

DragonLance[®]

SAGA

CLASSICS VOLUME I

Four Official Game Adventures

DRAGONS OF DESPAIR
DRAGONS OF FLAME

DRAGONS OF HOPE
DRAGONS OF DESOLATION



Combined Monster Statistics Chart

Monster	AC	MV	HD	THAC0	# AT	Damage	SA	SD	AL
Griffon	3	12, Fl 30 (C, D mounted)	7	13	3	1d4/1d4/2d8	Nil	Nil	N
Hobgoblin	5	9	1+1	19	1	Weapon	Nil	Nil	LE
Kender	8	6	1	19	1	1d6	Sp.	Sp.	LN/CN
Kender (Hugon Barker)	5	6	3	17	1	1d4	Sp.	Sp.	CG
Lamia Noble	3	9	10+1	11	1	1d6	Sp.	Nil	CE
Leopard, Snow	6	15	3+2	17	3	1d3/1d3/1d6	Sp.	Sp.	N
Lizard, Subterranean	5	12	6	15	1	2d6	Sp.	Nil	N
Man, Bandit	8	12	1d4	17-19	1	1d6	Nil	Nil	NE
Man, City Guard	8	12	2	19	1	1d6	Nil	Nil	N
Man, Farmer	10	12	2	19	1	1d6	Nil	Nil	N
Man, Highseeker Master	8	12	7	13	1	1d8	Nil	Nil	CG
Councilor	8	12	5	15	1	1d8	Nil	Nil	CG
Man, Holy Guardian	4	12	4	17	1	1d8	Nil	Nil	LG
Man, Hunter	8	12	2	19	1	1d6	Nil	Nil	N
Man, Nightshade	10	12	4	17	1	1d4	Nil	Nil	LG
Man, Plainsman	10	12	2	19	1	1d6	Nil	Nil	CG
Man (Raven-eye)	9	12	3	17	1	1d4	Nil	Nil	CG
Man, Refugee	10	12	1	19	1	1d4	Nil	Nil	N
Man (Sunstar)	8	12	2	19	1	1d4	Nil	Nil	CG
Man, Townsman	10	12	1	19	1	1d4	Nil	Nil	N
Mastodon, Skeleton	4	15	13	7	4	2d8/2d8/2d6/2d6	Nil	Nil	N
Mummy	3	6	6+3	13	1	1d12	Sp.	Sp.	LE
Ogre	5	9	4+1	17	1	1d10	+ 2 damage	Nil	CE
Pegasus	6	24, Fl 48 (C, D mounted)	4	17	3	1d8/1d8/1d3	Sp.	Nil	CG
Piercer	3	1	2	19	1	2d6	Surprise	Nil	N
Pudding, Deadly (Dun)	7	12	8+1	13	1	4d6	Sp.	Sp.	N
Ram, Giant	7	12	2	19	1	1d4	Charge	Nil	N
Rat, Giant	7	12, Sw 6	1d4 hp	20	1	1d3	Disease	Nil	N(E)
Roper	0	3	10	11	1 + 1	Sp. + 5d4	Sp.	Sp.	CE
Satyrs	5	18	5	15	1	2d4 or weapon	Sp.	Sp.	N
Shadow	7	12	3+3	17	1	1d4+1, sp.	Sp.	Sp.	CE
Shrieker	7	1	3	17	0	Nil	Nil	Noise	N
Skeleton	7	12	1	19	1	1d6	Nil	Sp.	N
Skeleton Warrior	2	6	9+12	11	1	1d12	Sp.	Sp.	N
Slug, Giant	8	6	12	9	1	1d12	Acid	Sp.	N
Snake, Poisonous	6	15	2+1	19	1	1	Poison	Nil	N
Spectral Minion, Guardian	2	30	6	15	1	1d8	Nil	Nil	LG
Spectral Minion, Philosopher	2	30	4	17	1	1d4	Nil	Nil	N
Spectre	2	15, Fl 30(B)	7+3	13	1	1d8	Sp.	Sp.	LE
Spider, Huge	6	18	2+2	19	1	1d6	Sp.	Nil	N
Sprite	6	9, Fl 18(B)	1	19	1	1d4 or 1d3	Sp.	Sp.	N(G)
Sylph	9	12, Fl 36(A)	3	17	0	Nil	Sp.	Sp.	N(G)
Treant	0	12	11	9	2	4db/4d6	Sp.	Sp.	CG
Troll	4	12	6+6	13	3	1d4+1/1d4+1/1d8+4	Sp.	Sp.	CE
Vulture, Giant	7	3, Fl 24(D)	2+2	19	1	1d4	Nil	Nil	N
Warthog	7	12	3	17	2	2d4/1d8	Nil	Nil	N
White Stag	-5	24	10	11	3	1d6/1d6/1d12	Nil	Nil	LG
Wight	5	12	4+3	15	1	1d4	Sp.	Sp.	LE
Will o' Wisp	-8	Fl 18(A)	9	11	1	2d8	Sp.	Sp.	CE
Wolf	7	18	2+2	19	1	1d4+1	Nil	Nil	N
Wolf, Dire	6	18	4+4	15	1	2d4	Nil	Nil	N
Wolf, Winter	5	18	6	15	1	2d4	Frost	Nil	NE
Wraith	4	12, FL 24(B)	5+3	15	1	1d6	Sp.	sp.	LE
Wyvern	3	6, Fl 24(E)	7+7	13	2	1d6/2d8	Poison	Nil	N(E)
Zombie	8	6	2	19	1	1d8	Nil	Nil	N

Abbreviations

AC = Armor Class, AL = Alignment. #AT = Number of attacks per round, CE = Chaotic Evil, CG = Chaotic Good. HD = Hit Dice. hp = hit points, LE = Lawful Evil, LG = Lawful Good, MV = Movement Rate, N = True Neutral, NE = Neutral Evil. NG = Neutral Good, SA = Special Attacks. SD = Special Defenses, Sp. = Special, THAC0 = Number needed To Hit AC 0

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DragonLance[®]

Official Game Adventure

DRAGONLANCE[®] Classics, Volume 1

by Hickman, Niles, and Dobson

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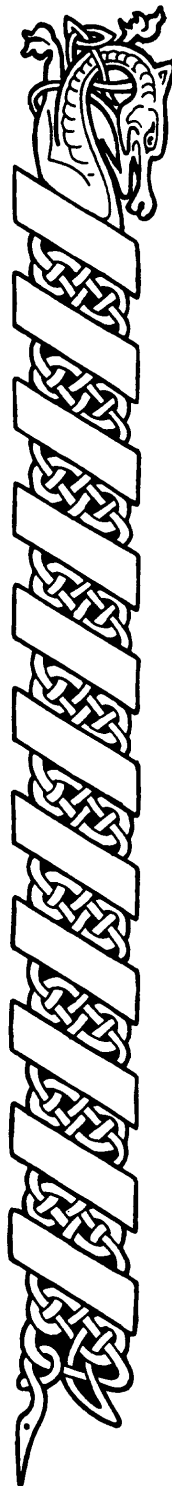
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PROLOGUE



Let your mind float free, Dungeonmaster; enter the mind of Astinus of Palanthus, Lorekeeper of Krynn, who sighs as he rises from the crystal globe of wisdom, weary from traveling the world in his spirit form, weary from following the trails of history to their ends. Slowly he stands, and shuffles across the floor to a table piled high with parchment scrolls. He dips a quill pen into an inkpot and begins once more to scribe.

. . . Darkness has fallen over poor, suffering Krynn. Thus it has been since the great Cataclysm, when the old world fell. Curse the High Priest of Ishtar, whose pride caused him to give orders to the True Gods! For the Gods punished Krynn for this blasphemy, and much was forever lost. Lost were the great cities, the accumulated wisdom and knowledge of many generations. Lost as well was all knowledge of the True Gods, and mankind sank into idolatry. Priests lost their power, and mankind lost hope for its salvation.

But hope always springs from the most modest of causes, and so it was that the Innfellows began the salvation of Krynn. Originally there were seven: Tanis, Kitiara, Flint, Tasslehoff, Raistlin, Caramon, and Sturm. Five years ago they set out from the Inn of the Last Home, seeking knowledge of the True Gods. In five years they found nothing, and so all returned to the sleepy town of Solace, the tree-city built in a vallenwood grove. All returned save one: Kitiara the beautiful, whose whereabouts are yet unknown.

Tanis is the leader, a half-elf born of an elf mother who was taken by a human turned savage in the terrible times that followed the Cataclysm. The elves took him in, and he was raised in Qualinesti, elfhome. But he is ever torn between his human and elfen halves, and has found the wanderlust strong within him. He has roamed the world and seen much. His heart is split between the fiery Kitiara, a human woman, and the elf maid Laurana.

Caramon and Raistlin are twins—yet unlike as night and day. Caramon is bright, Raistlin is dark. Caramon is a fighter of great strength and courage;

Raistlin is a mage gone cynical, a doubter. They have survived great and terrible trials. The tests that Raistlin underwent to become a mage left him with skin the color of gold and pupils the shape of hourglasses—he sees the constant, terrible effects of time.

Sturm Brightblade is the son of a Knight of Solamnia. Now taking up the mantle of his father, his most puissant knightly aim is to die nobly in a battle against his enemies. His motto is *Perunde ocadaver—Obedience Unto Death*. He is a man of military bearing, of great dignity, and of power—a true knight.

Flint Fireforge is a fighter of the hill dwarf race, distrustful of all—including other dwarven races (especially the cursed Aghar, the gully dwarves). Now of grandfatherly age, he is but two dwarven generations removed from the great Cataclysm itself! His family was killed through the neglect of the mountain dwarves, and now he seeks to avenge his people.

Tasslehoff Burrfoot is a handler (I would say thief) of the kender people, a halfling in size but a giant in curiosity. He is a treasure of odd information, of useful insights, and of clever solutions to knotty problems.

These are the original Innfellows, but the puzzle is not yet complete. On their journeys, the heroes will meet others who seek to battle the evil that threatens all.

Where will the heroes, armed with scant knowledge, go from here? They must hurry, else Krynn is doomed.

Although weary, I must keep watching. I shall return to my golden chair, once again gaze into the crystal globe, and let my spirit join the Innfellows on their quest. . .

From the *Iconochronos* of Astinus of Palanthus, Lorekeeper of Krynn, in the 351st year after the Cataclysm.

The World of Krynn

There are important differences between the world of Krynn and standard AD&D® game campaigns.

True priests have been unknown in Krynn for centuries. There are priests, but they do not have spell powers since they worship false gods. PC priests who enter Krynn

from other worlds lose all their powers (but these can be regained, if all goes well).

All PC elves are Qualinesti elves. Other elves appear in later DRAGONLANCE® adventure modules.

The equivalent of a halfling in this world is called a kender. Kender resemble wizened 14-year-olds and, unlike halflings, they wear shoes. These folk have two special abilities (in addition to the usual halfling abilities):

1. *Taunt*. Kender are masters at enraging others by verbal abuse. Any creature a kender taunts must roll a successful saving throw vs. spell or attack wildly at once for 1d10 rounds with a -2 penalty to their attack roll and a +2 penalty to their armor class.

2. *Fearlessness*. Kender are immune to fear, both magical and non-magical. They are, however, curious about everything—a tendency that often gets them into trouble.

Finally, dragons have been absent from Krynn for nearly 1,000 years. They are considered merely legends by all who have not personally beheld them. Characters may be thought foolish, or liars, if they talk about dragons to the wrong people.

Gold is worth a lot less on Krynn than on other campaign worlds. Steel is the metal standard on Krynn; one steel piece (stl) is the equivalent of one standard gp in purchasing power (i.e., on Krynn, the prices for common items found in the *Player's Handbook* are in stl rather than gp). But when players from other campaigns convert their gp to stl, their wealth decreases greatly. The official conversions are as follows: 1 stl = 10 gp = 20 sp = 100 cp = 2 ip (iron pieces) = 2 bp (bronze pieces) = 1/5 pp.

(The most commonly given reason for the relative values placed on gold and steel is that, in a world as wracked by turmoil and conflict as Krynn, a metal that can be crafted into weapons is much more valuable than a soft, fragile metal.)

DUNGEONMASTER NOTES

The DRAGONLANCE® saga is a complex epic, filled with detail, legend, and history not found in most modules. To run this adventure properly, you must think of it as a story, and try to motivate your players subtly to follow the right path. It is particularly important that you read the adventure several times, visualize the story, and think about the different things your players might do. No matter what, it will be necessary for you to improvise from time to time.

Several enemy NPCs, members of the Dragonarmies appear throughout this adventure. Try to make them have "obscure deaths" if they are killed; if at all possible, their bodies should *not* be found. Then, when the NPCs appear later, you have a chance to explain their presence. Be creative; think up an explanation for their "miraculous" survival. If this becomes awkward, or your players become suspicious, then let the NPC die, but be prepared to create a similar (but not identical) NPC to take the dead NPC's place later in the adventure. If you are willing to do this, you may eliminate the "obscure death" rule entirely.

After Goldmoon becomes the first true priest on Krynn, other priests may obtain spellcasting powers by dedicating themselves to the worship of Mishakal or Paladine. Goldmoon's Medallion of Faith will create Medallions for other true priests.

Sections of boxed text contain information that should be conveyed to the players. You may either read the text to the players verbatim, or you may paraphrase it.

At certain times in the adventure, characters may have to make an Ability check. If such a check is necessary, the player rolls 1d20. If the result is equal to or less than the PC's appropriate ability score (Strength, Wisdom, Dexterity, etc.), the check succeeds.

NPCs: Statistics and other information for NPCs are found either in the NPC capsules (pages 116-117), for major NPCs, or on the Combined Monster Statistics Chart (inside cover), for minor NPCs.

Keep in mind that the statistics

given for an NPC are those at the time the PCs first meet that NPC. If the PCs have gone up in level since the first time they met this NPC, the NPC should have advanced also. If the PCs easily overpowered an evil NPC the first time they met, advance the NPC faster than the PCs. Conversely, if the NPC got the better of the PCs, have him advance slower than the PCs.

The supplementary NPCs (Laurana, Elistan, etc.), listed on pages 114-115, can be attached to the party as NPCs when they are met (unless the text says otherwise). They cannot be used as player characters during the course of the adventures in this book (though this option is available later in the saga).

Players and PCs: *Don't feel that you and your players have to march in lock step with the DRAGONLANCE novels!* Feel free to allow your players to play the DRAGONLANCE saga with characters from other worlds. This will entail some juggling on your part, as certain portions of this adventure (dream cards, for example) refer to specific characters in the saga. Reassign them to the most appropriate members of your party.

Be sure that any PCs you allow into Krynn are no more powerful than the PCs depicted on the cover of this adventure. Lower their levels and strip them of their fancy armor, weapons, and devices, if need be (if the players protest, stand firm to keep the adventure balanced).

If your players decide to use the heroes of the saga as their PCs, give them the character cards on the cover. Each player gets 500 stl to equip his character at the beginning of the adventure (the items listed on the cards already belong to the PCs and don't have to be paid for).

Try to ensure that the PCs don't rise in level too fast (or the adventure might become too easy for them). A gain of one level per four chapters or so is good.

Though this adventure follows a fairly set story line, part of your job is to mask this from the players. When only one choice out of several will advance the PCs along in the adventure, use your wiles to subtly make

that choice the most logical, most appealing one for your players. Only you can do this, as only you know how to best tantalize your particular group of gamers. This is a test of your skills as a DM—to keep your players interested and to make them believe that they are free to make any choice they wish.

While reading this adventure prior to play, note the various methods given in the text for steering wayward players back into the story (the white stag, etc.). Make a list of these and add a number of your own. As you use each one during the adventure, cross it off—try not to use the same method twice. Also, don't let your players get the impression that no matter what choice they make, you'll steer them back on course with no harm done. Set a batch of draconians on them every so often when they stray, then let them limp back on track. Teach them that thinking things through often avoids dangerous situations.

Events and Encounters: Most of the occurrences within each chapter of this adventure are categorized as either events or encounters. *Events* are triggered at specific times or when specific conditions have been met. *Encounters* are triggered when the PCs enter a specific area. Encounters occur as soon as the PCs enter the indicated area, unless otherwise noted in the text. Be sure to keep careful track of time and location so you know which event or encounter to run next.

Time: Assuming that you have the *DRAGONLANCE Adventures* hardback book, try to keep track of the phases of the moons of Krynn, noting how these affect the wizards of the various Orders. (In this adventure, Raistlin is a wizard of the Red Robes.)

Canticle of the Dragon

Hear the sage as his song descends
like heaven's rain or tears,
and washes the years, the dust of the many stories
from the High Tale of the Dragonlance.
For in ages deep, past memory and word,
in the first blush of the world
when the three moons rose from the lap of the forest,
dragons, terrible and great
made war on this world of Krynn.

Yet out of the darkness of dragons,
out of our cries for light
in the blank face of the black moon soaring,
a banked light flared in Solamnia,
a knight of truth and of power,
who called down the gods themselves
and forged the mighty Dragonlance, piercing the soul
of dragonkind, driving the shade of their wings
from the brightening shores of Krynn.

Thus Huma, Knight of Solamnia,
Lightbringer, First Lancer,
followed his light to the foot of the Khalkist Mountains,
to the stone feet of the gods,
to the crouched silence of their temple.
He called down the Lancemakers, he took on
their unspeakable power to crush the unspeakable evil;
to thrust the coiling darkness
back down the tunnel of the dragon's throat.

Paladine, the Great God of Good
shone at the side of Huma,
strengthening the lance of his strong right arm,
and Huma, ablaze in a thousand moons,
banished the Queen of Darkness,
banished the swarm of her shrieking hosts
back to the senseless kingdom of death, where their curses
swooped upon nothing and nothing
deep below the brightening land.

Thus ended in thunder the Age of Dreams
and began the Age of Might,
When Istar, kingdom of light and truth, arose in the east,
where minarets of white and gold
spired to the sun and to the sun's glory,
announcing the passing of evil,
and Istar, who mothered and cradled the long summers of good,
shone like a meteor
in the white skies of the just.

Yet in the fullness of sunlight
the Kingpriest of Istar saw shadows:
At night he saw the trees as things with daggers, the streams
blackened and thickened under the silent moon.
He searched books for the paths of Huma
for scrolls, signs, and spells
so that he, too, might summon the gods, might find
their aid in his holy aims,
might purge the world of sin.

Then came the time of dark and death
as the gods turned from the world.
A mountain of fire crashed like a comet through Istar,
the city split like a skull in the flames,
mountains burst from once-fertile valleys,
seas poured into the graves of mountains,
the deserts sighed on abandoned floors of the seas,
the highways of Krynn erupted
and became the paths of the dead.

Thus began the Age of Despair.
The roads were tangled.
The winds and the sandstorms dwelt in the husks of cities,
The plains and mountains became our home.
As the old gods lost their power,
we called to the blank sky
into the cold, dividing gray to the ears of new gods.
The sky is calm, silent, unmoving.
We have yet to hear their answer.

since the great Cataclysm. Curse the High Priest of Istar for his pride! In trying to command the Gods, he called down their wrath. The Gods punished Krynn with fire and flood, and much is now forever lost. The greatest loss was the knowledge of the True Gods. The world of Krynn has sunk into blasphemy these many generations. It is said that once all priests had the power to cast healing spells, but that is no longer true.

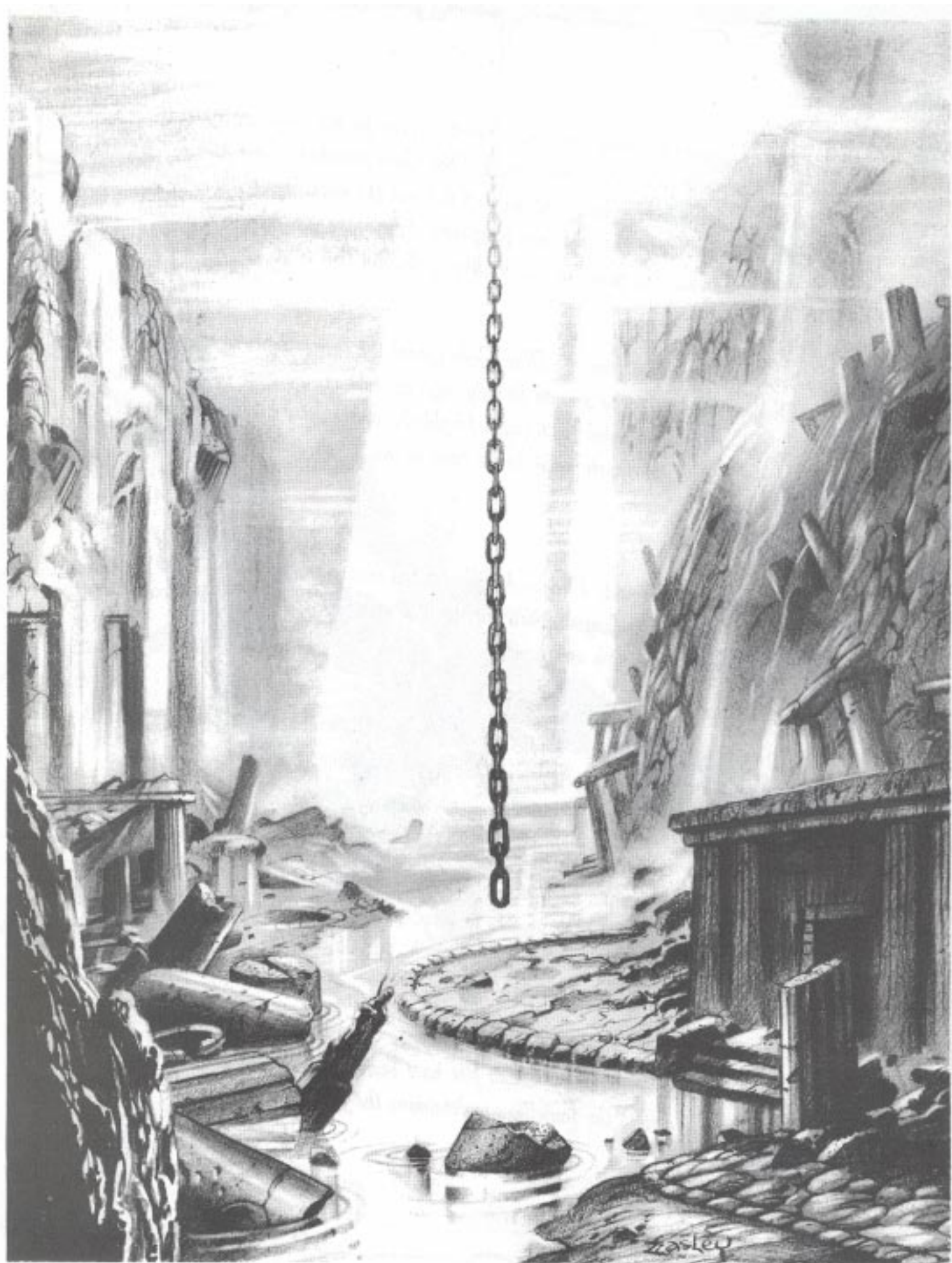
Mankind's separation from the True Gods opened the door to renewed evil in the world. Dragons, thought to be a myth fit only to frighten children, are once again working their evil. They are commanded by Dragon Highlords, and assisted by strange creatures, the like of which have never before been in this world: draconians, they are called.

The armies of dragons, Dragon Highlords, and draconians have now conquered much of Krynn, and soon they will have all the land under their sway. Things look dark. Evil may soon triumph over good.

Through my crystal ball, the Globe of Wisdom, I am able to send my spirit across the land to gather knowledge. And so I have found a glimmer of hope.

Five years ago, seven adventurers set out from the Inn of the Last Home in Solace to seek the forgotten knowledge of the True Gods. They had great adventures, but they did not find what they sought. In time, six returned: Janis, Flint, Jasslehoff, Raistlin, Caramon, and Sturm. Of the seventh, Kitiara, nothing has been heard.

On their return to the town of Solace, they found the Dragonarmy's hordes swarming throughout the lands. Their feet have been set on the path toward the True Gods . . . it is left to the Innfellows to determine the fate of our lands. May they not fail us!



Chapter 1: The Road Travels East

Events

Events take place at specific times. They may happen anywhere unless stated otherwise. The first event begins the adventure, then each follows at its stated time in the sequence below.

Event 1: The Adventure Begins.

Your players stand at the location marked "X" on the Wilderness map (Map 1). Begin by relating the following to them:

The air surges fierce and sweet, carrying the clear musk smell of the woodlands. The soft murmurs of stirring leaves, insects, and small animals fill the landscape. The clear highland sky blushes with the end of day and fades into stary sleep. This is home.

From this rock outcropping the valley below seems peaceful, untouched. Dense forests of pine carpet the mountainsides, broken only by thick aspen woods. The mountains, deep blue in the distance, circle the valley floor and form a soft highland bowl.

Five years ago, you and your friends parted to search for a true cleric. Tonight, you meet on the road to Solace Town and report on your discoveries.

If the players are using the characters provided in the center of this module, they should now read aloud the backgrounds written on the backs of their character cards. Notice that Goldmoon does not begin the game with the party, but joins them shortly. Players choosing to play their own characters have no stories to tell.

After each player reads his background, read the following:

None of you have found any sign of true clerics during your travels. The bushes to your left rustle. Suddenly, dark shapes scurry

from the woods on both sides of the road. Their yellow-green skin pales against their heavy black armor; their twisted faces glare from the evening darkness. They crouch in a large circle about you, well beyond sword range.

A stout pony struggles up onto the road, sagging beneath a flabby figure who resembles a larger version of those who surround you. The pony rider suddenly turns his head toward you and yells, "Onyx demands the blue crystal staff! Forfeit the staff now or die!"

Fewmaster Toede waits for no reply from the party: he has no intention of granting mercy. Roughly turning his swayback pony, he shouts, "Destroy them and bring the staff to me!" He then *gallops into* the woods. *Ten* hobgoblins attack the PCs.

Left to Toede's business, the hobgoblins attack. Any captured hobgoblins know only that they were ordered to search the road at night and find a blue crystal staff.

When the combat is finished, proceed with the adventure. By now, the PCs are on the road east of Solace (area 1).

Event 2: Goldmoon Found.

Roll 1d4. The result indicates how many encounters take place before this event.

Suddenly, soft music begins. Its source is a slim, beautiful girl. Lyre in hand, she sits gracefully as she plays; nearby, a large plainsman raises a flute to his lips.

The girl's eyes are a bright sky blue; her skin is a buttery tan. Most striking of all is the flowing white gold of her hair. Plush white furs trim her woven cape. A single feather folds back along the right side of her head.

Her voice clear as winter air, she begins to sing . . .

The Song of Riverwind is in the center of this module. If Goldmoon is a PC in the adventure, have the player read the lyrics aloud or, if he or she has natural minstrel abilities, sing them with the music provided.

If any PCs present at the event suffered any damage from previous combat, a strange thing happens: A crystal staff falls from a fold in Goldmoon's robe, rolls over to the injured PCs, and heals their damage. If no PCs suffered damage, then Goldmoon simply puts her lyre away in her pack and, standing, draws forth the staff.

If Goldmoon is a PC, her player may now take over the character and join the rest of the PCs. When she joins the party, her player should read the back of her character card. Then, as Riverwind offers his background, you should read the back of his character card to your players. If no one plays Goldmoon, she will follow Riverwind (who is always an NPC) and be an NPC herself for the rest of this module.

Unless the party takes some action to join with Goldmoon and Riverwind, they gather their belongings, bow to their audience, and leave. The players may meet them again in Event 3.

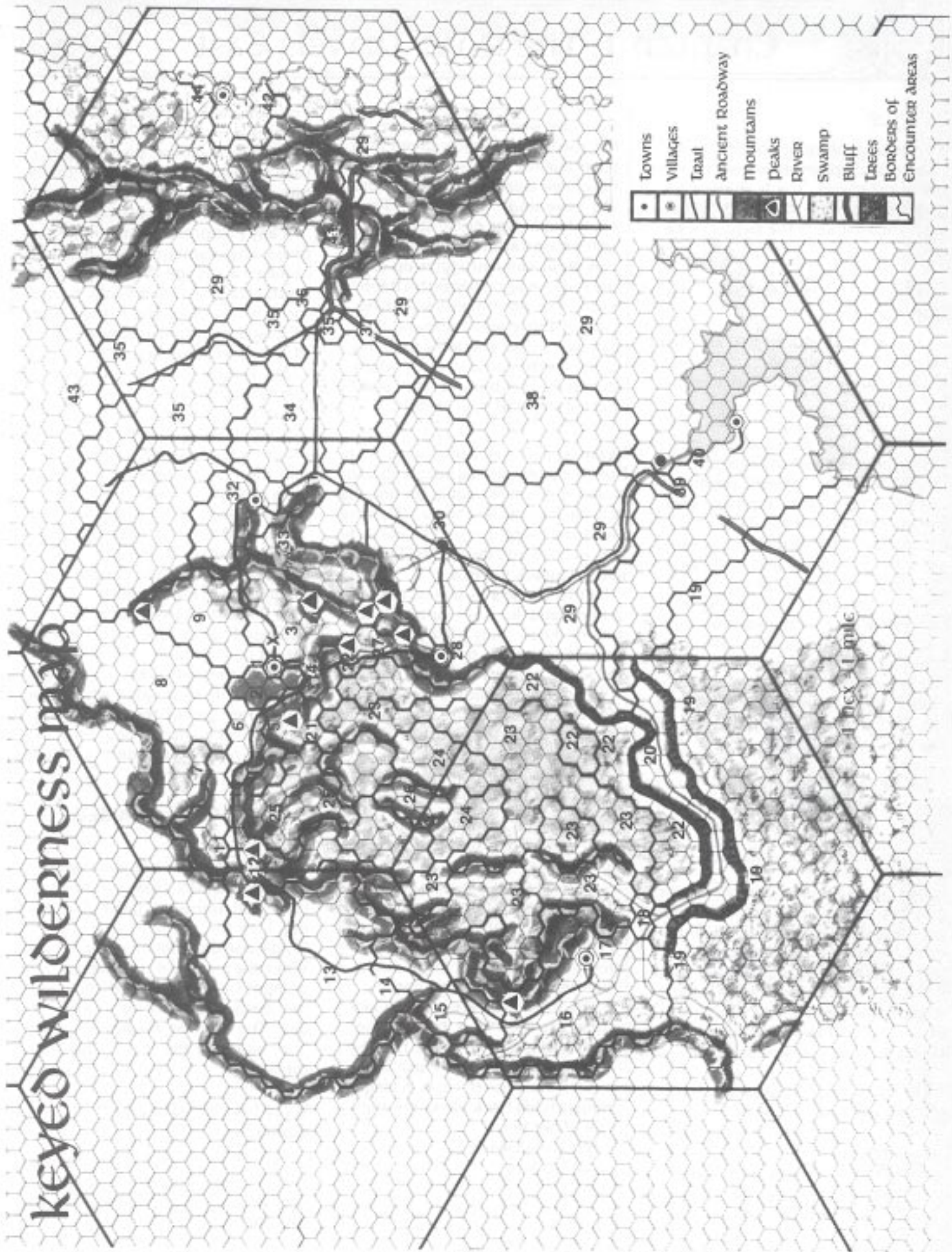
Event 3: Goldmoon Seen Again.

If Goldmoon does not join the party in Event 2, the PCs may still meet her later. Roll 1d6 every game day, adding 1 to the number for each day Goldmoon does not meet the heroes. When the result is 6 or more, the PCs glimpse Goldmoon and Riverwind in the distance sometime during the day. The strange musicians pause, nod, and give the PCs a chance to meet them.

Event 4: Reading of the Canticle.

On a night the party is camped (your choice), pass around the Canticle of the Dragon. As though around the campfire, have each player read one

keyed wilderness map



verse aloud, from first verse to last, until they finish the poem.

Event 5: All Winds Turn Cold.

On the fourth morning after the adventure begins, a chill breeze begins to blow from the north.

Event 6: Thunderclouds.

During the fifth game day, thunderclouds hover angrily to the west, south, and north of the party.

Event 7: The Dragonarmies March.

Just after dusk on the fifth game night, the Dragonarmies begin to march and conquer all the lands to the south; every four hours thereafter, one encounter area falls into their hands. Treat areas that fall as Dragonlands (as area 43). In order to fall, an area must either border area 43 to begin with or have bordered an area captured in the previous hour. The general trend of captured areas should direct the PCs toward Xak Tsaroth (area 44).

If PCs are in a captured area, they see the front lines of the draconian army approaching at a movement rate of 9. This gives them the chance to flee the army, toward Xak Tsaroth.

Two regions cannot be captured by the draconian army at this time: the Qualinesti Elflands (area 19) and the Darken Wood (22-26). Their times of trial will come later in the saga.

Encounters

Encounters are episodes in the adventure that are keyed to areas on maps. Whenever the PCs enter an area, the designated encounter takes place at once. Some areas have the same number; this is to create a further sense of certainty as your players follow their journey across their unnumbered map. If the PCs cross from one encounter area into another with the same number, simply repeat the encounter.

1. Solace Township

A warm autumn breeze rustles the great vallenwood trees of Solace. The road that wanders through the trees blazes in the bright colors of autumn. The richly stained buildings of Solace rest cradled overhead in the boughs of the trees.

Around 500 people live in Solace, not counting the farmers of the outlying fields. The town is built entirely in the huge boughs of mature vallenwood trees.

Solace is primarily a farming community. It has no local government, but is ruled by the Theocracy of Seekers from their central city of Haven, some three days' journey to the west.

All services that adventurers expect from a town of this size are available for reasonable rates. The exception is smithwork: Theros Ironfeld, town smith, charges usual rates for work on iron items, but because steel is so valuable, charges extra for weapons. Because he works with precious steel, Theros is the most respected man in town.

1a. Inn of the Last Home

Read the first description as the players approach the inn. Read the second if they enter, the third if the players are using the PCs provided in the module.

The Inn of the Last Home rests cradled high in the boughs of a vallenwood tree—as do all the buildings here, for Solace is a tree-top town. Warm laughter tumbles from the inn. The worn steps wind around the heavy trunk up to the familiar, carved door.

The Inn of the Last Home never changes. The polished wooden bar curves around several living branches. An old man weaves stories in the corner and delights the crowd gathered about him. The delicate windows of stained glass

behind the bar are being polished by Otik Sandath, the barkeeper. He turns and waves, smiling at you, and motions the barmaid in your direction.

The low murmur of voices fills the inn. The bartender turns thoughtfully to polish the glasses. At a far table, near the storyteller, a man and a woman sit together and speak quietly. Another man stands beside the now-silent storyteller while a small boy stares thoughtfully into the fire.

The barmaid steps toward you, smiles, and shows you to a table. Something about her seems familiar. The hair? The intelligent glint of her eyes? Could this be Tika, the little girl who swept the tavern floors a short five years ago? The inn never changes, but its people do.

The people in the inn all speak in low, hushed tones. Any NPC the PCs approach reacts, friendly 50% of the time. Each reveals the following if questioned:

The barkeeper: "A magical staff! I bet it was forged by demons from the terrible Darken Wood. There are terrible mysteries in that place, there are!"

A man at a table: "Hooded men have been in town asking about that staff! An evil lot they were, too. I wonder if they were offering a reward."

A man by the storyteller: "A man of the Holy Guard rode through two days ago asking about that staff. He said that anyone who had it or had knowledge of it should make haste to Haven and meet at once with the Prelate of the Temple there—but I certainly don't want to get involved!"

The old storyteller: "I foresee greas, and terrible destiny in your eyes. There is a blue staff that you must return to Xak Tsaroth. There, in but a few days hence, you shall face your greatest peril in contest for the greatest gift given to man."

A girl at a table: "It was probably found in Darken Wood. I hear that the

ruins there are filled with wealth—and dangers to match. No one who has entered that place has ever returned to tell the tale.”

A boy dreams by the fire: “I saw the white stag up near Prayers Eye Peak just a few days ago! If only I could catch it. He who walks the paths of the white stag is blessed, I hear tell.”

2. Crystalmir Lake

The blue of the autumn sky darkens on the deep stillness of the lake. The soft forests of giant vallenwood border the serene waters on the eastern, southern, and western shores. To the north, a patchwork of fields stretches toward the distant purple mountains.

3. Solace East Woods

The huge vallenwood trees tower above soft forest paths. Sunlight

dapples the floor of the woods, and sparrows and squirrels quarrel overhead. The musty smell of fallen leaves rises through the fragrance of late wildflowers.

4. New Haven Road

The Solace Stream sparkles beneath an ancient stone bridge. Water tumbles out of the forest, over the rocks, and toward the Southpass that lies between the southern Sentinel Peaks. West of the bridge, the road splits in two, branching to the south and the west. Both roads wind among the great vallenwoods, whose boughs form a brilliant canopy over the roadway.

Despite the apparent calm here, unfamiliar creatures lurk among the trees near the fork in the road. These are Baaz draconians, waiting for their leader up the road (see area 6)

to sound a horn. They are so well concealed behind cut branches that a PC would have to climb a tree to find them. Even then there is only a 30% chance of discovering them. If any draconian is spotted, all of them attack, sounding a horn and filling the woods with cold, rasping battle cries.

If your PCs spot the draconians and the attack takes place, the enemy glides from the vallenwood trees and blocks the heroes' retreat to Solace. A distant horn blares in answer to their battle call. The dragonmen fight to the death in an attempt to destroy the party.

The hornblast is a warning to those draconians who follow this party—not a call for aid. The dragonmen intend to remain disguised or concealed while traveling the human lands. They are sure that soon their armies will swarm across these fields; for now, they are searching for the Crystal Staff, although they do not know why.



