess of the Temple of Rosmerta in the Inner Castle.

Bonanza Bifex (N Clr4; SL 6; mace) is the leader of the Dwarven War Party and a priest of Goibhnie. He is anti-human and often causes problems by stirring up racial hatred.

Cur Raplin (CE Ftr3; SL 5; longsword) has a small but powerful group of dwarf followers. He, too, has a strong dislike for humans.

Meglin the Brute (CE Ftr4; SL 4; dwarven waraxe) is a friend of Cur Raplin and is a dullard.

Doggin Chopper (N Ftr5; SL 8; +1 *battleaxe*) is the High Sheriff and is known as the "Protector of the Axe." He is known for his Strength.

Romp Wikin (N Bar2; SL 6; +1 dagger) is a widely-traveled bard who has visited the regions of Tarantis, the Valley of the Ancients, Valon, the Elphand Lands and Viridistan. He hates elves.

Fenmar the Knave (N Rog5; SL 4; dagger, *boots of speed*) is nicknamed "Flash" for his skill as a cutpurse and famed quick escapes thanks to his magical boots.

Bankil the Culprit (CE Rog5; SL 4; shortsword) is a cutpurse living at the Souring Mug Inn.

Purloin Purfin (N Rog9; +1 dagger) is a noted thief living at the Summit Saloon.

Carlan the Puffer (N Ftr2; SL 5; dagger) is a notoriously affable and fat braggart. He is a good source of information, though as often as not the information is false.

Hoary Hang (N Ftr4; SL 5; *talisman sword*) is a dwarven hero who wields the famed Talisman Sword.

Goose Asquil (N Ftr2; longsword and crossbow) is uncharacteristically cheerful for a dwarf. He is skilled with his crossbow.

The Lady of Green Knowledge (LG female human [Tharbrian] Witch9/Drd3, +2 dagger, *bracers of natural armor* +3) is a charitable good witch. She resides at the Shadow Mirth Lodge.

Wehrmoth the Warlock (N male human Wiz8; +1 dagger) is a gloomy local human wizard who occasionally works for the Dwarven King.

Lady Kostbera the Sorceress and Spy (CE female human [Altanian] Wiz9; SL 8; +2 *dagger*, +3 *ring of natural armor*, *bracers of armor* +4, *wand of major image*, *scroll of magic circle of protection from evil*) is a former beggar girl who ruthlessly carved her niche in society and, at the peak of her notoriety, disappeared from the upper-world. She joined the Black Lotus and is the personal agent of the Overlord. Her *ring of natural armor* +3 bears the secret symbol of that spy network. Kostbera is extremely greedy and occasionally pursues her own best interests by looting other denizens of the deep. She wears beads and bangles of a slave girl (actually worth 11,600 gp) and is an excellent actress. Seeking to avoid capture and personal combat, she relies heavily on her secret passages, traps, and hirelings. In any bad situation, she will flee and trap pursuers. Kostbera makes use of four skeletons (medium-sized, see the *MM*; shortspears) stored in a pit-trap. She never forgets an affront and will seek revenge carefully without danger to herself. Lady Kostbera is cunningly reluctant to reveal her magic ability and often poses as a captive of the skeletons to dupe a party. She might sell captives into slavery, but, if attracted to an individual (probability equal to character's Cha stated as percentage) she will *charm* a captive and later set him free (nude and shaven bald) in the Square of the Gods in the City State. Hidden in a chest of garments in her room are a *potion of flying*, 440 cp, 110 sp, 90 gp, and four pieces of jewelry worth 100 gp each. In a jar by the corner is an orc head. Below the table in her room are four wine flasks. On the table is a dagger, 3 sp, and a flask of oil. On a shelf are two weeks' rations for one person, four torches, and 50 feet of silk rope; leaning against the wall is a heavy crossbow, rigged to fire at anyone opening the door without first releasing a catch (Search DC 20, Disable Device DC 20, Attk +8 ranged (1d10 heavy crossbow bolt)).

Her hirelings include **Thrandil IV** (CE male human [Alryan] Ftr3; SL 2; longsword), **Longarm Hem** (N male human [Tharbrian] Rog6; SL 3; +1 *shortsword*), **Bindel the Dwarf** (N male mountain dwarf Ftr2; SL 4; warhammer), **Gundar the Beardbottom** (CE male human [Tharbrian] Ftr2; SL 3; greatsword) and **Toothy Kalisk** (LE male human [Karakhan] Clr4 [Set, death, law]; SL 4; mace).

