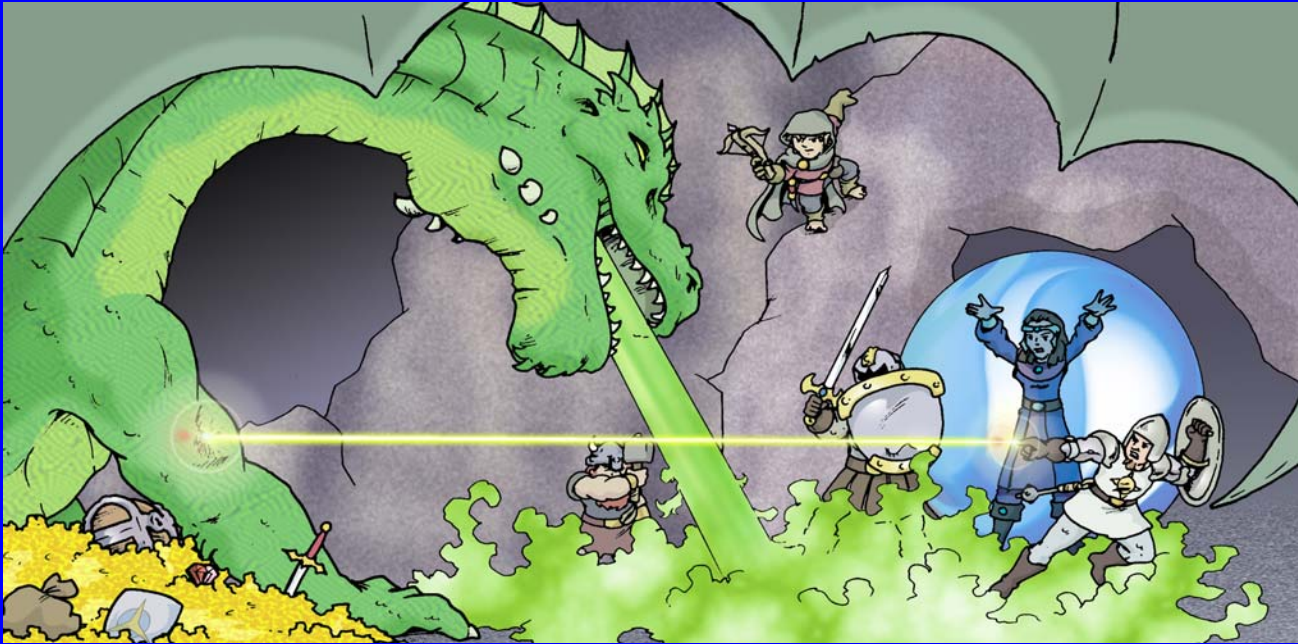


Dungeon Module WGH5 Lords of the Howling Hills

By William Silvey
AN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTER LEVELS 4-7



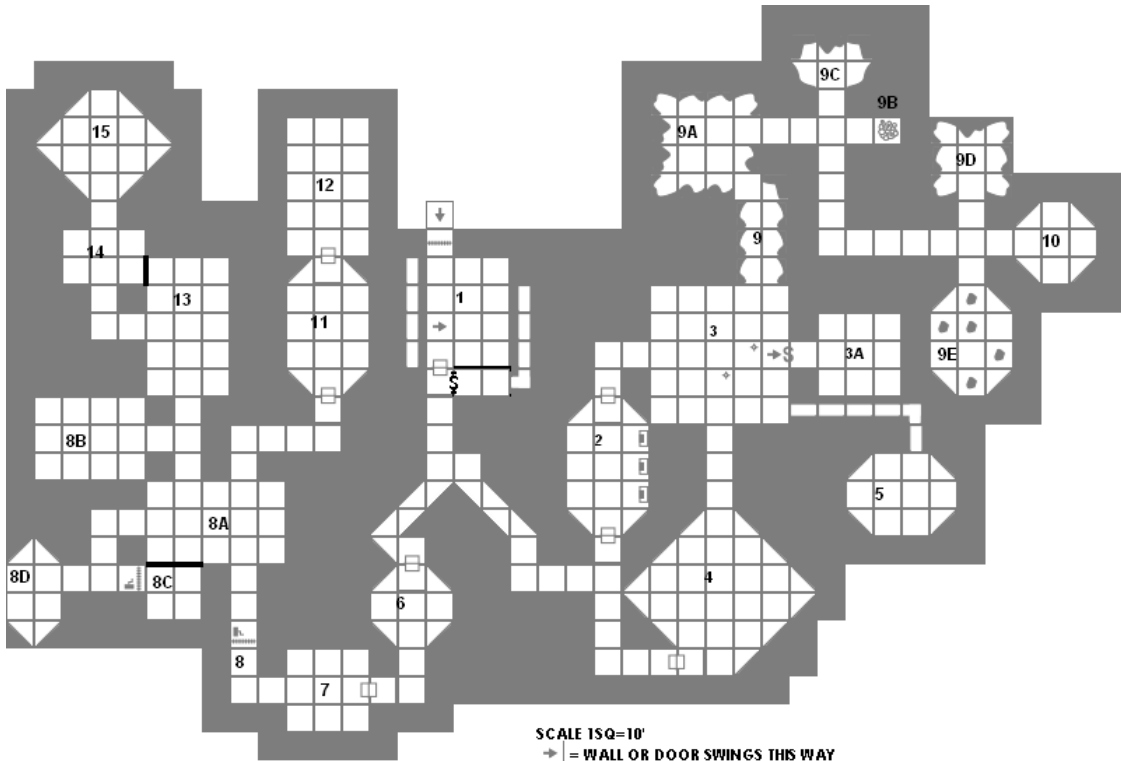
You have entered the Howling Hills at the behest of the barbarian warlords. You have overcome the humanoids in their fortress dungeon, and you have braved the undead terrors of the storied Tombs. Now, finally, before you is the last obstacle: the vaunted durance of the Lords of the Howling Hills. Will your party survive this final challenge, or will they perish like those before them?

This module was originally used as a convention adventure for the HMGS-South RECON '06 convention, and is a continuation of a series of three related convention modules from THE DELVER'S DUNGEON.

This module contains a fully detailed scenario, maps, notes for the Dungeon Master, and full background for integrating it with the other modules. It may be used with WGH3 INTO THE HOWLING HILLS and WGH4 TOMBS OF THE HOWLING HILLS or it may be played as a stand-alone adventure scenario. Be sure to look for other exciting ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™ adventure modules from The Delver's Dungeon.

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SCALE 1SQ=10'

- = WALL OR DOOR SWINGS THIS WAY
- F = FORGE
- R = RUBBLE
- W = PORTCULLIS WITH WINCH
- S = SECRET DOOR

BACKGROUND:

Your group of adventurers has assailed the peaks and ridges of the Howling Hills to unseat the minions of Iuz which have become entrenched there. You have undone the works of the bugbears, and managed to survive the horrible desecrated tombs of the wolf nomads. Your journey through the dark tombs is over. You stand now on a narrow, ancient stone causeway many hundreds of feet long, spanning a deep canyon open to the sky. Powerful gusts of wind whip through the chasm (which is easily a half-mile or more deep). These loud gusts produce a deep howling noise: truly, you have discovered the namesake of the hills themselves! You have little time to wonder at this phenomenon: as the tombs lay behind you, before you is a gaping entrance to another cavern or perhaps even complex of caverns. Adjusting your equipment and steeling yourselves, your party of adventurers continues onward across the great stone bridge...