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5. Prayers Eye Peak

The flaming colors of fall surround you, and an autumn breeze ripples through your hair. To the southwest, the white-capped outline of Prayers Eye Peak soars in the distance. Barely visible from here, a sharp crack splits the peak as though it consisted of two hands pressed together.

When the party passes through this area, there is a 30% chance that one of its members (determine randomly) will spot the white stag. If enemies pursue the heroes into this area, this chance increases to 80%.

If it is spotted, the stag crashes through a tangle of bushes and trees, emerging well ahead of the party. It stays just ahead of the heroes, a flashing white form in the undergrowth, until it has led them through the crack in the middle of Prayers Eye Peak. After that, it bounds at full speed into the Darken Wood (24).

The stag cannot be captured. If the heroes kill it, dark thunderclouds form overhead. These hover above the party for seven days during which time players suffer a +1 penalty to their Armor Class. The body of the stag disappears.

6. Twin Flat

A clear mountain valley sprawls about. To the northwest and southeast, thick vallenwoods flash yellow and scarlet against the bright autumn sky. To the east shimmers the cool blue of the Crystalmir Lake. Westward, the valley enters a canyon rimmed by granite cliffs. The valley floor itself continues to the northeast.

Some distance away, a group of huddled men pulls a large cart slowly west down the Haven road. They sway rhythmically. Coarse, heavy robes completely conceal their features.

These forms are 1d100x30' away. They see the party at the same moment the party notices them. If the heroes don't approach, one of the figures points in their direction; another slowly walks toward the party.

These are 11 Baaz draconians in disguise. Hoods and black cloth masks cover their faces. Heavy gloves shield their hands and thick leg wrappings cover their feet. Although it is autumn, they seem a bit overdressed against the cold.

As its companions join it next to the party, the leader speaks: "Good day to you, travelers! Please pardon the questions of an old cleric. Some days ago, our healing staff was stolen from Xak Tsaroth. Now one of our flock is dying, and we desperately need that item to bring our brother back to health. He lies yonder in the back of the cart. Have you heard any word of a blue crystal staff?"

If the heroes claim to know nothing about the staff, the disguised leader signals its comrades, who step aside and allow the party to pass. If the heroes suggest that they have seen or heard of the staff, the draconian leader rattles off more questions, its voice shaking slightly: Where did they see it? How long ago? In whose hands? If the adventurers reveal that they have the staff, the draconian leader screams and reaches for its weapon. At the scream, the robed draconians attack, limited to their lowest movement rate because their wings are bound. Once each round, a draconian may tear off its robes instead of attacking. Each has a 20% chance of doing this, which frees it to move faster. The draconians try to force the party back east down the road. If they can drive the party into area 5, the draconians sound a horn. If their comrades in area 4 are still alive, they sound their horn in answer, then rush to close the trap. All of these draconians fight to the death trying to gain the staff.

7. Jakanth Vale

Trails lead deeper into the woods, but even at its edge an unnatural stillness has settled on the place. The woods seem much the same, but there is a subtle difference, a heaviness in the air. Even the insects are silent.

Heavily wrapped feet tread upon this trail a short time ago. Following these tracks will bring the heroes to a campsite in a glade.

The campsite smells like burned hair. Charred bones lie in the ashes of the fire pit. The grass has been stamped down around the area.

Searching the area uncovers a bright silver bracer fitted with four gems (500 stl each). Inside the band is engraved: "Firehawk, warrior of Que-Shu." Que-Shu Plainsmen can identify this as the bracer of the warriors whose task it is to defend the tribe. These bands are forged around the warriors' arms. Death alone removes them.

8. Northfields

A sea of grain sweeps across the north flats. Stalks sag with ripend grain, ready for harvest. But no one is around to harvest the grains or tend the crops.

The few farm houses in the area seem to have been abandoned in a great hurry. The adventurers have only a 20% chance per turn of discovering, here and there in the fields and at some farm homes, signs of a fierce fight. Footprints of draconians surround these marks of struggle, but only those heroes who have met draconians can identify them, and then only 60% of the time.

All tracks lead east (to area 35).

9. Nearfields

Here, farmers and their workers tread through fields of grain. The

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thick wheat falls smoothly before the flickering scythes.

The workers here seem a bit nervous and speak with the PCs only 20% of the time. "Good luck on your way. We want no trouble," is all they say. Only 20% of the time will those who have spoken say more, and if they do, their thoughts are almost as one: "We don't know what is going on, but people have been disappearing in the night from our camps and homes. Now we fear all strangers. What terrible devil has struck our homes?"

10. Sentinel Gap

Walls of granite soar on either side of the narrow canyon floor. A chilly breeze whistles and rumbles between the cliffs.

11. Twin Peaks Vale

The twin peaks, Tasin and Fasin, stand to either side of the Shadow Canyon, overlooking the north road to the capital city of Haven. In front of them, a lush mountain valley echoes with the sweet sounds of the forest.

12. Shadow Canyon

Solid granite cliffs vault high overhead, forming walls that seem topless, casting deep shadows into the crevasse. The canyon floor is narrow but well-traveled and clear.

13-15. North Seeker Reaches

Green farmlands stretch between mountain walls in a great valley. Farm houses and trees dot the landscape and many well-traveled trails lead south to a central road.

There is a 15% chance per turn that the heroes find a typical farmer and his family moving toward the south, pulling all their belongings behind them in a dogcart. On the main road, this chance increases to 30% in area 13 and 70% in area 14. In area 15 a family can always be found traveling south down the main road.

The people flee south, intent on nothing else. Their eyes fixed to the road ahead of them, these refugees stop to talk with PCs only 20% of the time. If they do stop, however, they have an interesting story: "See the smoke rising from the valley yonder? Devils from the Cataclysm, they were, that started the fires! Came down from the north, only three days ago, and ever since they've plundered and killed. Now we're fleeing south to the capital, to Haven. Surely from there we can get to happier and safer country."

16. Haven's Vale

Dust cloaks the highway, which stretches down the center of the plain. A stream of refugees shuffles and limps southward toward the glistening, distant spires of Haven.

Refugees flee down the road, staggering and occasionally squabbling over food. All of them are too busy or worried to speak with the PCs. Now and then, a contingent of Seeker Guards rides up and down the lines of refugees trying to keep order (and looking for the Crystal Staff).

All of these people have but a single thought: to get to the city of Haven as fast as they can. There they believe the Highseekers can guide them and grant them the protection of the new gods. There they hope to be safe from the invaders. All of the fields in this area are abandoned. Occasionally, (10% chance per turn) a fight starts on the edge of a roadside field, as 2d20 refugee men scuffle over who shall steal its crops or fruits.

Now and then (25% chance per

game hour) a troop of Holy Guardians passes. Fifty percent of the time these troops are going away from Haven.

PCs have a 30% chance of stopping the Guardleader. If they do, he shakes his head and says: "Total madness, that's what it is! We march up and down this rag-tag line of beggars, trying to keep some kind of order. But it's impossible. What has happened to the world? These people run to Haven, but there is no escape from Haven except to the Qualinesti Elfkingdom or the Darken Wood. Now Qualinesti has closed its border, and no man enters the Darken Wood and lives.

"By the way, have you heard anything about a blue crystal staff?"

If the heroes make known that they have seen or even heard of the Crystal Staff, the guardsmen pull them up onto horseback and escort them directly to the Council of Highseekers in area 17b.

17. Lordcity of Haven

Read this description when the party nears Haven:

Six white towers rise from the foothills of the eastern mountains, encircling the delicate architecture of Haven. A long file of refugees chokes the road entering the city's main gate.

Read this description once inside Haven's gate:

The bases of delicate fluted pillars are covered by swarms of people. Every street surges with panic-stricken refugees, milling and crying beneath the ancient, serene buildings.

The Lordcity of Haven is a glistening place of white marble towers trimmed in gold. A low wall, more decorative than protective, strings together six spindly towers like a necklace about the city.

"City," however, is a misleading

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term for Haven: its inner circle is only one mile across, and only three miles across counting the homes outside the wall. The normal population is only about 5,000.

Almost all the services one might expect in a town of this size are available; however, the ironsmith is in the direct employ of the Highseekers and works only at their bidding.

Two areas may be of special interest to adventurers in this city: the Steel Tankard Tavern (17a) and the Councilhall of Highseekers (17b).

The city overflows with refugees. All of these people are close to panic; they have horror stories of the invaders to the north. Only 5% of the refugees have actually seen the draconians and hobgoblins or their army well enough to describe them; the rest tell obscure and greatly exaggerated tales about "demons to the north." None of these people is the least bit helpful. Their only desire is to find safe passage from Haven to the south.

On every street corner, Holy Guardians try to keep the peace—an impossible task.

Though they leap in to break up scattered fights (20% chance per turn) or help people find their way (40% chance per turn), the most pressing mission for the Guardians is to find the bearer of a blue crystal staff and bring him before the Council of Highseekers with all haste. They have been told that this person may be the only hope for the city and its people.

17a. Steel Tankard Tavern

The tavern is packed shoulder to shoulder with men and women trying to forget the reason they have come to the city. The heat is stifling despite the bitter autumn weather outside. The crowd is eerily quiet, each person drawn into his own thoughts and sorrow. Three people—a man in a fur cloak, a tall man dressed in the greens and browns of a forester,

and a woman, in leather armor and wearing an eye-patch—are less brooding than the others. Though they seem rather quiet, they busy themselves with helping older people find places to sit and clearing places for women with small children.

Though most here are deep within their own thoughts, adventurers can converse with the three people mentioned above.

"I should leave town right now," the man in the fur cloak says. "The Highseekers say we are safe here, but they have no power. Where is their magic? Where are their miracles? How can they speak for gods if they have no powers?"

The forester: "The guards of the city are looking for someone bearing a crystal staff. I wonder why? Could the staff preserve us from the invaders in the north?"

The woman: "The ways south are all blocked. The elven lands of Qualinesti are closed—the elves turn us away. The Darken Wood may be entered through the southern passes, but I've never heard of anyone returning from there. That leaves the River White-rage between the Darken Wood and Qualinesti: a most dangerous route. Not a happy choice!"

17 b. Councilhall of Highseekers

In the center of the city, a hall supported by six towers glistens above the shouting crowd below. Holy Guardians encircle the building, barring all entrance.

The PCs must pass the 100 Holy Guardians before they can enter the hall. If they do, they may address the Council of Highseekers directly.

The guardians let no one pass except those who bear news of the blue crystal staff. They stare cautiously for a moment at those who bear this news, then usher them before the Council.

A large hall rises to a ceiling supported by pillars on either side. At the far end, nine chairs sit in a semi-circle on the polished granite floor. Upon each chair sits a man in clean white robes trimmed in gold. A steel girdle bands each man's waist.

The Council Hall is large and elegant. The councilors are desperate for news of the blue crystal staff. The draconian army to the north has offered not to invade if the crystal staff is returned to its place in the eastern city of Xak Tsaroth. The council's prayers to the new gods have gone unanswered and they have no standing army; the Crystal Staff is their last hope to save the nation.

The council asks for the news the party bears. If the party has the staff and makes this known, the councilors plead passionately that they be allowed to take the staff. If the party refuses to hand over the item, the councilors plead with them to return it to Xak Tsaroth.

The Crystal Staff has other ideas. Any councilor who touches the staff (roll 1d8 and determine randomly; it is beneath the dignity of the Master to rise and touch the staff) will be hit by a *lightning bolt* from the staff for 4d6 points of damage. If this happens, the Highseekers declare the staff an evil artifact and command that the PCs return it to Xak Tsaroth to save the nation.

118. River White-rage

The rivers of the Haven Vale, the Darkwater River flowing from Darken Wood, and the clear waters of the Elfstream join in this region to form the frothing, powerful River White-rage. The water crashes swiftly between the cliffs that its current has cut into the plain. To the north, the Darkwater River pours gently from the deep shade of the Darken Wood trees. A path leads beside

the Darkwater river into the woods. To the south, the tall, straight trunks of the Qualinesti forests march into unseen distance.

The PCs may cross the rivers easily before they join, but the River White-rage is impassable without some kind of raft. Those trying to walk or swim across must roll a successful Strength check to swim back to the side of the river they started from. If the check fails, they are swept down the river, swirling and plunging for 100 feet and suffering 1d12 points of drowning damage. There they must check their Strength again. Repeat the process until the PC succeeds or drowns. PCs cannot be swept to the other side of the river.

The heroes may elect to build a raft. This takes 1d4 hours for every PC the raft is built to carry. Thus a raft for a party of six would take 6d4 hours to build.

The river is safe for rafts, and if the heroes allow their craft to float down the river, they enter area 20.

19. Qualinesti Elflands

Aspen trees stand in thick clusters, their trunks only a few feet apart. Beyond them, the forest darkens.

After the adventurers have spent more than one hour in the area, 15 elves suddenly emerge from the trees and surround the party.

Their bows are nocked, their swords drawn, but the elves do not attack. Instead, they call for the party to surrender. These elves have orders to take the PCs to the centaurs of area 23 for a special purpose.

If the party fights the elves, they must take on the rest of the elven army, one unit every game hour. These units are identical to the first unit encountered; they keep on coming, wave after wave, fighting for their homeland with cold fierceness. They fight to the death. They do not,

however, pursue the PCs farther than the borders of their land.

If asked why they have orders to take the PCs into the Darken Wood, one of the elves replies, "We have seen signs of unspeakable evil in the land. Haven and all the Seeker lands will fall unless a miracle takes place. A glorious being passed through our land and said you would be coming. We do not know his name, but we have orders to take you to the edge of Darken Wood at his bidding."

20. The White-rage Cut

Here the frothing torrent of the White-rage River spills between tall cliffs and funnels loudly down its course, crashing between two soaring bluffs.

Raft pilots must check both Strength and Dexterity once per turn here. If a pilot fails any check, his raft splinters on a rock in the river, casting all passengers into the rapids. If this happens, the raft is nearer to the northern shore of the river. Use the swimming rules from area 18 to determine if the characters can reach the rocks on the northern shore. PCs on the northern shore find paths up the cliff face into area 22.

The raft moves three hexes per turn.

21. Magical Mountains

The mountain valley runs east and west between Prayers Eye Peak and a second ridge of mountains. Tall aspens, still green well into autumn, shiver in groves about the valley. The vale itself is carpeted in tall, soft grasses. Both exits from the valley, to the southwest and to the east, lead into the dimness of deeper woods.

22. Spirit Forest

The canopy of leaves thickens; the sunlight dapples, dims, then fades

altogether. The trunks of the trees are gnarled and knotted, their bark almost black. Ahead lie deeper and deeper shadows.

Those who enter the Darken Wood (22-26) are subject to its confusing charm. When a PC leaves the Darken Wood, he cannot express what he saw or experienced there, even though his memory of adventures and encounters there is quite clear. If the players continue, read the following:

Between the twisted shapes of the trees, strange shapes flit nearby. It is hard to see their shape or size through the dense woods.

Unless the PCs withdraw from the woods, the spirits challenge them, asking their names. If they answer falsely, then the guardian spectral minions attack. If at any time either before or during combat, the heroes give their correct names or show Goldmoon's Crystal Staff, the minions halt any attack and let them pass.

Heroes who are allowed to pass hear the leader of the minions say, "The Forestmaster awaits. You are expected." The shadowy spirits part before the heroes—all but one, who escorts them down a path to area 26.

If the PCs ask their escort about the spirits, he replies, "Ages ago, before the world changed, we were ordered to keep this land safe. That was our purpose. We failed. Now we repent by protecting the land while we can."

23. Centaur Reaches

"Halt!" The broad torso of a man suddenly rises above a head-high bush. He looks down from at least two feet above eye level. His muscular arm poises, spear in hand. "Ye be trapped. Come with me to the judge of the forest, or be judged by my lance and those of my fellows."

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If the heroes resist, the centaurs fight to the death. Otherwise they relieve the party of their weapons and, pulling the PCs onto their backs, take them to area 26.

The centaurs are reluctant to speak about anything to the PCs until they have seen the Forestmaster. To the adventurers' questions they simply reply, "The Forestmaster will answer all things."

24. Dryad Forests

Tremendous, deep-rooted oak trees tower overhead. Though the grass and brush continue under them, littered with acorns and twigs, it is hard to see more than a few feet into the forest.

Unless another creature of this forest escorts the PCs, the dryads make themselves known after the heroes travel more than 1/4 mile into the area. PCs see them only briefly—long-haired women whispering in sweet low voices to one another. They make no effort to address the heroes, and vanish if approached. If a forest creature escorts the PCs, they do not see the dryads.

The Forestmaster gives the dryads their home and protection in return for their guarding this forest. They whisper to one another when they see intruders and forewarn the Forestmaster.

25. Starnight Canyon

Craggy canyons climb steeply among the peaks of the Sentinel Mountains. Clouds race over blue-green mountain glades.

The party has a 15% chance each turn to encounter pegasi in this area. The pegasi graze calmly, untroubled by the party's presence. The creatures are so docile that PCs can mount them.

Once the heroes mount them, the pegasi bound into the sky. However, once they are in the air, they fly di-

rectly to area 26 regardless of what the heroes try to direct them to do. If a PC threatens a Pegasus, the creature bucks once in the air, causing its rider to roll a successful Dexterity check or fall from the winged horse.

26. Unicorn Grove

The dense oak forest suddenly opens into a forest glade. Soft green grasses carpet the floor up a hillside, at the top of which sits an outcropping of rock. Atop this overhang stands a majestic unicorn, its head raised high and proud, but a strange sadness in its eyes.

If the PCs approach the outcropping, the unicorn speaks with them; he can call forest creatures to his aid if PCs are foolish enough to attack him.

As the PCs approach, the unicorn speaks. "I am the Forestmaster. You have entered my Great Forest: I grant you passage and the aid of all creatures while you remain within our borders." From now until the PCs leave the forest, no creature attacks them unless they attack first.

At a moment of your choice, the Forestmaster tells the PCs: "Some days ago, a great and glorious being came among us. He held great wisdom and power rare in the land today. He foretold your coming and left you a message: 'You must fly straight away across the Eastwall Mountains. Within two days you must be within Xak Tsaroth. There, if you prove worthy, you shall receive the greatest gift given to the world.' Those were his very words—the greatest gift given to the world! "

The Forestmaster knows no more of this, but he is aware of a terrible force of evil that will destroy the beauty of his domain shortly.

If the PCs request the help of Forestmaster, he summons pegasi. The beautiful and powerful animals, one for each PC, silently circle overhead and land with feather gentleness in the nearby grasses. They allow the PCs to mount them, then

hurtle into the air, their wings whispering on the wind, and soar above the glade. PCs looking back see the Forestmaster standing proudly on outcropping. He calls to them, "The greatest gift given to man awaits you. Carry the peace of my home within your hearts—soon it will live nowhere else." PCs flying out of Darken Wood are subject to the confusion of leaving (see area 22). They also must roll a successful Constitution check each turn or fall asleep.

If the PCs foolishly decide to attack the unicorn, he calls at once for magical forest creatures to defend him. Roll immediately on the Random Encounter Chart for the Darken Wood. From now until the PCs leave the woods, all creatures encountered attack them on sight; if, however, the heroes are headed out of the woods, the creatures try simply to chase them from the area.

27. Gateway Pass

The brilliant leaves float softly from the trees to the floor of the canyon. The road leads peacefully between the spires of the Sentinel Peaks.

28. Gateway

Smoke drifts lazily from the chimneys of Gateway. The comfortable houses and shops nestle in the arms of the Sentinel Mountains at the base of the Gateway Pass to Solace. The smell of baking bread sweetens the autumn breeze.

Gateway resembles Solace in many respects, except that its buildings are on the ground and the town has no ironsmithy.

Gateway's citizens know of no danger from "demon men" or "evil armies" and brush off such talk as tall tales. "Dragons in the night" is their name for stories of things that don't exist.

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29. Westplains

Grassland plains sprawl for miles east of the Sentinel Mountains. Their brown grasses bend in a fall wind turned suddenly cold.

30. Que-Teh

The chill wind rustles sadly through the silent village of Que-Teh.

Signs of hurried flight are scattered throughout the village: half-emptied food jars, meals half finished, and children's rattle-beads cast aside. Rangers have a 50% chance to find the tracks of the villagers, which lead straight to area 38.

31. The Great Crossroads

In the midst of a rolling plain, three roads converge. At their intersection, a single stone pillar points the directions to Que-Teh, Que-Kiri, and Que-Shu. Cold wind swirls about the stone; a single hawk circles to the east.

The ground here is trampled. A ranger has a 30% chance to identify some of the tracks as those of draconians (only, of course, if he has encountered the creatures before). The draconian tracks lead east, toward Que-Shu (36).

32. Que-Kiri

Thin columns of smoke rise from the chimneys of Que-Kiri. As you approach the town, men, apparently from the town, move cautiously in your direction.

These city guards escort the PCs through the town but do not allow them to stay. They speak with the heroes but are worried about the safety of their city and do not trust strangers.

If the PCs kill the guards and try to enter the town, the entire town drives them out and gives them no aid or information whatsoever. Adventurers can get one of the guards to speak with them 80% of the time. If he speaks, he says: "We don't know what the danger is that's on the way, but we know it is coming. Our scouts have seen great fires in the north. Many of our number have disappeared in the last week. But now we are prepared for the enemy. There are over 600 of us-who could stand against us?" They are sure that they can defeat any enemy; nothing will stop them from doing so.

33. Kiri Valley

The forest darkens and thickens beside an ancient trail. A cold, dry stillness hovers in the air. The trees are knotted and bent. Everything seems to watch you.

An evil wizard died here long ago. Only his essence remains.

34. Western Que-Shu Plains

A chill, biting wind cuts across the flatlands. Carried on the wind from the east is the sharp smell of burning grass.

35. Northern Desolation

The grasslands soon turn to burned stubble underfoot. For miles the once grassy plains are charred. The ashy taste of scorched earth laces the air. Large, heavy creatures have trampled the ground everywhere.

A ranger who has encountered draconians before can identify these prints as theirs 80% of the time. A ranger also has a 20% chance to tell that the prints first pass south, then return north.

36. Que-Shu

Read this when the heroes enter the area:

Chill winds scatter the smoke from dying fires in the midst of the village.

Birds wheel over the motionless village, descending slowly among the huts. Everything else is still and quiet.

Read this as the heroes enter the village:

They are gone. The huts and tents of Que-Shu lie abandoned. A strange, creaking sound comes from the center square of the village.

The birds stare coldly into nothing. They perch atop a strange construction thrown together in the center of the square. Two stout posts have been driven into the ground by unspeakable force, their bases nearly splintered by the impact. Ten feet above the ground, a crosspiece pole is lashed to the two upright posts. All the poles are charred and blistered. Three chains, the iron of each cold but apparently once melted, creak in the wind. Suspended from each chain, apparently by the feet, is a corpse. Though blackened and seared, the three bodies are certainly not human. Atop the dark structure, a sign, roughly clawed into a shield, has been stapled to the crosspiece with a broken sword blade.

The PCs can find signs that the villagers left their homes in a hurry. Tracks from the village obviously lead east toward the mountains.

Each PC has a base 15% chance to read the writing on the shield. PCs who have read *language* abilities may add that score to the base percentage. The sign reads: "Know ye, my servants, the fate of those who take prisoners against my will. Kill or be

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killed. Verminaard.” The corpses are those of hobgoblins.

37. Sageway Broken

The broken stones of an ancient roadway cut through brown plains. The stones lead north and south.

A close look at the road uncovers many footprints. It seems that a great number of people and heavy creatures moved south along this route a few days ago.

38. Refugees

A single figure, scantily clad, scurries over the rise. He is a man—by his looks an exhausted one. Behind him, three figures lope steadily, tirelessly in pursuit. They are laughing, taunting their prey, waiting before closing for the kill.

The man is 500 feet away when the encounter starts. The grasses of the plains are three to four feet tall and can easily hide the heroes. The man can run 550 feet farther before he collapses. The Baaz draconians, intent on their prey, do not notice the PCs until they are within 50 feet—not at all if the PCs take cover.

Since the PCs pose a real threat to them, the draconians give up their pursuit of the man and attack the heroes once they notice them.

If they rescue the fugitive, the PCs may speak with him. He gasps from exhaustion as he tells his story: “I am Nightshade from the village of Que-Teh. The dragonmen are taking all of us south as slaves. This morning the men of my tribe held secret council, chained though we were in the caravan. I was chosen to escape, to go to Que-Shu for aid, while the rest of my comrades rose against the dragonmen and drew their attention. A tremendous army of evil lies to the south. I have overheard them speak of a second army that waits to crush the Seeker Lands from the north. They

hold back their armies only for fear that a crystal staff will return to Xak Tsaroth while they are not watchful. Why, I do not know.” His voice becomes desperate. “Do not go south, for only slavery and death lie there. Find the crystal staff, and take it to Xak Tsaroth. It is our only hope.”

If the PCs cure his wounds, this man will go with them. He has no equipment at all.

39. Oldroad Bridge

Read the following when the heroes enter the area:

In the distance, an ancient bridge spans the torrents of the White-rate River. Several dark shapes crouch on the northern side of the bridge, many others on its southern side.

When the PCs get within 300 feet of the bridge, they discover that the forms are Baaz draconian guards; 4 watch the north and 10-20 the south.

Orders have come from their Dragon Highlord not to take any more prisoners. They will kill anyone who approaches. This is all they know about the position and situation of the Dragonarmies.

If the heroes approach on a raft, the draconians leap onto them from the bridge, capsizing the raft and spilling both heroes and dragonmen into the river. Use the swimming rules from area 18.

The guards on the northern side of the river are the only ones who are allowed to pursue north of the river. The reserves may pursue anything south of the river.

40. Southway

The tall grasses of the southern bank bend oddly against the wind. Occasionally, the gleaming point of a spear or the flash of a helm flickers through the grasses to the south. The cold, fall sky is overcast, and thunder rumbles to the south.

If the PCs move south, they encounter the southern draconian army, one unit of 1d10 + 10 Baaz per game hour. The number of units they can encounter is limitless.

These guards have orders not to pursue anything north of the river but to attack and kill anything crossing south of the river. They have no further information.

41. Sageway East

Here in the canyons of the Foresaken Mountains, an ancient road lies broken and abandoned. Yet the grasses and weeds growing between the broken stones of the road are trampled flat. A cold wind dives out of the east.

A ranger has a 50% chance to note tracks of human plainsmen mixed with other, heavier tracks. If the ranger has met draconians before, he has a 30% chance to identify their tracks here as well.

42. Cursed Lands of Newsea

A forest of ironclaw trees stretches eastward to the Newsea. Beneath an umbrella of branches, the streams of the Forsaken Mountains crawl through a spongy swamp. Still waters encircle islands of soggy ground. The landscape extends into the swamp and is darkness.

Each turn there is a 15% chance that the soggy ground the heroes are walking on will dead-end and the party must cross 1d4 + 5 feet of water to get to the next section of ground. See the Random Encounter table for details.

43. Dragonlands

The flames from a thousand campfires glitter in the distance on the burned plains. Nearby, several creatures stoop about their own campfire.

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If a PC can move silently to within 30 feet of the guards, he hears them speak in the common tongue. The large draconian says, "We can crush this human scum. So why wait until old Verminaard gets some fancy crystal staff? Why, he even has Khisanth tied up waiting for it, when we could use her help out here!"

If the PCs move past this outpost, they meet the bulk of the draconian army, one unit of $1d10 + 10$ Baaz per game hour. The number of these units is limitless.

44. Xak-Tsaroth

When the adventurers enter the ancient city, they begin in area 44a. Use the Swamp of Xak Tsaroth map.

44a. Swamp Ruins

The exposed roots of ironclaw trees twist into the mud and swamp water. Vines, trees, and ferns block vision beyond a few feet. The ground is soaked and

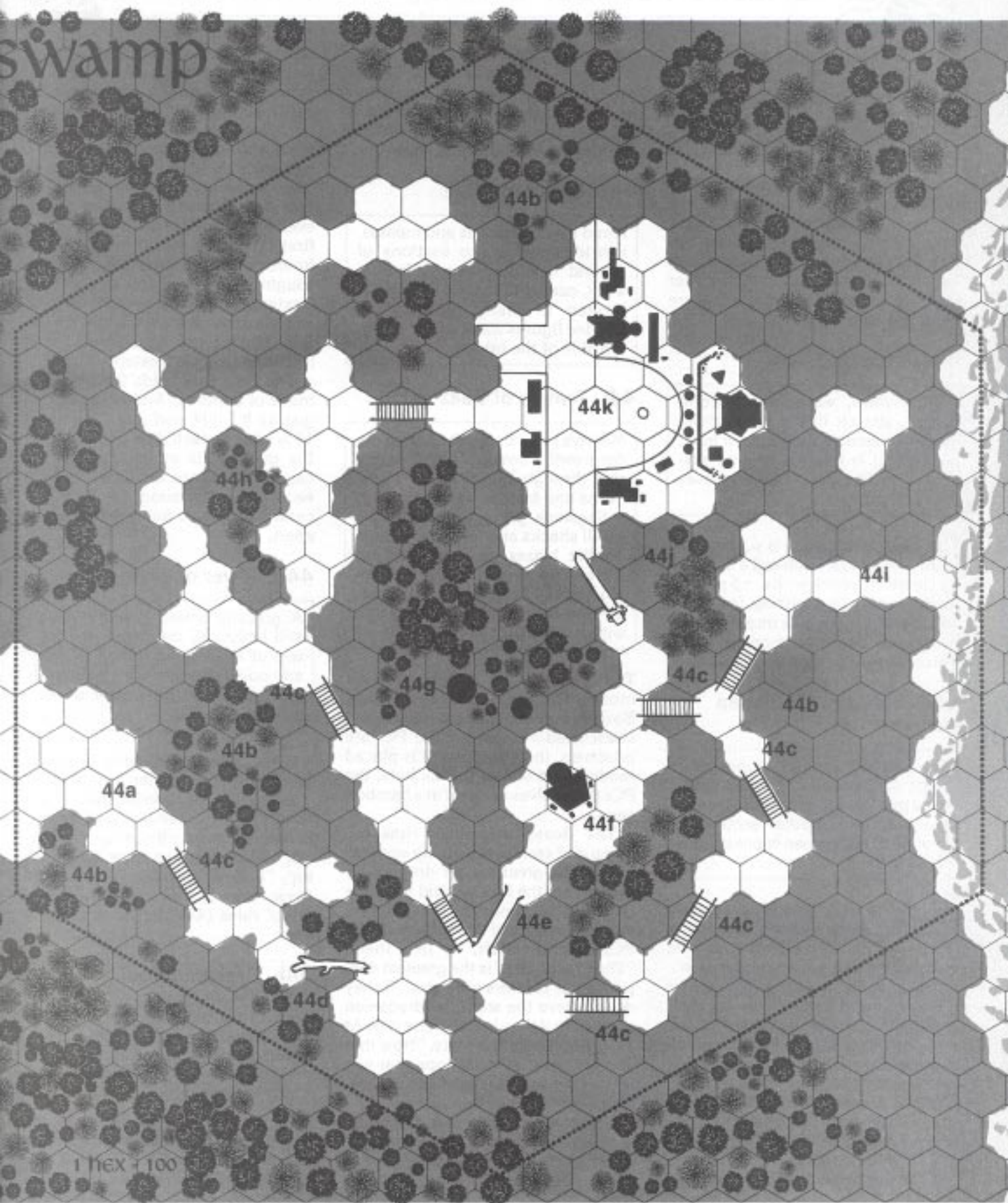
spongy. All is in shadow; sun shows only a brief glimmer through the jungle overhead.

Occasionally, (1 in 6 chance per round) ruined items jut from the underbrush: broken foundation stones, shattered urns, ancient carvings.

Many creatures passed through this area within the last three or four hours. The tracks look faintly reptilian. If the adventurers have met draconians before, they have a 20% chance to recognize these tracks.



swamp



44b. Waters of the Swamp

Green scum covers the dark swamp water. Sour, metallic smells float on the air.

The water depth is unpredictable (1d6 feet, roll once for every 30 feet traveled). Whenever anyone enters the water, for whatever reason, roll 1d6. If the result is less than 4, roll 1d4 + 20 on the Random Encounter table to determine what creature rises up to attack.

44c. Vine Bridges

Thick vines, woven into strong ropes, stretch like a long spider web between two sections of land. Each end is knotted around several ironclaw trees. Slimy mosses cover the ropes.

This makeshift bridge is surprisingly sturdy. PCs must each roll a successful Dexterity check with a -5 penalty to cross the bridge without trouble. If someone fails, he falls into the water below and disturbs a monster in the water (same procedure as in 44b).

44d. Battle of the Fallen Ironclaw

The soaked ground slopes into thick swampwater. A giant ironclaw tree has fallen here, spanning the waters to another section of ground. Thick green moss drapes the log.

Behind the trees and bushes, only 15-20 feet away, lurk six Bozak draconians. Four are on the heroes' side of the river; two are on the far side.

These ambushers plan to capture the party and take them to their camp for questioning. They attack first with *web* spells. PCs must roll successful saving throws (with a -2 penalty) or be tangled in the trees behind them. After that, the draconians try to cast sleep on the party. They take all captives to their camp (44f) and hold them there.

If the draconians suffer more than

50% losses, they retreat.

This group knows that the Crystal Staff is a very powerful item. It has been stolen from the ruins, and it is the one thing their leader Verminaard fears can upset his plans.

44e. Broken Bridge

Amid drooping vines and mosses, a bridge spans two sections of ground. Its ornate wooden lattice-work, carved to resemble vines, is broken in many places. Two hooded figures stand on the northern side of the bridge.

44f. Temple of Baaz

Massive ruins break the jungle undergrowth. Small broken towers rise through the cover of trees. Ferns and bushes sprout through a flagstone plaza surrounded by small shacks and lean-tos; a huge bonfire blazes its northern side. Beyond the fire, set in the remaining half shell of a crumbled dome, a huge black dragon stands, its wings outfolded!

The black dragon is only a wicker model. The draconians nearby, one Bozaak and seven Baaz, attack any unescorted intruders. If the PCs are prisoners, their equipment is placed randomly in one of the six huts; the PCs themselves are held in a bamboo cage.

The Bozak draconian runs the camp and conducts worship services before the great wicker dragon. He orders that the PCs be held for three days until Khisanth, the group's commander, comes to claim them. If the PCs have the staff, he tells them, "The Crystal Staff is the greatest danger to our masters we know." If they do not have the staff, the draconian asks them if they know where it is. At any rate, it tells the party, "Now that you are here, we only hope that you do not die as easily as those of Que-Shu did at our hands."

The black dragon is a draconian idol woven of vines and branches. There is an opening in the figure at the base between its legs. The main

braces for the wings are tied together just below the dragon's mouth. The mouth itself forms a funnel. If a PC gets inside the wicker dragon unnoticed, leaps up and down on the main brace and shouts through the mouth, he panics the draconians and drives them screaming into the jungle for 1d6 turns. The whole structure, however, has a 30% chance to fall face-first into the bonfire and burn furiously if a PC tries this. Anyone caught inside must roll a successful Dexterity check to escape the idol and the damage from the fire. He suffers 1d6 points of damage each round he fails his Dexterity check.

The cage that holds the heroes is made of bamboo. A Baaz draconian guards it night and day. There is a 10% chance each daylight hour that the guard falls asleep next to the cage. The chance increases to 30% each hour after sundown. Any successful bend bars roll breaks the bars apart.

44g. Tower of Truth

A graceful tower, crumbling yet still beautiful, rises from the waters of the swamp. Finely carved and polished stonework walls still glint beneath the jungle undergrowth.

It is sad to see the remains of a capital city brought to silence and decay.

Although the wooden floors and rafters have long since rotted away, a carved staircase circles up the interior of the tower to a stone floor at its top. The tower provides a view of all the surrounding swamplands; a cluster of ruins (44k) lies to the north-east.

44h. Breeding Pool

A pool of black water stands amid the towering jungle trees. Not even the mighty ironclaws grow in this water.

Five leathery egg shells lie on the shore. All of these are cracked open and unoccupied. Each is about two feet long. Black dragon hatchlings

lurk beneath the water and rise suddenly to attack if the PCs disturb the surface of the water.

44i. Swamp Falls

The soggy jungle floor suddenly ends in a 1,000 foot cliff! Water from the swamp trickles down the stone bluff to a crashing seashore. The Newsea spreads to the eastern horizon, covering what was once a fertile plain.

44j. Fallen Obelisk

A tremendous obelisk lies beside its broken pedestal base. Strange spidery runes cover its surface. The obelisk bridges two sections of ground divided by swamp water.

The PCs have only a 15% base chance to read the runes, although those who have read *languages* abilities may add their score to their chances. The runes read:

*The Great City of Xak Tsaroth
Whose beauty surrounds you
Speaks to the good of its people*

*And their generous deeds.
The gods reward us
In the grace of our home.*

44k. Plaza of Death

Emerging from the dense jungle, a broad cobblestone street runs south and north among the ruins. A roadway branches to the west. A large cobblestone courtyard lies to the east amid crumbling buildings. Beyond the courtyard are five tall free-standing columns; no trace remains of the building they once supported. In front of these pillars, a huge well plunges into the earth. Vapors rise from the well. To the north of the well, a single building stands whole, although time and the weather have worn its outer walls.

The heroes may enter the building to the north, taking them to area 46a.