LEGENDS AND RUMORS

The Dungeon Vault: Tales tell of a huge cave complex below the Majestic Fastness near the ancient ancestral home of the dwarves who now live in Thunderhold. It is believed that the Vault is occupied by Analegorn's young.

The Master Stone: A 100,000 gp gem is reportedly in a

balor horde.

The Charm-mantle: A famed garment which is in fact a *robe of scintillating colors*.

The Eldar Relic: +3 *longspear* in a troll horde.

The Omen Beacon: A mysterious light that shines above Nimbus Tor.

The Raven-guide: A legend of a raven that led a dwarf hero out of danger.

The Night Watchers: A group of specters riding manticores that plague the nearby mountains.

The Sundered Shield: +5 *shield* lost to a dragon, believed to be one of Analegorn's young.

The Sun-driven Dwarf: Legend of a flying dwarf adventurer who arrived and quickly departed from Thunderhold 140 years ago.

SHOPS AND LOCATIONS

Unless otherwise noted, all shop owners are male mountain dwarves.

A. Marblehead Tavern. Run by Nyi (LG Ftr2; SL 3; dagger) and located on the Street of Armorers, the Marblehead is frequented by the stonemasons of the castle.

B. Engineer. Nithri (N Exp3/Ftr2; SL 8; longsword) the engineer offers his expert services from a small shop just off the main gate into the castle behind the Lofty Inn.

C. Lofty Inn. Run by Austri (N Ftr3; SL 4; dagger), the Lofty Inn caters to visitors and is one of the most human-friendly of the dwarf-run inns due to its proximity to the main gate.

D. Summit Saloon. Run by Vestri (N Ftr4; SL 5; shortsword), famed for its location facing the temple. Purfin the thief (see above) resides here and is not above picking the pocket of temple attendees.

E. Bounty and Bludgeon Inn. Run by Nain (CG Ftr3; SL 4; handaxe), this inn is located near the barracks on Deep Delver Street and is frequented by soldiers and mercenaries.

F. Master Smith. In a prominent location on the Street of Armorers, Northri (N Ftr2/Exp5; SL 9; shortspear), the master smith, forges all manner of iron items, from weapons to horseshoes.

G. Jeweler. In his prestigious shop located within the main keep itself, Vindalf (CE Ftr2/Exp4; SL 5; +1 *warhammer*) can appraise, cut, set or convert any manner of gem or jewel.

H. Wheelwright. In his busy shop inside the keep proper, Rathsvith (N Ftr1/Exp2; SL 5; war hammer) repairs the wheels of wagons that travel over the rough terrain of the surrounding mountains as well as the wheels of the various battle chariots.

I. Master Armorer. Located perhaps in the most prominent location on the Street of Armorers, this shop is the workplace of several excellent armorers. Regin (N Ftr2/Exp6; SL 6; +1 *heavy mace*) can make +1 armor and weapons if given the correct materials. Rufalin (N Ftr1/Exp3; SL 5; flail) is greedy but skillful. Thranark (N Ftr1/Exp5; SL 7; battle axe) can repair magic weapons and armor (probability of failure 10% per +1 of the item, if failure then item is destroyed).

J. Sourcing Mug Saloon. Located inside the main keep and run by Nar (N Ftr5; SL 5; dagger), the Sourcing Mug is home to Bankil (see above). He rarely marks other customers at the saloon, however, preferring not to work inside the keep itself.

K. Toymaker. In a spacious low building off Temple Street, the toymaker, An (CE Ftr1/Rog1/Exp2; SL 3; handaxe), makes strange toys. Despite his evil nature, most of his toys are appropriate for children. He has been known to make trapped toys.

L. Towering Tavern. Run by Suthri (N Ftr3; SL 4; longsword), this tall building has three stories of rooms.

M. Emerald Tankard Inn. Run by Draupnir (N Ftr3; SL 5; handaxe), this inn is a favored watering hole for the citizens both before and after worship at the Temple of Goibhnie just to the south.

N. Crossbowmaker. Draupnir (N Ftr2/Exp2; SL 5; handaxe, crossbow) runs this shop off Temple Street. He can manufacture masterwork crossbows and repeating crossbows.