Now, across this huge wind-blown rift lies your next goal: what could be the dwellings of the very driving force behind the occupation of the Howling Hills itself!

MODULE BACKGROUND:

This module was written for the HMGS-South HURRICON'05 convention. It was run as a two-session adventure spanning two days. The maps are laid out specifically to match most Dwarven Forge™ scale dungeon models, although it is not necessary to use them in play.

START:

It is assumed that the party survived the previous module (if played) intact and have taken time to heal themselves and rest to memorize any expended spells. If the party wishes to retire between sessions, the outer causeway area is "safe" so long as they retreat without pursuit; otherwise the denizens of the upper dungeon area will surely follow them and try to drive them away or kill them. If the party retreats during combat this will **surely** be the case. If the party retreats unobserved across the causeway and makes camp in the far caves of the Tombs, they will be able to rest and recuperate without encountering any creatures there – assuming they destroyed or drove off all the beings present in the tomb!

NOTES FOR THE DUNGEON MASTER:

WGH5 Lords of the Howling Hills is the final module in the WGH series. While it is intended for use with the two previous modules (WGH3 Into the Howling Hills and WGH4 Tombs of the Howling Hills), it may be used as a stand alone module and/or incorporated in to a separate campaign or module. This module is geared for play by a party of four to six adventurers of fourth to sixth level of experience. A well rounded group should include at least one cleric, one thief and a magic-user. If the party has been seriously decimated through combat or misfortune in the previous two modules, the Dungeon Master may arrange for a conveniently placed

raise dead scroll, or freed prisoners of the creatures encountered earlier to fill the party's ranks. Alternately, the number and strength of the monsters encountered here may be altered to suit a smaller (or larger) party.

Time in this dungeon is a consideration: the master of this place is surely aware of the events which transpired in WGH3 Tombs of the Howling Hills and will act accordingly! The vanguard of the place (the black orcs) will not simply wait in their barracks to be slaughtered like so many cattle. They have keen senses and will hear (and react to) sounds of battle within their domain. Likewise, the were-rat and kobold slaves and servants of the black orcs will also act accordingly. These inhabitants are responsible for the pitfalls and mechanical traps herein and can move around and over them without triggering them. Remember, play the monsters *intelligently* and your party will have a memorable stay in the dungeons of the Lords of the Howling Hills!

UPPER WORKS:

The upper levels of the dungeon area are carved from living rock, buttressed in areas with worked stone and timbers. A dwarven character may (25% chance) note that the crude but effective construction is the stonework of kobolds. While the main entryway is of much older construction (and was probably begun by Wolf Nomad artisans, ages before) the tunnels and rooms within are much, much newer. The caves are cool and slightly damp. The walls separating inner rooms are of stone and wood construction, and 2' thick. The doors are constructed of bronze and iron bound timbers and 6" to 1' thick, and very heavy. The floors are of dirt or bare stone, with the occasional scrap of old carpet or patch of rushes.

KEY TO THE UPPER LEVEL

Wandering Monsters:

1. 4-8 leather-armor clad black orcs, armed with great wooden clubs. They are on their way to the armory at area #10. These brutes have 25 hit points each.
2. 2-12 kobold rat-hunters. Four carry trained rats in cages which they will open before combat begins.
3. 3-8 Wererat slaves (loyal). One will transform to rat form and attempt to flee to raise the alarm at the kobold barracks at area #3. They are all average of their kind and equipped with broadswords. They will fight in humanoid/rat form.
4. 1-2 gray ooze
5. 3-7 Ogrillions
6. 1-4 fully armed and armored black orcs on patrol. Of average hit points.
7. Mixed band of 1-4 wererats and 2-12 kobolds (disloyal). Average of their kind, they seek to escape the orcs and make their way across the chasm. If pressed, they will flee back into the caves and attempt to raise the alarm and hopefully escape in the confusion.
8. 1 Verbeeg giant, from area #15 below. If encountered in the corridors and slain, area #15 will be occupied by but a single verbeeg.

1. THE ENTRYWAY

The open rock shelf from the causeway quickly tapers into a room which is partially worked stone and partially natural (near the causeway entrance). A few wooden benches and shelves dot the room. The nearly deafening howl of the winds on the causeway is lessened here.

Unless the characters carefully search the room, they will not see two carefully disguised arrow slits along the eastern and western walls. These are the watchposts for a group of kobolds and their black orc masters. When unauthorized intruders enter the room, a lone orc will quietly slip out of the watchpost to the east and alert the orcs at area 3, below. Two kobolds will fire arrows into the room, targeting any obvious spellcasters first to disrupt any spells they might cast. The rest of the kobolds and orcs will wait while the archers strike at the party before charging in to the room through a rotating wall panel in the northern wall. The kobolds will form a defensive line with spears to repel any charges, while the orcs themselves will throw flaming oil in the first round before they melee. Their targets will be spellcasters and archers.

There are a total of seven kobolds (HP 3 ea., two are armed with short-bows, the rest with spears and short sword, and all wear leather armor) and five black orcs (HP 22, 21, 20(x2), 19) wearing full plate mail, armed typically, and with two flasks of oil ready to hurl.

The orcs have 1-8 GP each; the kobolds have no treasure.

2. WERERAT WORKSHOP

A group of ten grubby looking humans are here, repairing armor and working at a forge. A few suits of black orc sized platemail are on stands. The small room echoes with the sound of hammers and bellows. The occupants seem unconcerned with the party's entry...

This is a small forge operated by a group of human-form wererats (10) for their orc masters. They all wear thick leather robes and gloves, equivalent of leather armor. If the party enters without authorization and/or if the party attacks, the wererats will spring in to action, seizing weapons from the racks and attacking the party. They are loyal to the black orcs and will fight to the death. The weapons they are most likely to grab are broadswords and short-swords at the DM's discretion. 1-4 of them will grab and wield red-hot iron tongs and pokers from the fire itself to wield for 1d6 points of damage per hit plus an additional two points of damage from the extreme heat of the metal. Unless the implements are quenched or cooled by the party they will strike with extra damage for the duration of combat.

3. KOBOLD BARRACKS (LOYAL)

Two smoky fires gutter in braziers in the middle of this large area. Pallets lie strewn along the walls. A large round table occupies the middle of the room, a chair on a raised dais sits along the far wall. A huge kobold (fully 4' tall) sits there, attended by equally impressive humanoids. About the room, some 30 kobolds go on about their duties.