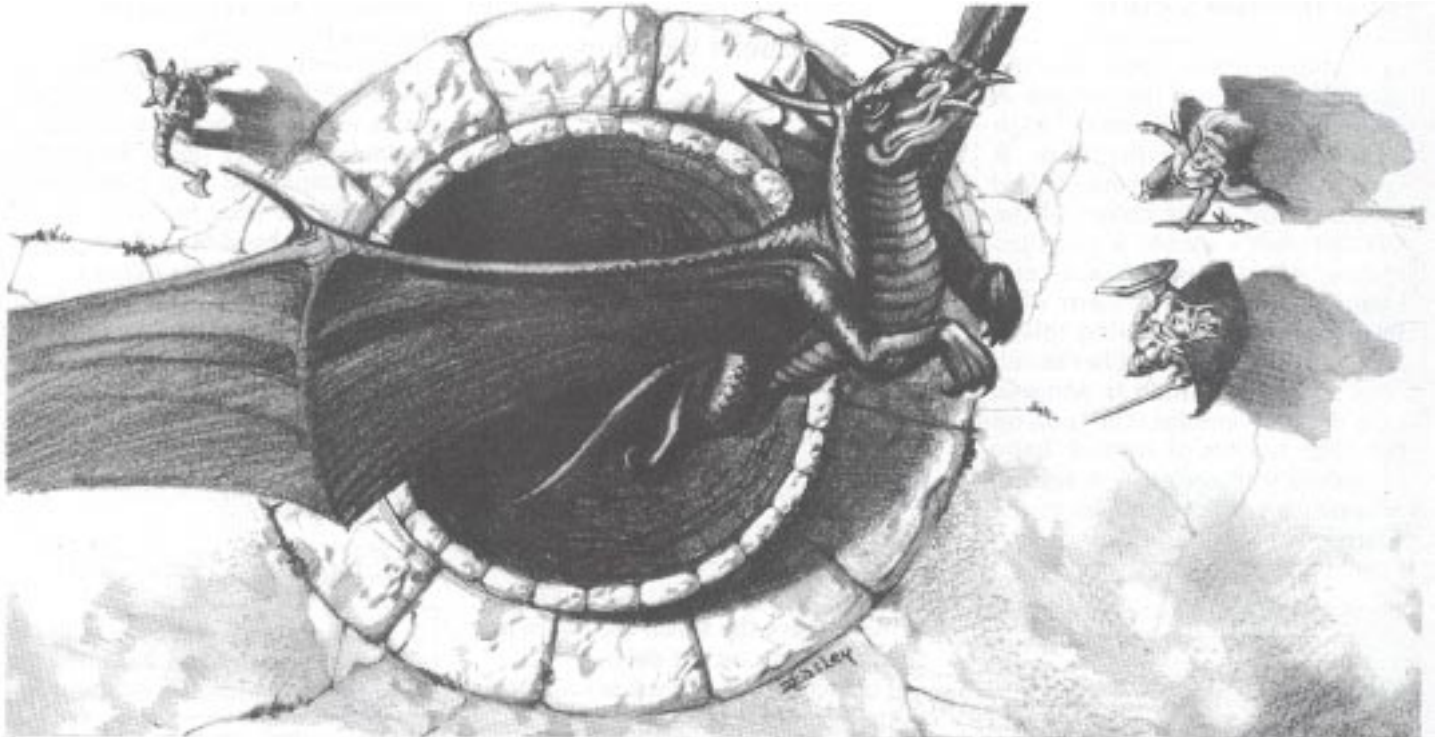
The building to the north is a temple of the ancient goddess of healing, Mishakal. The only entrance to the windowless temple is through the front door—gold doors weighing 15,000 gpw each. They are on counter-poised hinges so they open as normal doors. Whoever enters the

temple finds himself in area 46.

A dark and terrible stillness lies around the well. PCs who gaze into it see nothing but vast blackness. Rushing air, deathly cold, swells from below. Suddenly, a fantastic shape, huge and black, bursts from the well and unfolds its tremendous leather wings! Magical darkness (from the *ring of darkness* the dragon wears) covers the entire area.

The dragon (named Khisanth) uses its first combat round to gain speed in the air and circle around for a better attack position. PCs are susceptible to the fear a dragon generates. The dragon then attacks the heroes from the air, hovering to avoid swords and hand weapons. It bombards the heroes with *magic missile* and *sleep* spells (it can cast two of each). The dragon then makes two passes, using its acid breath weapon to sear flesh with deadly accuracy. Finally on the third pass, feeling the need for the safety of its lair, it flies over the well, folds its wings, and drops like a stone down the well. Deep below it, it will break out of its dive and move toward its lair.

After this encounter takes place, the adventurers may explore the well (area 45) further (see the Cavern of Xak Tsaroth map).



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45. The Great Well

The shaft plunges into darkness, from which a fowl air rises. Steam and the heavy odor of rotteness make it hard to see the bottom.

The masonry shaft of the well drops 100 feet before it opens into the ceiling of a vast cavern beneath the swamp. On the floor of the cavern, some 800 feet below, lie the shattered remains of Xak Tsaroth. Much of the city slid into this cavern at the time of the Cataclysm. It is the most preserved part of the ruined ancient capital. The well sits directly over the central plaza of the ruins (area 67).

46a. Temple Entrance

Double doors of tarnished gold close off each end of the corridor. Blue oval archways rise 30 feet to form the ceiling. A second pair of stained gold doors stands shut at the other end of the hall.

These doors weigh 15,000 gpw each. They move on hinges and open as normal dungeon doors.

46b. Mishakal's Form

The golden doors open into the central chamber of the temple. A tremendous dome rises high above the delicate tile floor. It seems as though time has stilled in this room. In the center of the circular room stands a polished statue of singular grace and beauty: the delicate form of a woman, draped in flowing robes. Her hair cascades about her shoulders and neck, which is adorned by a detailed amulet. The look on her face is one of radiant hope tempered with sadness. A feeling of warmth and love abides in the room.

The statue is the likeness of Mishakal, the ancient goddess of healing. Her power still fills the chamber. Through this statue, Mishakal will reveal the destiny of the adventurers

and the purpose of their quest. The statue also has the ability to recharge the Crystal Staff.

If a priest brings the Crystal Staff into this room, the statue comes to life and speaks to him: "Beloved disciple, the gods have not turned away from man. Man turned away from the gods and now seeks gods who do not exist. But the end of darkness nears. Krynn is about to face its greatest test. Men now need the truth more than ever. You must return the truth and power of the true gods to men. It is time to restore the balance.

"To gain the power, you shall need the truth of the gods. Far below this temple lie the *disks of Mishakal*: circular plates of platinum that are all you need to call upon my power. You must recover these disks.

"But your way will not be easy. The disks now lie in the lair of the dragon. Therefore, I charge your staff: if you present it boldly, never wavering, then you shall prevail. Even then, your journey is not complete; you must leave here, must search for a true Leader of the People."

The arms of the statue are curved as though they once held a long, thin pole. If any PC places the Crystal Staff in the statue's arms, the staff glows brightly and recharges.

46c. Southern Worship Room

A greenish tinge covers marble benches throughout the room. It looks as though this room has not been used in a long time.

46d. Northern Worship Room

The marble benches are coated in a thin, greenish film. Opposite the door, three figures crouch over a dais. Their robes hide their features as they spring to attack.

In their haste to attack, the Baaz draconians leave the scroll they were inspecting lying on the dais.

The scroll is a wizard scroll for a 10th-level *lightning bolt*.

The heroes may capture these draconians if they inflict more than 50% damage on them. The draconians know the way into the cavern through the well (area 45), though this is helpful only to flying creatures. The draconians also know about the elevator system at 47c, and the location of the dragon's lair (70k).

46e. Southern Holy Circle

A high, domed ceiling caps this circular room. Fungus creeps down all the walls, covering frescos faded beyond recognition. To the west, five squat figures claw at the wall with stubby fingers, scraping the frescos into a heap of wet plaster on the floor.

The five Aghar gully dwarves are too busy scratching and scraping to notice the PCs. In common speech, their leader says: "Claw, mates, claw! We gots to get these here pictures off o' the walls! I hear tell that humans used to keep pretty treasures behind walls like these. That Highbulp king of ours down in the cavern-city might give us special favors if we bring a pretty to him." With a start, the dwarves suddenly realize that the heroes are in the room.

"It's the lords, mates!" shouts the leader. All the dwarves drop like sacks to their knees. Faces pressed against the slimy floor, they grovel out, whimpering, "We didn't mean nothin' by it, your lordships!" They jump up and head out to join the line of other gully dwarves (47b).

If the PCs stop them, the Aghar beg for mercy. If the heroes promise to spare them, the Aghar draw a very crude map that shows the way down into the cavern city. They advise: "Go visit our king, the great Phudge Highbulp. He'll help you right straight!"

46f. Northern Holy Circle

A circular fresco, faded and damp with age, covers the walls of this 60-foot-high room. A domed ceil-

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ing vaults overhead. Fungus creeps down the walls.

46g. Paths of the Dead

A domed ceiling caps this 60-foot-high circular room. Vines and mosses dangle from great cracks in the ceiling. Fungus covers the walls. In the center of the room stands an empty pedestal, the top of which cannot be seen from the floor. On the west side of the room, just in front of the doors, a circular staircase, its flagstones slick with green film, descends into darkness.

47a. Hall of the Ancestors

Dim light shines up through the broken floor. A vast hall stretches to the east. The ceiling, heavily reinforced, stands solidly above, but below, the floor has fallen away in several places. Hot mists, carrying the odor of decay, rise through the holes in the floor.

Any dwarf can tell that this floor is unsafe. The holes open to a 700-foot drop straight into the lower ruins of the city. Anyone who weighs more than 500 gpw and comes within five feet of a hole's edge runs a 25% chance that the floor below him will collapse.

Even if a hero makes it to the edge of a hole, all he sees is foul mist swirling below.

47b. Southern Crypts

Crypts line the hallway. Cloaked in foul mists, a group of squat forms files into a line.

Many gully dwarves slouch and stoop in line. Every three turns, a whip cracks and half of these dwarves (15) rush through the eastern entrance to the hallway. The rest move up to the entrance. In one hour, the same 15 gully dwarves that rushed out the east end of the hall come in the west end and get back in line.

If they notice the heroes, these Aghar only put dirty fingers to their lips: "Shhhh!" They run if attacked.

47c. Going Down

Hot mist rises from two large holes in the floor, one on the north and one on the south. A tremendous black iron pot hangs from a large chain over the northern hole. The chain runs around two large wheels, crosses the ceiling, and drops through the center of the southern hole. Two large figures crouch beside the pot.

The holes, each ten feet in diameter, break through the ceiling of the cavern below, dropping 700 feet to area 66. Every three game turns, a gong sounds far below; then one of the draconians cracks a whip and 15 gully dwarves from 47b clamber into the room and scurry into the pot. When the pot is full—dwarf arms and legs sticking out, some Aghar even hanging on the sides—it slowly descends, pulling the chain with it. Within five rounds, another huge pot, containing draconians, groans up the chain through the southern hole. The machine is the Aghar idea of an elevator. The two Baaz draconian overseers order the Aghar into either the northern pot or the southern pot, using this crude pulley system to bring up their comrades.

If the heroes attack, the overseers panic and leap into the pot. The pot sinks slowly, and PCs have a chance to jump aboard; however, the heavier the pot gets, the faster it moves. You should warn the PCs that "the pot is falling quickly" if more than two try to climb aboard.

When the second pot rises into the room, it contains six Baaz draconian troops.

These are shock troops, trained to fight to the death. They do only what they are told and know nothing except the way from their quarters (64g) to their post (44e). They are not above having a snack along the way, however, and the adventurers look pretty tasty to them.

47d. Northern Crypts

Row upon row of dark and musty crypts line either side of a ten-foot-wide, 30-foot-high hall.

47e. Floorless

Four archways enter a square room, well preserved but for one exception: there is no floor. Mist billows from the gaping hole where the floor once was. Only about one square yard of floor remains in the northeast corner. A small box sits at the edge of this floor section.

The room is 30 feet square. The box contains five gems (1,000 stl total).

47f. Watch Room

This room has remained untouched for centuries. A green film blankets everything; corroded metal fittings lie where a banded table once stood.

The fittings crumble at the touch. The floor is slippery; all creatures fight here with a -3 penalty to their attack rolls.

47g. Treasury

Six stone coffins lie in the room. Thick fungus and slime cover everything in sight. A hollow voice, as if from the bottom of a deep well, calls to you: "Who enters the tomb of kings?"

The guardian spectral minion watches the tombs of the kings and may not leave until relieved of duty. He is tired of his eternal watch. If the heroes speak kindly to this spirit, he tells them his purpose. If someone tells him that the party has come to relieve him, he is released from his vow and departs.

In each coffin lies the skeleton of a king of ancient Xak Tsaroth. Each skeleton holds a gleaming *sword +1*, the hilt at its chest, the point toward its feet.

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47h. South Temple

This 30-foot square room rises 20 feet to a flat ceiling. Wall carvings, coated in a slimy green substance, adore the walls.

47i. Temple of the Dead

The 30-foot-wide octagonal room rises 60 feet to a domed ceiling. The back wall bears a relief statue of the goddess Mishakal. The arms of the statue reach down as if to receive something. Exits lie to the north, south, and west.

47j. North Temple

The ceiling has partially collapsed! A four-foot-diameter sewer constructed of fitted stone apparently fell through the roof, caving in the northeast corner of the room. Now, the jagged edge of the broken sewer juts through the rubble-strewn floor. It looks as though a man could follow this tunnel downward into the dark

quite some way, but there would be no room to swing a sword.

If Riverwind is with the party, he remembers having been here before. The sewer opening leads to area 48.

48. Sewer Entrance

Mosses and a slimy green film coat the walls of the three foot diameter sewer.

The walls are extremely slick. Unless the PCs have both hands free to climb down, they have to roll a successful Dexterity check here (with a -4 penalty) or slide down the shaft to area 49.

Those who slide do not slide alone. Five gully dwarves are crawling up this tunnel, halfway between the junction (area 49) and the top of the sewer. Any hero who slides down bowls them over and tumbles with them all the way down. Since the tumble is more a gentle slide than a fall, PCs do not suffer falling damage.

The dwarves are irritated at the accident, but do not bother the PCs. If

no hero falls down the tunnel, the Aghar back all the way down to area 49 and let the party pass by.

49. Sewer Junction

The slick sewer tunnel suddenly branches downward. The corridor continues steeply before you, but the branching looks even steeper.

50. Sewer Branch

Moss and slimy green muck coat the four-foot-diameter tube. Water trickles slowly down the shaft.

51 a. Cellar Above

A sewer pipe breaks through the cavern ceiling only ten feet above the floor. What is left of the room appears to be upside down. Ceiling rafters span the floor, and the doors hang three feet above the rafters.

A huge spider has wandered into the room in a search for food. It attacks the first PC to slide down the sewer. It fights to the death.

51b. Tipped Hallway

What was once polished plank flooring covers the ceiling.

51c. Ceiling Cooks

Cooking utensils are scattered about the room. A large wooden table hangs from the floor above.

If the heroes enter this room, they see three spectral minions guardian cooks standing on the ceiling, behaving as if nothing is wrong. The cooks try to chase the adventurers out of their kitchen.

51d. Bottoms Down

Broken tables and chairs sprawl about the room. Swamp water

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seeps through the shuttered windows and collects in pools between the ceiling beams below. A huge fireplace against the far eastern wall receives the overflow, which drains down the chimney. Thin music and hollow laughter float through the hall. Overhead, spirits float upside down as if sitting at tables. They laugh and joke.

Unless they are attacked, these spectral minion revelers go about their business and ignore the PCs. If the PCs attack them, they scatter and vanish.

51e. Sleeping Inn

Rotted cots lie in a jumble all about the room. Water seeps in through the shuttered windows, collecting in pools on the floor. The overflow drains through the southern door.

52. Chimney Down

Water trickles down this chimney. Loose bricks provide handholds on all sides.

The chimney now descends from the fireplace, water trickling down its inside. A man could easily fit down its shaft, and there are plenty of handholds in the loosened bricks to help him descend. The chimney ends abruptly in mid-air, 15 feet above the sloping floor of a small cavern (area 58a).

53a. Bakery

A sewer tube of fitted stone breaks through the ceiling of this shop. Water trickles from the tube onto the floor and streams out the door to the east. On the floor directly south of the slanting sewer tube sit 20 large rotting sacks.

This shop was once a bakery. The windows in its east wall overlook the ruins of a city street. The roar of rush-

ing water comes from that direction.

If any PC slides down the sewer shaft into this room, he launches into the rotting sacks. The sacks disintegrate in a sudden explosion of white, and the flour within them covers the PC. Although the hero suffers no damage, until he cleans off the flour everyone he meets asks him why he is covered in it.

53b. Slidestreet

The buildings that once lined this street have toppled against one another, forming a rough arch of marble slabs over the cobblestone street. The place is still but tense, like the nave of a haunted cathedral. Doors and broken shop windows yawn into the street as though the buildings had exploded from inside.

54a. Philosopher Front

Books line the northern wall of the room, their spines stained with green fungus. The rich, musty smell of rotting paper fills the room.

The books 'bear familiar titles: *Huma and the Lance of Dragons*, *Tales of the Greystone Wars*, *Chronicle of Kith-Kanan*, *The Gods of Krynn*, and *Iconochronos, Vol. II*. Why, you, Astinus wrote the *Iconochronos*. In fact, you're working on Volume X right now! These books are so rotted from the swamp water that they crumble at the touch.

54b. Philosopher's Court

A large golden chair sags to one side atop a platform at the western end of the room. Floating above the chair is the bright, transparent form of a man in robes.

The heroes in the room hear the ghostly figure speak: "I am Ossamis. It is my vow to answer one last question before I may leave. Ask: yours is the answer."

Ossamis answers any question as

best he can. He knows the location of the *disks of Mishakal* (area 70k) and how to get there.

55. Treasury Court

The street emerges from arched buildings into a plaza. Tremendous cracked and crumbling pillars strain beneath the rock ceiling. Water from the street rushes into a river flowing west from the east wall toward a steady roar of water. Across the plaza river, blackened steel doors stand in the face of a solid, square structure.

Those who try to wade across the river must roll a successful Strength check (with a +5 bonus) to cross the river. Kender and dwarves do not get the bonus mentioned above. Any hero who fails tumbles ten feet farther down stream toward the falls (area 56). He has to check again until he succeeds or goes over the falls.

The steel doors weigh 5,000 gpw each and are worth 5,000 stl each in Solace, Haven or Gateway. The doors are on counterpoised hinges and open easily for the adventurers.

56. View from the Falls

Water rushes around columns and plunges from hanging steps into a vast cavern. Overhead, mist thickens beneath the fading ceiling. A single shaft of light illuminates the vast underground area. Over 500 feet below, ruins litter the dim floor of the cavern. The ancient city of Xak Tsaroth is in many states of decay: some buildings are almost intact, many are nothing but rubble. Several waterfalls pour into the cavern, and many of the streets are rivers, all of which flow into a single abyss to the north. A huge chain extends from the mists overhead down into a small courtyard below. Vines at your feet twist over the edge and appear to reach almost to the floor of the cavern.

Chapter 3: Descent into Darkness

The vines are slippery and damp. If a hero wants to climb down them, he must pass two Dexterity checks. A fall (failing the first means a fall of 130 feet and 13d6 points of damage; succeeding on the first but failing the second means a fall of 60 feet and 6d6 points of damage) would certainly attract the attention of the draconians.

57a. Outer Treasury

A long counter of chipped, dusty marble bisects the room from east to west. Against the southern wall, four ghostly forms stand at attention, their weapons drawn. Just behind the counter stands another long-faced ghostly form. He speaks as you enter: "So you've finally arrived. Kathal! Well, you're the last, so pay the tax!"

The counter has a three-foot gap at its eastern end, and is about four feet high. The spectral minion warriors hover around it and demand the payment of Kathal's taxes: 500 clay Tsarothian culli. The accountant accepts no other currency; payment releases him from duty.

If the PCs have no culli, the accountant orders the guards to kill them for trying to impersonate Kathal.

57b. Vault

Hundreds of rotting sacks lie within the room. Clay tokens spill from their split sides. Three skeletons, two holding shovels, sprawl half-buried in the clay tokens. Their faces grin hideously. Two alcoves sit in the eastern wall; the moss-covered inscriptions above them are difficult to make out.

The PCs have a 30% chance to read the inscriptions. The northern one reads "Treasury," the southern one "Taxes." The alcoves are both *dimension door portals* to the ruins of the Treasury Tower (area 62).

58a. Northern Cavern

The fragments of a chimney hang down five feet from the cavern ceiling. Water trickles from the chimney and from fissures in the surrounding cavern walls. Fifteen feet below the chimney, the cavern floor slants sharply to the south.

58b. Drain

The steepening floor of the cavern suddenly narrows into smooth, yard-wide, nearly vertical drain. Water collected from all the fissures in the cavern swirls steadily down the sides of the shaft.

58c. Down the Sink

Water splashes down the slick sides of the shaft. The tunnel is chilly; the noise of the water is deafening.

The PCs can either fall down the shaft (suffering 15d6 points of damage) or they can lower themselves down via ropes, or "walk" down by bracing their backs against one side of the shaft and their feet and hands against the other side. This last method entails two Dexterity checks, one at 100 feet above 59a, and the other at 50 feet above 59a. Failure of either check means a fall to 59a (10d6 and 5d6 points of damage, respectively).

After traveling about 100 feet down the shaft, the PC who leads the way suddenly hears something coming toward him: sniffing, muttering, a loud curse or two. It is eight more gully dwarves, climbing up to add their weight to the lifter.

The dwarves grumble, move back down to 59a, and let the heroes go by (they flatten themselves against the sides of the shaft to avoid falling PCS).

59a. Windows Below

A natural shaft of smooth rock carries a spray of water into the

cramped cave. The ceiling of the small area is covered with running water. On the floor the water falls through what appears to be 30-foot-tall windows laid into the stone floor. The glass is gone, but the ironwork of the window frames remains.

Curtains of woven metal strands fall from the northern ends of the windows (what had been the top before the room capsized) down to the floor of the room below. These can support any PCs trying to climb down.

59b. Dance on the Wall

The vast hall lies on its side. Its northern wall is beamed like the ceiling it once was; its southern wall is a great, tiled floor. Now the ceiling and floor of the room are windowed. Water pours into the room from the upper windows and out through the broken lower ones. Mosses and fungus cover the hall. The fungus on the floor appears to be moving. From the northern ends of the overhead windows, curtains made of some corroded, woven metal hang limply toward the wall below. Each of the three upper windows has these drapes, but those from the westernmost window have been pulled over to an arched opening in the western wall, where they have been fastened. This opening, 30 feet up the western wall, leads to a dark corridor.

The curtains easily support the weight of a man. Each adventurer who attempts to move from one curtain to another must roll a Dexterity check or fall to the floor (3d6 points of damage from the fall) and be attacked by the ten poisonous snakes that live there.

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60. Entrance to the Hall of Justice

Only a dim light from above relieves the darkness in the cavern, shining faintly on the ruins that cover the cavern floor. The air is heavy with moisture and heat. The facade of an ancient building juts sideways from the cavern wall. Its roof lies half buried in the rubble of the cavern floor to the north, its steps now rising to the south. The delicately carved pillars that stood in front of the building now lie broken amid rubble that slopes west to a cobblestone street. Farther west, a ring of broken stones marks the foundation of a tremendous tower. The tower itself lies next to the foundation, its top buried in the cavern wall. Water pours into the cavern from several places high up the walls.

61. Cobblestone Street

This cobblestone street is heavily damaged. Rubble is strewn about and many small fissures make passage difficult but not especially dangerous.

62. Treasury Tower

A broken foundation circles the area where a tremendous tower once stood. Two ten-foot cubes stand within the circle, apparently untouched by the catastrophe that destroyed the city. Each cube has an arched opening in its side. The openings face each other, 20 feet apart. To one side, the fallen tower lies on its side, its top buried in the cavern wall to the north. Inside the hollow cylinder the tower is only darkness.

The cubes are permanent *dimension door* portals both of which lead to the vault of the treasury (57b). These warp space so that they appear to be normal arched entrances into the vault.

63. Northern Mall

The catastrophe has marred once-beautiful buildings. Moss-covered rubble hides the carefully laid cobblestones of the street. Rushing through the rubble and cobblestones, an icy river surges northwest. There the street ends abruptly in a chasm: mist billows from the hole, and falling water crashes somewhere below.

The water charges out of the cavern here. Heroes trying to cross the swift water within 50' of the chasm must each roll a successful Strength check and Dexterity check to make it across unaided. Those who fail either check are swept ten feet toward the twisting whirlpool in the crevasse. Then they must successfully roll both checks again or be swept another ten feet toward the maelstrom. Anyone who falls into the crevasse drowns, unless he has a spell, potion, or device of *water breathing*, in which case he finds himself at the bottom of a 1,000-foot-high cliff, floating out into the Newsea.

64. Palace Guard Hall

The shattered walls of the city bow darkly above the street. Mosses and fungus cling to the ruins, as if trying to drag the walls down. In the middle of the street that runs between the ruins, a river flows swiftly north. A dim shaft of light overhead centers on a great plaza to the south. To the east, one building seems to have held up most admirably. Dark growth obscures the lettering above its double doors.

The adventurers have a good chance (60%) to read these runes: "Guardians of Justice."

64a. Entry

Dark stains spot the walls. The ten-foot-wide hall curves before a set of bronze double doors. In

front of the doors, mosses cover an ancient, faded mural.

The heroes must clean off the mural before they have any idea that it is a map of a city. Even if they discover this, they have only a 30% chance of recognizing their current location on the map.

Anyone who figures out which part of the mural is the cavern area can discover the way to the Great Plaza (67), the Pillars of the Palace (70a), and the Treasury Tower (62).

64b. Northern Cell

Dark stains streak the walls of the 20-foot-square room. Two sodden wooden doors open to the east and south.

64c. Northern Armory

Ancient bronze weapons dangle from broken racks on all the walls. A low ceiling, heavy with moisture, strains on sagging beams. In the center of the room, two squat shapes bat their leathery wings, chattering loudly and tugging a steel weapon between them.

The two Baaz draconians in the center of the room are arguing over a short sword. They and their three Baaz companions stop bickering and attack the party, fighting until death.

64d. Assembly Hall

This room is dark, but the echo of your footsteps suggests that it is large. From deep in the darkness comes a shrill, hiccuping sound.

The hiccups come from a stone drunk Baaz draconian, lying in the northwestern corner of the room. It thinks the adventurers are its draconian brothers, so they have no trouble getting it to babble at them in common tongue. It is drunk and upset: "The Captain an' I was havin' a little celebration when we got a bit too cel-

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ebreated! I remember that a bunch of stinking gully dwarves came along and carried him off. If they let the humans in on our real plan, the whole thing could be ruined. I'm pretty sure they dragged him off to their guildhouse west of here. I've got to get a rescue party together—just as soon as I've had a chance to sleep. . . off . . . this . . .”

The draconian will sleep for at least three hours. It cannot be awakened in that time.

64e. Southern Cell

Dark stains streak the walls of this 20-foot-square room. A green, slimy substance coats its ceiling.

64f. Southern Armory

Bronze weapons, corroded and useless, hang askew from broken wall racks.

64g. Quarters

Mosses drape the darkened corridor. Inky alcoves branch off to both sides of the hall. A putrid smell hangs in the air.

Snorts, hisses, and whistles rise from the 15 sleeping draconians lying in many of the cells in the hall. These fellows do not sleep well, and each hero who enters this area must be quiet or risk awakening them. Even if he is trying to be silent, each hero must roll a successful Dexterity check to avoid awakening the sleepers. If awakened, the draconians have but one thought on their minds: to kill the intruders.

64h. Mess Hall

Smoky torches light this large room. Broken tables lie scattered about, and a fireplace, cold with disuse, is built into the eastern wall. Three unbroken tables stand upright in the center of the room.

There, under the sputtering torchlight, three, dark shapes argue loudly.

“What are we waiting for?” roars the first Baaz draconian. “I’ll tell ya! The Dragon Highlord needs this here crystal staff, see? If he don’t have it where it be safe and sound, then them humans might just be able to clean our noses.”

The second Baaz replies, “If old Verninaard, our high and mighty Dragon Highlord, needs a staff, then let him get it! I don’t see why it’s so important. Khisanth guards the only writings of the true gods we know about—without them the humans can’t stop us.”

“Look, all we gotta do is wait until those spineless Seekers in Haven come up with the staff. Then we crush them and take it. What’s a few days’ wait for a little extra safety, eh?”

These draconians are spoiling for a fight! They fight to the death.

65a. Larder Office

Three figures squat in the center of the room, their wings folded flat against their backs. They seem to be tossing something on the floor. In the northwestern corner, a figure lies bound head to toe. His eyes glitter above the gag over his mouth.

“What luck,” says the largest of the three Bozak draconians, “that this little morsel fell into our hands! We’ll cast our bones on the floor until one of us wins him. He’ll make a nice change of diet.”

The kender (Hugon Barker) held prisoner by the draconians is in serious trouble: Caught up in the middle of wanderlust, a natural time of kender life, he felt as though he had to find out what was at the bottom of the cavern. He knows nothing about the plans of the dragonmen, or even what they are. If rescued, he gladly joins the party.

65b. Larder

This 30-foot-square room has no natural source of light. Wicker baskets are stacked against its walls.

Anyone who checks the room carefully notes a glint of metal from behind the baskets against the western wall. A cache of extra weapons: three long swords of superior craftsmanship (+2 to attack and damage rolls) and an elven bow with a marching quiver of 12 arrows (+1).

66. Court of Reception

A thin shaft of light overhead dimly outlines a dismal courtyard 40 feet in diameter. Broken cobblestone streets run east, west and south from the courtyard; ruined walls sag threateningly toward the streets. Against the northern wall of the courtyard, a ten-foot-tall wicker dragon stands, bearing a large round metal plate suspended in a hole in its chest. A robed figure stands next to the statue. A huge black metal pot sits in the center of the courtyard. A chain rises from the pot and disappears above into mists.

The robed figure is a Baaz draconian. Within a few minutes, a group of eight Baaz arrives in the plaza.

Their leader nods to the robed draconian by the statue, who takes a mallet from its robes and hits a round metal gong in the statue. Moments after the sound rocks through the cavern, the chain overhead grows taut and the pot begins to rise, with the eight Baaz draconians scrambling in. A second pot, bristling with stubby arms and legs, descends on a chain and passes the ascending pot. Within five minutes, the descending pot bumps to a stop in the courtyard. It is full of 15 gully dwarves, some having ridden down on the outside of the pot.

They wait until the robed draconian yells. “Now, you scum! Climb out or else!” Then they leap from the pot and scramble from the cavern, back to area 47c.

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67. Great Plaza

A single column of light pierces the overhead mists and spreads onto a vast plaza at least 120 feet across. Steady streams from the eastern and western streets flow into a large pool of water, which in turn empties into a river channeled down the northern street. The roar of waterfalls fades to silence, the moss-covered ruins that surround the plaza recede into the darkness when a low, throaty noise rumbles from the entrance of one of the southern buildings.

A huge, black creature arches like a cobra on the steps to the building. The plaza stills. It seems as though light and air flee the spot on which the creature stands.

The dragon (it must be a dragon: a winged draconian kneels before it) speaks in a low, hissing language from the stairs. Behind the draconian, several dirty forms grovel in the moss, turning their eyes from the glossy black scales.

The dragon Khisanth whispers further to the Bozak draconian, who then turns and yells to the Aghar: "Begin the search." While the dragon looks on, the search party and its draconian leader scurry off. A moment later, the dragon retreats through area 70a into its lair (70k).

The PCs would be seen before they could get close enough to hear the dragon's instructions. However, the draconian's voice carries throughout the plaza, saying, "Aghar slime, hear me! If this prisoner escapes, I will be eaten alive for breakfast, but not before I eat you! I want that prisoner and I want her now!" The draconian cracks a whip overhead and the Aghar scatter down each of the streets. The draconian follows one of the search groups randomly.

They are looking for an escaped prisoner—a Que-Shu tribeswoman who is hiding in area 67b.

67a. Eastern Falls

Torrents of water from high above batter the rubble, hurling mists into the air, then settle into a stream running west down the street. Vines grow up the side of the cavern next to the waterfall.

The wet vines are very slippery. The adventurers must roll Dexterity checks twice to climb to the ruins of the treasury (see area 56 for details).

An escaped prisoner of the draconians hides, trembling, behind the curtain of water.

The woman (Sunstar) crouches in the rubble, as far from the water as she can get. Cornered, she fights fiercely and to the death, unless the party shows that they mean no harm. She is one of only two survivors in her tribe, and is desperate to escape the dragonmen. Her cell (70g) is near the dragon's lair (70k). If the party is friendly, she joins them gladly.

68a. Alley

A narrow passage, framed by crumbling walls, winds through the vine-covered ruins and ends suddenly in a door.

68b. Scum Entrance

The room is damp and chill. An old and terrible quiet rules the place, as though stunned by the past—by something unspeakable that happened here once.

68c. Slud Rooms

Brown and drying mold covers every wall. A dull stench rises from beneath the lumpy, woven mats piled about the floor. Faint sounds rattle from each of these mats.

The room is an Aghar barracks. Thieves must *moue silently* to walk among these sleeping dwarves without waking them. Non-thieves who attempt to enter the room wake the

Aghar. If they awaken, these Slud clan Aghar rush toward the door and safety; if captured, they know (and tell) about the elevator (47c, 66) but nothing else.

68d. Glup Room

Fungus and water stains streak the wall. Light flickers into the room through four vertical slits in the northern wall.

Heroes looking through these slits see the torch-lit room (68c).

68e. Welcome Room

Torches sputter and smoke in sconces mounted on the eastern wall. Darker than the smoke are the slits in the southern and western walls. These slits are two inches wide and four feet long.

The southern slits look into an empty room (68d). The sound of hearty snoring rumbles through the western wall slits. The guards (in 68f) that are supposed to make this a death-trap are napping. No amount of noise in this room awakens them.

68f. Guard Post

With their backs to the slits in the eastern wall of the room, three gully dwarves lean against each other, asleep. The huge round nose of the largest bobs up and down with every rolling snore. His arms are folded across his chest; his notched short sword rests on the floor well out of his reach. He leans against the second dwarf, whose ears curl in cycle with his loud snoring. The feet of the third, small dwarf stick out from beneath his friends, wearing two huge boots, their soles tattered. The snoring of the guards could awaken a mountain.

These are crack Aghar guards! If wakened, they try to bully any one trespasser but run away from more than one. If they run, they go straight

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to the Highbulp's throne room (68m), report that "an army" has broken in, and ask for orders.

68g. Waiting Place

The streaked walls of this room lie buried under tapestries and decorations almost too gaudy to be believed. The tapestries hang everywhere, some upside down or sideways. Fraying gold cloth drapes between statues of every shape and kind. It is the Aghar idea of the good life.

Other than the obvious doors in the room, a secret door in the eastern wall leads to 68h. Anyone within three feet of this door will hear thumping sounds against the door, followed by muffled growls and yells.

68h. Treasury

A single Bozak draconian glares from the darkness. Its hands and feet are bound tightly, its wings tied securely against its body. On either side of it, two small gully dwarves stand, bearing wooden spears. They prod the draconian with their sticks, then jump back as though it is not tied. Each time they jump, their oversized horned helmets roll around atop their heads, sometimes falling over their eyes.

The dwarves notice the heroes after two rounds. They try to flee the room. The draconian, stripped of its weapons and its uniform, is the captain of the draconians and has awakened with a horrible hangover!

If untied, the draconian captain uses every means it can, but mainly its spells, to escape and regain command of its troops.

The captain tells the following, only if threatened with death or if *charmed*: "Verminaard is our Dragon Highlord! True cleric of evil, he calls upon the powers of darkness to bring this land under his rule. Yet he fears one thing: the uprising of light against the darkness. We guard that which might kindle hope among

men and lift the darkness! We guard the true knowledge of the gods. Under the eye of Khisanth, the truth is safe in the secret!"

68i. Messy Mess

Lukewarm, stinking glop flies about the room. Bowls shatter against the walls, knives clatter on the floor. Gully dwarves are settling a wild argument over dinner.

Each round a hero is in this room, he suffers a 70% chance that a bowl of goo hits and splatters on him. This is Aghar stew, made by throwing just about anything dead or near death into a pot. The stuff stinks violently, and keeps on stinking. It wears off in 1d20 turns, but during that time other heroes must each roll a successful Constitution check to be able to stay within ten feet of the smelly goo. Neither the hero or anyone with him has a chance of surprising an enemy.

The Aghar do not notice the heroes until five rounds after they enter the hall. Some of them throw food at the intruders, though their chances to hit the heroes do not increase. If the heroes try to fight, the foul-smelling dwarves simply run out one of the doors of the room.

68j. Bulp Rooms

Grinding snores and whistles echo from the dirty cells of the hallway.

If awakened, the eight aghar try to run away. If captured, they reveal some valuable knowledge: They know of the tunnel from 69b into the dragon's lair.

68k. Highbulp Quarters

A huge bed—carved, rotting posts at the corners—sags in the middle of the room. Tattered hats, some of which sport shredded or soiled feathers, hang on racks lining the western wall. Caps and loud clothing of all kinds are piled about.

This is the bedroom of the Highbulp Phudge. There is a secret door in the

western wall. Any heroes who search the clothing piles find an old, stained map.

The map shows the location of the sewer access (69b) and the tunnel that leads from there to the dragon's lair at 70k. Crude notes on the margins of the map read, "Big treasure, much goods. Old bark of a dragon not miss if great Highbulp take his share!"

68l. Secret Exit

Thieves of old used this exit when they needed to get into the street quickly. The secret doors are one way only—out of the old guild hall.

68m. Court of the Aghar

Heavy, frayed gold cloth adorns the hall. Statues line the walls, and carpets of every color and description form a patchwork across the floor. At the western end, a huge throne sits, the gold leafing peeling badly from its carved frame. A shrivelled figure, nodding beneath a tarnished crown three sizes too big for him, sits buried in robes on the throne. Four armed dwarves, their heads rattling inside their helmets, stand beside their king.