O. Sage. Ni-Weser-Re (LG male astari Wiz10/Clr10/Sage10; SL 7) is 869 years old. He is an astari (for more on the astari see the *ENWorld Player's Journal*, Volume 4, "Lesser Races of the Wilderlands") sage who specializes in History of all periods and Astronomy. He is a cleric of Thoth. He will not fight except in self-defense. He charges one magic items plus 1000 gp to answer a question as a sage (see the "Characters" chapter of the *Player's Guide to the Wilderlands* for more information on the Sage class). He is preoccupied with charting the various stargates that reside on and above the planet. He is known as a dwarf-friend and is a Hero against the Race of Wyrms. He rides a gold dragon and is frequently gone from his home for weeks at a time. His residence is unlocked and a silver whistle which lies on a small table in the center of the main room can be used to summon him

back from his current location. His residence has no obvious valuables and seems larger even than its large exterior would allow.

P. The Scarlet Archer Alehouse. This cramped alehouse outside the walls of the castle is run by Hroptr (CG male human [Common Orichalan] Ftr4/Sor1; SL 3; dagger). It caters to visiting humans.

Q. Shadow Mirth Lodge. The proprietor Lysir (LG male human [Tharbrian] Rgr2; SL 4; longsword and light mace) runs this lodge. The Lady of Green Knowledge (see above) lives here, having rendered aid to Lysir years ago. Lysir refuses to discuss just what aid was rendered. She occupies the second level above the eastern portion of the Lodge. Four more rooms can be had upstairs for rent.

R. Animal Trainer. Brune (N male human [Tharbrian] Ftr2/Exp6; SL 3; longsword and dagger) trains animals, specializing in horses and bears from this strange house and barn, which has been added onto several times.

S. Stage Coach. Rimegerd (LE male human [Alryan] Ftr2; SL 4; longsword) runs a stage coach service throughout the town and the surrounding areas. Some say he has a deal with local thieves, bringing his passengers to certain locations at certain times for heists or a throat slitting in exchange for a cut of the take.

T. Border Warders' Barracks. The Border Warders are an all-dwarf force that constantly patrols the Rorystone Road and Vagabond Trail in groups of 6+1d6. The Border Warders (typically a mountain dwarf Ftr2/Rgr1; longsword, dwarven waraxe) number 100 strong and are skilled in fighting in all terrain types and are the enemy of Giant type monsters. The Border Warders are led by Sergeant Onar (N male mountain dwarf Ftr5/Rgr2; SL 8; +2 *longsword*, +1 *dwarven full plate*, +1 *large steel shield*). Their barracks sit up and away from the other buildings outside of the castle, near the Rocky Rapids.

U. Jewel Thief Pub. Run by Rigsmal (CE male human [Alryan] Ftr6; SL 4; dagger and heavy mace), this pub lives up to its name. Stolen goods, including gems, are often fenced in the open.

V. Mountaineer. This building offers the services of Hildeger (N male human [Skandik] Ftr2/Rgr3; SL 4; longsword) and his two gnome assistants, Godwin (N male Lightelf gnome Ftr1/Exp3; SL 4; shortspear) and Sigtun (N male Lightelf gnome Rog1/Ftr2; SL 4; shortsword).

W. Scribe. Thelemark (N male human [Alryan] Wiz2/Sage 1; SL 5; dagger) scribes documents and provides minor sage advice.

X. Woodcutter. Hespnr (CG male mountain dwarf Rgr2; SL 4; handaxes) leads cutting expeditions into the nearby woods from his small, secluded home.

Y. Mercenary. Fialer (N male human [Karakhan] Ftr4; SL 5; long spear) leads a band of 50 to 100 mercenaries (as needed, normally War1-3s and Ftr1-2s), hired by the King to fight raiding gnolls and others suspected of banditry in the area. His home is one of the few stone buildings outside of the castle and it has several stories and a crenellated roof. His men sleep on the main floor or in camps outside the building.

CREDITS

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This *Thunderhold* download contains the description of Thunderhold as found in the original *City State of the Invincible Overlord* product by Judges Guild. Very little expansion has been done, other than detailing the NPCs in v3.5 terms and adding Wilderlands-specific race notes. For a truly updated and expanded version of Thunderhold, see *Thunderhold Revised*, below.

THUNDERHOLD REVISED

Coming soon from Necromancer Games and Judges Guild is *Thunderhold Revised*, a full expansion and revision of Thunderhold, complete with expanded area descriptions and full stat blocks and backgrounds for all the NPCs. Also includes expanded story and adventure ideas, full details on the types of dwarven arms and armor available for sale, as well as expanded history and background notes. *Thunderhold Revised* will be available soon as a for sale PDF available for download.

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