A large, open unkempt place, this room is the barracks and common area of the kobold servants of the black orc tribe that guards the upper dungeons. There are 19 male kobolds here (AC 7, HD ½, HP 4 (x3), 3 (x4), 2 (x4), #AT 1, D 1-4/See Below, SA: none, SD: none), 8 females (who fight as males) and 3 young (who do not fight). 12 of the males are equipped with short swords (1d6 damage each), three are armed with large axes (D 1-8), and 4 are near weapon racks with javelins (D: 1-4). The females fight with daggers. The master of this clan (AC 6, HD 1, HP 4, #AT 1, D 1-6, SA: None,

SD: none) and his attendant bodyguards (as chieftain, x4) will direct the fight from the dais but will wade in to assist where necessary. If hard pressed, the chieftain will drag a favored female away from the battle and attempt to flee through a secret door to area **3a**. behind his throne. The kobolds have been well trained and disciplined by the black orcs and thus will not break and attempt to flee in panic on an indicated morale check, but *will* attempt an orderly withdrawal to area **4**, below. The chieftain wears a tin whistle on a chain around his neck, and if he so desires during the course of battle, can blow it and within 1-4 rounds, 40 giant rats (AC 7, HD ½, HP 2 (x40), #AT 1, D1-3, SA: Disease, SD: None) will pour through small openings along the floor and ceiling and attack anyone in the room who is not a kobold. These creatures have been well kept by the kobolds and will be bold in their defense of their masters!

Beneath the wooden "throne" (really just a discarded human-sized chair, adorned with rat skulls, skins and carvings by the kobolds) is a locked iron box with a poison needle in the lock. Within the chest are the holdings of the tribe: 11 gems of base 50 g.p. value each. Concealed by a false bottom is a **potion of extra-healing**. The jar is large enough to contain two full doses. The chieftain has the key in a belt pouch which also holds 95 s.p.)

3A. CHIEFTAIN'S CHAMBERS

Within this small chamber, a simple but clean bed lies unmade in one corner, a low table along the opposite wall is empty save but a silver candleholder with a guttering taper in it.

If pursued here, the chieftain will attempt to negotiate with the party for his life – seemingly. He has hidden a **potion of gaseous form** beneath his sleeping silks and if the party parleys with him he will try to grab it and disappear out a grating behind the table. He will flee the mountain and leave his fellows to their fate. There is nothing else in the room. If the chieftain is slain outright, only a careful search of the room will reveal the location of the potion.

4. KOBOLD ARMORY

The forges in this place are silent, but the coals still glow within. Suits of kobold-sized armor and kobold-sized weaponry hang from racks along the walls.

Survivors of the assault on the kobold barracks will form up here to make a last-ditch defense. Wounded will try to alert the black orcs within their quarters at area 8; the rest will try to hold the party here. While the kobolds themselves have nothing of value, beneath the anvil (**A** on the map) there is an ingot of pure gold (500 g.p.).

If any kobolds survive to report to the black orcs at area **7**, eight of the brutes will storm in and try to take the party on the flank. The passage is long enough that noise of battle will not be heard by the orcs within their lair; pursuit to the doorway leading therein will alert them to the presence of intruders (assuming that the alarm was not already raised when the party entered the place).

5. DISLOYAL KOBOLD BARRACKS

Unlike the relative comfort of the previous chamber, this is a dingy, dimly lit room with dirty straw and mats strewn on the floor. Garbage litters the place, and a dying coal fire burns unattended beneath a steaming cauldron in the center of the place. A large number of kobolds are here. There is no clear leader.

If the party attacks, the kobolds (AC 7, HD ½, HP 2 (x26), 1

(x14), #AT 1, D1-4, SA: None, SD: None) will fight to defend themselves. They are mostly spirited and of low morale, but realize that the favor of their fellows and their orc masters can be regained by slaying intruders and will act accordingly. A few giant rats (AC 7, HD ½, HP 2 (x18), #AT 1, D1-3, SA: Disease, SD: None) sniff among the refuse here and will act as the others in area 3 do. These wretches have no treasure. If the party enters the room and begins to decimate the kobolds, they will seemingly retreat to the other side of the room, behind the cauldron. If the party approaches to try to get around the cover provided by the cauldron, a group of five kobolds will tip it over when the adventurers are within 30' and pour out the foul-smelling stew within, splashing the front rank for 1d4 points of damage from the boiling, greasy mess.

If the party attempts to parlay, the kobolds will act *very* suspiciously; if the party indicates that the kobolds may go in peace, some (10) will go to their fellows at area 3 above. If those kobolds have been slain they will attempt to alert the orcs are area 8. The best that can be expected from these kobolds is indifference!

They have no treasure.

6. CHAMBER OF WERERATS

Six pale, emaciated humans are in this room. They all wear dirty, tattered finery. Two are playing cards at the table in the middle of the room. A woman lies on a couch to one side, three men sit on stools around a barrel, sharpening daggers and muttering to themselves. When the party enters, the woman will prop herself on one elbow and beckon the party to come in.

These are more wererat chattel of the Lord of the Howling Hills. They will act casually (and indeed unsurprised) at the party's appearance in the room. If attacked they will transmogrify into their humanoid/rat forms and attack with broadswords for 1-8 points of damage. Otherwise they will be curt but not violent towards the party – until the group enters the room completely. One of the “men” at the barrel-table will pull a hidden lever beside his knee, causing both doors to slam shut. The men at the table will leap up and attack any obvious spell-casters, while the other two men will hurl their daggers at the front ranks of the party, then draw poniards and attack in humanoid rat form. The “woman” will try to get to the rear of the party – she is in fact a skilled (6th level) assassin and she will act as such, staying in human form to give herself as much of an advantage as possible. The wererats are arrayed as follows: AC 6, HD 3+1, HP 15, 15, 20, 18, 12, 20, #AT 1, D 1-8/1-4 (thrown daggers), SA: Surprise on 1-4, SD: Only hit by silver or +1 or better weapon. The assassin fights as a 7th level member of her class, and will only transform to full rat form to try to escape if her fellows are slain. If captured she will beg for her life and try to bargain with the party. She is not unlovely in her human form and will ply herself accordingly.

Within the barrel is the treasure these lycanthropes have been paid, some 2200 s.p. Their plan was to leave after another month's service and return to the cities of luz as minor crime lords...

7. OGRILLION BARRACKS

As you approach this area you are nearly overwhelmed by the stench. Clearly, horrible creatures must be kept here. Within the room are three blue-skinned ogre-sized humanoids with orcish features. As soon as you enter, they turn to attack!

The ogrillions here (AC 6, HD 2, HP 12 (x3), #AT 2, D2-7/2-7, SA: None, SD: None) serve as footmen for the black orcs, keeping the kobolds in line. They are of low intellect and the wererats regard them as absolute buffoons, and have mostly robbed them blind. They have suffered many casualties in chasing down renegade wererats and kobolds and now only this group and a few patrols within the dungeon itself remain. They are however physically strong and can acquit themselves well if dealt with incautiously. The treasure they possess is on their persons, a mere six gold each. One, however, has been “holding out” on his fellows and has a base 50 g.p. value gem filched from the kobolds hidden in the hem of his rough tunic.

8. BLACK ORC CAVES

An open archway leads into this area. Two large humanoids can be seen on the far side of the archway.

This is the entryway to the black orc caves. The two guards (AC 1, HD 3+4, HP 21, 15, #AT 2, D 4-11/4-11, SA: None, SD: +4 on save v. spells) are regulars here, and will attack any who do not present a pass (only obtainable from the master of this place) or are not wererat or kobold or ogrillion. If the alarm has been raised, a portcullis will be lowered down through the arch and four more black orcs will be stationed here (18, 17, 19, 12 HP), attempting to hide behind the pillars of the archway. They are totally loyal and will fight to the bitter end. The two guards have their pay with them: 2000 s.p. in a locked chest (one of the two has the key). Each also carries a base 1000 g.p. gemstone in a bag. They are elite, and well paid for what they do.