This is the court of the Highbulp Phudge I, King of the Aghar. He bargains with whoever comes into his court. The guards attack only if they or Phudge are attacked first. Though Aghar generally run away from a fight, when backed into a corner they are ferocious!

The Highbulp does not like draconians. He feels that pickings were easier before they came, and he misses the times when Aghar could go for weeks without working. Furthermore, the dragonmen have cleaned the place up far too much for his tastes. The Highbulp knows that the *disks of Mishakal* lie in the dragon's lair at 70k; he also knows about the tunnel from 69b into that lair. He offers the party guides to various places in the caverns, but he offers no other aid.

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69a. Delvers Welcome

Water seeps down the walls in the room, pools, then winds out the southern door. A long stone counter bisects the room from east to west. Behind it, another doorway leads north.

69b. The Secret Way

Rivulets of water trickle down the walls of the room. Although a great deal of water is flooding the room, there seems to be only one or two inches of it covering the floor.

PCs who check the floor near the center of the room find a closed trap door operated by a pull ring. Add the strengths of all PCs trying to pull the door open to find the percentage chance of their success.

The trap door is four feet square and opens over a four-foot-square shaft 20 feet deep. There it opens into a masonry tunnel half-filled with water.

If the PCs enter this area, check for a random encounter. If an encounter is indicated, roll 1d20 to determine how many rounds later it takes place. Treat a rolled encounter with Khisanth as no encounter.

Water trickles into the main tunnel through gaps in the stonework. North of the access shaft, the tunnel runs 30 feet to a cave-in. The tunnel extends south into the darkness,

Through the darkness, the tunnel runs 200 feet south, then turns 340 feet east to another cave-in. Thirty feet before the end of the tunnel, however, a shaft ascends 30 feet to a gate in the floor of Khisanth's lair (70k).

70a. The Pillars of the Palace

Broad steps lead from the great plaza to a pillared courtyard. All cracked, same, shattered, the pillars support a sagging stone roof. In places, the cavern wall has bro-

ken the stonework and forms much of the courtyard. A large archway leads into a huge dark room to the east. At the back of the courtyard, a set of stained steel doors stands closed. These also lead east.

70b. Honored Dead

Tremendous, 40-foot-tall statues of ancient kings stand at the northern and southern walls of the hall. Their deeply carved features are masked in shadows, but they seem to watch intruders.

70c. First Hall

Soiled walls rise 30 feet to an arched ceiling. Mosses and an off-white fungus line the hall. Ancient, man-sized statues stand throughout the chamber.

Two Bozak draconians guard the northern end of the hall. They attack the PCs on sight.

70d. Palace Treasury

Huge chests, their wood rotted and split, spill their contents into the room.

There are 30,000 Tsarothian clay culli in this room—absolutely worthless. However, if a PC searches through the culli, he has a 30% chance of finding one of the following: two *throwing daggers* +3, 1 pair *gauntlets of climbing*, one spellbook containing *wizard lock*, *knock*, and *invisibility* spells, and a *shield* +1.

70e. Bozak Quarters

Cells branch north from a long hall that runs to the east. The hall is silent.

70f. Bozak Captain's Quarters

This 20' x 30' room is quite spare: A bedroll lies on the floor, a pack in the corner.

The pack contains dried meats and a map showing the exact layout of the palace (70a-70h).

70g. Prisoner Cell

The door creaks open to reveal a man hanging limply by his wrists from manacles driven into the walls. His torso is bare and stretched, showing signs of torture.

The man's name is Raven-eye. Though weak, he speaks: "Our tribe was set upon by demons from the north. We fought bravely. To our shame, we still fell into their hands. Only two of us are left—the other is a woman who escaped just a few hours ago." He knows the way to the dragon's lair (70k) and will join and aid the PCs.

70h. Bozak Commander

The door opens onto a room lit by a smoky torch. A crude desk sits in the middle of the room. Sitting behind it, a scaly winged lizard creature wearing partial armor suddenly looks up and leaps to his feet!

If badly outnumbered, this sly Bozak draconian surrenders, then tries to lead the players through the western doors of area 70j, insisting that it is the only safe way to enter the dragon's lair.

70i. Long Hall

Water seeps down the arching walls of the ten-foot-wide hall. A cold, musty smell rides the air.

The hall runs south into the rubble of a collapsed ceiling. Steel double

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doors, weighing 500 gpw each, stand closed on the right of the corridor. These lead to area 70k.

70j. Hall of Sound

A 30-foot-high ceiling arches above the hall. Mosaic patterns cover the floor with meaningless designs.

The hall is 90-feet-long. Forty feet from either end, pressure plates in the floor activate a loud gong, which resounds throughout the palace and area 70k. If the PCs fail to note this trap and sound the gong, the dragon pushes her head out the eastern doors and uses her breath weapon on the party in this narrow space. She then calls for draconian guards, unaware that there are none in the area.

70k. Court of the Balance

A vast chamber stretches before you, 100 feet in diameter. The circular room rises four stories to a cracked and broken translucent dome. Dim light filters through

the mists above, spreading onto the center of the rotunda. There a glossy black dragon straddles a pile of jewels, steel weapons, and intricate items.

This is Khisanth's lair. Khisanth, known commonly as Onyx, is duty bound to keep the *disks of Mishakal* from the PCs. If she has a breath weapon or any spells left, she takes to the air and uses these. Otherwise, she must slug it out on the ground with the PCs.

If the PCs have the Crystal Staff, the PC who holds the staff while in this area hears a soft, feminine whisper: "Retrieve the disks and strike the dragon with this staff. All will be well." If the PC manages to hit the dragon with the staff, the staff explodes on contact. Read the following boxed description if this happens:

The staff shatters as it strikes the dragon. Blue light bursts from the staff in brilliant spherical waves. The figure who broke the staff is lost in light, disappearing as a

ringing sound fills the chamber. The shining blue light pulses, its power shaking the earth itself. The great dragon is covered in the glow and falls, screaming, into the light. The walls shake; pillars in the room sway and topple. The cracked ceiling begins to crumble. Above the falling ceiling, the cavern walls themselves begin to collapse.

Everywhere the PCs go in the cavern, from now on, rocks tumble from the walls, and water gushes under tremendous force, into the area. All creatures encountered are trying desperately to escape the collapsing cavern. The water level in the cavern rises one foot/turn. It is up to the players as to how their PCs make good their escape from the floor of the cavern. If they manage to escape, direct them to the Temple of Mishakal (46b) and read the Epilogue.

The dragon's horde contains the *disks of Mishakal*, 26,000 stl in gems, a cloak of invisibility, and 1,000 pp. The dragon wears a *ring of darkness* that projects up to a radius of 100 feet.





Chapter 5: Que-Kiri and the Plains

Start the characters at the spot marked "X" on the map. They are moving westward on a cloudy, chill afternoon.

Great pillars of smoke rise from beyond the Sentinel Peaks—a grim sign that there is trouble in Solace. How much of the once-mighty forest of vallenwood trees has fallen to fire? The grasslands that stretch toward Que-Kiri—a town at the gap in the mountains—are hot and dry. The smoke adds an eerie touch of darkness to the autumn afternoon.

"Your journey is not complete; you must leave here, must search for a true Leader of the People." This strange message, spoken by the statue of the goddess Mishakal, suggests that your mission is far from over. Where in the vast world of Krynn will this search lead?

Here on the barren Plains of Abanasinia, the late autumn wind bites sharply. The yellow-brown grass withers in the rushing cold, but the feeling is much more disturbing than that of a normal change of seasons.

In many places, the plains are marked by the tracks of crude, two-wheeled carts and many clawed footprints. Thousands must have passed this way. Nothing is alive here—neither the wild animals that normally inhabit these areas nor the occasional settler scratching a living from the harsh land.

Most ominous of all these signs are the great black scars stretching for hundreds of yards along the ground, often through the charred remains of farmhouses. Fire has gutted and collapsed these dwellings. The thick smell of death and decay fills the air, and even the wind is silent.

The PCs should have no random encounters during this trek, since the Dragon Highlords' army has laid waste to the area. As the PCs approach Solace, this army is sacking

the southern cities of Gateway and Que-Teh and advancing to the White-rage River. To the south, they have seized the fortress of Pax Tharkas, aided by treachery from within the citadel. Even now, their slaves are working the Tharkadan mines.

71. The Witness

Que-Kiri is almost as barren as the surrounding plains. Most of the buildings are shattered and burned, and many blackened bodies sprawl in the empty streets. The air is hot and thick, laced with the odors of ash and decay.

Splintered timbers and scorched stones litter the narrow streets, and smoke drifts through the abandoned town. Everything is dead and silent. Suddenly, a faint groan rises from behind some collapsed beams.

The groan comes from a badly burned old man who lies at the verge of death. If the PCs investigate immediately, they find him before he dies. If they wait more than a round, however, they are too late.

The old man lies under the wreckage of an inn, the heavy crossbeam pinning his legs to the ground. In addition to his burns, he has lost much blood. The man has been blinded, so the PCs must make noise to alert him to their presence.

The old man is very confused and frightened. His pattern of speech is jerky and halting, but he says this:

"Didn't you see it? You must have seen it! From the north . . . they came from the north! From between the mountains. First the terrors that rode the great wyrms . . . they came into our town and fear filled our breasts. We fought, though. Yes! We fought long and hard, but still more of them came on leather wings. . . straight out of the old legends they came, fire splashing like waves over our homes.

Many fled. . . many died. Those

who ran fell among the small demons—man-sized but looking like their larger masters. I don't know where they took my people

I was too clever for them. I hid! Yes, I hid!

"When shall my people return? What shall become of my garden?"

72. The Draconians

Nine Kopak draconians still skulk in the wreckage of Que-Kiri, concealed in some rubble in the center of the town. They attack the PCs at some point. If the characters seek out and listen to the old man, this attack occurs as soon as he dies; if they do not find the man, have the draconians attack at any time when the party is in the ruined town.

The Kapaks are overconfident from their recent victories: they toy with the PCs before attacking. The monsters emerge into plain sight 180 feet from the PCs and then pause a round. They lick their swords with long, reptilian tongues. (This envenoms the blades for three rounds.) The next round, using their wings to accelerate the charge, the draconians attack. They fight to the death.

73. Journeys Across the Land

If the PCs decide to continue to Solace, go to chapter 6. Read the opening encounter as the party crests the pass in the Sentinel Peaks between Que-Kiri and Solace.

If the heroes decide to spend the night here, begin to roll wandering monster checks immediately. This reflects the growing tide of scavenging creatures following the Dragon Highlords' army from a distance. Treat Que-Kiri and areas just east of it as plains; the PCs reach mountains as soon as they leave the town toward the west. The dragonmen have conquered all of the areas off the northern and eastern edges of the Elven Mosaic map. If the PCs leave the map at these edges, move immediately to event 75: "Captured!"

74. The Dragonlands

At the start of this adventure, the Dragonarmies have conquered all of the lands on the map except Qualinesti. Although folk still live in these areas, the Dragon Highlords have absolute power. If the PCs wander through these areas, let several days pass with the usual random encounters, then go to encounter 5: "Captured!"

All these villages and towns outside of Qualinesti have been captured and damaged, but most have not been entirely destroyed. Que-Kiri, New Ports, and Que-Teh have been razed; no buildings stand and no original inhabitants remain. Treat these areas as "ruins" for random encounters.

All other communities are in the same shape as Solace—they have been conquered, losing some buildings and some people. A few businesses and farms survive to provide services for the Dragonarmies. The conquerors terrorize the people: For example, draconians may use a farmer's family as hostages to force him to help feed the Dragonarmies. Treat these areas as "towns" for random encounter checks.

75. Captured!

This encounter returns the PCs to their epic path if they stray or dally. Run the encounter when the party is in open terrain (plains or low mountains) and has no place to hide.

Two specks of crimson approach in the far northern sky. As they rush south they grow, forming mighty engines of death—red dragons. The monsters dive swiftly, and upon their backs sit creatures who seem to be miniature versions of the terrible steeds. The riders' faces bear a look of serpentine evil: lizardlike faces and cold, gleaming eyes.

The dragons land less than 100 feet away. From one of the riders, a hollow, metallic voice rings:

"Drop your weapons, puny ones, or you shall feel the heat of my pet in anger." He strokes his

dragon's broad neck. Both dragons bellow menacingly; their eyes glitter, and wisps of smoke curl from their nostrils.

The two old red dragons and their two Kapak riders try to capture the heroes if at all possible, but they are willing to fight to the death.

Within an hour of their capture, the heroes are surrounded by several hundred Kapak draconians. Their weapons and possessions are removed and they are loaded into a huge wheeled cage and taken to Solace. There they become part of the caravan to the south. Go to chapter 7.

At Solace, Tika Waylan, Theros Ironfeld, and the elf Gilthanas are thrown into the cage with the PCs.



Chapter 6: Solace

Begin this section when the heroes reach the pass in the mountains just east of Solace.

The scene bears no resemblance to the lofty forest that was here only a week ago. The beautiful and legendary vallenwood trees have been hacked, uprooted, and burned. Only a few of the mighty trees still stand among a vast ruin of blackened branches and low, thick stumps.

The elegant tree-city of Solace is now only a few ramshackle huts on the ground amidst the wreckage. South of the city, strange creatures are building a tall pole fence. Apparently they intend to fence in the ravaged community.

In a central square cleared of scorched branches and smashed homes, many blackened stakes have been driven into the ground, like a dark parody of some ancient temple of the True Gods.

Unlike Que-Kiri, however, Sol-

ace is not a ghost town. A few lights twinkle in the windows of some of the buildings, and humans, dwarves, and elves can all be seen aiding in the construction of the fence. They seem to be taking orders from a number of whip-wielding dragonmen. Many other bands of dragonmen are visible poking through the brush of the fallen trees. These bands are heavily armed, and seem to be organized into patrols.

As darkness falls, lights begin to flicker in a number of buildings in town. If the PCs ask, tell them that the guard patrols seem to be casual and unorganized. It seems as though slipping by the patrol and into town would be fairly easy.

In fact, the PCs can get to the Inn of the Last Home without incident, unless they are downright belligerent toward the draconian guards. In this case, use the Random Encounter ta-

ble for an encounter with Kapak draconians.

Once the PCs are in the town, they can see the remains of the inn, once lodged in the branches of a vallenwood tree, sitting somewhat awkwardly on the ground. Not only half remains, but makeshift walls and a kitchen enable it to be open for business.

Many other buildings sprawl on the ground, most of them smashed beyond recognition. Fires smolder here and there amid the wreckage, and survivors scratch through the rubble in search of a few former possessions. Moans of pain and the cries of babies carry through the town.

Very few healthy men remain in town; those who survived the invasion now work the mines of Pax Tharkas. Most of the inhabitants are too old to fight, or are the widows and children of soldiers killed in the war.

The only business other than the inn that have survived are a large blacksmith shop, which was always



Chapter 6: Solace

on the ground, and a battered general store, which apparently landed on its side and was righted. Dragonmen have taken over these two places.

Frequent patrols of dragonmen wander the streets of Solace, more concerned with bullying lone peasants or carousing with their comrades than with guard duty. If the PCs do not start any trouble and do not display weapons, the draconians do not bother them. If, however, the PCs act belligerently or show weapons, the guards attack them: consult the Random Encounter table for a battle with Kapak draconians.

If the PCs do fight the draconians in the streets, they find themselves surrounded by over 100 Kapak reinforcements when the battle is over. The Kapaks disarm them and load them into a cage of the slave caravan. Go to chapter 7.

76. The Inn of the Last Home

Use the map of the Inn of the Last Home to run this encounter. The map is scaled for use with miniatures; if you wish you may remove it from the book and place the miniatures right on the page.

A smoky fire struggles in the blackened stove, feebly challenging the gloom in the town. In sharp contrast to the usual lively crowd, the few patrons present are lost in their own thoughts. No one smiles, nor does anyone seem interested in the arrival of a few more customers.

A thin, cloaked figure sits alone at a table near the door, an untouched glass of ale before him. Three old men crouch above a table in the back of the inn, staring silently at the dirty tabletop. The usually bustling inn is otherwise empty.

One familiar note carries good cheer with it, however; the aroma drifting from the kitchen—a mixture of onions, chives, garlic, and mysterious herbs—shows that Otik Sandath still rules the realm

of cooking. The cheery sizzling can only mean that his famous spiced potatoes are heating even now over glowing coals.

Suddenly the door of the makeshift kitchen bursts open, and the spill of torchlight outlines the figure of Tika the barmaid. She holds a steaming pan in her right hand, a foaming pitcher in her left. "Sit down!" she orders, her loud voice out of place in the somber town. "Git somethin' to eat—you look like a pack of starved rats." Her voice falls as she approaches: "and then we've got to talk."

Tika guides the party to a table in the rear, away from the few customers. After serving the PCs whatever they order, she pulls a chair to the table and sits in it. She sets a heavy iron pan full of steaming potatoes next to her, after she sees that everyone gets a portion.

Curly auburn hair tumbles around Tika's lightly freckled face. Her striking green eyes match her low-cut blouse. A fur-trimmed leather vest actually doubles as effective leather armor if she gets involved in unexpected trouble. She wears a gold ring on a chain around her neck.

Tika is a brash young barmaid who looks older than her 19 years. Rough living has hardened her and she presents a tough image as protection against her sense of vulnerability. Indeed she has certain childlike qualities: a fascination with magic and a fear of heights. Formerly quite happy at the Inn of the Last Home, she now nurses a bitter hatred toward the dragonmen that have invaded her home. She realizes that it is just a question of time before her patience with the brutal conquerors wears out and she does something rash and foolish.

Tika fidgets in her chair and looks over her shoulder at every sound. She whispers that she wants to leave Solace and accompany the PCs on

their journeys. She quietly leads the conversation around to this topic, pretending to be bored with life in town. This "boredom" disguises her very real fear of the dragonmen. As the PCs talk with Tika, move directly into encounter 77 below.

77. Unwelcome Guests

Shortly after the conversation begins, five Kapak draconians burst into the inn, sit down at a table near the PCs, and loudly demand service. Tika grimaces and rises to wait on them, doing her best to ignore their crude behavior.

While the barmaid spoons potatoes from her large pan, the cloaked figure who was seated near the door rises and approaches the PCs. The robe still covers his head and most of his face, but as he passes the draconians, one of them pulls the garment off to reveal a handsome elf. At once the invaders begin to shove the unfortunate character around, gleefully bullying him.

No matter what the PCs do, Tika has had enough of this bullying. With a scream of rage, she slams the pan down on the head of one draconian, automatically hitting him for double the normal damage.

If the PCs join in, a melee obviously begins. Any dragonmen who spends a round in which PCs or friendly NPCs do not attack him licks his blade to envenom the weapon for three rounds.

If the PCs do not come to Tika's aid, the dragonmen subdue her quickly and carry her out of the inn. The PCs next meet her in the cage on the caravan to Pax Tharkas.

78. Prisoners of the Guard

Read this passage to the players after Tika has been arrested, or, if the players have come to her aid, immediately after the melee in the inn:

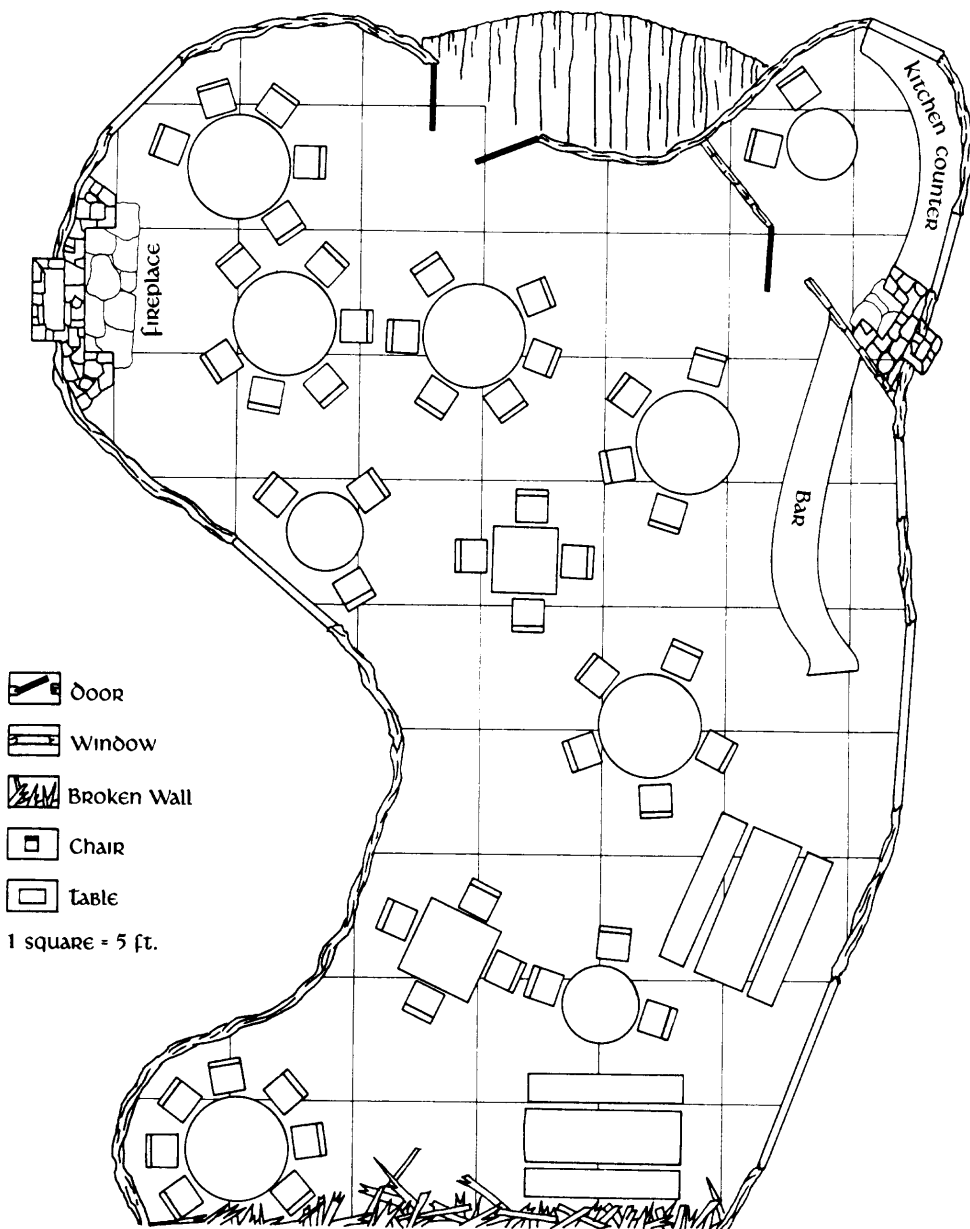
Heavy feet clatter outside, and eerie torchlight flickers through chinks in the doorway and wall. Suddenly the door splinters inward, and a crowd of draconians bursts into the room.

Leading the band is a swaggering ugly hobgoblin, the stench of his unwashed body preceding him by several feet. He sneers as he advances across the room, flanked by four Kapak draconians to either side. Beyond, dozens more of the creatures stand in the sinister light of their torches.

Fewmaster Toede's wispy white hair tops a very ugly face. His speckled gray skin, double chins, and pot belly all resemble those of a vicious little toad.

Toede is a bully. He snivels and whines around superiors but is full of bluster and threats when he has the upper hand. Like all bullies, he is cowardly, but he possesses a certain crude cunning that helps him to stay alive and prosper.

Inn of the Last Home



If the heroes helped Tika fight the draconians, Toede arrests them for brawling. Otherwise, he sneers as he recites charges of "trespass and malicious destruction in the realm of Xak Tsaroth," then places the party under arrest. If the PCs resist, 40 Kapak draconians outside the inn swarm indoors to overcome them.

The draconians disarm the party and seize all visible possessions except for rings and armor. A character has a base 50% chance to hide a small object on his person. Make this check privately, modifying for any factors that seem relevant. Thieves' tools and spell books cannot be hidden!

The dragonmen tie the heroes' hands and lead them through the rubble of Solace to an open space that once functioned as a town square. Tika Waylan and the elf from the inn are brought with them. All PCs and the two NPCs are herded into a caged wagon.

Chapter 7: The Slave Caravan

Here the dragonmen load the heroes onto a slave caravan and move them south. On the way, the PCs learn a few things and, if they are patient, benefit from a timely rescue.

Gritty smoke drifts from a few lingering fires through the clearing, adding a ghostly dimness to the air. Many hobgoblins and a few dragonmen scramble about, loading things onto several large wagons. Beyond these wagons, the smoke lifts briefly around three large cages. Each is mounted on a sturdy four-wheeled carriage.

The hobgoblin commander screams his orders above the bustle and chattering, and all of the monsters leap to obey Fewmaster Toede. Another group of prisoners—mostly women and children—are dragged into the clearing and roughly loaded into one of the cages. At the same time, Fewmaster Toede unlocks the door of the heaviest cage. His escort prods the prisoners forward at sword point and thrusts them behind the solid iron bars. The cage door shuts with a heavy clang, and Toede locks both of its locks himself.

Toede is assembling a caravan to carry prisoners to Pax Tharkas, where slaves are needed to work the iron mines. The huge cages carry the captives, while the other two wagons are loaded with routine supplies. The heroes' possessions are loaded on the first wagon, where Toede intends to examine them and claim a few items for his own.

The heroes' cage also holds Gilthanas (the elf from the tavern), two soldiers from Solace who fought against the Dragon Highlords, and Elistan—a high priest of Haven who believes in the false gods. Elistan will give no clue to his identity. He is an intelligent and perceptive man, however, and if confronted with evidence of a true cleric, he will question his faith. At this point Tika may become a player character.

All three of the heroes' human companions are silent and de-

pressed, since they know that their families have been taken to Pax Tharkas as hostages. If prodded, they reveal this information, as well as the fact that they turned themselves in because of the hostages.

The bars of the cage are much too heavy for even the strongest character to bend. The cage has two separate locks, both of which must be unfastened to open the door.

79. The Elven Stranger

The heroes quickly recognize the elf that approached them at the inn. His hood is thrown back, since he no longer needs a disguise, and he talks to the adventurers.

Gilthanas was serving as a messenger for the elven king at Qualinesti when he was captured by the dragonmen. A feeling that he has failed overwhelms him, but this does not show to outsiders. He succeeds in appearing both calm and confident; indeed, he is sure that elves will make a rescue attempt as the caravan passes Qualinesti.

Although he provides no details, Gilthanas suggests that fate is not always as unkind as it appears to be. He is friendly to the PCs and makes an effort to cheer them up.

The caravan does not move, and the captives are left without food or water for an entire day and night. The temperature at night drops alarmingly, causing some very uncomfortable and sleepless hours. Many hobgoblins and draconians walk beside the wagons. Some of them carry bows; they shoot at characters who do anything suspicious.

If the PCs hatch any rash plans of escape, Gilthanas counsels caution, saying that the chances may be much better later. If asked what this means, he only smiles.

80. A Chilly Sunrise

As dawn colors the sky, the autumn chill makes another onslaught. Heavy mists obscure

the nearby ruins of Solace, and ghostly figures flit among the wagons. Several of these figures approach, and it becomes clear that they are draconians. They pour a foul-smelling slop into buckets in the nearby wagons.

A fierce clatter of swords disrupts the morning calm. Dry screams and yelps of the dragonmen rise above the crash of metal. Somewhere a deep human voice rings out in challenge, and the sounds of fighting move toward the voice.

Gilthanas starts at the sound of the voice. A look of alarm clouds his face. "That is Theros Ironfeld, elf-friend. The evil ones must have learned of the aid he has given my people. I fear that he will pay with his life.

"The dragonmen would have taken me days ago, had it not been for the courage of that smith. He has smuggled elves out of Solace since the city fell, with no regard for his own safety."

The sounds of combat cease. A large band of dragonmen hobble from the mist, carrying the bleeding figure of a huge man. Under watchful eyes of 30 archers, the cage door is opened and the man is thrown inside.

Blood from the stump of his right arm pools, on the dirty floor. Moaning softly, but apparently unconscious, Theros Ironfeld slips toward death.

Any use of magical healing saves Ironfeld's life, although he will be very weak (1 hp only). Without such aid, he will become still and lifeless one turn after he is thrown into the wagon. One of the soldiers from Solace then shouts at the nearby draconians, "You've killed him!" Then the draconians open the cage (using the same procedure as when they threw Ironfeld in), draw out the smith's body, and cast it into a nearby pile of rubble.

If any of the PCs uses magic to save Theros, Gilthanas looks on with slightly raised eyebrows. The three captive soldiers react more obvi-

Chapter 7: The Slave Caravan

ously, staring wide-eyed at the healer and muttering about a “miracle.”

81. The Wagons Roll

A long day passes underneath a surprisingly warm sun. Draconian and hobgoblin guards remain on watch throughout the day, but no new prisoners are added to the cages. An air of waiting hangs over the wrecked town square.

As the sun drops behind the stumps of the vallenwood forest, the waiting comes to an end. The square suddenly swarms with hobgoblins, goblins and draconians, all following the orders of the repulsive Toede. Huge elk are brought forward from the village pens, and four of the beasts are attached to each wagon.

Darkness falls as the guards form ranks before and after the column, which consists of three cage and two supply wagons. A driver and a guard climb into the front of each and urge the elk forward. The reddish glow of twilight provides one last look at the ruins of Solace as the caravan slips away to the south.

Toede rides a small, shaggy pony along the column, shouting orders to his soldiers. He taunts the prisoners as he passes with tales of the dungeons of Pax Tharkas and of the Dragon Highlord waiting to meet them there. His servant, a young, unkempt gully dwarf named Sestun, follows his master as best he can. Sestun is constantly falling down or getting splashed by mud from the passing of wagons, and he finds it impossible to keep up. The PCs see him jog past their wagon often, his new metal helmet askew over a face dominated by a massive red nose. A battle axe of doubtful quality swings from the dwarf's side.

At the front of the column marches a troop of 45 Kapak draconians, preceding the goblins by about 1/4 mile. One hundred goblins follow the draconians in a long line ending just before the first supply wagon. The three cages are next (the heroes

are in the first cage), and another supply wagon follows. Last in line is a force of 100 hobgoblins.

Two hobgoblins man each wagon. The front supply wagon contains all of the PCs' equipment as well as a load of swords and shields. The last wagon is filled with grain,

82. Gilthanas's Tale

Through the long night the wagons roll ever southward. The towering summits of Twin Peaks Pass soon fall to the rear. Winding out of the mountains, the caravan passes through a dark and silent town—the formerly bustling community of Gateway. Obviously the Dragon Highlords have been at work here.

South of Gateway, the plains of Abanasinia spread to all sides. For several hours, the caravan makes good time across the dull flatlands, until the sound of flowing water whispers far to the south. Shortly, the caravan trundles over the only bridge to cross the mighty White-rage River.

Now the land rises. More trees line the ascending trail. The Elvenhome of Qualinesti lies somewhere to the west.

“Pax Tharkas,” Gilthanas says quietly, “That must be our destination. It is bitter indeed that a monument to peace has been perverted to the evil purposes of slavery:”

If any PC questions him, Gilthanas begins the following tale:

“Long ago, in the near-forgotten Age of Dreams, Kith-Kanan led the elves to Qualinesti. The Second Dragon War of Silvanesti had brought these western elves great fame back in their ancient home. But Silvanos, King of Silvanesti, felt uneasy at the rise to power of the Qualinesti elves.

“Yet when the Kinslayer war with the human kingdom of Ergoth erupted, the king did not hesitate to call upon the Qualinesti.

The war was long and bloody, leaving scars that no treaty could heal. Thus, when borders were agreed upon and the bloodshed halted, the elves of the west felt removed from their kin and wanted no part of the ancient home of Silvanesti.

“With the scribing of the Sword-sheath scroll, many problems of the world were laid to rest. The King of Ergoth gave the western elves a magical wooded place of great beauty and natural harmony—the land that has come to be known as Qualinesti.

“Sad was Silvanos the king, when his eldest son Kith-Kanan chose to lead the western elves to their new home. Deep was the split between the two elven kingdoms. Silvanesti continued to follow the lofty ancient ways, removed from the other peoples of Krynn, while Kith-Kanan and the Qualinesti made peace, traded, and intermarried with their neighbors.

“Perhaps the greatest accomplishment of a great life was Kith-Kanan's signing of a permanent peace with the mountain dwarves of Thorbardin. Sharing their knowledge and skills, the two peoples built the mighty fortress of Pax Tharkas at the border of their two lands. For many centuries Pax Tharkas was a bastion of peace and safety—a symbol of the cooperation among folk of different backgrounds and trades.

“Even now, as we hear that the fortress is in the hands of the dragonmen, I cannot believe that it has fallen to storm. Only the darkest treachery from within the walls could have led to this sorry outcome.”

83. Fight for Freedom

Suddenly, a wavering call rolls from the woods off to the west, like the cry of some elegant bird. Gilthanas stiffens, brings a finger to his lips. Another call floats from the east, and now the elf responds with his own call.

Chapter 7: The Slave Caravan

Immediately, the caravan guards begin to shriek and whimper. The driver of the cage wagon slumps forward, an arrow bristling in his neck. Quickly, the guard at the driver's side draws his sword and leaps to the ground; a deadly arrow whistles into his breast.

Fewmaster Toede gallops from the rear of the column, screaming to his troops to draw arms and face the unseen foe. He barrels into his gully dwarf servant, and berates the poor creature with a volley of curses.

"On your feet, you pitiful worm, and cover my glorious retreat. Above all, dog, these prisoners are not to escape!" Staggering beneath his weight, Toede's horse carries him to the front of the column, where the sounds of fighting are the faintest.

The little dwarf climbs to his feet, muttering under his breath. He adjusts his oversized helmet and raises a fist in the direction of his master. He still grumbles as his

eyes wander to the cage holding the heroes.

Hoisting his dented battleaxe, he moves to the locks holding the cage shut; he shatters them with two solid blows. As the door swings open, the little gully dwarf disappears into the underbrush.

Although freedom lies just beyond the swinging cage door, the battle outside is becoming more violent. Several elven warriors glide from the darkened woods, but 20 of the goblin guards have rushed to the scene as well.

Characters may leave the cage at the rate of two per round. They can pick up short swords in 1d3 rounds: many of the guards dropped their weapons when felled by arrows. The 20 goblins arrive at the rate of two per round, and all concentrate on the prisoners from the PCs' cage.

The three warriors from Solace refuse to escape, because their families are imprisoned in Pax Tharkas. Gilthanas, however, joins the fray.

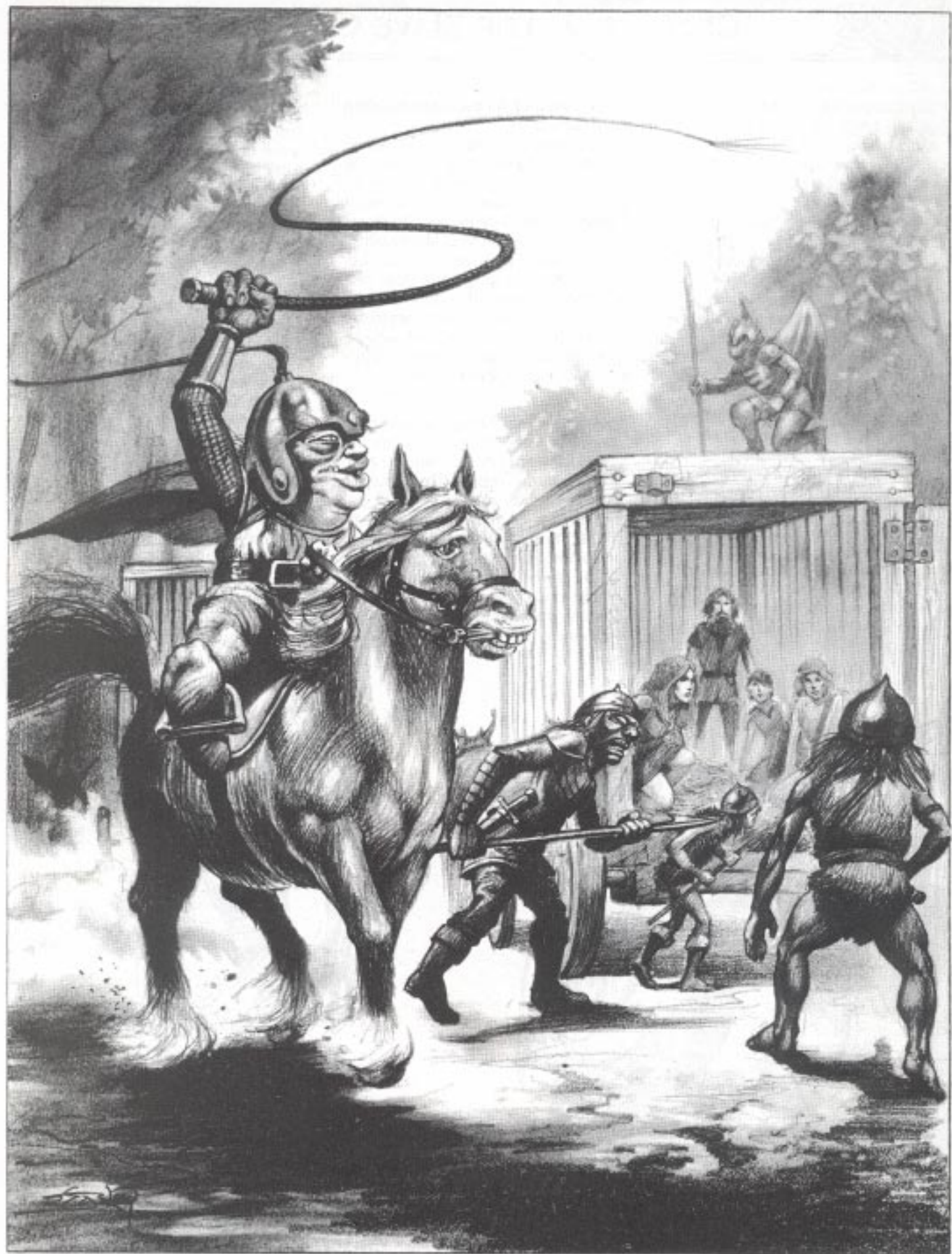
The elven rescuers free the prisoners, mostly women and children, from the other two cages, and escort them into the forest. If the PCs follow after dispatching the goblins, they have no more combat here.