8A. COMMON AREA

This room has several large tables and a food preparation area on the far wall. Weapon racks stand in the corner. Nothing of immediate value is visible.

If the alarm was raised, the four black orcs will be at area 8, above. Otherwise, they will be found here waiting for their shift to begin. They are as follows: AC1, HD 3+4, HP 18, 17,19,12, #AT 2, D4-11/4-11, SA: None, SD: +4 on save v. spells). They hold 1d10 p.p. each, and the largest among them (19 hp) wears a beaten gold necklace worth 1000 g.p.

8B. BARRACKS

This large open area has many straw and blanket lined pallets on the floor. At the foot of each is a large chest. Weapon racks hang from the walls; shields hang at random intervals along the walls as well.

A group of five off-duty black orcs (AC 8, HD 3+4, HP 17, 19, 13, 15, 15, #AT 2, D see below, SA: None, SD: +4 on save v. spells) are resting here. If the party enters they will leap to attack. They will seize great spears from the walls (1d6+3) and use them as polearms against the party. The common treasure of the orcs is kept in the various footlockers and totals: 4000 cp, 4 gems worth base 1000 g.p. each, and three pieces of jewelry worth 660, 210 and 1500 g.p., each respectively. The black orcs will immediately apprehend that they are trapped in the room and fight to the death.

8C. STORAGE AREA

Barrels and stacks of items litter this room. Most are marked as being trade goods from distant kingdoms, and some are marked in other unknown tongues. Pieces of meat – some of it humanoid in origin – have been dried and hung from hooks within the room.

This room contains most of the “mundane” plunder the orcs have taken as they have raided nearby kingdoms (most particularly the Wolf Nomad kingdoms). While there is little

of obvious value, one of the crates contains a bolt of fine silk worth 1500 g.p., and another is filled with cloaks. On the bottom of the crate a single **elven cloak** lies undetected by the orcs themselves. The food here is foul – much of the meat as is obvious comes from the orcs victims (and not a few of their own!). A keg of passable wine is in one corner and may be drunk without ill effect.

8D. BLACK ORC CAPTAIN

Within this pillared hall sits an iron throne on a slightly raised dais. Sitting on the throne is a huge orc-like being wearing dead-black iron platemail. He is attended by two other large orcs, and one nearly as large as he. Upon your entry, he raises his fist and bellows a command to his attendants! There are also a number of scruffy-looking normal sized orcs within the room.

A fearsome warrior unto himself, the black orc captain (AC 1, HD 5+5, HP 35, #AT 1, D5-13, SA: None, SD: +4 on save v. spells), his sergeant (AC 1, HD 4+4, HP 22, #AT 2, D 4-12/4-12, SA: None, SD: +4 on save v. spells) and his two bodyguards (AC 1, HD 3+4, HP 16, 17, SA: None, SD: +4 on save v. spells) will attack any intruders. If an alarm has been raised they will be prepared (and unable to be surprised) but otherwise treat the encounter normally. Like their fellows they are fanatical and tough and fight to the end, save the chieftain who will (like his Kobold counterpart) attempt to imbibe a **potion of gaseous form** and flee to the Verbeegs at area 15 and entreat them for aid. The chieftain's throne holds the rest of the tribe's fortune: 5000 g.p., 4000 p.p., 33 gems worth 10 g.p. each, 11 pieces of jewelry worth 100, 110, 166, 220, 80, 230, 400, 500, 550, 510, 1100 g.p., respectively, and 3 magic items (YTBD). This is all in a huge black iron coffer beneath the dais. The coffer is locked, and the chieftain holds two of the three keys that open it; his sergeant holds the other. Each lock is trapped; one contains a poison needle (save v. poison or die), the second releases a cloud of poison gas in a 10'x10'x10' cloud (all save v. poison or are slowed for 1d6 turns), and the last shoots out a gout of flame for 2-24 points of damage. The traps can be detected with a single find traps roll.

The orcs within the room have long been slaves of the black orcs and know no other existence. If the party destroys the black orcs, the "regular" orcs will simply attend to the party (if permitted). If the party "frees" them, they will wander aimlessly from room to room within the limits of the orc barracks, only taking care to feed themselves. They have been brutalized so long that they are nearly mindless and can aught but obey orders. If the party wishes to slay them they will not defend themselves or resist in any way.

Note that if the orcs in other areas of the cave have been bypassed, the chief can easily sound an alarm to bring them to battle!

9. FORSAKEN CAVERNS

A musty reek fills your nostrils as you enter this area. A layer of damp dust coats the floor, and cobwebs hang from the walls. In the distance, dripping water can be heard.

Most of the inhabitants of the upper dungeons avoid this area; once built to house more troops, a cave-in slew many kobold miners and their lone spriggan overseer. The orcs consider it unsafe, the kobolds consider it accursed, and the other creatures here just leave it alone. There are a few places of note, however...

AREA A

The walls, floors and ceiling of this mostly-completed area are covered with thick cobwebs – some ominously dense. Due to the presence of the webs, little can be seen beyond a 5' radius, even by those with infravision. The vaulted ceiling of this place seems to indicate it may have once been a temple or would have been at any rate.

Within the tangle of sticky webs lurks a pair of horrible giant spiders (AC 4, HD 4+4, HP 26, 30, #AT 1, D 2-8, SA: Poison, SD: None) who have been feeding on foolish and unwary creatures from the common areas. Recently all they have had to eat are rats, and they are athirst for the blood of new prey! Within the cocoons on the floor are the remains of their victims, including the dried husks of a group of kobolds that were sent here to clean the caves out many months ago. Most of their gear is worthless, however one of the corpses has a bag containing two base 50, one base 100 and one base 500 g.p. gems in a bag at its side.

AREA B

A large section of roof has collapsed here. Rubble makes further passage down the corridor impossible. A forlorn looking skeleton of some sort of demi-human, wearing rotten leather and rusted harness, lies crushed beneath a fall of boulders.

This is where the cave-in occurred which took the lives of the kobold workers and their overseer (an engineer from a race of evil gnomes) who sought to expand the upper dungeons. While the gear and equipment of the kobolds was all crushed and destroyed, the engineer's skeleton is still visible beneath the collapsed stone. In his belt pouch are 10 p.p., a few c.p., and a (somewhat miraculously) unbroken **potion of healing**.

AREA C

Another unfinished chamber, this one rougher than the first, opens into a semi-circle. A ghastly luminous glow from everywhere and nowhere illuminates the place. You feel colder as you enter...

A layer of luminous mold on the damp stone here covers the brown mold (AC 9, HD -, HP 0, #AT 0, D 0, SA: Cold, SD: Can only be made dormant with cold attacks) that clings to the rocks. It feeds on the radiant energy of the lichens around it and is quite large. It will begin to drain the party's heat as per the *Monster Manual* as soon as they enter this place. The mold is large enough that it covers the diameter of the chamber, so a careless party could be slain *outright* if they remain too long here!

AREA D

It appears that the entrance to this chamber simply collapsed instead of being dug when the corridor was constructed. More luminous lichen grows along the walls of this cave. A single barrel sits in the corner near a pool of water. A steady drip fills the bucket with a hollow tapping sound.