The heroes may try to regain their possessions from the supply wagon, which has halted immediately before them.

If they try to recover their supplies, they must dispatch a detail of 16 hobgoblins that has rushed back to the battle. Once they have done this, they may recover everything and make an escape into the forest following Gilthanas. If they choose to go elsewhere, turn to encounter 84; though he will urge going into the forest, Gilthanas accompanies the party.

Carefully laid elven traps tangle draconian patrols who might want to pursue. Soon all sounds of pursuit grow faint and disappear.





Chapter 8: Elvenhome

The heroes are taken into the sacred realm of Qualinesti. There they learn of a high task that may fall to them. Of course, any elf PC is received quite hospitably—but half-elves are treated with the same suspicion as humans and dwarves.

Dawn lightens the woods as the last sounds of pursuit fade. The tall elf who seems to be in command calls a halt. The escaped prisoners and their escort of two dozen elven warriors stand in a large clearing bright with dew and striped by the shadows of ghostly pines.

Gilthanas speaks earnestly with the leader of the war party, then introduces him as Porthios. Porthios then turns to the freed prisoners and says: "People of Solace. . . you are free from the cages of the Dragon Highlords. Where you can go I cannot say, for all the land is wracked by their evil.

"I suggest you try the south, for once past Pax Tharkas you might find safety in the realms of the southlands. I am not sure what you may find there; but the heavy fist of our foe has battered everywhere in the north country."

He turns from the mass of prisoners to the PCs: "I would ask that you please come with me, through the sacred realms of Qualinesti to our capital of Qualinost. Gilthanas has told me something of your story. I know it would please my people to hear more."

84. Away From the Elves

If the heroes accompany the elves, skip this section. If not, here is detailed the state of the world in which they may travel.

To the north, two Dragonarmies move south for the invasion of Qualinesti. To the south, Pax Tharkas blocks the only path. To the west lies Qualinesti, still an elven stronghold.

If the players go north, they have random encounters (see Random Encounter table for the next game day). Then they run into one squad of Kapak draconians (use entry #4 on

the Random Encounter table) per game hour. These dragonmen fight to the death, and there is an infinite supply of squadrons. If the party goes south, run the adventure the same as if they were going north or east, as one day from the rescue, the southern Dragonarmy leaves Pax Tharkas to march on Qualinesti. (See Encounter 89 and 91.) The PCs encounter an elven war party (consisting of 40 normal elves, three elven fighters, and an elven mage) if they attempt to enter Qualinesti unescorted.

The mage is invisible, following the PCs closely. If combat breaks out, the elves attempt to subdue and capture the heroes. Gilthanas will try to stop the fight, but he does not join either side.

If the PCs move away from Qualinesti, Gilthanas goes with them, taking Theros Ironfeld with him. Have them meet Eben Shatterstone as described in encounter 92. If the party is captured and taken to Qualinesti, pick up the adventure as described in encounter 86.

85. The Secret Ways

The tall elf called Porthios leads the way through the pine forest. As dawn creeps to daylight, a deep roaring thunders in the far distance. After several hours, it is obvious that the source of the sound is a huge waterfall, plummeting from an unimaginable height.

The path westward is blocked by a massive gray cliff of dark granite. The pines march right to the cliff base; from there smooth stone ascends for nearly a mile. A fringe of green at the summit suggests that more forest lies beyond.

Porthios leads the way through a chuckling stream to the base of the falls, where a deep, clear pool collects the outflow of the towering spume. Stepping nimbly from rock to rock, the elf crosses the pool and enters a darkened hollow that gapes behind the waterfall.

Here, a steep stairway, cut from the living rock of the cliff-face, be-

gins to ascend. A curtain of silvery water sheds light on the secret way. The path is strangely easy, turning beneath the waterfall until it finally emerges under a clear autumn sun, atop the high plateau of Qualinesti.

Aspen forests shiver in the noon brightness, the trunks reflecting in ivory whiteness. The fresh, earthy scent of moss rides the air. A soft trail spread with evergreen needles seems to appear magically before Porthios as he leads the way farther into the wood.

86. Qualinost

After several more hours of providing a smooth path through the woods, the needle-strewn forest floor ends abruptly in a deep chasm. Rolling blankets of moss coat both sides of the gap; billowing mist far below suggests that rapid waters cut along the chasm bottom. A narrow footbridge, suspended from sturdy aspens, spans the chasm.

Gilthanas speaks: "Qualinost is protected on all sides by such barriers. Yet I fear that even these will be of little aid against the Dragonarmies."

Across the bridge, a few slim towers appear through the aspens ahead. Now Porthios walks with bouncing steps, like travelers, and Gilthanas sees their home on the horizon.

The dense aspen forest thins out in front of the spires and arches of Qualinost. The city is small by human standards; by the same token, no humans could ever build a city like this. Four slender towers lined with silver mark the four corners of the roughly square city. Between each of these towers, strings of slender arches—also silver—stretch in an elegant chain.

A high tower of burnished gold dominates the city, throwing off sunlight in a whirling, sparkling pattern that gives the impression of movement. Of course, the

Chapter 8: Elvenhome

tower is quite still, but the illusion is very realistic indeed.

Beyond the arches, the wide, quartz-lined avenues of the city lie dappled in the strange green forest light. Many of the city buildings are made of quartz, too, and of aspen beams inlaid with silver and gold. The buildings are tall and slender, blending gracefully with the many aspens that fill the city.

And everywhere, there is frantic activity. Female elves and elf-children either rush about carrying large bundles toward the central tower, or scamper toward houses, empty-handed. The adult males are all armed and alert, graceful bows and slim long swords ready to meet any foe.

Any elves in the party immediately realize that this hustle and bustle is very much out of place. Because of the screen of warriors around them, the PCs do not attract attention right away. Soon, however, an elf-child spots a dwarf PC, if one is present (if not, a human will do) and, shrieking hysterically, flees to his mother. Soon all activity ceases as the citizens gawk at the procession of PCs and elf warriors.

Gilthanas and Porthios have been talking quietly. Now Gilthanas turns: "I know you are all tired and need a well-deserved rest. I ask that first you accompany us to the Tower of the Speaker, where you will meet the Speaker of Suns, my father. As soon as possible we will see you to comfortable quarters and refreshment."

All of the elves are moving in the general direction of the lofty golden tower. Porthios and Gilthanas start off in that direction.

87. The Speaker of Suns

The following council occurs in the Tower of the Speaker. At first, the heroes are only spectators as the elves conduct business. At any time, of course, a PC may have something to say; this should be worked into the description.

The Speaker is aloof toward all but elves—especially cool toward the humans. He is not, however, hostile or insulting. As the story grows clearer, and particularly if the characters fought beside Gilthanas at the Inn of the Last Home, the Speaker's attitude warms up, but only slightly. If Tanis is with the heroes, the Speaker recognizes him, but is very cool toward him.

A pair of gilded doors swings silently open into a chamber that looks much bigger than the outside of the tower. The huge room has a white marble floor and walls. Many windows admit the sunlight and fresh air. Many elves stand there expectantly.

The tallest elf is dressed in a splendid yellow robe, and his hair is tinged with silver. He steps forward eagerly, opening his arms to embrace Gilthanas and Porthios.

"My sons! I thought I would never meet you in this world again!" For a moment, joy rises in his voice, then his manner becomes serious. "Gilthanas, what of your raid?"

"Lord Speaker, my father," says Gilthanas solemnly, "I have failed. We traveled with all stealth southward as was planned; yet fate had us meet a northbound army of the Dragon Highlord. I was struck upon my head and fell into a ravine, thinking that to be the end of my days upon the face of Krynn.

"Some time later I awoke and found tracks leading northward to Solace. Thinking to free my warriors who may have been taken prisoner, I followed. I found that Solace has been taken and its valenwood forest razed."

A gasp rings through the council chamber at the thought of the mighty forest leveled. Gilthanas lowers his eyes and speaks his next words with difficulty. "I found my companions in the square, tied to stakes made from the fallen trees. A large red dragon soared above them. I watched the people of Solace forced into a large circle around the captives.

"A great and evil leader, hidden by a beast-like mask, rode the red dragon downward beside the stakes in the square. He spoke as the serpent landed: 'I am Verminaard, Dragon Highlord of this realm. I have need of all mortal beings in the great work of the Dragon Highlords. Those who obey shall serve me. Those who do not shall feel my wrath!'

"Then the dragon breathed flame upon my fellows . . ." Gilthanas's voice trails off, and he gestures toward Theros Ironfeld. "A kind of madness came over me, and had not this man restrained me, I too would have been burned into nothingness. He risked his life for me, and indeed, suffered the loss of his arm for the crime of protecting a frightened elf."

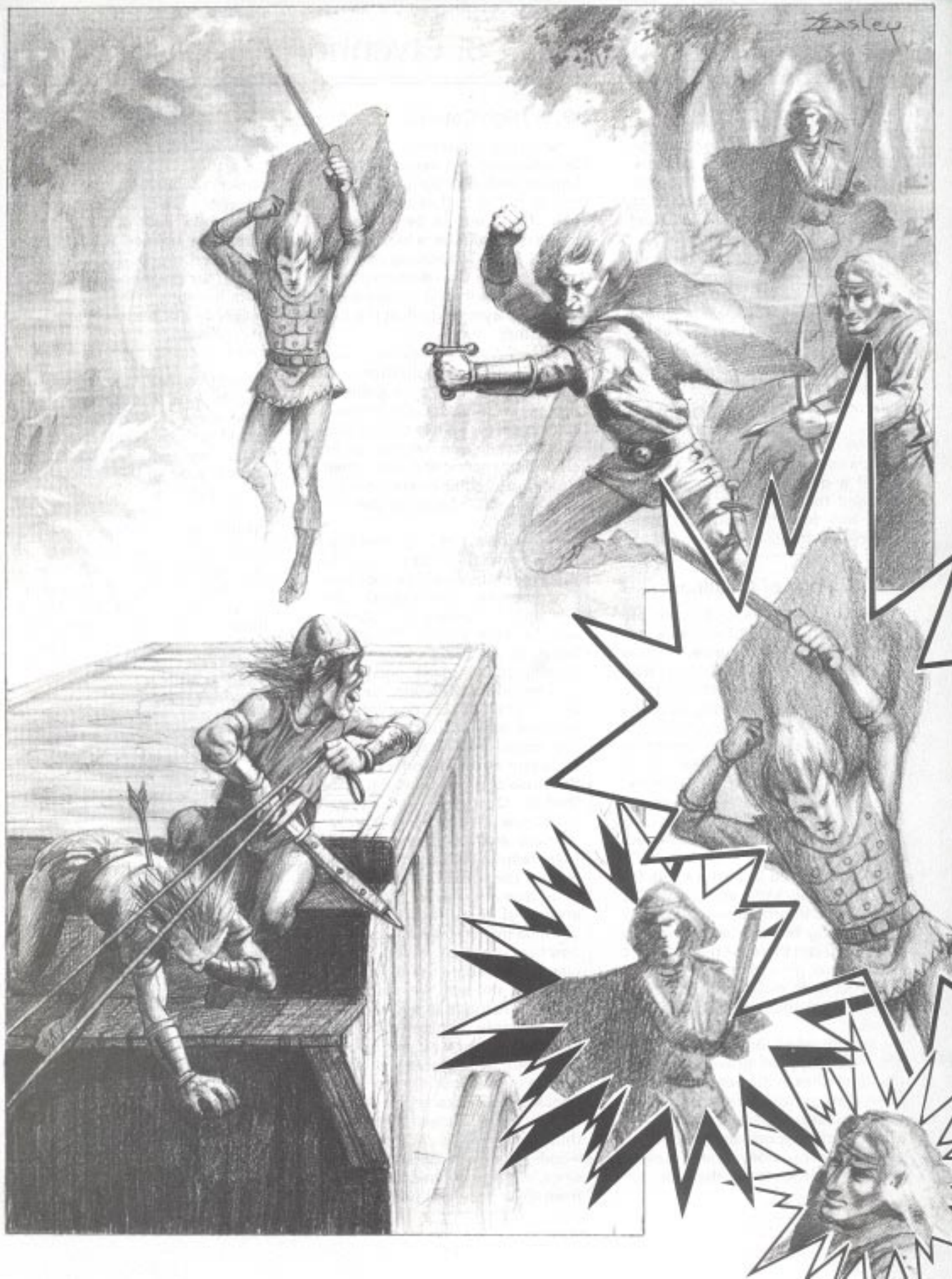
Gilthanas then relates his acquaintance with the heroes; he mentions any priest spells that he has seen used.

The Speaker becomes more polite toward the PCs if they do nothing to deserve otherwise. If they mention priest spells, he acts impressed, saying that it has been more than a century since such knowledge has been held by the children of men. He does not volunteer anything about elven magic; if the PCs persist in questioning him on the subject, however, he tells them that all the elven priests disappeared to the south at the time of the Cataclysm.

"It was the worst of times, the Great Sundering," claims the Speaker. "We keep what we know in memory and song. It was then that a great darkness fell, but now, as our poet will tell you, the darkest of the gloom is lifting."

At this time, the court poet steps forward and recites the Canticle. Read the Canticle to your players or have your players read it aloud. After the recital, the Speaker makes the following statement:

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"Travelers, I shall have a place prepared for you while you are among us. Follow my daughter, and she shall see you comfortably tended. After you have had a chance to wash, eat, and sleep, I shall send for you. Time is indeed short."

An exceptionally beautiful elven maiden moves forward from the onlookers. She curtsies slightly toward the Speaker before blessing the weary travelers with a smile like a spring sunrise. Her beauty seems greater as she moves closer; yet a child-like air about her belies the wisdom in her eyes.

She glides toward the gilded doors and they part for her, almost as if a gentle gust of wind persuaded them to open. She leads the way into the sun and leaf-speckled streets of Qualinost.

88. Laurana of Qualinost

Laurana is a very spoiled little girl. In childhood, she and Tanis were "betrothed," although it is uncertain how seriously the half-elf takes this childhood vow. If Tanis is with the party, she fawns on him, showing all of the signs of an adolescent crush. If he is not with the PCs, this affection should be directed at a male PC elf from Qualinesti, if at all possible. She tends to sulk when she does not get her way; she is skillful at using her good looks and charm to her advantage.

Destiny has an important role for Laurana in this saga, and she will be called upon to grow up in a hurry. By highlighting her immaturity at this point, you can increase the dramatic effect of her growth upon your players. This little girl possesses an inner strength that will one day lead armies!

Laurana takes the PCs to a pleasant, sun-dappled grove of aspens that flourishes in the heart of the city. Clear springs furnish fresh water, and many mossy beds seem to invite sleep. Pears, apples, and peaches all grow in profusion, and Laurana urges the heroes to eat their fill.

89. A High Council

As twilight descends over Qualinesti, Laurana rouses the heroes from their slumber and asks them to attend a council in the Hall of the Sky. This "hall" turns out to be the central square of Qualinost, where a cluster of stars is just appearing overhead. As the heroes arrive on the scene, read the following. At the same time, allow the players to look at the Elven Mosaic map.

The entire population of Qualinesti seems to be gathered around the wide square. The warriors are in the center ring, around the Speaker and several of his chief lieutenants; the other men, women, and children are more distant, but still observing the proceedings.

A path opens through the crowd to the center of the circle, and the Speaker looks up with a cool stare as the heroes of Xak Tsaroth enter his sight. "Forgive our somber air," he says slowly. "These are heavy times, and we face the beginning of a long and lonely road.

"Look, if you will, upon our situation." The Speaker gestures to a detailed mosaic on the ground. The colors and shapes seem to represent a map of some kind. As the circle of elves draws back, the land of Qualinesti and its surroundings are displayed entirely.

"Here and here," the Speaker says, tapping the end of his staff against the northern communities of Solace and Haven. "Two huge armies of the Dragon Highlord Verminaard have gathered. Even now they prepare to invade the ancient Elvenhome of Qualinesti. There is no way we can stand against the might of such hordes.

"Our only choice is to flee Qualinesti to the west, and hope to bring our people safely to some land in that unknown region." The Speaker pauses to let his remark sink in; for it is indeed stunning to think of the elves of this fabled wood—elves who have lived here since the Age of Dreams—forced from their ancestral home by the

cruel might of the Dragon Highlord.

"Still a third Dragonarmy poises against us here." Now the Speaker's staff strikes sharply on the narrow pass of Pax Tharkas. "We have learned from captives that the Dragon Highlord would like to see the race of elves driven from Krynn; and they have nearly succeeded with respect to our kin of Silvanesti."

The heroes may wish to say something here, as the Speaker pauses. Allow them to speak, and answer questions if you feel they are appropriate. Eventually, work the conversation around to the speaker again, as he continues.

"Here, in the depths of Pax Tharkas, work the warriors of Solace, Haven, and the other northern lands. Why would they slave in the mines, gaining iron for the forges of the Dragon Highlords?"

"Because also here," and the Speaker's staff strikes Pax Tharkas with a vengeance, "are their women and children—hostages lest the warriors can display the rage and hatred that they must feel against their villainous masters. This was the reason for Gilthanas's mission only a few short days ago. He and his band were to enter Pax Tharkas by a hidden route—the Sla-Mori—known only to the elves. They would free the hostages and lead the slaves in a revolt, escaping to the south and drawing the Dragonarmy in pursuit.

"The humans can reach safety and elude the dragonmen, for the mountainous route contains many secluded valleys where they can hide. Yet they will never have a moment of freedom unless some means of rescue is offered.

"It is our belief that you should accept this heavy task. Gilthanas has offered to accompany your party and show you the ways of the Sla-Mori, even the room of the Great Chain—the quickest en-

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trance to the fortress itself. If you accept this opportunity, you not only offer freedom to those of your kin trapped within the walls of the fortress, but you offer our beleaguered folk a chance to escape Qualinesti alive, a chance to live that many of ours were not given when your people caused the Cataclysm, the turning away of the gods."

Thus is presented the plight of the elves and the suggestion for the heroes' help. If the heroes take on the quest, go directly to encounter 90 below. If they decline, go directly to encounter 91.

90. Kidnap!

Speed is important; Gilthanas feels that the party's chances to enter Pax Tharkas are greater if they enter the Sla-Mori at night. Therefore, the elf urges that the party leave the next morning. This should bring them, after a long day's travel, to the mouth of Sla-Mori. Also, since draconians prefer not to travel by day, this lessens the chance that the PCs will run into them.

The council has adjourned. As they part, the people sing an ancient, haunting song of the elves. At this time, you may read or sing the song "Elvenhome." Immediately afterward read this passage.

Laurana leads the way back to the quiet hilltop grove. "Sleep peacefully, for the road tomorrow is long," she whispers, then moves silently down the hill.

Suddenly, the stillness of Qualinesti shatters. A sharp female scream rises from the direction Laurana has gone. Even as the echoes bounce from the hills, a dark shape blacks out the moons, settling among the aspens of the city.

A wyvern, ridden by Fewmaster Toede, lands in Qualinost. Toede has decided to capture one of the party as a peace offering to Verminaard, who is surely going to be angry that

the caravan was raided and Gilthanas freed. Six Kapak draconians have also been carried to the elven city, and even now move to attack the characters. Whether the PCs move to investigate or simply hold their ground, they are attacked by the Kapaks as the huge serpent, now bearing two riders, rises across the red moon as Toede shouts, "Your loyalty is touching, my little Kapaks! To give your lives is all that my grandness could ask of you!"

The Kapaks were sent by Toede to create a diversion, then abandoned. Left on their own, they fight to the death. The noise of the skirmish arouses the community, but no elves are near enough to intervene until the battle is over. By then, it is obvious that this was an isolated raid and not a general attack.

If the PCs mention Laurana, the elves know of her absence at once. If not, it is morning before they realize she is missing. In either event, nothing can be done about the kidnapping. The elves react to the kidnapping with sad acceptance, and tell the heroes to sleep while they have the chance, for the next day's mission must go ahead as planned.

While the heroes sleep, the elves load their packs with two weeks' worth of the nourishing elven quithpa, a kind of dried fruit. Quithpa functions in all respects as iron rations.

At this point, Gilthanas may become a player character. Theros elects to remain with the elves.

91. If the Heroes Refuse the Elves

Of course, the Innfellows may reject the elves' appeal. In this case, the elves are considerably colder to the PCs; they no longer extend their hospitality, asking the PCs to leave. The next morning, Gilthanas and a band of hand-picked elven warriors leave for Pax Tharkas, gravely weakening the fighting strength of the Qualinesti nation.

The elves do not bother the PCs if they consent to leave Qualinesti quietly. At the first nightfall, priests in the party have a prophetic dream.

Take your priests and read them this passage!

The landscape you lie upon is blurred, as is often the case in dreams.

The wind has died away, and the air seems far less chilly than it did before. Indeed, a glowing warmth spreads across your back.

When you turn toward the source of the heat, you see that Qualinesti forest is burning. The fire withers aspen, snaps evergreen, and the woodland erupts into red columns of flame.

Dark shapes lope toward you out of the fire. A rain of arrows and spears cannot stop the rushing draconians, their wings flapping as they charge across the ground like large, wounded bats. Your comrades fall around you—first one, then another, as your weapon grows heavier in your hands.

Finally, seven draconians turn toward you—toward you alone. Three of them lick their swords. Their lidless eyes stare hungrily at your throat. They move coldly and firmly in your direction, whispering in dry, rattling hisses. They surround you; one of them lunges at you with a spear, and a white-hot pain explodes in your chest.

The dragonmen appear to double in size, and then suddenly shrink to the size of sparrows. Your weapon falls to your side. Your legs do not work. Everything is dark now.

If the PCs still do not take up the quest, the dream comes true almost to the letter. Qualinesti is in the hands of the Dragon Highlords in 1d6 days; no matter which direction the PCs go after one game day they encounter draconians as they did in encounter 94. These skirmishes continue, one every game hour, until all the PCs are dead.

The heroes make a long day's march and are at the Sla-Mori at nightfall. Today, also, the Dragonarmy marches out of Pax Tharkas toward Qualinesti.

Dawn is just beginning to color the sky as Gilthanas leads the way through the aspenwood of Qualinesti. The trail descends gradually to the south. Soon the whisper of a rushing stream rises from nearby, as the path begins to follow a clear brook. The route grows steeper and steeper, and the water deepens and roars as it tumbles toward the sea with increasing force.

The aspens of Qualinesti blend with the tall pines of the lowlands, and by the time the sun is high, there are no signs of the silvery trees of the plateau. Dark and looming, the evergreens crowd the trail, making the brightly sunny day seem closed and dusky. The stream still roars, but the sound has become threatening, like some unspeakable thing in tireless pursuit.

Suddenly, the pines spread to reveal a clearing about 150 feet across. The grass has been churned into mud by a furious combat. The bodies of both men

and hobgoblins lie grotesquely in the places where death claimed them.

A groan sounds from the center of this carnage, and a battered human warrior rises from a pile of hobgoblins. His eyes appear glazed and unfocused as he turns his head about, finally looking at the trail where it enters the clearing. He struggles to stay on his feet, but gives up with another groan.

Suddenly a look of surprise crosses his face, and he points to the dense pine forest. "Look out! Dragon . . ." The effort proves too much, and he topples onto his back again.

92. Ambush

Immediately after this statement, 12 Baaz draconians rush from the pines to attack the party from all sides. If the heroes heed the wounded warrior's warning, they are not surprised by the ambush; otherwise, check normally with a 1d6.

The draconians attack savagely, fighting to the death. If the battle seems to be going in the heroes' favor, the wounded man climbs to his feet, joins the melee, and strikes a Baaz from behind after most of the draconians have been killed.

The wounded man is Eben Shatterstone (see Supplementary PC cards, page 114, 115). Eben wears clothes that once were very fine, but a lot of rough wear has tattered them somewhat. He has straight, jet-black hair, cut fairly short, and his face is ruggedly handsome. A faded red cape hangs from his shoulders, and his fine chain mail is rather tarnished. He also wears a scarlet hat.

Eben is completely self-serving, willing to do anything to win favor with those whom he sees as in power. Right now, this is the Dragon Highlord Verminaard, who has sent Eben to infiltrate the party and try to direct them to Pax Tharkas, where he is to betray them. Eben is not evil, nor will he risk his life for the Dragon Highlord, so if he does not have a chance to betray the party safely, he will not do so. If at all possible, Eben's mission should not be discovered. If it is, however, and the PCs turn on him, see to it that Eben meets an obscure death—that his body is lost.

Eben has blood upon his legs and arms. He graciously denies that he needs any magical healing and suggests that the magic should be saved for a later time. In fact, he is not wounded at all: he has staged the entire encounter so that he might join



the group of heroes. He will attempt to betray the party later.

Eben thanks the PCs many times, and offers his aid wherever they might be bound. Gilthanas urges haste in continuing to Pax Tharkas, and if his opinion is sought, remarks that an extra swordsman always comes in handy.

Soon the pines give way to the open plain, and in the southern distance, Pax Tharkas sits wedged between mountains. By moving steadily, the party can see the Tharkadan walls by late afternoon.

93. The Hidden Valley

The sun has almost disappeared in the west; the important fortress of Pax Tharkas is nearer still. The tops of its two mighty towers rival the mountain peaks for control of the sky. Between the towers, a massive wall closes off all passage through the mountain gap. A single gate, 30 feet tall and 20 feet wide, seems to be the only entrance.

Suddenly, the massive gate swings open. Even before it finishes moving, column after column of armed troops march out. Rising clouds of dust soon obscure their exact numbers, but surely several thousand pass from the fortress onto the plains. The road they follow leads to Qualinesti.

"The Dragon Highlords' power," says Gilthanas grimly. "The time has come." The elven warrior points to a narrow vale leading into the mountains just east of Pax Tharkas. "Here lies the approach of the Sla-Mori. We must move carefully: this valley is sometimes not a safe place."

The elf refers to rumors of a band of trolls that has come down from the high mountains into the valley. He tells the PCs about this if they ask him. Urging haste, he then leads the party into the valley, to the secret gate of the Sla-Mori, or "hidden path."

A narrow trail climbs steeply from the plains into the wooded valley. Splashing with impartial cheer, a clear brook emerges from the cut in the mountains, as Gilthanas leads the party ever higher. Soon, the elf leaves the path and begins to pick his way through underbrush made especially dense by the falling of night.

94. Trolls

The trolls in this valley always place a guard to cover the approach from the plains. This troll alerts its partners, and the three monsters attack the rear of the party as it leaves the trail and begins to move toward the Sla-Mori. Check normally to see if the PCs are surprised.

The trolls try to kill two PCs and carry the bodies to their lair—a small cave on the opposite side of the valley, about 1,000 yards away. The cave is 30 feet wide, 50 feet deep, and ten feet high. It contains a collection of bones, worthless scraps of armor and weapons, a rusty key amid the rubbish at the back wall, a *shield + 1*, and a locked strongbox. The key opens the strongbox, which contains 257 sp and three gems, worth 150 stl, 100 stl, and 200 stl.

95. The Gate to Sla-Mori

Gilthanas leads the way along the base of a tall granite cliff for several hundred feet, halting at a slight niche in the wall. He takes a small, glowing gem from beneath his tunic and holds it forward with his right hand. Making a set of motions in the air, he chants an ancient series of incantations. Suddenly and silently, a tremendous stone block moves to the side.

Use the Sla-Mori map for the following encounters. The numbers of these and all further encounters are keyed to areas on maps.

96. The Ways of the Sla-Mori

A whiff of musty, dead air emerges as the huge block moves aside. The passage plunges directly into the heart of the mighty peak that guards the eastern flank of Pax Tharkas. A thick coat of dust layers the floor, and cobwebs hang loosely from the ceiling nearly 15 feet above. The tunnel is 20 feet wide and completely dark.

Despite the many birds and small animals in the nearby woods—all chattering noisily but a few moments ago—the area is now covered by a stunned silence, as though the mountain protests this break-in and the animals have paused in sympathy.

Gilthanas advances firmly into the tunnel. If the PCs falter, he pauses and urges them forward with a whisper. He knows this area only through lore—he has never traveled it—and the grim passage makes him uneasy.

The tunnel is obviously ancient. Whether it was carved by hand or created by the flowing of water is impossible to determine. Loose chunks of rock litter the floor, and the walls and ceilings are crumbling. The dust on the floor looks as if it has not been disturbed since the Cataclysm.

97. The Crossroads

A crossroads offers a choice of directions 120 feet into the mountain. The corridor continues straight ahead but it also branches to the right.

More significantly, the dust on the floors of the tunnels now shows the passage of many feet. The marks extend into both of the passages continuing into the mountain; only the corridor leading to the gate seems to have been untraveled before.

The tracks in the dust were made by a number of different types of creatures. Most of the tracks seem to be humanoid, although it is impossible to tell more. Most of the animal tracks are those of small, clawed creatures.

Chapter 9: To the Walls of Pax Tharkas

The corridor continuing straight ahead has more tracks in it.

98. Hall of the Ancients

An eerie, gigantic hall has fallen into decay. Many tall columns rise to a lofty ceiling, others have fallen over and litter the center of the room like the felled vallonwood trees of Solace. From behind the rubble comes a chittering and scratching.

A huge, granite throne sits against the eastern wall, flanked by two large statues. The stone guardians are warriors three times the height of a man, each armed with a broad, granite sword.

Dwarfed by these images, the decayed remains of a man sit atop the throne. Gaunt, empty sockets and bared teeth stare from an ancient skull. A worn, once-regal cloak covers his body; a sheathed sword lies across his lap.

Further examination of the chamber reveals that the wall opposite the tunnel entrance has collapsed, apparently triggering the fall of the columns. A huge pile of rubble here is riddled with small tunnels and provides shelter for thousands of rats. The rodents are timid creatures, however, and represent no threat.

The double doors at the western end of the room are closed, but they swing open easily. They are made of bronze, now well-tarnished, and covered with a relief drawing of Pax Tharkas.

This is the burial chamber of Kith-Kanan, founder of Qualinesti. The elven prince and his dwarf comrades built the fortress of Pax Tharkas during the Age of Dreams. His tomb has been sealed further by the cataclysm, which has closed off access to Pax Tharkas proper. Your adventurers, of course, will have to find this out the hard way.

The sword across Kith-Kanan's lap represents one of the most potent weapons of his age: it is *Wyrmslayer*, a *two-handed sword +3*. If drawn from its scabbard, it gleams brightly with magical radiance.

99. The Closed Corridor

The corridor widens to 60 feet, still continuing forward. The air in the room is stale and musty; loose boulders and stones litter the floor, but apparently a wide path runs down the center of the corridor. This path is free of any speck of dust.

The far end of the corridor has been caved in by the Cataclysm. Boulders the size of houses are wedged together to form an impenetrable wall.

A giant slug has cleaned the path through the chamber. It lives off the refuse created by the rats in Kith-Kanan's tomb.

The slug is wedged amid the boulders at the far end of the room. It does not detect the heroes until they advance to within 60 feet. Then the monster slides forth and attacks, pursuing if necessary. The slug can turn around in a 20-foot-wide corridor; in any area narrower than this it must continue forward until it locates a wider space.

100. Chamber of Doom

The winding of the narrow tunnel finally ends in a dark chamber. The air is heavy and cold here, and a nameless sense of evil throbs somewhere within these slick, stony walls. A thick layer of dust covers the floor, as if the frightened creatures living in the tunnels know better than to come here.

Lurking in the northwestern alcove of the room is the source of this nameless evil: a wraith. This potent spirit begins to move forward as soon as it detects life in this room. Its attack is swift and merciless.

This undead creature is the evil remnant of a graverobber who broke into the Sla-Mori trying to plunder the tomb of Kith-Kanan. Forcing entrance through the gate, he became trapped inside. Nourished only by the force of his own evil, his mortal body perished and left only the sinister presence that now dwells in this room.

The wraith pursues trespassers. If the intended victims enter area 102, the zombies emerge and aid the wraith; if the PCs flee into the loop at 101, the wraith follows them before the sliding wall closes.

101. The Sliding Wall

In the area marked on the map is a sliding section of wall, constructed centuries ago as a trap for tomb robbers. The wall cannot be detected when open, as it is when the party first passes by.

When they reach the western section of the loop (marked with an X), the lead characters feel the floor sink slowly down one foot. There is no other perceptible effect unless a character is very near the sliding wall, which closes when the trigger is sprung. When closed, the sliding wall can be discovered as a secret door, and opened when pushed by combined Strength of 50 or greater. Up to three characters may push at once. The door cannot be opened from the outside.

102. Tomb of the Zombies

The tunnel breaks into the corner of an old hall, obviously constructed with care in some distant age. A wide center aisle stretches to the limits of sight, and a row of stone doors line each side.

Rats have passed over the dust on the floor throughout the Sla-Mori, but much less often in here than in most other areas. None of the tracks approach the doors, which are supported by huge iron hinges spiked right into the stone. Each door has an iron handle, but apparently no lock.

This is the tomb of Kith-Kanan's elite royal guard. Through a lifetime of valued service to their lord, these honored elves, dwarves, and men have earned the right to burial here.

In the centuries since, however, an evil perversion has corrupted the bodyguard, creating a band of 44 mindless zombies dedicated to only one task: kill all intruders!

Sla-MORI

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┌ = 20 ft.

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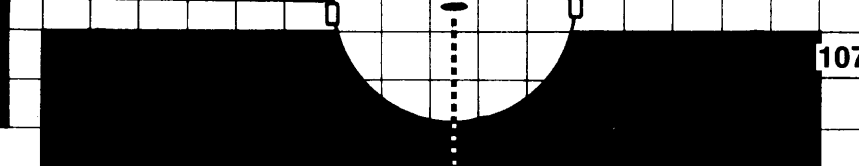
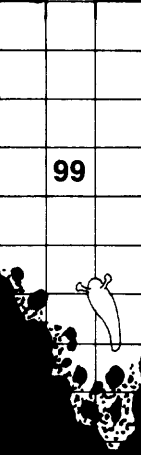
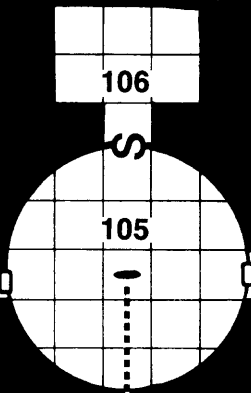
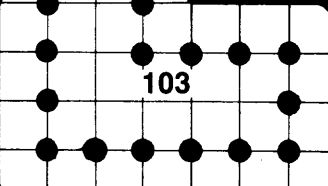
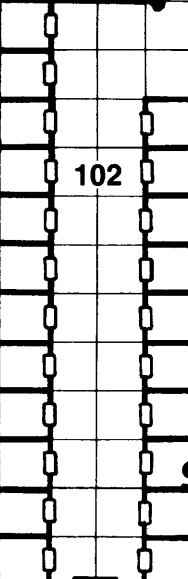
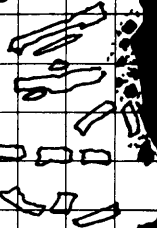
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Chapter 9: To the Walls of Pax Tharkas

The undead lie on stone biers, two behind each door. They arise and attack when any of the following occur:

- * One of the tomb doors is opened.
- * A magical spell, rod, wand, etc. is used in the room (not including magical weapons used to shed light).
- * The double doors in the western end of the room are opened.
- * The wraith (from area 30) enters the room and commands the zombies to arise.

Coldly and silently, the zombies close in on the party and try to destroy them. Any that are turned by a cleric escape by the most convenient route, returning to their tombs if they can.

The double doors at the western end of the room are made of solid bronze. Like the doors to Kith-Kanan's tomb, they bear a raised outline of Pax Tharkas, done in considerable detail. This design adorns each side of the doors. They are unlocked, and open silently with a push.

103. Hall of Columns

This large chamber echoes softly with the sounds of any passage, no matter how quiet. Puffs of dust rise with each footfall on the floor—here again is an area that seems not to have known the passage of a living soul in decades.

The passage gradually widens from the doors, but the true dimensions of the room are lost in darkness. A row of stately granite columns lines each wall. These are plain supports with no ornate carvings or unusual shapes, but they seem to have been constructed with great care. The fact that they have survived the Cataclysm intact indicates that their builders were accomplished engineers.

This chamber is the fruit of dwarven labors, designed as a fitting entryway to the resting place of Kith-Kanan's elite.

You should make careful note that the chambers from here to Pax

Tharkas (103-107 on the map) have not been traveled in over a century. The rats and other small creatures roaming the outer tunnels, as well as wandering monsters, never pass through the Tomb of Zombies into this area. Therefore, thick dust covers everything, and the adventurers have no encounters in these areas.

104. Trap

A single bronze door swings open easily into a short corridor that runs for 60 feet to another bronze door, identical to the first. Each door bears the inscription of a jeweled crown.

The dust in this corridor is very thick, and undisturbed by any tracks.

Dwarven engineers rigged the last 20 feet of the corridor as a trap for unwary trespassers. When any pressure is applied to the false door, either pushing or pulling, a 20-foot section of the floor drops away. All characters standing on it fall 20 feet into a pit and suffer 2d6 of damage.

105. Chain and Support

The long, dusty corridor finally passes through a bronze door into a large, circular room. Here, as in the corridors leading into the chamber, the dust on the floor is thick and unmarked. A curious feature of the room is the column in its center, which slants to one side and climbs far out of sight above.