As the party approaches this distant chamber, the DM should indicate that they hear a musical yet alien sort of humming coming from within. When they get close enough with their light sources, it will cease. The sound is coming from a mimic (AC 7, HD 7, HP 40, #AT 1, D 3-12, SA: Glue, SD: Camouflage) within the room. It has paused here to get a drink of water, and was singing in its' own weird tongue when the party approaches. It worked its' way into these caves recently and has no real knowledge of them. If approached in a friendly fashion (and especially if offered food) it will react well. Otherwise it will attack. All it can

really offer the party is its' musings on things that pertain to it and its' way of life (slither, eat, sleep, reproduce) but will react in a sympathetic fashion if told about the travails against luz (intelligent forms of mimics do not prey upon one another or intelligent life if they can avoid it and find such behavior in other species a curiosity).

AREA E

This cave is a virtual maze of stalactites and stalagmites. They often join in the middle and form nearly impassable barriers across the room. It is difficult to see how far back the cavern stretches.

The room is the occupied by giant ticks which have burrowed through into this area, sensing warm blood. If the party carelessly tries to explore the room they will soon find themselves caught in the maze of rock formations. While initially amusing, soon after they enter they will be set upon by nine giant ticks (AC 3, HD 2-4, HP 11, 9, 12, 10, 12, 14, 17, 11, 24, #AT 1, D1-4, SA: Blood Drain, SD: None). The ticks are voracious and will pursue the party (at their maximum speed of 3") if the party flees. If the spiders at Area **A** have not been encountered, the party can enter that area and the ticks will all become stuck fast in the webs (although the spiders will still attack the party).

10. CAVE OF ECHOES

Another open cavern that appears to have been created in a mining collapse, the fallen ceiling reveals several beautiful crystal growths. Glowing lichens cover the walls here, adding more eerie beauty to the place. Water drips from stalactites in the ceiling and causes an almost musical echo through the place. The beauty contrasted with the ugly stonework of the orcs is stark.

While beautiful, this room holds a hidden danger: a slithering tracker (AC 5, HD 5, HP 26, #AT 0, D Nil, SA: Paralyzation, SD: Transparency) lurks near the edge of the pool, perfectly concealed by the shimmering water. While dormant (it has not eaten recently) any character who approaches the pool (in which lie many hundred quartz chips, each worth 1 g.p.) will alert the slithering tracker. It will then attempt to follow the party to wherever they rest. Should the party continue through the caves without rest it will attack the rear-most party member after six turns (one hour).

11. DWARVEN FORGE

Like the kobold forge, this large square room houses a great forge, anvils, tools and metal working implements. Six dwarves are working at the forges. One seems to be directing the activities of the others.

These six duregar, or gray dwarves, work the forges of the black orcs in exchange for slaves and gold. They are repairing the weapons and armor recently worn by black orcs in a raid on the Wolf Nomads. They will ignore the party until they enter the room, and then demand to see identification. Any hesitation by the party will bring the wrath of these taciturn beings. They are apportioned as follows: (AC 4, HD 1+2 (leader's HD 2+4), HP 10, 9, 6, 4 (Leader 7 HP) #AT 1, D By weapon, SA: Psionics, SD: Save v. magical attacks at +4). The subordinates are armed with pick and hammer (1d6/1d8), while the leader is armed with a crossbow (1d4) and will fire over and around his allies into the party's ranks. Each carries 2-4 g.p. each. The leader and strongest subordinate carry gemstones; the leader carries but one worth 500 g.p., while his subordinate carries a base 50 g.p. valued stone.

There is nothing else of value in the room.

12. GRAY DWARF AREA

Low beds and tables are present in this room; there is little else of interest.

This room is the area given to the gray dwarves who work the forges for the black orcs; while nothing of value is seemingly present, beneath the bunk (**A**) a compartment has been dug out by the dwarves. It contains four huge, beautiful geodes found in the crystal cavern at area **10**. The value of each is 120, 200, 250 and 300 g.p. respectively. The geodes are large and fragile, and any rough handling will break them, reducing their value to 25% of the noted worth. They *may* however be carefully chipped into smaller but still valuable pieces for ease of carrying by a dwarf or gnome. Each is 1000 g.p. in terms of bulk as well as weight.

13. DONJON AREA

A low ceiling and narrow hallway make passage through here difficult; there are barred doors along the western wall of this place.

Each of the doors is a cell. In the first cell is the stinking corpse of a dead groll; it has been here long and has been gnawed by rats and other creatures. There is nothing of value on the creature, but disturbing it will cause 10 rot grubs (AC 9, HD 1/8th, HP 1 ea., #AT 0, D -, SA: Burrows into flesh, SD: Can only be cured with fire or *cure disease*) which will attack anyone foolish enough to handle the corpse of the dead groll. The second cell contains nothing but dirty straw and a rusty iron chain (attached to the wall). The third cell is likewise empty.

14. SECOND DONJON AREA

Another low ceilinged room, this chamber has four cell doors, two on the north and one on the southern wall. Beyond the eastern door, loud but unintelligible grumbling can be heard.

The first cell here contains a disobedient black orc (AC 9, HD 3+4, HP 21, #AT 2, D4-8/4-8 (bare hands), SA: None, SD: +4 on saves v. spells). Eager to regain the favor of his fellows and leave this dismal place, he will happily lead the party to area **15** if given the chance.

In the second cell, a nearly dead elven fighter-thief (AC 9, 29 HP, STR 9, INT 13, WIS 8, DEX 10, CON 12, CHA 8) lingers. He intruded into the caves long ago and has been beaten and tortured for the pleasure of the kobolds and black orcs for months. He possesses nothing and has only 25% of his noted hit points currently. If freed, he will serve his liberators for a year and a day as is the tradition of his kind. He will require food and medical attention before he can go with the adventurers though. He has no equipment. He fights at the 7th level of ability and can thief likewise. He will warn the party of a great brute of a creature who guards far room.

The third and fourth cells are empty, save for a few forlorn kobold skeletons.

15. CHAMBER OF THE GUARDIANS

This broad room reeks of offal and dung. Red stone columns support the high ceiling. You can hear a gruff voice at the far end of the room.

The verbeegs (or verbeeg, if one was slain earlier) cannot remember the "combination" to open the valve to enter the lower levels. If but one is present, he is studying a large circular stone design on the floor and musing quietly; if both are there they are arguing loudly while looking at the same

spot. The verbeegs are (AC 3, HD 5+5, HP 26, 32, #AT 2, D By Weapon + 3, SA: Throw spears for 1-6 + 3 +3" range, SD Improved armor class). Their treasure is in a great barrel near their beds. The barrel has a spring trapped punch dagger which will strike the hand of the unwary if they open the lid incautiously. The DM should roll a d20; if a 20 is rolled the dagger has pierced the hand of whomever opened the lid and they suffer a -1 to all attacks for 1 day due to the injury. The trap may be detected and removed normally. Within the barrel are 21 s.p., 16 e.p., and 50 g.p.

The stairs to the lower dungeons are concealed within the circular design on the floor. To open the way, an iron wheel on the north wall must be turned, and then a flat blade must be pushed with great force through a slot in the center of the stone circle. An 18/01 strength or better must be used to push the sword or dagger through to cause the mechanism to catch. The door will then iris open slowly revealing a set of spiral stairs leading downward. A *knock* spell will force the door open – but it will slam shut again from within once all parties have passed through (or after 5 rounds have passed). Anyone standing on the uppermost stairs will suffer 10-40 h.p. damage when the door slams shut! Once shut, the door may *only* be opened using a key held by the master of this place – and *knock* will not function on the door again! If the door is opened properly, a manual release will be revealed on the other side which will open it easily.

LOWER DUNGEON AREA

Wandering Monsters within the Lower Dungeon (check once per turn):

1. Giant centipedes (8), 1 hp ea.
2. Black orc patrol (4 total, hp 15, 17, 19, 19)
3. Carrion crawlers (3), 14, 17, 19 hp ea.
4. Giant rats, hunting in a pack – 20 total, 3 hp ea. Loss of more than 50% of their number will scatter them.
5. Three (3) wererats in human-form. 20, 21, 23 hp each.
6. A line of 15 giant ants working across a hallway. Unless they are directly attacked or the line is stepped on they will likely (60% chance) ignore the party.
7. Gray ooze. 22 hp.
8. Lone verbeeg, 24 hp

1. ENTRYWAY

This room is lit by many lamps; barrels, crates and boxes line the walls. They are stamped with the symbols of many kingdoms but the majority show a white skull on a red field. Two of the great orcs are in the room standing before the doorway to the south.

Unless any of the inhabitants of the upper dungeon fled to the lower chambers, these two black orc guards (AC 1, HD 3+4, HP 17, 19, #AT 2, D3-12, 3-12, SA: None, SD +4 on all save v. spells) will not immediately attack intruders. They will instead wait until all have entered the room and then demand to see a pass before they allow any to continue. A moment of parlay may buy the interlopers enough time to ready an attack, but noise of battle will swiftly bring reinforcements from area 2. The orcs have no treasure, and only mundane items fill the crates.

2. GUARDPOST

A few crates and barrels lie strewn about in this room. Four huge orc-beasts are using some as table and chairs.

These are the reinforcements for the guards of the entryway. If the party has bluffed their way past the others or has managed to defeat them without raising an alarm, the orcs will assume that all is as it should be and allow the party to pass. The doorway to the southeast is barred from this side. It will take a single character one round to unlatch and lift the bar from the door.

3. ABANDONED ROOM

Broken potsherds and furniture fill this room. The door hangs half on its hinges, half off. It appears as though there was a great fight here at some point. There is nothing of any apparent value within the room.

Some time ago, a unit of black orcs took to drinking within this room after looting casks of wine from traders passing near the hills. A drunken brawl ensued and the crocks of wine that were sent from the depths as a gift to luz were smashed. The Lord of this place, once he heard of the destruction of the fine wine, was so enraged that he came here and used powerful magic to utterly destroy the drunken orcs. Now the rest of the dungeon inhabitants regard this place as cursed and will not enter it. However, there are two things of interest within the room. Firstly, one of the crocks is unbroken. Searching through the debris carefully will reveal a black ceramic jug filled with good, if earthy tasting wine. If unconsumed the wine will fetch 500 g.p. on the open market. Also amongst the ruin, seven huge spiders (AC 6, HD 2+2, HP 17, 12, 17, 13, 10, 12, 9, #AT 1, D 1-6, SA Poison, SD: None) have been foraging for unwary creatures. They will attack the first person that enters the room.

4. THE DARK CORNER

The area around this corner is covered in impenetrable shadow. Nothing – not the vision of demi-humans or torches - can pierce the darkness...

This corner has had an extra-strength **darkness 15' radius** cast upon it. Additionally, the walls around the corner area are covered with **magic mouth** spells. Anyone who enters the darkness will activate the **magic mouths**. They will individually taunt, curse and condemn the player ("You'll never make it out of here alive!" "Lost? Confused?", etc.). Additionally, the floors (and walls) are covered with loose stones which have loud metal springs underneath them. Touching the walls will on a 1 in 6 cause a loud, ominous "click" to be heard. If done while the darkness lingers, the mouths will utter proclamations of doom such as "Now you've done it!" and "Say your prayers, butterfingers!"

If a **continual light** spell or **dispel magic** is cast in the area of darkness, *all* of the magic mouths will activate at once, babbling at a great volume. This has a 1 in 3 chance of attracting a wandering monster. Also, anyone standing within 10' of the cacophony must *save v. spells* or be **confused** for 10 rounds!

5. THE CURIOUS LIBRARY

This room is incongruous with its rough surroundings. Upon entering, you note that each wall is stacked with bookshelves, and each shelf is bursting with books. A large desk occupies the center of the room, and an old man sits at the desk, scribbling away in a journal or ledger, while a young girl sits attentively at his side. A few "comfortable" items are in the room: two sleeping pallets, a comfortable chair, and a small table with a bottle of wine and a few glasses on it. The entire place is cozily disorganized and

would not be out of place in a university or sage's study. The old man regards you amusedly as you enter...

The genial "old man" is in fact a rakshasha (AC -4, HD 7, HP 33, #AT 3, D 1-3/1-3/2-5, SA: 3rd level magic user spells, 1st level cleric spells, SD: cannot be hit by non-magic weapons, takes half-damage from weapons less than +3, unaffected by spells less than 8th level) from the distant west who has come to pay respects to luz's lieutenant in charge here. His assistant is a wererat (AC 7, HD 3+1, HP 15, #AT 1, D1-8, SA: None, SD: Cannot be hit by non-magical or non-silvered weapons). The rakshasha has "observed" the party using its ESP ability as they approached and will appear as non-threatening as possible. He wishes to slay the party and take their magic items – particularly any clerics or magic users in the party. Obviously, *detect evil*, *know alignment* and like spells and spell like powers will be useless against the beast. If the party suggests they leave, the "old man" will reluctantly agree and tell his "assistant" to gather their belongings. As part of the illusion she will appear to do so – but she is in fact readying her weapon and trying to gain the opportunity to back-stab at her first chance. When the party attempts to leave the old man will drop the charade and attack. The creature has the following spells memorized

6A. SKELETAL REMAINS

A lone skeleton lies in a niche here. The harness, weapons and armor are all corroded and rusted. Although no dust is on the skeleton it appears to be many, many years old.

These are the remains of an adventurer who was lured to this place and slain by the guardian of the library proper at area 6, below. If the skeleton is disturbed nearly everything will crumble to dust. A journal is in the bag at its hip but nearly all the pages save one will decay if touched. That page is nearly unreadable, save the following fragment:

"...ing the lower – singing, took –'s deck, and barely escaped ourselves... not pass the riddling room... must be near -gon, Gileax has divined... We will regroup and – again, after we search the I-. GODS, BEWARE THE SPHERE..."

The last phrase in the book is hastily scrawled.

There is nothing of any value on the skeleton.

6. TWIN LIBRARIES

Two medium-sized rooms – one on each side of the corridor – hold shelves full of books and scrolls. A bronze box sits on one of the shelves.

This is the Lord's true library, unlike the illusory quarters of the rakshasha. In the right-hand room, among the various tomes and librams and writings (most dealing with foul topics, some histories, and the like) there are three magic scrolls. There is a 1 in 10 chance per round of searching that a scroll will be discovered. Additionally, there are three *curse* scrolls on the shelves also. The DM should determine which has been found either with a die roll or arbitrarily. The useful scrolls are:

A scroll of **protection from possession**

A cleric's scroll of **exorcise**, **true seeing (x2)**, **commune**, and **conjure animals**

A magic user's scroll of **feather fall**, **shocking grasp**, **minor globe of invulnerability**, **disintegrate**.