A closer look shows you that the column is actually a massive chain, supported by a huge iron bracket sunk into the center of the floor. Each link is as long as a man, and the iron bands forming the links are nearly a foot thick. The bracket in the floor is 15 feet across and nearly three feet thick.

This chain is the final support mechanism for the heavy stone defenses that protect Pax Tharkas against attack from the north. If it is released, massive blocks of granite drop be-

hind the gate of the fortress, blocking any attempts to batter down the portal with even the most massive of rams.

The chain rises through the ceiling of the room, 100 feet above, in a narrow channel, to the Chamber of the Chain in Pax Tharkas (see area 131). Although the chain nearly fills the chute, a small individual (a kender or a human man child) could climb the chain and emerge into the chamber. Such an ascent would require thieving ability and a successful climb sheer surfaces roll.

106. Tharkadan Treasure Vaults

Having detected the secret door, locating the concealed latch is a simple matter. It releases with a soft click, and a section of the stone wall swings silently inward.

The room beyond is fairly large, and nearly filled with yellow, brick-like objects that glitter through a layer of dust.

Stacked 25 high, 25,000 gold ingots line the walls around the room. Each contains the equivalent of 1,000 gp of the metal. Gold was valued highly by the dwarves of Pax Tharkas in the Age of Dreams, but it is of little use to the current adventurers.

107. Gates to Pax Tharkas

Do not read this passage until the adventurers have discovered the secret door.

The wall seems to block the corridor is a secret door, apparently activated by a small catch near the ground. Beyond the portal is silence.

Finally your adventurers have reached the walls of Pax Tharkas itself. If they decide to advance, use the map of Pax Tharkas.

The cut-away map displaying Pax Tharkas should be used for the following series of encounters. Note that the map does not show the entire fortress, only those areas the heroes are able to visit. This includes the ground floors of each of the two towers, as well as the underground level and second floor of the eastern tower. Also shown are the wall connecting the two towers and the holding bin for the tons of rock used to block the gate.

In area 133, immediately inside the doors to both the eastern and western towers, are two ropes attached to an alarm mechanism. If any members of the Dragon Highlord's army see the heroes and manage to pull one of these, the fortress is alerted. In this case, double the number of random encounter checks and double the number of creatures encountered in the fortress. Surprise is impossible after the defenders are alerted.

As the party enters the fortress, Gilthanas should mention that there is a gate-blocking mechanism within the walls. This can be used to seal the gates for a long period, and—if the party could activate it—would be useful in delaying pursuit by the Dragonarmy that just marched off to the north.

108. Cellar

Three tunnels lead from the secret door through a maze of crushed stone and broken timbers. The tunnels have been cleared from an area that was once totally caved in. A thin, undisturbed coat of dust covers the floor.

The tunnels all lead to a large cellar room, with rough and rocky walls to the east, but a finely crafted, smooth stone wall to the west. A large, wooden door stands near the center of the western wall.

To the heroes' left as they enter is a pile of wooden crates, nailed shut. These contain clothing, pots and pans, curtains, heavy coats, boots, and blankets. A character passing a Wisdom check can identify the items

as coming from Solace and Gateway.

Also in the large room is a deep well, capable of providing fresh water in times of siege or if the streams flowing from the mountains outside of the fortress should dry up.

109. Lower Guardroom

Listening to the door to this room reveals the rasping voices of dragonmen mingled with a woman's voice. The woman sounds upset. The door is solid, but not locked or stuck.

If the heroes open the door slowly and carefully, they can watch the following scene for a few moments. Of course, if they smash down the door,

the dragonmen move to fight at once.

A savage-looking dragonman hauls a young woman by the arm. He hurls her toward a door on the far side of the room, growling: "My lord Verminaard requires your presence! Who are you to refuse his noble calling?" The monster advances toward the girl, menacingly, while three other draconians watch, their faces twisted into hideous grins.

The Kapak draconian takes the girl from the room, unless interrupted by



the heroes. If combat erupts while she is in the room, the girl runs to the southern end and crouches there until the fight is over.

If attacked suddenly, the Kapaks have no time to envenom their blades. If more than one of them is slain, survivors try to escape through the western door and alert the fortress.

Although Laurana is quite startled by her sudden rescue, she is spirited and courageous, and she quickly recovers her wits. She has been kept in area 112, but knows that 111 and 110 also contain some of the women from the north. The keys to all of these rooms are kept on the belt of one of the draconian guards.

If the PCs do not enter the room before Laurana is dragged out, she is taken before Verminaard. If not rescued by the heroes, she dies an "obscure death" and returns later in the saga.

110. Women's Prison #1

This cell holds 34 women from Solace, Gateway, and Haven. Rude straw mats line the walls, and several low chairs are scattered about. No other furniture or other accommodations are present.

Maritta the Seamstress is one of the prisoners in this room. She is generally regarded by the women as their leader and spokesperson. It is she who leads the group of ten women each evening up to the chamber on the ground floor (room 117) to feed and tend to the children. The youngsters are imprisoned there under the watchful eyes of the red dragon Flamestrike.

Also in this room is a battered Elistan, injured from a fall in the mines. Because of his influential position, the Dragon Highlords allow the women to tend him, when they would let most prisoners die unaided. Even so, Elistan is near death and needs magical healing.

If the PCs heal Elistan, he abandons his disbelief and embraces the true gods. He renounces his past beliefs and begins to worship Mishakal, or whichever of the true gods the PC priest who healed him worships.

111. Women's Prison #2

This chamber is the prison of more of the mothers from the northlands. Sixty women between the ages of 18 and 40 are locked up here, in much the same conditions as the women next door.

112. Maidens

This room holds 45 young women, between the ages of 12 and 20, who have not married or borne children. As in the other two rooms, the conditions are squalid and dirty.

The women from all of these cells react with quiet joy to the thought of rescue; this reaction, however, cools with the knowledge that the red dragon above still watches the children.

The women explain the situation to the heroes, including the procedure for tending the children every evening. The women also know that many other women are held on the bottom floor of the western tower. The men are forced to work in the mines, and are kept in a crude cave south of the fortress during those brief periods when they are not working.

The women also send a group of 12 up to the mines to feed the men every night. They wear heavy shawls and robes to protect against the autumn chill, and the guards pay little attention to those on either feeding mission. Thus, any characters concealed as these women would be able to move about the fortress fairly safely, as long as they could conceivably be on one of these feeding missions.

If the heroes do not think of this, Maritta suggests that armed men, disguised in women's robes, could enter the chamber where the children are kept and rescue them.

If the PCs decide to make a rescue attempt in this way, Maritta has the following advice about Flamestrike:

"You must try to pass the dragon quietly, as she sleeps very deeply. I don't think she would normally harm the children—in fact, she seems very fond of them—but do

not attack her, even if she should awaken. She is half mad, and there's no telling what she might do if aroused."

113. Chamber of the Aghar

A series of strange noises rise from behind this door: first, a loud crash, followed several seconds later by a dull thump, and then gales of raucous laughter. The laughter dies down slowly, and after a minute the pattern repeats.

The women have no idea what is in this room. The door is quite typical, and does not seem to be locked. In fact, it is not even stuck and opens to reveal the following:

A long timber is balanced on a boulder in the center of the room. At each end of the timber is a wide, dish-shaped container. Set on the ground by these containers is a pile of large stones and a tall wooden box. Huge mattresses of straw have been spread on the floor beyond either end of the timber. A dozen short, stocky creatures scurry frantically around the timber, shouting and cursing each other. They wear oversized tin helmets, and several wear swords in their belts. Because these swords are several inches longer than their legs, those creatures who wear them often get them tangled between their feet, sprawling headlong onto the floor.

Shortly a pattern emerges. One of these creatures (who by now are recognizable as Aghar gully dwarves) climbs into the dish at one end of the timber, dropping that end to the ground like a large see-saw. Three other Aghar climb onto the wooden box at the other end of the timber, where comrades have already raised three of the large stones. The Aghar on the boxes drop the stones together into the dish below them, dropping that end to the ground and catapulting the dwarf at the other

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end through the air, over the heads of the three on the box, and into the mattress of straw.

After each of these stunts, all the Aghar laugh uproariously, then run around crazily for a while until the process is ready to start again.

These Aghar are servants of the draconians, amusing themselves in their off-duty moments. If the PCs do not announce their presence, the dwarves do not notice them for 2d4 rounds.

When and if the Aghar discover the adventurers, they cease their game immediately and dive for cover behind the timber and stones. A minute later, several of the tin helmets peek out from behind this cover.

Finally, one of the sword-bearing gully dwarves swaggers forward. His face is hidden behind a bushy beard, and his tin helmet shadows his eyes. In fact, he can see very little; as he nears the party, he trips over his sword and falls headlong, his helmet rolling to the feet of the forward PCs. The dwarf rushes to snatch his helmet back, blustering about trespassers and uninvited guests.

This is Highklahd Drooth, leader of the Klahd Clan of the Aghar. Angrily he demands an explanation from the party; although what they are supposed to explain is unclear.

These 12 Aghar are no friends of the Dragon Highlords and only remain here because Pax Tharkas has been their clan home for centuries. Although suspicious and cranky, they will not betray the party, and may offer aid if approached with "appropriate honor."

The Aghar are quite familiar with the layout of the fortress, and even understand how the stonedrop mechanism to seal the gate operates. Their services must be purchased, however; rope, weapons, armor, food, clothing, or things that might work as toys can all be used for barter. Note that the Aghar are essentially cowardly, and do not voluntarily get involved in risky business.

The Aghar are aware that Sestun is

being held prisoner in area 120 for the crime of aiding the escape of a group of Fewmaster Toede's prisoners. If the heroes aid in his rescue, the Aghar are much more willing to take risks for the party.

114. Storage Room

The door to this room is locked.

Many rows of crates, boxes, and barrels line the walls of this large room. Several boxes containing iron nails are open nearby. All other containers are closed.

Stored here are 72 barrels of oil, 20 barrels of fresh water, 12 barrels of salt, 20 crates of nails, 140 boxes of grain, 43 crates of wool woven into 4' X 8' pieces (430 pieces total), 12 crates of leather in the same dimensions (60 pieces total), and 30 boxes of pots and pans.

If the oil is ignited, the contents of the room burn up in two turns. One turn after such a fire begins, the hallway outside fills with smoke. PCs in this area suffer 1d6 points of damage per round until they reach fresh air.

The smoke continues to spread at this rate, filling all adjacent areas each turn if no door blocks the way. Areas behind doors take two turns to fill with smoke. Those rooms adjacent to rooms filled with smoke fill on the following turn (or two, if a door blocks the way), and so on for 20 turns, when the fire extinguishes from lack of air.

115. Upper Hallway

This hallway is furnished with great care, creating an atmosphere of comfort and luxury. A plush purple carpet blankets the floor, and many tapestries of rich red and golden colors decorate the walls. Each of the several doors is made of dark-grained valenwood and has golden rivets, hinges, and latches.

At closer examination, however, the luxury begins to wear thin. Dark stains blot the carpet in many places, and a wide, muddy

trail mars the center of the floor. Some of the tapestries, depicting pastoral woodland scenes, have been defaced: charcoal has been used to add a beard and mustache to an elven princess, and long slashes ruin a scene of elves and dwarves in council.

This hallway connects most of the rooms on the first floor of the tower, and thus receives a lot of traffic. Double the usual number of random encounter checks while the party is in this area.

Standing outside the throne room (area 121) are two hobgoblin guards. They do not attack on sight but are very suspicious of any armed characters in the hallway and demand identification. If alarmed, they rush to get their comrades from area 119.

116. Reception Room

Much like the outer hallway, this room has the appearance of former luxury now fallen into decay. The carpet is slashed and spotted; many fine pieces of furniture are strewn across the dirty floor. Some fancy chairs have been splintered, apparently so their legs can be used as firewood, since a smoky blaze struggles in a huge fireplace.

A strong smell of ale hangs in the air, and a large keg lies on its side in the center of the room. Another keg sits in the center of the room. Another keg sits in the far corner, and around it crouch five draconians.

These Kapak draconians have been drinking. If they are disturbed, they react aggressively. They take time to envenom their blades as they charge across the room.

If three draconians are killed, the remaining two realize that the PCs are tougher opponents than they thought, and they bolt for the other door. Once in the hallway, they raise a cry, alerting the fortress.

117. Dining Room

For some reason, this elegant room escaped the destruction rampant throughout the rest of the fortress. A shiny table made of smooth vallenwood occupies the center of the room. It is surrounded by a dozen finely crafted chairs. An undamaged carpet, of the same rich purple found in the hallway, covers the floor.

Three golden chandeliers hang from the ceiling, each ablaze with dozens of candles. Many more candles flicker from sconces in the wall, bathing the room in bright and cheery light.

The table is set for four, with fine china and silver. A large platinum pitcher is placed in the center of the table; beads of moisture have collected on it. Four matching platinum goblets stand next to the pitcher.

The pitcher contains ice water. If a player asks about the length of the candles, inform him that no wax has dripped from them, so they have apparently been lighted very recently.

If the party remains in this room for two rounds, the gully dwarves from the kitchen enter, carrying trays of steaming food. (See area 118 for gully dwarves' reaction to the PCs.) Note that these Aghar are encountered in one place or the other, but not in both areas!

118. Kitchen

A long counter is covered with a wide variety of foodstuffs, and several ovens spew smoke into the air. Four Aghar run busily around the room, armed with pots, pans, and in one case, a large meat cleaver. Several inches of liquid—perhaps some kind of gravy—spread over the floor, and the gully dwarves are coated with all kinds of food.

As the door opens, two of the Aghar turn their attention toward it and collide headlong with each other, falling to the floor amid

great splashes and loud cursing. A third gully dwarf snarls: "Dinner ain't gonna be ready for hours if we can't get some privacy what to work in! Now get lost!" He moves forward, a heavy frying pan raised aggressively.

These Aghar are the official cooks for Verminaard, present lord of Pax Tharkas. While they are afraid of the Dragon Highlord, they are rude and unpleasant to everyone else.

If the heroes attack them, the gully dwarves turn and run.

If the heroes identify themselves as enemies of the Dragon Highlord, the gully dwarves become much friendlier, although they are still suspicious. They explain that they are preparing Verminaard's dinner, and that he is planning to entertain one of the women from downstairs as his guest. The meal consists of fresh bread, a fine haunch of venison, potatoes, and apples. These Aghar are actually not bad cooks, so the meal will be a good one.

The Aghar cooperate very little if the heroes ask for any kind of aid. In no case do the gully dwarves do anything (such as poison the meal) that might cost them their heads. They might provide secret aid, however, if they have very little chance of being caught.

These dwarves know that Sestun is imprisoned in area 120. If the heroes aid him, the gully dwarves will be much friendlier to them.

119. Guardroom

If the heroes listen at the door here, they hear loud laughter and argument within. The voices are not those of draconians.

Many chairs and benches of rude wooden construction are scattered about this room. Sitting or moving around the room are several dozen ugly guards, their grinning faces displaying yellowed tusks. Their skin is a ruddy yellow color, and they are all armed with swords and daggers.

This room is the duty quarters for 28 hobgoblin guards. They have been playing various gambling games, eating, or practicing with weapons. They rush to attack any intruders.

If the heroes enter the room and fight with the door closed, the fortress is not alerted. Otherwise, the alarms certainly go off. The hobgoblins fight to the death.

Hanging on a nail in the wall is a key that unlocks the cell next door (area 120). Scattered about the room, on tables and the floor as well as carried by individual hobgoblins, are 54 stl, 187 sp, and 327 bp.

120. Prison Cell

The door is heavy and barred and has a small hatch near the bottom. A massive lock protects the latch to the door as well as the hatch.

If the heroes pick the lock, or use the key found in area 119, read the following. Note that this door cannot be smashed in.

The large room contains only a single occupant: a dirty, unshaven, and very smelly gully dwarf. He looks up angrily from a straw mat on the stone floor, then seems surprised by the appearance of his visitors.

This is Sestun, the gully dwarf who freed the heroes from their cage in the slave caravan. Although he slipped away from the caravan, he was captured by a party of draconians as he moved southward. Now he is being held prisoner while Verminaard attempts to come up with a suitably vicious punishment.

As revealed by his actions in the caravan, Sestun is an Aghar of high courage and spirit. He despises the Dragon Highlord and hates their draconian and hobgoblin servants.

Sestun is willing to participate in anything that is likely to anger Verminaard; he knows that he has no future working for the Dragon Highlord. If he is offered a chance to escape, he will do so, causing as much trouble on the way out as pos-

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sible. When the slaves make their escape to the south, Sestun will tag along in the background.

If any PCs are captured in Pax Tharkas, they are disarmed and placed in this room. Their possessions are taken to Verminaard and placed behind his throne. In 2d6 hours, the Dragon Highlord calls the captives before him, asking them to betray their comrades and explain their purpose in Pax Tharkas. Refusal results in being fed to the red dragon Ember.

121. Verminaard's Throne Room

The massive double doors that lead into this room are unlocked and push open silently. If the heroes open them only slightly, they may hide and observe the discussion described here.

The PCs may also observe this discussion from the balcony (area 130) or through a crack in the wall of the chain room (area 131). Of course, if the party visits several of these places, they observe this scene only the first time they look into the throne room.

This huge, looming chamber was obviously the throne room for the elven and dwarven races that built the great fortress. Tall columns brace the ceiling, and a huge stone throne occupies a central spot.

Tall, silvery mirrors line the walls, creating the impression that the room is even larger than it really is. In the middle of the west wall, a pair of huge doors—easily 12 feet high by 20 feet wide—lead from the throne room.

A figure seated in the throne wears the hideous mask of a Dragon Highlord. His hoarse voice rasps from behind the grotesque covering, addressing a cringing figure before him:

"Toede, you miserable rodent, you have the gift of ruining the simplest plans! As if kidnapping the elf maiden wasn't bad enough . . . now thanks to your idiocy, your

incompetence, that priest has been allowed to live, bringing my opposite power back among men! Find them and slay them all . . . bring me their heads before the day is out!

"If that traitor that I planted among them does not do the job, then the task is on your shoulders. Hear me well, Toede: either your head or theirs will decorate my throne room tonight!"

The figure before the Dragon Highlord cringes even more, and begins to speak in a pathetic whine, "Your most worshipful lord, I offer my hopelessly inadequate apology. If I had known that the ones you seek were imprisoned in my caravan, I would have brought you their heads personally as I brought you the elf maid Laurana. If not for the treachery of one of the loathsome Aghar, they would even now be kneeling before you, prisoners to your tender mercies . . ."

"Enough!" roars the Dragon Highlord. "You have my warning, now go!" The voice lowers, heavy with menace. "And Toede, do not fail me again . . ."

Toede turns and scuttles for the doors, while two draconian guards pull them open to allow the Fewmaster quick exit. Of course, any intruders at the door are discovered at this time.

As Toede races for the door, Verminaard leans back in his throne and slowly surveys the room. If any heroes are watching from the door, the balcony, or the chain room, he sees them in the mirrors. He calls: "Ember!" and the red dragon immediately pushes through the double doors on the west wall. "Destroy them!" is Verminaard's next command.

There are six Kapak draconian guards in the throne room, as well as Verminaard (an 8th-level priest). The draconians enter the combat only if, for some reason, the dragon seems to have trouble making the kill. Verminaard stays out of range and watches the fight; if Ember suffers

half damage, the dragon flees through the double doors and up through the chimney, but not before he has stopped and let Verminaard mount. (Statistics for Ember and Verminaard can be found in the Combined Monster Statistics Chart and in the capsules, respectively.)

Verminaard's face is concealed behind the grotesque mask of a Dragon Highlord—a vicious visor that has a pair of wicked horns curving from the forehead. He wears shiny blue plate mail and a billowing blue cape. Standing well over six feet tall, Verminaard presents an imposing image of evil.

Verminaard is dedicated to the ruthless destruction of good in all its forms. No shred of conscience disturbs him in his quest for power. He controls all of the lands from the Seeker kingdoms south to Pax Tharkas. He is constantly striving to extend his power.

122. Verminaard's Quarters

Verminaard has taken over these three connecting rooms as living quarters. The doors are all polished vallenwood, and locked securely. Verminaard himself carries the only keys.

122a. Waiting Room

This room has kept its former splendor: The plush carpet on the floor is undamaged, and the chairs and couches are all richly upholstered. A small table sits in the center of the room, and a pair of crystal goblets and a crystal decanter filled with a golden liquid sparkle from atop the table.

A large tapestry covers the far wall. This is the only indication that the fortress has recently changed hands: it displays a huge, red dragon, jaws agape, spewing flames over a small village. Several large candelabra provide steady light for the chamber.

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122b. Private Dining Room

Half of this chamber is filled by a polished table of gleaming dark wood. A buffet with glass doors displays a priceless collection of china and silver. Light spills from a pair of golden chandeliers, each supporting many flickering candles.

A pair of tapestries has been added to the eastern and southern walls of this room. One shows a massive red dragon landing amid a troop of armored horsemen and wreaking gory havoc. The second shows a region of black mountains, heavy with mist and shadows, where a looming fortress rises up in the distance.

A small, locked drawer in the bottom of the hutch is trapped with a poison needle (successful saving throw vs. poison or suffer 15 points of damage). Within the drawer are four small bottles containing two potions of extra healing, a potion of gaseous form, and a potion of invisibility.

122c. Verminaard's Bedroom

This chamber seems to be a combination office and bedroom. A huge bed, lushly canopied and quilted, nearly fills the southern end. A large wooden closet sits next to it. Across the floor are spread rugs made from the skins of many of the large carnivores found throughout Krynn: brown bears, jaguars, panthers, wolves, and a tiger.

The other end of the room is taken up by a large desk, plain wooden chair, small table, and washbasin. Three tapestries, picturing scenes of dragon-wrought destruction, add a dark touch to the walls. Several smoky torches flicker in sconces. Several candles and a lamp sit on the desk, but they are unlit.

Spread upon the desk are many maps of this portion of Ansalon,

showing the gradual increase in lands controlled by the Dragon Highlord. On top of the pile is a map of Qualinesti, showing that peaceful land pierced by three great daggers: one each moving from the northeast and northwest, and one advancing straight from Pax Tharkas, just as the elves had reported.

Another sheet of paper diagrams the permanent defenses of Pax Tharkas, showing how the chain and stone mechanism (room 132) operates to block the massive gates.

The desk has one drawer, firmly locked and guarded with a dose of *sleep* gas. If the lock is picked without deactivating the trap, all in the room fall asleep for 2d6 turns, no saving throw. This drawer contains two sheets of rolled parchment, each a priest scroll. They contain these spells:

Scroll #1: *cure serious wounds, prayer, find traps*

Scroll #2: *light, augury, cure light wounds*

The closet contains several robes, a black cape, a pair of boots, and a suit of black plate mail.

123. Children's Playroom

This door is barred on the outside with a heavy wooden beam.

This large, open room has no furniture. Scattered about, however, are many small bits of wood and rags carelessly carved or sewn into dolls, wagons, balls, and other toys. A tall arch in the eastern wall leads into darkness, and next to the arch is a normal wooden door. A pair of huge doors in the southwestern corner apparently leads outside, since four windows in that same wall admit some cool, fresh air.

The double doors are held by a very heavy beam, requiring a total Strength of 25 to remove. There is a similar beam on the ground outside these doors that may be used to bar them and keep something (i.e., Flamestrike) inside. The door to room 124 is not

locked. If the fortress has been alerted, there are six Kapaks here. Use Random Encounter 4.

124. Storeroom

Many shelves line the walls of this small room. Stacked upon them are blankets, cloaks, tiny boots, and a number of toys similar to the ones strewn about the playroom.

The cloaks are all children's sizes.

125. Chamber of the Nursemaid

The arched tunnel enters another room, even larger than the playroom. No windows shed light into this area, but a soft, wheezing noise gives evidence of another presence here. Soon, the torchlight falls across a monstrous red tail, then massive crimson flanks that rise and fall with a slow, rhythmic pattern.

Now the great head appears: eyes closed, forked tongue extending from wicked jaws, and nostrils flaring ever so slightly with the slow breaths. This chamber is occupied by an ancient red dragon!

At first, Flamestrike looks every bit as awesome as is usual for her kind, but a closer look reveals that this dragon suffers some of the ill effects of age. Many of her teeth are blunted or broken (accounting for her lessened bite damage), while one of her eyes is cloudy and apparently blind. Long scars mark her weathered flanks, and she looks unusually slender, even scrawny.

Flamestrike lost her brood of young to an unknown enemy years ago, and this tragedy has deeply scarred her personality. She is a very careful guardian of the children, and would never harm one of them under any circumstance. She deals harshly with those she believes threaten "her" children. The only visitors she allows are the ten women who, once a day, arrive to feed and care for the youngsters.

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126. Food Storage and Preparation

On the right-hand wall of this room, several shelves are piled high with goods. To the left, a large oven and a pot-covered counter run along the wall. The small room is cluttered with food and utensils.

In this room the women prepare the food for the children. Barrels of salt pork, beans, salt, flour, lard, dried meat, and potatoes sit on the shelves.

127. Children's Room

This large room bustles with several hundred children, ranging in age from infant to about 12 years old. Their frightened, questioning faces stare at the doorway. Several of the older boys and girls stand protectively before the younger children, as if to spare them the sight of anything horrible.

Although fear and hardship have struck these youngsters unjustly, their spirit has not been broken. Courage and resolve shine in the faces of the older children, and the younger ones look to their older brothers and sisters with respect and pride. Not even the smallest baby is crying.

There are 180 children in this room. They will recognize and instantly respond to Maritta, if she is with the heroes. Otherwise, a very mature boy and girl advance to talk privately with the PCs, seeking information about them. The children will never consent to leave unless convinced that their parents will join them in freedom.

If the heroes begin to rescue the children, they file slowly and silently past the sleeping Flamestrike. The red dragon stirs in her sleep, but does not awaken until all but a few dozen of the children have passed—unless of course, a PC attacks or arouses her.

When the dragon wakes up, read the following:

The great red dragon slowly raises her head, muttering softly: "Maritta, you take all of my children together . . . is it not easier with a few at a time?" Blinking her one good eye, Flamestrike slowly looks around and sniffs the chamber. Suddenly, she screams with rage and springs to her feet!

"You cannot steal my children!"

Flamestrike tries to attack the heroes with teeth and claws. She will never use her breath weapon while the children are nearby!

If the heroes escape with the children to the outside, Flamestrike cannot follow them through the double doors. She will not emerge from the fortress until the moment described in "Escape from Pax Tharkas."

128. Upper Landing

The stairway emerges into a long, narrow room. Two silver-coated doors, embossed with an image of an elf and a dwarf holding a lute between them, lead to the left. The lure is an ancient symbol of peace in Krynn, so the artwork dates these doors to the period of elven and dwarven cooperation when Pax Tharkas was built.

The secret door operates by twisting a stone that is set into the door itself.

129. Gallery

This huge room is chilly, exposed to the autumn drafts by a number of slit windows along the curving walls. To the left, it follows the angle of the wall of the fortress out of sight.

The entire outer wall of the room is covered with paintings. The different styles and varying degrees of aging indicate that they were created over a long span of Krynn's history. The paintings show woodland scenes, rugged mountains, several views of Pax Tharkas, and portraits of various elves and dwarves, dressed in fine costume.

Nothing lives in this room, so the heroes may take their time here without being bothered. If they wish to examine the pictures closely, they will see that the oldest paintings are directly before them. They seemed to be organized chronologically, getting more recent as the viewer moves to the left.

Read the following if the party takes some time to look at the artwork.

The first paintings show a high mountain pass glittering in the light of the sun. Snowfields flash among the peaks, and thick forests cover the lower slopes. Many streams, frequently interrupted by ponds and waterfalls, wind into the lowlands.

A large band of sturdy dwarves labor in the pass, building a low stone wall across the opening. Now many elves appear, bearing huge logs on low wagons, and the wall takes on a familiar form. First the main wall of Pax Tharkas goes up, elves and dwarves working side by side in the monumental task. Then, even as two curtain walls rise on the slopes below the main wall, two mighty towers begin to inch their way into the sky.

After a few pictures displaying the various stages of construction, during which the seasons make the yearly cycle several times, the fortress assumes its current shape. Following this series are a number of portraits displaying various elves and dwarves, usually dressed in shiny plate mail and bearing gleaming weapons. A number of these paintings have been crudely defaced.

Then begins a series in which mighty dragons rage about the towers of Pax Tharkas. Acid, lightning, fire, and cold all rain down upon courageous defenders, driving them from the parapets to shelter within the solid walls. Soon, the mighty dragons land all over the fortress, and it seems that mighty Pax Tharkas has fallen.

But then new weapons appear. Long, slender, and gleaming like



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polished silver, these lances are carried by fighters of highest courage. Slowly, at a fearful cost, the dragons are driven from the towers and walls. Great gashes burrow into their scaly hides, as they begin to bleed and die. Finally, although the parapets are red with the defenders' blood, the skies are free of dragons, and it seems that peace has once again returned.

At this point, the course of history has carried halfway around the room. Several more portraits follow, this time displaying human leaders in historic poses; then the series ends.

Faded spots on the wall show that more paintings hung here at one time; a pile of blackened ashes at the far end of the room provides a clue to their fate.

130. Balcony

Many slender columns support a high ceiling. Twenty feet from the wall, the floor drops sharply into a deep pit—actually, two pits separated by a stone wall. The larger of these is well lit, and voices rise from inside it. The second, smaller pit is dark.

If the heroes advance into the lighted pit, read the scene described for area 121 (unless they have already witnessed Toede's interview with Verminaard from another vantage point, in which case room 121 is empty). If they look into the darkened pit, read the following:

Enough light filters over the wall and through the huge connecting doors to cast a faint glow on the bottom of this pit. Curled up there, alert eyes blinking warily here and there, is the serpentine form of a monstrous red dragon!

Any untoward noise from the PCs, or other signs of their presence, brings Ember flaming upward for the kill. Her statistics are listed in the Combined Monster Statistics Chart.

131. Chamber of the Chain

This cavernous room can be entered through the secret door in room 128, or (by a halfling) by climbing the chain that is anchored in the Slamori.

A thick layer of dust coats the floor of this vast chamber. Much rubble, in the form of boulders and small stones, lies strewn about. Running along the wall is a mighty chain, made of foot-thick steel bars bent into six-foot-long links and held taut by unimaginable force.

A thin trickle of light leaks through a crack in the wall, leading into a large room. Voices can be heard through the crack.

If a player looks through the crack into the throne room, describe the situation there as in area 121 (unless this incident has already taken place, in which case area 121 is empty). Remember that the mirrors enable Verminaard to catch sight of the eavesdropper eventually, at which time he will send Ember up to breathe fire into the crack.

Although an intelligent hero can avoid the fire by moving to the side, the chain turns bright red, then white from the heat of the blast. Finally, it stretches, snaps, and releases the stone blocking mechanism, sealing the mighty gates for at least a month.

A stairway in the northwestern corner of the room climbs to the next level of the tower. Six more levels can be found this way, but all the rooms are dusty and empty.

132. Gate-Blocking Mechanism

A narrow stone walkway, covered with dust, leads through the length of the Tharkadan wall high above the ground. To the right, ten feet below you, are scattered piles of massive granite. To the left, the mighty chain stretches across the darkness. Many chains, only slightly smaller, lead from this massive chain underneath the

walkway, apparently connecting somehow with the stone blocks on the right.

At the far end of the walkway (marked "A" on the map), a large screw and winch mechanism can be used to release the chain. This requires a combined Strength of 40 to operate, and takes 3d6 rounds to activate.

When the rocks fall, the crashing shakes the foundations of the entire fortress. Anyone in area 133 is killed outright by tons of stone. Area 132 fills with so much dust that movement and vision are impossible for 1d6 rounds.

133. The Great Wall

This area is basically a large corridor that runs the length of the Tharkadan wall. Massive winches operate the mighty gates, requiring a Strength of 80 to move. Even then it takes two turns to open or close a gate. The northern gate is slightly open (a six-foot-wide crack), while the southern gate is shut.

134. Western Hallway

The double doors leading from 133 into this area stand open.

The walls of this hallway are dirty and bare, and the floor is covered with mud. Several broken chairs and a small table, only two of its four legs intact, are the only furniture. The double doors in the northern wall and a single iron door in the western wall are all closed. The double doors look as if they have been hacked with a blade of some kind.

The iron door is locked; the double doors are not. Listening at the iron door reveals low sounds of conversation and occasional laughter.

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135. Western Guardroom

Several ugly guards sit at a table in the center of this long room, playing some kind of gambling game. Two more of the guards are grappling—apparently in practice—at the far end of the room, while another two, swords drawn, rush toward the door!

The eight hobgoblins in this room are charged with guarding the women held in area 136. Seven attack any intruders, fighting to the death, while one slips out the back door and tries to get help from the monsters in area 137.

If the escaping hobgoblin is not intercepted, five rounds after the heroes enter this room, they are attacked from behind by the seven Baaz draconians and six hobgoblins from room 137.

Scattered on the table are 23 stl, 15 sp, and 2 pp. One hobgoblin carries keys that open the doors to this room and room 136, as well as a pouch containing a 300-stl ruby.

136. Large Prison

The single door to this room (from 135) is made of iron and is solidly locked. It cannot be smashed open.

A cavernous chamber stretches far off into darkness, but the number of people crowded into it makes the room seem small. Sitting, standing, or lying down, several hundred women turn their attention listlessly toward the door.

Those nearby leap to their feet in surprise; a wave of excitement spreads through the room like a spring breeze. All of the women rush toward the door. A thousand questions fill the air, but no one waits for answers.

In this room are 287 captive plainswomen. The PCs receive many frantic questions about the children, followed by queries such as "Who are you?" and "Where did you come from?" Since it is likely that some

alarms have sounded by this time, the PCs run risks by stopping to answer many of these questions.

Any attempts to smash open the double doors leading outside suffer a -2 penalty to the roll.

137. Monster Mess Hall

If the heroes have already battled the monsters from this room because the guards from 135 have summoned them, read only the first paragraph of this description.

This room is dimly lit by a number of flickering fireplaces, and the air is gray with smoke. Many long tables and benches sit in the shadows, and the stench of foul food and cheap ale fills the air.

Suddenly, scraping sounds of movement erupt from the darkness, followed by gruff challenges and the whisper of swords being drawn. A bench falls over with a crash, and shadowy figures lunge out of the darkness. Blades upraised, the troops of the Dragon Highlord charge!

The seven Baaz and six hobgoblins attack desperately, fighting to the death if necessary. If any of them make it through the door, they try to sound an alarm and alert the fortress.

The stairway in the northern part of the room climbs to the second floor, which is a huge, empty room that the draconians once used as a barracks. The former residents were the troops that the party saw marching to the north toward Qualinesti.

A stairway leads from the second to the third, fourth, and fifth floors. Each of these was used as a barracks; each contains 1d20 Kapak draconians that somehow were left behind when the army moved out. Treat these as random encounters (see Random Encounter 4 or 2 1). Nothing of value can be found on any of these upper floors.

138. Western Supply Room

This is a well-stocked supply room. Many sturdy shelves line

the walls, and a wide aisle runs down the center of the room. Three sets of doors give access to the room, and the shelves cover the rest of the wall space.

Stacked on the shelves are hundreds of suits of leather armor, a similar number of shields, rows of heavy boots, cloaks, and capes, and a number of sealed wooden crates and barrels.

The sealed wooden crates contain a mysterious smoked meat (wild dog). The barrels contain oil. If a fire starts here, it spreads with the same smoky effects described in area 114.

139. Kitchen

This room resembles a large military kitchen that has been ravaged by a tornado. Stale food covers the floor and counters, ashes from the ovens are spread around, and pots and pans lie overturned, spilling sticky garbage over the rest of the mess.

This kitchen served the draconian hordes while they were stationed in the fortress. After cooking the last meal before the army moved out, the hobgoblin servants simply left things as they were.

A deep well, four feet in diameter, sinks through the floor in the northern end of the room. The water is 20 feet below, and it is quite drinkable. This well can be used to support the garrison in times of siege.

140. Armory

The double doors to this room are made of thick timbers and are solidly locked. Any character trying to smash them suffers a -2 penalty to his open doors roll.

Row after row of wooden racks cover this room. Although most of these racks are empty, a few chipped swords, broken spears, and rusty daggers show that this is an armory. Many thousands of



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weapons could easily be stored here, if the racks were filled.

If the players try to gather some weapons here, they find that most of those remaining are unusable. They will, however, be able to pick up 23 short swords, eight long swords, 108 spear heads (no shafts), and 60 daggers. All of these are somewhat rusty, but may be cleaned up and used.

The Tharkadan Mines

Areas 141-143 are not in the fortress proper, but have been excavated from the mountainsides south of Pax Tharkas. They represent an important part of the Dragon Highlords' operations in the region.

If the heroes leave Pax Tharkas to the south, read the following passage:

A narrow mountain valley winds steeply down to the south. In the eastern wall of this valley are the mouths of two large caves. From these caves, several narrow and treacherous trails wind up the slope to a gaping scar on the mountainside, two hundred feet above.

A band of dull red streaks the rocky surface of the scar, while hundreds of human-like figures toil to scrape the rock away and reveal more of the rusty red material. This is the fabled Tharkadan iron mine.

If the heroes talk to the miners before they rescue the children, either disguised as women or by sneaking up here at night, they discover that the miners are slaves and that the slaves are very lightly guarded (since the children are held under the watchful eyes of Flamestrike, the Dragon Highlord has very little fear that the miners will escape).

Indeed, no prisoner is willing to join any risky undertaking without assurances that the women and children are safe.

141. Smelter and Mill

This deep cavern has a huge entrance, about 80 feet wide and 20 feet high. Acrid, sulphurous smoke billows in the chamber and drifts out to the valley. Gully dwarves scramble to and fro in their usual hectic fashion, although there seems to be a bit more organization than usual.