In the *leftmost* library, the bronze box is lead lined and trapped with a glyph of warding (lightning) which will inflict 8-48 points of damage (*save v. spells* for half damage) to the incautious individual who opens it. Further, it is trapped

with a poison needle in the lock. Finally, if the box is opened by anyone other than the Lord of this place, a Xeg-yi (AC 0, MV 6", HD 8, HP 37, #AT 1, D7-12, SA Rotting/decay, SD +1 or better to hit, MR 15%) will appear and attack intruders. Contained within the box is a valuable treasure indeed: a **book of infinite spells!** The Lord of the Howling Hills has placed the book here under ward and guard as he wishes to access it in a coming battle with the Wolf Nomad Lords. He has placed an **alarm** spell on the book and will know if it is disturbed. If it comes into possession of another person he will lose its spells and subsequently be **greatly** perturbed!

The book's spells are as follows:

Page 1: Dispel Magic, Page 2: Insect Plague, Page 3: Flame Arrow, Page 4: Animate Dead, Page 5 BLANK, Page 6: True Seeing, Page 7: Commune, Page 8: Find the Path, Page 9: Resurrection, Page 10: Part Water, Page 11: BLANK, Page 12: Water Breathing, Page 13: Detect Evil, Page 14: Death Spell, Page 15: Wind Walk, Page 16 Friends, Page 17: Shillelagh, Page 18: Detect Magic, Page 19: Enchanted Weapon, Page 20: Cure Critical Wounds, Page 21 BLANK, Page 22: BLANK, Page 23: Locate Any Object, Page 24: BLANK, Page 25: Blur, Page 26: Resurrection, Page 27: Gust of Wind, Page 28: Bless

7. THE STRANGE GROTTO

As you approach this area, melodious singing can be heard from within.

A Nereid (AC 10, MV 12", HD 4, HP 32, #AT 0, SA: Kissed target *save v. breath weapon* or drown; form "water fists" which strike for 1-4 points of damage once per round within 10' of body of water, SD: Caught Nereid *save v. poison* and can flow away like water) has come to this chamber. She occasionally consorts with the Lord, and enjoys trapping adventurers and toying with them before they die. It has been a while since her last "playmates" came through, however, and she is growing bored and impatient. Her pool is a large (30' diameter) well some 20' deep full of cold clear water. Easily visible at the bottom is a form clad in rusty mail. This adventurer perished here some time ago and carried with him a pair of **boots of elvenkind**, a bag containing a small ruby star worth 1000 g.p., a large 10 g.p. value hematite, and wrapped tightly in oilcloth a **deck of many things** (with 19 cards). These items are valueless to the Nereid; she only enjoys the suffering of other creatures, so wicked is her heart!

Her pet giant leech (AC 9, MV 3", HD ½, HP 4, E#AT 1, D1-4, SA Drains blood for 4 HP/melee round after striking) will attack any other than the Nereid who enter the water.

She will toy with males for days before granting them the fatal ecstasy of a kiss, but females she will try to drive off or destroy with water strikes.

If her shawl is taken, she will comply with the party only insofar as need be before she can strike to retrieve it; she will then attempt to kill the entire party.

8. INDUSTRIOUS ANTS

A hole has been worked or chewed through the wall near the floor here; as you approach it, a clicking and clattering sound can be heard.

A mound of giant ants lies behind the wall here. There are 63 total; some 50 are workers with 8 hit points each and the rest are fierce warriors with 13 hit points. If the wall over the hole is struck hard, it will collapse, disturbing the insects and

the warriors will attack aggressively, while the workers only so if the party is so foolish as to enter their lair. Their tunnels stretch back many, many hundreds of yards through the earth and stone and lead to a central lair where a bloated, huge and helpless queen sits. In this central chamber the ants have gathered nine gems with a base 50 g.p. value, and a bandolier containing three **potions of extra-healing**. While the tunnels are only large enough to admit a Halfling, dwarf or gnome, the soil behind the wall softens after some 30' or so and digging towards the giant ant lair may be made at a rate of 10' per turn.

9. UNWANTED GUEST

A thick carpet of dust covers the floor here. Upon a stone bench in the middle of the room sits a robe-clad skeletal figure. It regards you when you enter the room.

This creature is a crypt thing (AC 3, MV 12", HD 6, HP 29, #AT 1, D1-8, SA Teleport per *Fiend Folio* chart, SD Only hit by +1 or better weapons). It came into this place after Odral created the dungeon and steadfastly refuses to leave. While annoying, it does after a fashion amuse Odral as it confounds intruders as well as servants. For the time being, Odral is content to leave it alone. Hidden beneath the stone bench by the creature's robes is a chest containing the thing's treasure (which it has collected from various rooms and denizens within this place): 941 c.p., 2099 e.p., 39 gems with a base value of 50 g.p., a **curled** scroll, and a **wand of magic missiles** with 19 charges.

The creature will regard intruders balefully and bid them leave lest they "be destroyed for intruding on the one true master of this place!"

Unless attacked the crypt thing will not otherwise act.

10. CHAMBER OF RIDDLES

The winding corridor apparently ends here; three great stone faces are carved into the wall. As you ponder them, one opens its' eyelids and regards you, then speaks!

These three stone guardians hold the passageway against any they do not recognize as the Lord of the Howling Hills. They will, one after another, challenge the party with a riddle. If all three riddles are solved, the third and leftmost mouth will open wide enough to permit passage through to the corridor beyond. The riddles are:

**I GO ON NO LEGS AT DAWN
FOUR LEGS IN THE MORN
TWO LEGS IN THE DAY
THREE LEGS AT DUSK
FOUR LEGS AT TWILIGHT
NO LEGS IN NIGHT ETERNAL**

The answer is "man" (born unable to walk, then learns to crawl in infancy, then goes on two legs as a child and adult, then with a cane, then in the deathbed, then lies in the grave, unmoving).

The second riddle:

**EVEN THE MOST UNTHINKING CREATURES CAN SCRY THIS.
THEY WATCH IT CLIMB AND WATCH IT DIE. IT COUNTS THE
TRACK OF ETERNITY.**

The answer is "the sun" – even plants follow it.

The third riddle:

**THAT WHICH MARKS THE CENTER OF THE LABYRINTH IS OF DIM
INTELLECT BUT NOT OF PRIDE OR BOAST AS IT MAY SEEM.
SPEAK OF IT NOW!**

The answer is "minotaur" ("Bull headed").

When the last riddle is answered, the third mouth will speak again:

**YOU HAVE PROVEN YOUR INTELLECT, BUT IT WILL NOT BE
ENOUGH FOR WITH YOUR TRESPASS HERE YOU HAVE SEALED
YOUR DOOM. FLEE NOW AND LIVE, OR ENTER AND SUFFER A
PAINFUL DEATH, IT MATTERS NOT TO ME, GUARDIAN OF THE
INNER SANCTUM OF ODRAL, LORD OF THE HOWLING HILLS.**

11. DRAGON'S LAIR

Through the narrow, angled passageway leading from the chamber of riddles, you find yourself looking through a doorway into a huge chamber. The center of the room is piled high with treasure, and resting on the pile is a great green dragon! Attached to the beast via a leash-like chain, a nude female lies at the creature's side.

This is the chamber of Nyarglesept, a green dragon (AC 2, HD 8, HP 53, #AT 3, D 1-6/1-6/3-18, SA: Breath weapon, spells, SD:) under the employ of the Lord of this dungeon. The woman at his side is a slave who has displeased the Lord and has been given to the worm as food. The huge beast knows of the party's approach, and is merely feigning sleep. It will wait until the group is in the room, and then use its breath weapon as a primary attack. Knowing it can do so but thrice, it will then employ spells and physical attacks and try to keep the party herded together. If the party lingers outside the room and can attract the attention of the girl, she will try to silently indicate the dragon's imposture to the party. If successful the party may of course employ spells or missile attacks from the narrow corridor, but the beast will simply cross the floor and flood the hall with its noisome breath attack. If the party retreats, the dragon will kill and consume the slave girl; if the press an attack it will ignore her for the time being. She is comely and more than a little brave but unable to fight (although she will shout encouragement to the party). An illusion hides a great opening in the ceiling into a natural chimney through which the dragon comes and goes; if reduced to 25% of its starting hit points the beast may well try to flee, deciding to lick its wounds and attack the party as they exit the dungeon back to the northwest.

Nyarglesept has the following spells memorized:
Charm Person, Magic Missile (x2), Hold Portal, ESP

12. MANOR OF THE LORD OF THE HOWLING HILLS

This room is simple but tastefully decorated. A low couch sits against one of the angled walls. A table is set in the middle of the room with a silver tray, crystal tumblers and a decanter of orange liquid. The faint scent of pipe tobacco lingers in the air.

This room is actually an illusion created by the Odral, Lord of the Howling Hills. The floor, ceiling and walls are all covered with arcane symbols of gross and disgusting magic power; the center of the room contains a summoning circle stained with blood. The decanter on the table is real, the liquid within is a potion of *flesh to stone*. Anyone who imbibes the "drink" will immediately be petrified, no saving throw

permitted. The “couch” is merely a few empty crates piled in the corner. If the dragon in area 15 has been defeated and the party enters this room and lingers, after a few rounds a short, rotund balding man with long hair will walk out and congratulate them. This is Odral, luz’s lieutenant in charge of keeping the passes of the Howling Hills. He has monitored the party’s progress thus far, and is dismayed that he must now deal with them personally. Odral is, however, a powerful magic user and as soon as the party is put at ease, he will employ magic to attack them.

The doorway into his inner sanctum is *wizard locked*, and physically locked as well. Odral possesses the sole key. The lock to the door is trapped with a fulminating liquid; if the door is carelessly opened, the liquid will jet out onto the person grasping the knob for 1-12 points of damage the first round, then 1-6 the second.

Odral is an 8th level magic user (STR 7, INT 18, WIS 14, CON 12, DEX 10, CHA 8, 22hp) with an effective armor class of 3 due to the magic bracers he wears. Before he enters the room he will have employed *shield* and *ESP*. He carries a *staff of striking* with 8 charges, but will be loathe to enter combat unless under extreme duress. He has the following spells memorized:

1st level:

Charm Person
Hold Portal
Jump
Shield

2nd level:

Darkness 15’ Radius
ESP
Invisibility

3rd level

Lightning Bolt
Blink
Dispel Magic

4th level

Fear
Ice Storm

His spell book is kept in his quarters.

12A. INNER SANCTUM

This small octagonal room seems disproportionate with the station held by Odral. A desk/writing table sits in the middle of the room, strewn with papers, books, quills, inkwells and candles. An iron coffer is along the northwest wall. A sleeping pallet is along the southeast wall. A small table with some provisions on it is next to the door. Leering over all of this is a taxidermied red dragon’s head hanging behind and above the table.

Sitting on the table are Odral’s spellbooks – both study and travel. He is currently doing magical research but given the nature of his studies, the mess of notes and formulas are unintelligible by any save him. The locked chest contains his belongings (he has the key) as well as some treasure: a dagger +2, a potion of extra-healing, a (currently empty) ring of spell storing, 829 p.p., a lapis lazuli statue worth 2000 g.p. and a potion of delusion (hill giant strength). A false bottom in the chest is trapped with a poison needle and contains a scroll with a single **wish** spell on it.

The table itself is trapped in such a way that it cannot be detected by a thief, but *can* be sensed with a *detect traps* spell: anyone who approaches the table and tries to remove anything without first saying “Praise luz” will be blasted by a gout of flame from the red dragon head on the wall! The blast will do 3-36 points of damage, half of which may be avoided via a *save v. dragon’s breath*. The way to avoid this blast (if the pass is unknown) is to bind the eyes of the dragon’s head. Only through one of these two methods may the fire be avoided. If the trap is triggered, the books and papers on the desk will be destroyed. A saving throw may be made for the spellbooks. If the party was able to rescue the slave in the dragon’s lair, she can warn them of the trap provided they have treated her kindly...

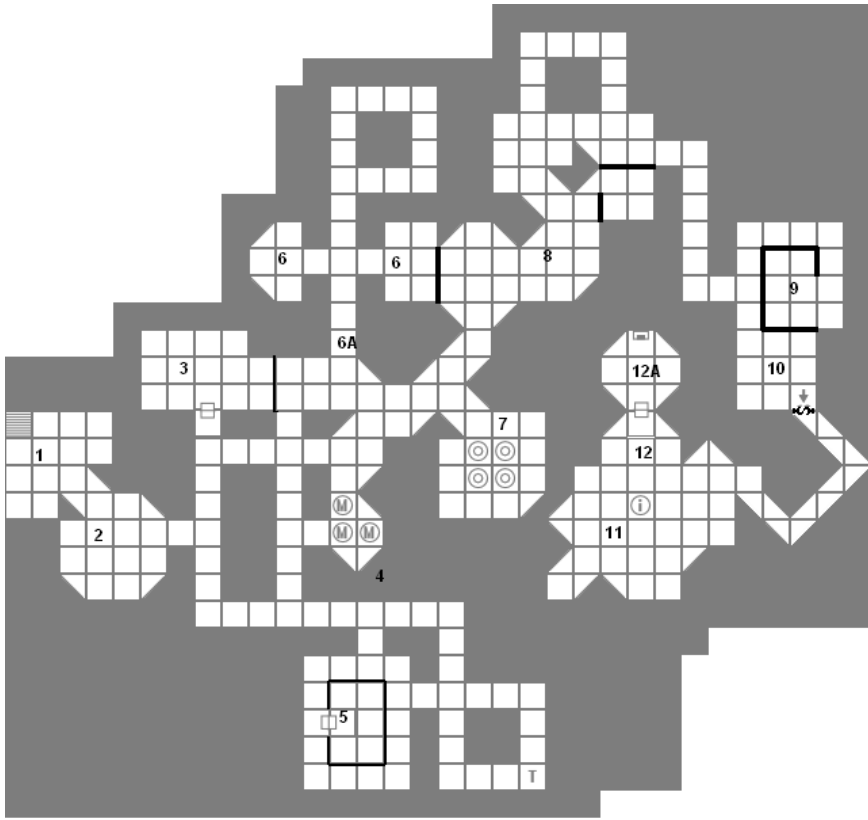
THIS CONCLUDES WGH5 LORDS OF THE HOWLING HILLS

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