Many of the Aghar use huge hammers to smash red rock into gravel. Every few minutes, another batch of rock falls through a hole in the ceiling, and the Aghar attack it fiercely. Other Aghar carry the pulverized rock across the cave, to huge vats that sit atop smoky fires.

Great bellows feed air to these fires, while gully dwarves pile on coal. The sulphurous smoke belches from the vats in great, yellow clouds. Although the Aghar work furiously, there is no sign of draconians or other masters.

This is the processing plant for the iron ore that the slaves mine on the Tharkadan slopes. Although the gully dwarves are unsupervised, they do not stop working for anything short of a cave-in; they have been threatened with death if they do not produce a high quota of iron.

142. Slave Quarters

This huge cave is deserted now, but the floor is virtually covered with dirty straw pallets. Several fire scars dot the interior, and some rotten wooden buckets leak dirty water onto the floor. Any unfortunate souls that live here put up with hardship indeed.

This is home for all the male prisoners from the north. They are at the mines for 16-18 hours a day. There is nothing of value in this cave.

143. Mines

Hundreds of swearing, muscular men toil across this great strip of mountainside, raising picks or pushing shovels to scrape a rusty red ore from the earth. Several dozen draconians are scattered about the area, but they seem to take little interest in their prisoners. After all, with their women and children safely locked in mighty Pax Tharkas, these men can ill afford any thoughts of escape!

When they have collected a great pile of ore, the slaves drag it on pallets across the mountainside to a hole directly above the smelting cavern. Other slaves shovel the ore into the hole, where it lands among the gully dwarves below.

There are 310 men working here. If the slaves see their loved ones brought from Pax Tharkas, they turn on their guards and slay them easily. Running down the narrow trail to the bottom, they soon rejoin their families and begin rejoicing. Despite the pleas of PCs, the people insist on locating those closest to them, a process that takes 15 or 20 minutes.

Epilogue: Escape from Pax Tharkas

If the heroes have rescued the women and children, Flamestrike is battering against the barred doors, the men rush down from the mines, and the thousands of troops that marched out of the fortress to the north are rushing back to answer the alarms. The mass of people, around 800 of them, should be collected on the southern side of the great fortress.

At this time, read the following passage:

Suddenly, with a splintering crash, the double doors holding Flamestrike fly outward. The great beast slithers out of the tower toward the crowd of prisoners.

"My children! You shall not have my children!" Her voice is shrill and strained. "Leave me my children!" she demands, lumbering down the gradual slope.

Now another great crimson shape appears, flying. Bellowing a challenge, a second huge red dragon lands on the mighty Tharkadan wall. On its back is the imposing figure of the Dragon Highlord Verminaard, still concealed by the fearsome mask. His voice booms through the valley.

"This is the final insult! I have tolerated your impudence far too long. . . slaves are cheap and plentiful. Now you pay for your foolish daring!" As the people scream and turn to flee down the valley, his evil voice picks up more power: "Now, I destroy you! I *destroy your wives! I destroy your children!*"

As Ember leaps from the wall, Flamestrike pauses in her advance. Confusion shakes her as she looks from the children to the great engine of death above her. Suddenly, her dim eyes take on clear focus as she makes a decision.

Curling her long neck upward, Flamestrike sends forth a horrifying spout of fire, straight at the flying dragon and the Dragon Highlord. With a scream, Verminaard vanishes in the glowing cloud, and his dragon-steed bellows in pain. Quickly, the two

dragons lock in a fearsome melee, thrashing their mighty bodies across the valley and bringing boulders tumbling from the mountainsides.

If the heroes take advantage of this diversion, they can lead the band down the valley and out of sight of the fortress while the two dragons struggle. Verminaard barely survives the fight, and it takes 12 hours before he sends his army after the escapees. If the heroes have succeeded in dropping the gate-blocking mechanism, it is four days before he can send an army.

If the heroes make good their escape at this time, read to them from the following passage:

The autumn sun disappears behind a mountain ridge, as 800 people huddle among a cheery grove of tall pines. Tired and hungry, they are nonetheless happy for their nearly miraculous escape.

This small side valley should provide shelter for the night from any draconians that have been sent on the hunt. No doubt fresh problems will arise tomorrow, but for now the plainsmen are safe.

The biting chill of the wind brings warnings of the winter that is soon to come. The wilderness yields little food, but many mouths need to be fed. The great silver moon rises and the stars blink into sight.

The heroes may easily locate skilled teachers among the rescued prisoners. This enables all fighters, mages, and thieves to gain one level of experience immediately. Multi-classed characters advance in the class that requires the least number of experience points.

Priests who have learned of Mishakal or another of the good True Gods of Krynn may gain one level by meditating and praying to their deity.



The Refugees of Pax Tharkas

Much of this adventure involves leading 800 refugees (not counting leaders, PCs, and named NPCs) through the wilderness to safety. Use the following rules to run the refugee population.

Movement

The entire refugee population moving as a group can travel one hex per hour on the Abanasinia Wilderness map. The refugees have carts and supplies that slow down their movement. If the refugees panic (during a draconian attack, for example), they can flee at a rate of 18 for up to 20 rounds. Panicked refugees automatically lose all supplies and wagons. If the refugees decide to abandon all supplies and leave behind the weak and sick, they can move two hexes per hour.

Regardless of movement rate, the refugees can travel no more than 12 hexes per day.

Supply

In their rush to escape the mines of Pax Tharkas, the refugees plundered what they could. There is one wagon for every 20 refugees (40 wagons total). The wagons contain enough food to feed all the refugees for two days, and they also carry enough blankets for everyone. Keep track of the total food supply. Each wagon lost means 20 hungry and cold refugees.

Attrition

The refugees were starved and beaten in Pax Tharkas, and the cruel weather and conditions of their escape has weakened them further. It is likely that some of them will die before they reach safety. Attrition primarily affects the weak and ill, rather than the few remaining fighters among the refugees. Keep track of losses in the refugee population.

Consult Table 1 for conditions that cause attrition.

Table 1: Refugee Attrition

Circumstance	Chance	Attrition
Each night in the open without cover	80%	2d10
Each day in camp without moving	60%	1d10
Each day without food	20%	1d10
Panic or rout	100%	4d20

Each time that a circumstance occurs that might cause attrition, roll percentile dice. If the result is less than or equal to the chance of attrition, roll for attrition as listed. Deduct losses from the total refugee population, taking only 10% of any attrition losses from the fighters. Spread losses evenly among the five refugee camps (see "Politics"), unless common sense says that one camp should suffer most or all of the attrition.

Combat

The refugees are far from combat ready. Only 10% of the men (80 total) have combat experience, and only half of these have weapons. Treat these as 1st-level fighters. Keep track of the fighters separately from the main refugee population.

The following system is used to resolve mass combat involving refugee fighters. Use normal combat rules for smaller melees. All combat involving PCs or named NPCs uses normal combat rules.

For mass combat, compare Total Refugee Strength and Total Attack Strength. The Total Refugee Strength is the sum of the remaining refugee fighters, plus 5 for every PC or named NPC present and fighting. The Total Attack Strength is the total number of attackers.

Roll percentile dice. If the result is greater than the Total Refugee Strength, the refugees panic and flee. (See "Attrition" for the effects of flight. All wagons and supplies carried by panicking refugees are lost, regardless of the outcome of the battle.)

Next, determine the Combat Modifier for each side, using Table 2.

Table 2: Combat Modifiers

Circumstance	Modifier
Terrain Advantage	+20
Surprise	+10
Defending	+20
Outnumbered by 50% or more	-10 for each 50%
Magic Use	+20 per caster
Unarmed Fighter	-1 each

All modifiers are cumulative. Use common sense when judging whether a modifier applies.

Each side rolls percentile dice and adds their Combat Modifier to the roll. Consult Table 3 for casualties.

Table 3: Combat Losses

Modified Roll	Losses	Result
100 or more	4d20	Enemy panics
80-99	3d20	Enemy retreats
60-79	1d20	Continue Battle
40-59	1d10	Continue Battle
20-39	1d6	Continue Battle
10-19	1d4	You retreat
9 or less	0	You panic

All losses are taken from NPC fighters. Civilians become combat casualties only if all refugee fighters are killed. Player characters, henchmen, and named NPCs can be killed only in individual melee. Repeat this process until one side is destroyed, surrenders, retreats, panics, or withdraws. Unarmed fighters can acquire weapons from dead enemies.

Politics

Because the heroes liberated the refugees from Pax Tharkas, they automatically have a leadership role in the refugee community. However, politics is part of the human condition, and there are other leaders who also play a role.

From the time of the escape from Pax Tharkas until the refugees first make camp, the heroes are completely in charge. The refugees do whatever the players wish.

When the refugees make their first camp, they begin to select their own leaders: the Council of Freedom. The

The Refugees of Pax Tharkas

draconians enslaved community leaders as well as regular folk. Now, those people are again asserting their authority.

The Council, once established, divides the refugees into five camps, each with one representative. The PCs are appointed Advisors to the Council, but they have no votes. Laurana, whose political and diplomatic skills are very strong, should be the PCs' primary liaison to the Council.

The Council members and their camps are as follows:

Elistan, leader of the Believers. He is actively friendly to the PCs, and votes according to their wishes 70% of the time. He and Laurana work closely together on matters concerning the party.

Locar, leader of the Seekers. Locar hates Elistan, who was once a Seeker, for his new faith. Locar wants to take control of all the camps, preferring to lead than follow. He is actively unfriendly to the PCs, and votes according to their wishes only 10% of the time. He works to undermine the PCs' role at all times. If the PCs try to kill him or remove him by force, Briar and Brookland both turn against the heroes.

Briar, leader of the Plainsmen. He is neutral to the PCs, except for Goldmoon and Riverwind, both plainsmen. He is basically a good but suspicious man. Locar can influence him on complex matters. He votes according to the PCs' wishes 30% of the time, but is more cooperative on matters that are simple, straightforward, and easily explained. Political persuasion used on Briar tends to backfire.

Brookland, leader of the Woodfolk. He is friendly to elves and half-elves and can be swayed by Laurana. He is a good man who seeks only the safety of his people. He votes according to the PCs' wishes 40% of the time, but he cannot be stampeded into a vote without consideration.

Eben Shatterstone, leader of the Free Peoples. As a secret agent of Verminaard, he plays a complicated game. Publicly, he is friendly to the heroes and supports them. Privately, he is allied with Locar to discredit the heroes and take control of the refugee movement. He is very charismatic and is working to sway Briar and Brookland to the side of Locar. To keep on everyone's good side, he always votes last and votes with the majority. If he is forced to break a tie, he votes according to the PCs' wishes 50% of the time. If the PCs should suspect Eben, try to kill him, or exile him, he heads for Verminaard and does not reappear until later in the adventure.

The voting tendencies of the Council members are meant to be advisory only. Not even Locar will vote against a plan to gather food or to build shelters for the sick. However, if the decision to be made is even slightly controversial, political intrigue comes into play.

The Council must vote on any decision affecting all five camps. Each leader is responsible for running his own camp, and decisions by that leader are final. (Locar, for example, can refuse to allow PCs access to his camp.)

The voting tendencies of the Council, and the reactions of any individual leader, are modified based on the political rating of the PCs. Consult Table 4, in the next column.

All political rating modifiers are cumulative. In addition, add or subtract up to 10 points based on your judgment of the PCs' proposal. To determine the Council's decision, add the cumulative political reaction modifier to each Council member's base chance to vote as the PCs wish, and roll percentile dice. If the result is less than or equal to the modified chance, the Council member votes in favor of the PCs' proposal.

Do not let these rules get in the way of common sense! The political intrigue and goals of each Council member can make for very entertaining role-playing. Encourage the players to act out the situations, and play

the parts of the Council members yourself. Encourage role-playing and active participation rather than just rolling dice.

Table 4: Political Rating

(Base Political Rating = 40)

Modifier	Circumstance
- 5	Each vote taken
- 5	Each day in wilderness
- 5	Each time refugees must break camp and move
- 10	Each combat
- 1	Each refugee death
- 20	Each day without food
- 50	PCs use violence against any Council member
+ 10	Each 800 food units found by PCs
+ 20	Refugees reach Encounter Area 21
+ Reaction Adjustment	Charisma of character trying to persuade the Council

Experience Points

In addition to normal experience points for combat and treasure, each PC receives 10 additional experience points for each refugee still alive at the end of this adventure.

Chapter 11: The Way

This chapter is divided into encounters (keyed to areas) and events (keyed to time). The order of events and encounters depend on the players' actions. Keep track of both location and time to know which event or encounter to run next.

Encounters are keyed to the Abanasinia Wilderness map—think of it as a large, outdoor dungeon in which Encounters happen as soon as the PCs cross an encounter border. The adventure begins with event 1.

Events

Event #1: Escape

The PCs start at the location marked with a cross on the Abanasinia Wilderness map.

Your lungs ache from breathing the bitterly cold air. A heavy snowfall blurs the Kharolis Mountains to either side. Behind you is the evil Dragonarmy. Before you are nearly 300 families just liberated from the dungeons of Pax Tharkas.

Suddenly, you hear the war cries of your draconian pursuers!

Four Baaz draconians attack the PCs. The sounds of the fleeing refugees recede southward into the snows. As soon as the draconians are defeated, more screams come from the north within 1d6 rounds.

Unexplored canyons of sheer rock and snow form a maze before you. The ever-present shock troops of the Dragonarmy pursue you relentlessly as you plunge headlong into the snowstorm.

If the PCs stay where they are, another party of draconians attacks. Each time the PCs are attacked after remaining in place, one more draconian than before attacks.

If the PCs flee southward, they are attacked again, but this time by one fewer draconian than before. Each 1d4 turns, they are attacked again, but by one fewer each time. Finally,

the sounds of pursuit stop and the sounds of the refugees get closer.

After 1d6 turns, the characters catch up to the fleeing refugees.

Wind-driven snow attacks 800 huddled forms as the refugees trudge wearily through the mountain pass. They move slowly, pushing their heavily laden wagons through the snow and ice.

Event #2: The First Night

This event occurs the first time the refugees stop for the night.

A few campfires flicker in the snow-covered wilderness. Around them are gathered tired, weak, and scared families. Several refugees ask you to attend a meeting of the leaders of the people.

This is the formation of the Council of Freedom. Introduce the Council, using the information given under "The Refugees of Pax Tharkas." The Council begins by thanking the PCs for their valiant help, and offers them a non-voting advisory role. If the PCs argue for voting membership, Locar explains that the people are more likely to follow known leaders than strangers. (Locar's opposition to the PCs should be revealed gradually.) It is apparent that Elistan is the PCs' best friend on the council. Laurana offers to be the PCs' primary liaison to the Council. Remind Gilthanas's player about his sister's diplomatic skills.

Once the Council is set up, all political rules are in effect.

The Council then discusses what must be done to ensure safety for the refugees. It is clear that the Dragonarmy will attack soon. The PCs' experience with draconians shows that the refugees must move quickly. Elistan suggests that a way south be found. The Kharolis Mountains lead into a valley, site of the ancient Dwarfgate Wars. Somewhere in that valley are the gates to the Kingdom of Thorbardin, home of the mountain dwarves. The only escape from the valley is through the dwarven

kingdom—yet no one knows where it can be found!

The Council requests that the PCs help find a temporary resting place for the refugees and the gates to the dwarven kingdom. One clue is known: that the location of the dwarven gates might be found somewhere in the tomb of Fistandantilus, rumored to be deep underneath a mountain shaped like a skull.

Event #3: Elistan is Called

This event takes place following the first meeting of the Council. Goldmoon (or another PC priest) suddenly has a vision of Elistan clothed in the robes of a priest of Paladine. He carries the *disks of Mishakal* and is bringing word of the True Gods throughout Krynn. This vision lasts only a moment. The priest has a strong feeling that Elistan must read the *disks of Mishakal* right away. This vision takes place whether or not Elistan was converted to the worship of Paladine earlier.

If the priest speaks with Elistan about the disks, he appears mildly interested and says he will look at them later. That night, he takes the disks and stays up all night. The next morning he emerges refreshed and with new power and determination. Overnight, he has become a 7th-level cleric of Paladine. From this point on, use Elistan's character card.

Event #4: Changing Weather (Day 2, Turn 1)

The dawn breaks clear and cold. The snow-laden clouds have moved off to the east, leaving a chilly, blue sky.

For the next seven days the weather is clear.

Event #5: Dragonarmy Breaks Through

If the characters sealed the gates of Pax Tharkas during the escape, the Dragonarmy takes four days to get over the wall. If the characters did not seal the gates, the Dragonarmy takes two days to organize pursuit.

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When the Dragonarmy breaks through, this event takes place.

In the distance, clouds of snow rise from the ground as though kicked up by some tremendous wind.

Soon, the glint of weapons and armor can be seen. The Dragonarmy has escaped Pax Tharkas!

The Dragonarmy advances in a cautious yet disorderly fashion. They are highly suspicious of a trap and slow to a movement rate of 10 when they first see any PCs or refugees.

The Dragonarmy occupies one encounter area every four game hours. In order for an area to fall, it must border an encounter area previously occupied by the Dragonarmy. The Dragonarmy cannot occupy encounter areas 161 (Snow Passage), 163 (Hopeful Vale), 174 (The Bog), or 175 (Skullcap) at this time.

If the Dragonarmy and the refugees are in the same encounter area, 50 Baaz draconians attack the camp once per day.

If the PCs enter an encounter area occupied by the Dragonarmy, double the normal number of random encounters. In addition, the PCs encounter parties of eight Baaz draconians once every six turns.

Event #6: Dragon Attack!

This event occurs after Event #5. There is a 10% cumulative chance, checked every six hours, that this event takes place. It can happen several times. Each time the event takes place, start the checks over again.

An ancient, huge, scarred red dragon appears overhead. Its great wings send gusts of wind to mark its passing. The Dragon Highlord Verminaard is clearly visible on its back. The dragon wheels overhead, then swoops to attack.

Verminaard and Ember make two passes against the refugees. Verminaard casts spells and Ember uses his breath weapon. They do not land. Attacks made against PCs are re-

solved normally; each attack against the refugees causes 1d6 casualties. Once the attacks are made, the great dragon flies off. If Verminaard or Ember is killed, he should meet an obscure death.

Event #7: Fizban Found

This event takes place only if the PCs enter encounter area 160 before they enter encounter area 162.

A strange, shabbily dressed old man is just ahead of you. He wears a long beard and a floppy hat. He seems to be deeply involved in conversation with a large tree. The tree does not seem to be responding. As you watch, the old man gets very frustrated that the tree is not answering.

Fizban welcomes any invitation to join the party, since he has nothing better to do. Even if the party doesn't invite him to tag along, he will follow anyway.

Event #8: The Final Battle

When the Dragonarmy occupies all encounter areas in Event #5, it pauses for two days to consolidate its conquests—then it advances once more. It takes one encounter area every 12 hours, saving encounter area 164 for last. If the refugees have not escaped by then, the Dragonarmy finds them. Each hour, 100 Baaz draconians attack until all refugees and PCs die, flee, or are captured. If this happens, the PCs have failed. Make a note of how much time remains before the Dragonarmy conquers all—this determines how much time the PCs have to complete the remaining adventures of this first book of the DRAGONLANCE® saga.

Event #9: The Refugees Encamp

This event takes place on the first night the refugees reach encounter area 163.

The chill of night is pushed back by a tremendous bonfire in the center of the camp. This night, at least, the people do not live in fear. The sounds of merriment and music float over the crackle of the fire. Elistan, with quiet majesty, stands. A hush falls over the people.

"Hear now the retelling of the Great Tale, the Canticle of our people," he says.

Ask each player in turn to read aloud one verse of the Canticle, from first to last.

Encounters

Encounters in this chapter are keyed to the Abanasinia Wilderness map. Whenever the PCs cross an encounter border on the keyed map, the encounter takes place immediately. If the PCs enter an area with the same number more than once, simply repeat the encounter.

144. Ice Passage

Sheer walls of granite form a narrow canyon through the snow. From the north comes the distant thunder of siege engines. The south is silent, except for the mournful wind.

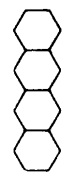
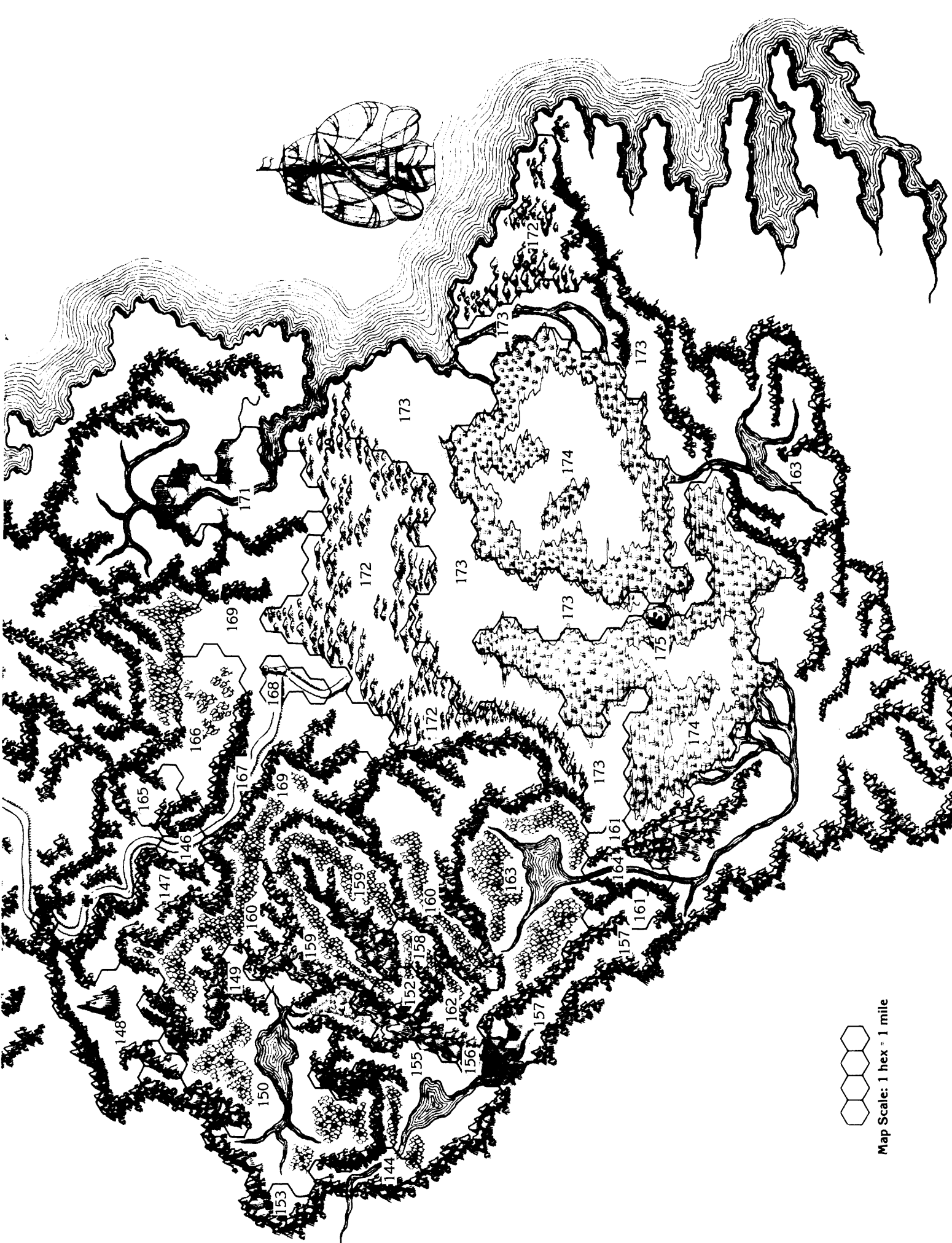
Each turn that the PCs are in this area, they are attacked by eight Baaz draconians who fight until killed.

145. Pax Tharkas

The fortress of Pax Tharkas looms on the horizon. The sounds of a great army resound over the stone walls. A thundering boom shakes the earth. The armies of the Dragon Highlord demand passage!

Dark forms climb onto the wall, spread leathery wings, and glide down to the canyon floor.

This assumes that the gates to Pax Tharkas were blocked during the escape. If not, then the Dragonarmy is



Map Scale: 1 hex = 1 mile

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mustering before the gates.

Eight Baaz draconians discover the heroes after three rounds and fight until killed. PCs who try to hide have a base 50% chance (thieves add their hide in shadows chance) of escaping the notice of the draconians. Check once every three turns.

If the PCs are discovered, the draconians attack and also call for help; 1d4 draconians join the melee every three rounds.

Draconians continually clamber over the walls of Pax Tharkas. Once down, they form into squadrons and move south down the pass.

Any captured draconians coerced into talking (60% chance) say that the entire Dragonarmy is inside Pax Tharkas, but it is only a matter of time before they march against the refugees.

146. Southern Road

The broken remains of an ancient roadway glitter with windswept ice. Here and there, old monuments of stone jut from the frozen ground. Their surfaces are covered with snow-filled runes.

To the south, the way branches. The roadway, mostly buried in the snow, turns to the east. To the west is a mountain pass that leaves the road. A set of small footprints follows the southwest route.

The monuments are ten feet tall and four feet in diameter. The runes are written in the Thorbardin dwarf language. Anyone who can read dwarvish has a 70% chance of understanding the runes. The runes tell of the ancient dwarven kingdom of Thorbardin and of the Road of Kith-Kanan that linked the dwarves with their elven neighbors to the north.

A ranger inspecting the footprints can tell they were made by a dwarf. The prints are close together and can be easily followed.

147. Canyon Trail

The snow-filled canyon slopes gently upward. Footprints form a wavering line up the canyon floor.

These are the same tracks that were discovered in encounter 146.

148. Spire

The canyon opens into a great mountain bowl rimmed by majestic peaks. In the center of the bowl, a single mountain peak towers into the sky. The wind howls and snow spirals upward.

Several canyons open into this bowl: one to the north, one to the east, and three, filled with snow, to the south. A lone set of footprints winds from the eastern canyon to the middle canyon on the south.

These are the same tracks that were discovered in encounter 146.

149. Neidar Trails

A pine forest blankets this valley. Winding through the trees and up into the craggy canyons are many well-traveled paths through the snow. In the snow are tracks that show that something recently moved this way, dragging large objects behind it. The trail runs up into a narrow canyon.

The first time the PCs follow any of the Neidar trails, they encounter 12 dwarven axemen of the Neidar (Hill) dwarf tribe gathering wood. They are led by a dwarf named Zirkan.

Zirkan and his people do not trust strangers. They fight unless the heroes make it clear that they come in peace.

If the heroes convince Zirkan that they mean no harm, Zirkan offers to take them to his village, and escorts them to encounter area 150.

150. Kingdom of the Neidar

A tribal village lies beside a frozen lake. Wisps of smoke issue from the lodge-pole buildings and curl into the air.

This is the village of the Neidar tribe. If the heroes have made friends with Zirkan, they are invited to stay in the guest lodge for the night. The lodge consists of one room and a fireplace.

If the heroes have not met Zirkan, they are greeted with suspicion. The Neidar are always ready to fight, and they attack unless the heroes manage to convince the tribesmen of their good intent. There are 50 Neidar tribesmen and 100 noncombatants in the village.

Since Flint is a hill dwarf, he is well received. The Fireforge family is known to the Neidar, but Flint does not know any of the Neidar personally.

The Neidar are fascinated with fighting prowess. If a battle breaks out between the Neidar and the PCs, each dwarf retreats after his hit points drop below 50%. After 15 dwarves have retreated, the Neidar chieftain orders the battle to cease. If the PCs agree to a truce, the chieftain praises their fighting ability and seems quite friendly.

The chieftain grants an audience to the PCs. Although cordial, he makes it clear that the refugees can only stay overnight. He does grant safe passage through his kingdom. He listens to warnings about the Dragonarmy but refuses to flee. "Better to die in battle than live in cowardice," he says.

If asked about escape from the Dragonarmy, he says that the only escape is through the kingdom of the mountain dwarves, sealed off long ago during the Dwarfgate War. He does not know where the gates are, although he believes that important clues lie within the tomb of Fistan-dantilus under Skullcap Mountain (chapter 13). He says that others of his tribe have tried to explore the tomb, but none have ever returned.

If asked about food, the chieftain tells the PCs about encounter area

Chapter 11: The Way

153 (Honeycomb). He insists that the PCs give the Neidar 10% of all food gathered there. If they bring back the royal jelly, he gives them each a *battle axe +1* and a *shield +1*.

If Flint is with the party, the Neidar chieftain gives him a gift of a *battle axe +2*, a *shield +1*, and a suit of *chain mail +3*, because of his noble ancestry.

151. Valley of Clouds

The tall peaks of the Kharolis Mountains disappear in a deep, rolling fog that seems to arise from somewhere in the canyon ahead.

PCs who enter the valley find themselves in the midst of the clouds. The farther they go, the warmer the air gets. Soon the humidity becomes almost unbearable.

At the southern end of the valley, vents in the earth spew forth boiling hot steam. Anyone who falls into a vent suffers 3d6 points of scalding damage each round.

At the far end of the valley, where the visibility is only a few yards, PCs find the following.

The hot, clinging mists part to reveal a large, carved archway, more than 50 feet high. Runes are carved into the surrounding stone. The stonework is obviously of dwarven manufacture.

Anyone who reads dwarvish has an 80% chance of understanding the runes, which state:

*Enter ye hereby
The lands of Thorbardin
Follow the road that lies beyond
Into the justice
Of the Nine Thanes below.*

Through the arch lies a hall that goes into the mountain. The hall leads to encounter area 176 of chapter 12: Outpost Mines.

152. Southern Exit

Thin clouds of vapor billow from an arch carved into the stone of the mountain. Over the arch are carved dwarvish runes.

Anyone who reads dwarvish has an 80% chance of reading these runes. They say:

*Exit ye hereby
The lands of Thorbardin
Leaving on the road behind you
The justice
Of the Nine Thanes below.*

Beyond the arch, a hall extends as far as can be seen. A cobblestone road runs from the arch and turns to the southwest.

The hall leads to encounter area 189 of chapter 12: Outpost Mines.

153. Honeycomb

Sheer cliffs lead into a beautiful valley. The cliff face to the west is perforated with hundreds of caves.

There is a 20% chance (thieves add hear noise chance) to hear a deep buzzing sound coming from within the caves.

There is a 30% chance each game turn that 1d10 giant worker honeybees emerge from the caverns.

If the heroes enter any cave, they find a swarm of giant honeybees working inside a vast complex of honeycomb. In the lair are 48 giant worker honeybees, seven giant soldier honeybees, and one giant queen honeybee. The bees attack intruders.

There are 2,400 food units of honey here. If the queen bee is killed, the PCs find a deposit of royal jelly, the equivalent of four *potions of extra-healing* with the side effect of *cure disease*, worth 3,000 to 8,000 stl if a buyer is found.

154. Cold Cathedral

A waterfall is frozen in mid-descent, forming a wall of ice over a steep ravine.

Characters can climb down the frozen falls by rolling successful Dexterity Checks (failure means a slide of 60 feet and 3d6 points of damage).

155. Crystal Lake

A clear lake reflects the snow-capped peaks that surround the valley. To the southeast, the frozen meadowlands drop steeply into a canyon. To the northwest, a canyon opens into a mountain-rimmed bowl.

156. Bridge of Derkin

If Fizban the Fabulous has not yet been encountered, run event #7 immediately prior to this encounter.

The highlands end in a precipice that drops into a steep canyon leading southeast. On the northern edge, an ancient cobblestone road runs straight into a sheer cliff face in one direction and onto a large bridge in the other.

The bridge is weathered, and its stones are loose. Great arches rise out of the glacier below. The bridge leads to a road on the other side. The span of the central arch has given way—a gap of 30 yards blocks passage across the bridge.

The glacier drops 50 feet and levels off. Its ice is very smooth; a climber could easily slide into the canyon and the unknown lands beyond.

“Stand back!” Fizban suddenly cries, acting as if he just woke up. He stares out across the bridge and then spreads his arms wide, his sleeves flopping over his hands. “I see the way! Behold!” His hat topples over his face. “The powers. . . I. . . uh. . . powers. . . I. . .” He bats at the tassel that swings in front of his face. “Uh. . . oh. . . yes. . . powers I bring forth!”

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With a flurry and rustle of loose sleeves, the strange magician looses his spell. Improbably, a bridge span appears to cover the gap, bathed in brilliant light and apparently made completely of silver and gold.

Fizban's triumph is short-lived. Moments later, the bridge collapses completely, on both sides, taking the ground on which you stand with it. Fizban falls first, quickly disappearing into the canyon below. Uncontrollably, you slide down the glacier chute. The last thing you see as you slide off at breakneck speed to the south-east is the golden span, still floating high overhead.

The characters slide into encounter area 157.

157. Glacier Chute

Players find themselves sliding down the chute on their faces, backs, and sides, in complete disorder. Each PC must roll six Dexterity Checks; each failure results in 1d6 points of damage.

If the refugees also slide down the chute, total losses are 1d10 wagons (and all supplies carried) and 1d10 refugees.

158. Ice Forest

Pine trees coated in ice sparkle in the light. Billowing clouds swirl about. The frozen remains of a stone roadway lead southwest through the trees.

The clouds cover encounter area 152. The road leads to encounter area 162.

159. High-Mountain Bowl

This snow-covered valley is filled with pine trees.

160. Ice Forest

Ice-covered pines glitter in the sun. Broken sections of an ancient road run from southeast to northwest.

This road connected with the road in encounter area 158, but that was before the Cataclysm. Now the southeastern route ends in a solid cliff face.

161. Snow Passage

The canyon narrows here, with huge snowdrifts piled on either side. The drifts creak and groan under their own weight, threatening to collapse at the slightest vibration or sound.

Any sound louder than a whisper causes rumbling and shaking. Small chunks of snow tumble down the cliff face.

There is a chance that an avalanche occurs. Score any noises made as follows: Normal Voice = 1; Loud Voice = 2, Shout = 3. Noise scores are cumulative. When the total noise score reaches 7, an avalanche occurs.

An avalanche hits everyone in its path. PCs and named NPCs suffer 1d10 points of damage. Refugees caught in an avalanche lose 1d20 wagons (and supplies carried) and 1d20 people.

On the first occasion that PCs enter any encounter area 161, run the following section. If the PCs have already met Fizban, he disappears shortly before this section is run. See event #7 (and Fizban's NPC capsule) for details of Fizban the Fabulous.

As you enter the canyon, you see a lone figure scurrying in the distance, busy at some task. It seems to be an old man making a snow fort. Beside him is an immense wall of snowballs.

The snow fort is shaped like a small igloo, about four feet high and five feet in diameter. Inside, it seems sig-

nificantly larger—in fact, it is large enough to hold one more than the number of people who enter it.

The old man is, indeed, Fizban the Fabulous, absent-minded sorcerer. He introduces himself, whether or not he has already met the party. He talks in a very loud voice, causing the canyon walls to rumble ominously, but his voice never adds to the avalanche score.

He explains that he is building a "secret defense" against the Dragon-army. He urges the PCs to bring the refugees through the canyon to safety.

If the refugees enter the canyon, the dark shapes of draconians appear just behind them! A major force of nearly 1,000 foot soldiers charges the party!

An avalanche does not occur until the refugees are safely through the canyon and past the snow fort. Fizban tells the PCs to wait until the refugees are safely past the small fort, then says, "Now for my secret defense!" He points with pride at the immense wall of snowballs. "We'll throw them at the enemy!" he says with glee, and then does so.

Of course, the thrown snowballs do not stop the draconian advance. But, as the snowballs are taken from the wall, the overhang of snow over the pile becomes dangerously fragile. It creaks and rumbles, and then begins to collapse.

"Hurry! Into the fort!" Fizban cries as the wall collapses.

The avalanche crests over the snow fort and decimates the oncoming army. All attackers perish. When the heroes emerge, they find nothing but silence. Most of the draconians are buried under huge snowdrifts. However, enough short swords are found to equip all the fighting refugees with weapons.

162. Southern Bowl

Several canyons lead into the gently sloping valley before you. The biting wind moans through the trees.

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163. Hopeful Vale

A valley five miles wide, carpeted in great evergreen trees, lies before you. In the middle of the valley is a wide clearing containing a frozen freshwater lake.

Tracks of game animals are everywhere. Loose and broken timber is scattered about. The howling winds are now just a gentle breeze.

The refugees make camp here. Enough food is available for the refugees to gather at least 800 food units per day. On the first night in this valley, run event #9.

164. Southern Branch

The canyon walls broaden into snowy plains to the south. A river runs down from two mountain canyons and through the center of the valley into the plains.

165. Fallen Forest

A hardwood forest provides some shelter, yet there is something peculiar about these woods.

The western edge of the woods is normal. Toward the east, however, the forest changes. Trees lean toward the west. The eastern side of the trees have burn marks of increasing severity.

During the final throes of the Dwarfgate War, the wizard Fistandantilus cast a devastating spell that destroyed the Plains of Dergoth and much of the forest that covered it.

166. Blackened Wood

Blackened and scarred tree trunks can be seen through the snow. The trees all seem to have fallen in the same direction.

These trees are also part of the devastation caused by Fistandantilus. The refugees can find shelter here for a night against the wind and cold. However, this position cannot be defended against the Dragonarmy.

167. South Road

The plain of Dergoth stretches south. A few miles away is a tower by a huge stone slab. Next to them are the faint tracings of a road leading south. Beyond the tower are roiling hills dusted with snow. In the distance, purple mountains line the horizon.

168. The Eye of Elar

A solitary stone tower stands in the lonely plain. A single door of iron hangs twisted and open.

Next to the tower, about 100 feet away, is a giant, black slab of stone. Once runes were carved across its face, but they have worn smooth over the centuries and can no longer be read.

The tower is a hollow stone cylinder 100 feet high and 100 feet in diameter. A ten-foot-wide spiral staircase leads to a platform at the top.

On the platform, a steel framework supports a huge glass lens, now chipped and pitted at the edges. It is mounted so that the lens can be rotated as well as tilted. A smaller frame just to the right holds a second, smaller lens that is fixed at about eye level.

A hammer symbol is engraved on the floor of the tower behind and slightly to the left of the large lens. To the left of the hammer is an engraving of a sunset. An arrow is engraved in the base of the frame perpendicular to the plane of the lens. An arrow is also engraved along the tilt axis of the large lens.

This strange device has two purposes: showing the location of the gate to the dwarven kingdom and revealing the writing on the marble slab.

If the arrows on the plane and tilt axes of the lens are aligned to point to the hammer mark, a character looking through the smaller lens sees the magnified image of a sheer cliff face. This is actually the Dwarfgate, but there are no landmarks or clues to help locate it.

If the large lens is aligned so that

the arrows point to the sunset marks when it is actually sunset, a ringing sound comes from the lens. A brilliant red shaft of light appears and illuminates the stone slab. Glowing letters of gold appear where the light strikes. As the sun slowly sets, the shaft of light moves slowly down the slab, illuminating the mystic writing line by line. The runes are written in a dialect of dwarvish easily read by anyone who can read dwarvish. They state:

*In the time of Derkin,
Lord Thane under the mountain,
Did the world sunder
And darkness fell upon Krynn.
Look now upon the plain of war
Whereon brother slew brother,
And surged as a tide of death
To take that which was not theirs
From those who were cold of heart.
Look on as did Fistandantilus,
Magician past his age,
Through the Eye of Elar
At the Gates of Thorbardin,
Sealed now and forever against
Love and life.
Now only he holds the key
Buried with him far below.*

169. Way of the Warrior

Powdery snow blows in gusts across the ancient stones of a road.

Scattered about are relics of the Dwarfgate War—here a rusted helm, there a broken weapon. All found items are rusted beyond use and have no value.

170. Winterfruit Grove

Here, the dead forest comes alive with strange, copper-leaved trees.

These are winterfruit trees, which bloom and give fruit in the winter. The fruit of these trees is unusually nourishing; PCs can gather 2,400 food units here. Although there is food, there is no safety against the Dragonarmy here.

171. Trampled Plain

The mountains march north on either side of this three-mile-wide valley.

About a mile away is a dark spot in the snow.

The dark spot is a party of eight Baaz draconians lying dead in the snow. They have been stripped of valuables and weapons. Surrounding the corpses are large footprints of creatures that are not draconians.

If the PCs do not turn back, they are attacked by a party of 1d10 ogres. Every 1d6 turns that the PCs remain in this area, they are attacked by a new group of ogres—each group consisting of 1d4 more ogres than the previous one.

172. Hills of Blood

Snow-capped hill roll in seemingly endless procession to the horizon. There is no wind here, yet the moaning and rushing sounds of wind are heard.

173. Battle Plain

This flat plain shows scars of the Dwarfgate War. The blasted heath is punctuated by the rusting hulks of ancient, broken war machines. The wind howls across the plain.

Rusted, broken swords, shields, and armor litter the plain, obscured by sand and drifting snow. The great iron war machines stand draped in ice, monuments to destruction.

There is nothing of value here.

174. The Bog

Clouds of vapor rise from the warm surface of the swamp and fill the area with a thick chilling fog. Brown reeds clog the area so that you can see only a few feet ahead.

The characters hear the distant clatter of swords and faint battle cries in every direction. Sometimes the sounds seem very far away; at other times they appear to be very close.

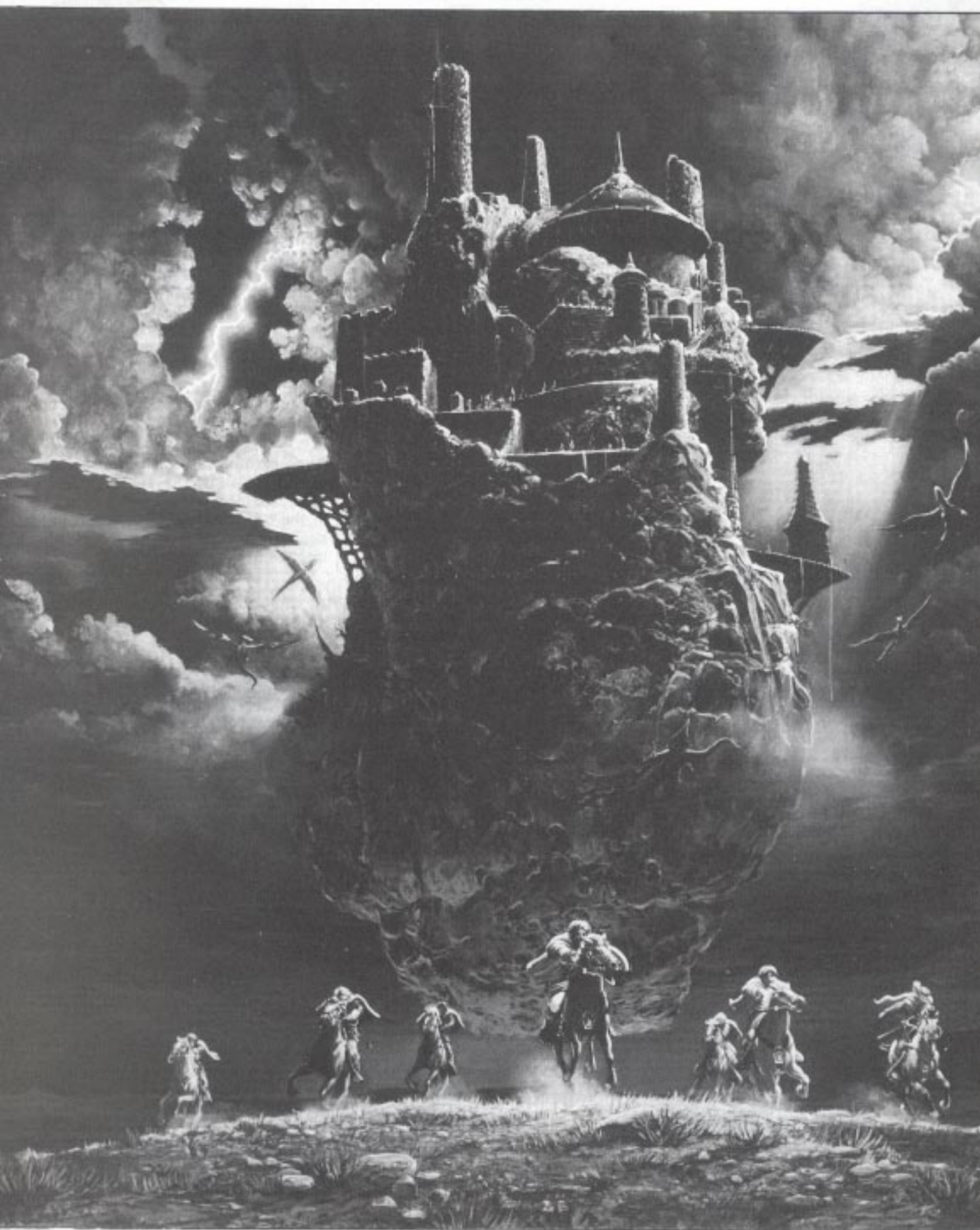
The waters of the swamp are surprisingly warm to the touch. If PCs enter the swamp, the sounds of battle seem to get closer. Within 1d10 rounds after PCs enter the swamp, ghostly spirits (guardian spectral minions) rise out of the swamp to fight each other. They ignore the PCs for 1d6 turns unless attacked. Thereafter, one spectral minion attacks the PCs. Each round the PCs remain in the swamp, one more spectral minion attacks. No more than two spectral minions attack any PC simultaneously. This process continues until the PCs leave the swamp or are killed.

175. Skullcap

A great mound of rubble rises from the swamp. Its craggy features resemble a skull half buried in the bog. The eye holes of the skull are gaping caverns leading into the mound.

Any exploration of Skullcap leads directly to chapter 13: Skullcap.





Chapter 12: The Outpost Mines

The dwarven kingdom of Thorbardin once controlled this entire region. Outposts—small cities—were built in convenient caverns. When the gates of Thorbardin were sealed forever during the Dwarfgate War, the small outposts were left to fend for themselves. Only one of the outposts survived, but even that is inhabited now only by the ludicrous Aghar dwarves.

Use the Steam Caverns map for the encounters in this chapter.

Encounters

176. Northern Entrance

Clouds of warm steam pour from a carved opening in the mountain wall. A 60-foot-wide corridor runs deep into the mountains. Giant statues, now broken, line the hall.

The broken statues are of long-dead dwarven heroes. There is nothing special about them. The corridor runs 600 feet south to encounter area 177. The air grows warmer farther down the corridor, becoming un-

comfortably hot. The northern entrance connects to encounter area 151 in chapter 11.

177. Junction

The steam grows hotter and thicker here. Three corridors intersect at this point: one leads north, one southeast, and one southwest. To the southeast, the steam gets denser and hotter and a distant hissing sound is heard.

All three corridors are 60 feet wide. Giant, broken statues line the way. The ceiling is 100 feet overhead.

178. Southern Route

A corridor runs southwest for about 850 feet and then turns south for about 1,000 feet. As you travel down this corridor, the temperature changes from uncomfortably hot to comfortably cool. The clouds of steam thin and disappear.

179. Southeastern Road

A corridor runs southeast for 280 feet, then turns south for 50 feet. The clouds of steam become thicker and hotter. Vision is limited to ten feet, regardless of the light source.

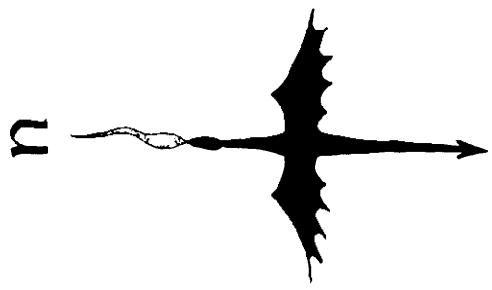
The heat quickly grows unbearable. If characters take off armor and winter garb, they can progress normally. If they do not remove these, they lose 1 point of Constitution every round they remain in the area. If a character's Constitution reaches 0, he faints and does not revive until brought to a cooler location. Lost Constitution points return after 1 d 10 rounds in a cooler environment.

180. Steam Caverns

Natural vents in the earth blast forth steam. The roar of the escaping steam is deafening. A maze of stalagmites and stalactites weaves through a huge cavern.



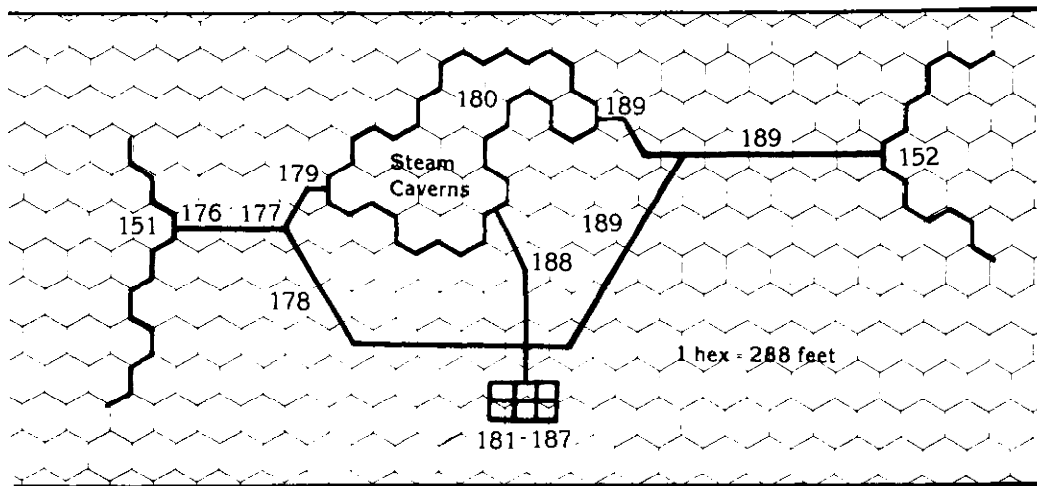
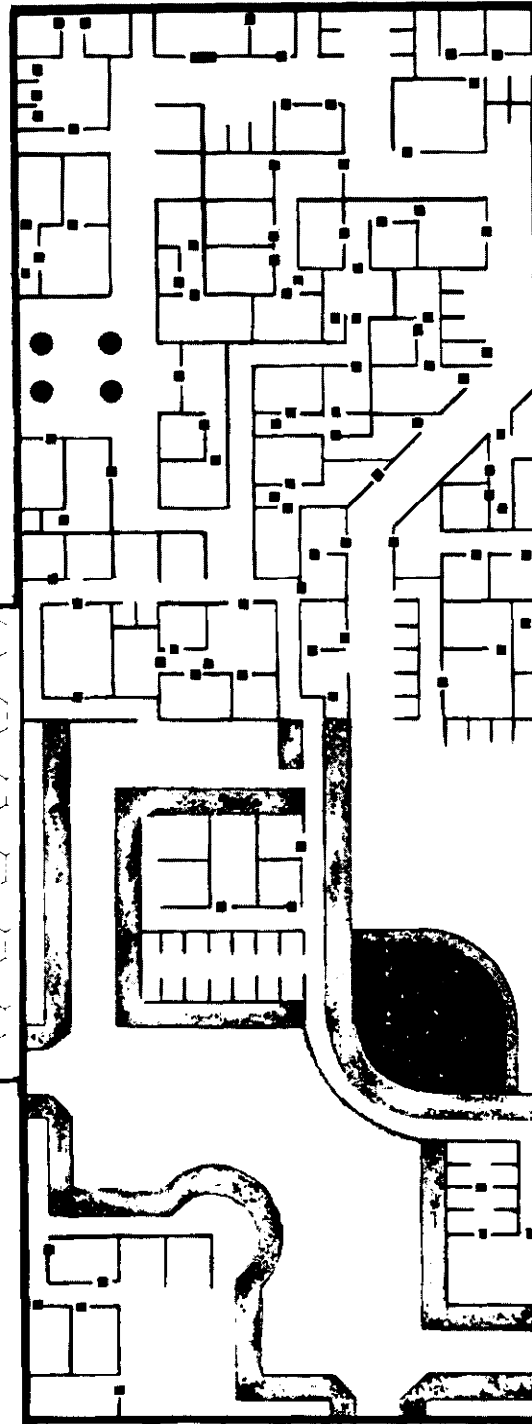
The Steam Caverns



Key

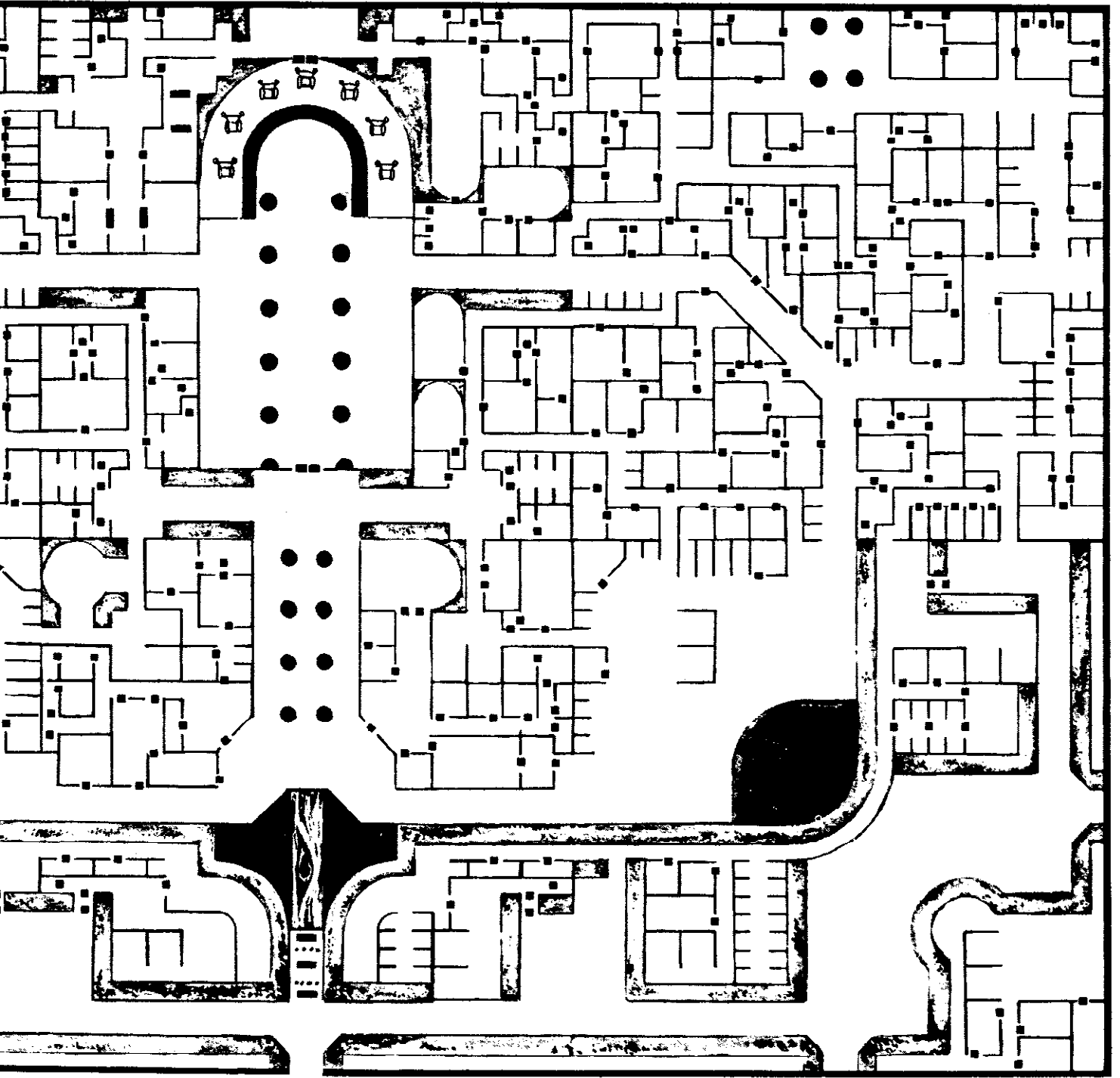
■	Door
▬	Wall
◐	Pit
●	Column
☞	Throne

1 Square - 5 feet





The Steam Caverns



Chapter 12: The Outpost Mines

Characters cannot see farther than ten feet, regardless of the light source. Infravision cannot be used. For every five feet characters travel in the steam, there is a 1 in 3 chance (1 or 2 on 1d6) that their path is blocked by either a steam vent or a stalagmite.

Lurking in the cavern are ten ogres, a vanguard of Verminaard's army that is searching for the refugees. They wandered into this cavern through the south entrance and, liking the warmth, have decided to stay for a while. They attack the heroes, trying for surprise, and fight until killed.

Constitution penalties (as in area 179) also apply here.

181. The Steam City

Although this city once held over 1,000 dwarves, now only 200 Aghar dwarves live here. The Steam City is a fine example of dwarven architecture, consisting of traditional map blocks grouped together to build a community. Now, most of the city has fallen in one encounter section. The players should not try to explore the entire city. If the players stray off course, improvise encounters with the Aghar society, such as it is.

182. East Gate

This corridor leads into a wide courtyard. Before you is a wide gate, obviously the work of master builders. In front of the gate is a strange sight: a single Aghar dwarf standing guard in the middle of the gate. His helmet is falling over his eyes and he is having considerable difficulty keeping his oversized halberd from falling to the ground.

This dwarf is supposed to guard against intruders, but he has a poor idea of how this is to be accomplished. As the characters approach, he calls out in his most challenging squeaky voice, "Halt! Answer me before I let you pass! Are you supposed to come into this kingdom?" If the answer is "Yes," he lets the party pass without question.

Once the guard has decided that the party can pass, he asks, "Are you here to see the great secret treasure of the Aghar?" If the answer is "Yes," he offers to lead the heroes to the Aghar Highphulph, Lord of Phulph Clan Aghar. If the heroes ask what the "great secret treasure" is, the Aghar won't tell them, since it's a secret.

This map block consists of the Great Gate and various shops and storehouses, mostly empty. All stairs lead nowhere. The Aghar leads the heroes directly to encounter area 183.

183. Court of the Thanes

You walk down a wide corridor with large columns on either side. The guard opens double doors that lead into a huge court. At the far end, a semicircle of thrones sits on a raised dais. On one of the thrones sits another Aghar dwarf—this one wearing a crown three sizes too big and ill-fitting robes. The guard whispers, "Don't be afraid. It's just His Magnificence, the Highphulph!"

The Highphulph welcomes the heroes in his squeaky voice. He asks them if they have come to see the great secret treasure. If the heroes answer "yes," he leads them to a small temple room (labeled "A" on the map). In the center of the room is a great slab of black stone. Before the stone is a circular dais of white stone. Gold letters are carved around the edge. Unfortunately, the Aghar cannot read (the Highphulph admits this with some embarrassment), and thus they have no idea what to do next.

The inscription is written in an old dialect of dwarven, readable by anyone who knows that language. It says, "Stand and ask, if you would receive knowledge." If any person stands on the dais and asks a question *in dwarven*, fiery letters appear in answer on the slab.

All questions must be about dwarvish matters, or else the answer will always be, "What has this to do

with the Dwarves of Thorbardin?" If asked about Skullcap, the Dwarf-gate, or Fistandantilus, the device tells the story of Fistandantilus. (Read the introductory material at the start of chapter 13.)

The device answers only three questions per day.

The Highphulph is ecstatic that he has finally found out how to use the great secret treasure. He asks the heroes what boon he can offer them, and provides anything within reason. (The Aghar are poor and stupid. They cannot provide very much.) He offers to allow the heroes and all the refugees to come live in his kingdom forever. (If the PCs propose this to the Council of Freedom, the leaders of the Woodfolk and the Plainsmen bitterly oppose living underground with Aghar.) He can provide up to 400 foot units, all unpleasant-tasting.

The rest of encounter area 183 consists of royal chambers (squalid), temples (mostly useless), and store-rooms (filled with garbage).

184 & 185. Walls of the City

The great wall forms a defensive perimeter about the ancient city. Store-rooms and barracks, both empty, can be found here. There are stairs that once went somewhere, but no longer. Pits lead deep into the earth. Any dwarf with the party recognizes them as the Pits of Reorx (god of the dwarves), a religious feature common to dwarven settlements.

There is nothing here of value or particular interest.

186 & 187. Residences

These blocks formed the residential area of the dwarven community. Now, most of the houses are empty. The ones inhabited by Aghar are easily found by their smell. Stairs lead nowhere.

188 & 189. Passages

These passages are identical to those in areas 177-179, except that area 188 runs between 180 and 181, and area 189 leads outside, through area 152.

Chapter 13: Skullcap

Following the Cataclysm, the hill dwarves and men of the Xak Tsaroth regions fled southward seeking refuge in the kingdom of the mountain dwarves. This kingdom, known as Thorbardin, could not support the hundreds of thousands of refugees, and thus the Thanes (rulers of the Kingdom) closed the gates against the refugees.

Disorganized and without leadership, the refugees proved no match for the organized and motivated forces of Thorbardin.

Then came Fistandantilus.

Fistandantilus was an ancient mage of the Age of Might that preceded the Cataclysm. Magic at that time was despised as an "impure" profession. Wizards, both great and small, became outcasts. Yet Fistandantilus foresaw a time when mages would again be important in Krynn. He knew not when, but he swore that he would be there when the time came.

The years came and went, but the day of magic's reign did not come. Eventually, Fistandantilus used magical means to prolong his life, until there was nothing left of him except

the magic. It was in this form that he greeted the Cataclysm. It was in the rabble at Thorbardin's gates that he saw his chance to regain the power he had lost.

He built a magical fortress at the roots of a mountain, and formed a great army to take Thorbardin. The battle raged across the valley. And, when his defeat looked certain, his vengeance knew no bounds. He loosed the most powerful magic he knew, and both his armies and his enemy's were consumed. His mountain fortress was blasted until only the shattered and glazed form of a giant skull remained—Skullcap.

Deep beneath Skullcap, legend has it, are the remains of Fistandantilus and the path to the gates of Thorbardin.

Encounters

190. Jaws of Death

The mouth of the skull-shaped mountain, 80 feet above the swampy plain, forms a cavern leading deep inside.

Rubble is piled 50 feet high before the cavern. It can be climbed easily. The remaining 30 feet is made of the glassy black material that covers all of Skullcap.

The surface of Skullcap is blue-black, as though burned and melted by tremendous fires. It is now icy and cold to the touch, and impossible to climb normally (climb walls penalty of -50%). Ropes or other devices must be used.

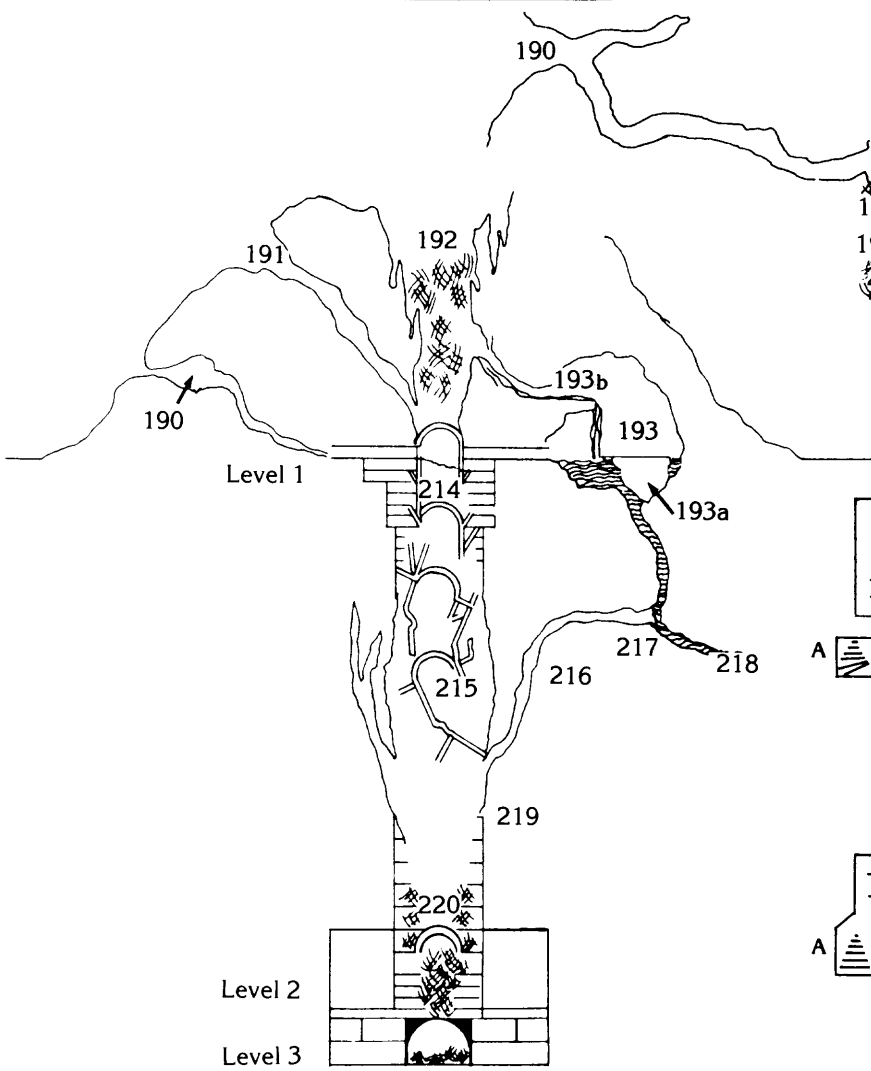
Jagged stalactites and stalagmites form the "teeth" of the skull. Once inside the cavern, characters see the following:

Stalactites and stalagmites form grotesque rows of teeth. At the back of the opening, a natural tunnel descends into the mountain.

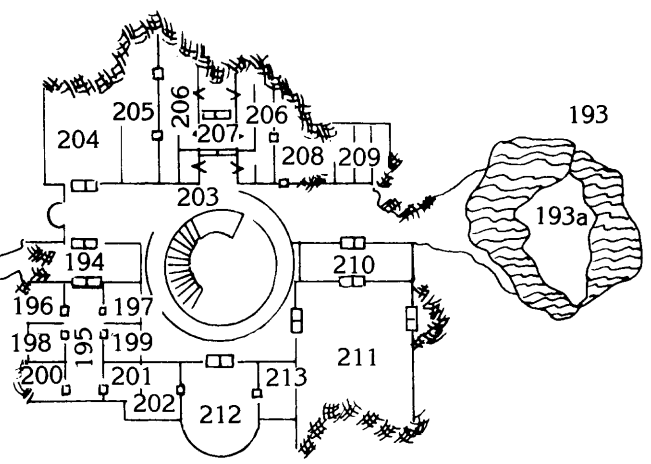
The tunnel is made of the same fused black rock as the outside of Skullcap. After 20 feet of gentle downward slope, the angle of the tunnel changes to a 70-degree incline—too steep and smooth to walk. Characters can use ropes and spikes to descend, or they can slide down the



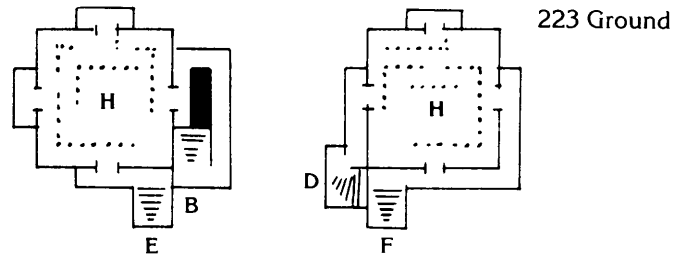
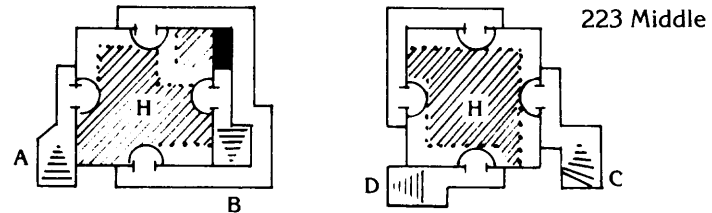
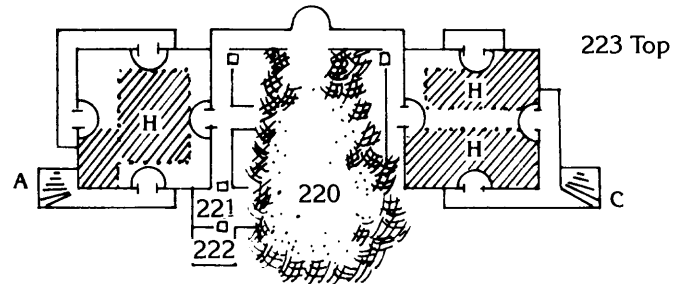
Skullcap



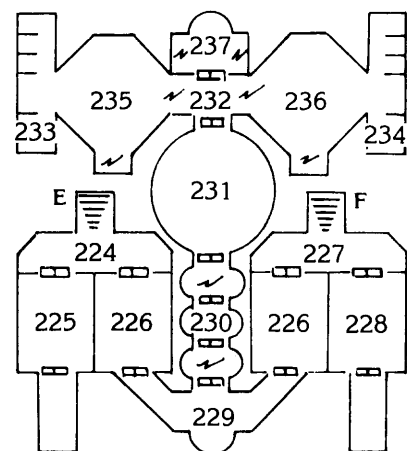
Cross Section



Level One














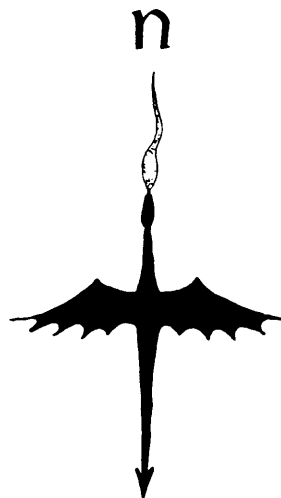
Level Two



Level Three

Scale: 1 square = 5 feet

-  Rubble
-  Water
-  Metal Framework
-  Spiral Staircase
-  Stairs
-  Magical Field
-  Invisible Wall
-  Pit
-  Arrow Slit
-  Door
-  Double Door



Chapter 13: Skullcap

smooth tunnel. The tunnel leads to encounter area 194. Climbing up the tunnel from the bottom is the same as climbing the smooth exterior of the mountain.

191. Eye of the Dead

The eye sockets of the skull-shaped mountain form caverns leading deep within.

Both these caves are identical. At the back of each is a small tunnel leading down at a 70-degree angle. However, they are not made out of the fused glassy material, and handholds are available for an easy descent.

Both tunnels lead to the same place: a metal framework overlooking encounter area 203. There are no handholds down; characters must tie a rope to the metal framework and lower themselves to the floor, or use equivalent means.

192. Rubble Crater

A large crater forms the top of Skullcap. The crater is filled with rubble. Strange and tortured shapes of stone twist skyward, obscuring the bottom of the bowl. A pool of water has collected at the bottom.

If characters explore the bottom of the bowl, they find a 20-foot-wide shaft descending at a 60-degree angle. It can be climbed slowly and with some difficulty. After 70 feet, the walls become glass-smooth.

The shaft leads to the upper ledge of encounter area 193. The pool of water has an outlet at the bottom five feet wide; it leads to the waterfall in area 193.

193. Shadowlair

The sound of rushing water fills this large cavern. A waterfall pours into a large pool covering the cavern floor. In the middle, surrounded by water, is a small island, on which are piled gems and weapons.

The cavern is 100 feet across. A pool of water covers the cavern floor from the exit to area 203 to the lower platform (area 193a). Behind the lower platform is a small tunnel (leading to area 218) that serves as the drain for the pool.

A waterfall empties into the pool from the bowl above (area 192). At the level of the waterfall is an upper platform (area 193b). A five-foot-wide ledge at the level of the upper platform goes around the entire edge of the cavern.

On the upper platform, beside the waterfall, resides a shadow dragon.

The shadow dragon, an ancient, huge member of its race, was bound by Fistandantilus long ago to guard this fortress as long as Fistandantilus remained alive on this earth. The shadow dragon, who can speak, mentions this to anyone it has not yet eaten.

The shadow dragon prefers to rest on the upper platform and wait for adventurers to raid its store of treasure. Then it attacks, using breath weapon and spells first.

The shadow dragon has an Intelligence of 18 and speaks common, hill dwarf, mountain dwarf, and all dragon tongues. It has the following spells (cast as an 8th-level mage):

1st Level: *magic missile*, *phantasmal force*

2nd Level: *darkness (15' radius)*, *fog cloud*

3rd Level: *fireball*, *suggestion*

4th Level: *confusion*, *shadow monsters*

The treasure consists of 900 pp, 21 500-stl gems, 3,000 stl, one suit of human-sized *chain mail +2*, two *potions of clairaudience*, and *boots of levitation*.

194. Lords' Hall

Faded tapestries, depicting men and dwarves at war, line the walls.

195. Generals' Way

Ancient dust fills the corridor. Stains streak the metal finish on each of the doors.

These doors are oak covered with silver, worth 1,000 stl each.

196-200. Empty Rooms

Broken furniture is strewn about.

The room is otherwise empty. There is nothing of value here.

201. Brass Buttons

On a broken table is an old tunic with brass buttons on it.

A spectre appears and attacks if the brass buttons are disturbed.

202. Priesthood West

This room is empty.

203. Great Stairwell

A central stairway descends deep into the mountain. Torn by the same terrible forces that long ago ravaged Skullcap, the iron framework that once supported these stairs is now twisted and wrenched. Overhead, the ceiling is shattered, revealing the iron frame that once held the stairway.

The stairwell is 60 feet in diameter. A ten-foot-wide staircase circles down about 20 feet to area 214 (Twisted Iron). The dome above leads to area 191.

204. Armory

A grey hemisphere shimmers in the center of the room. Armor stands gleaming against the walls.

Anyone who enters the room can see into the hemisphere. Read the following:

Chapter 13: Skullcap

A gleaming metallic dragon is frozen in mid-flight, its mouth gaping open. Below it, a goblin is also frozen, this one in mid-stride as though fleeing for its life.

If a nonmagical piece of iron or steel touches the grey hemisphere, it vanishes like a popped soap bubble. Nothing else will break the spell. The instant the hemisphere vanishes, the temporal stasis that holds the two creatures breaks. With a lunge, the brass dragon devours the goblin in a single bite. Then it notices the party.

The brass dragon is understandably confused, since it has been frozen for 350 years. Shocked by the changes, it pauses. If the characters attack first, it will fight back, but if they do not, it asks them what has happened.

The brass dragon's name is Blaize. It was part of the attacking force during the Dwarfgate War, and the last thing it remembers is Fistandantilus casting a spell. It does not know anything about the disappearance of dragons from the world, or about the recent reappearance of the evil dragons. When the current state of the world is explained, it does not have any idea why the good dragons have not entered the fray.

Blaize is a bit of a braggart and loves to talk about its great feats in the war.

The dragon is very interested in the history of the current war. It tells the characters that it will seek out good dragons, if any remain, to help their cause. In the meantime, it offers to accompany the heroes for the a while. It can fit through double doors, though not through single ones.

Blaize remains with the party until one of three events occurs: Verminaard and Ember attack (see Event #6), the heroes battle the shadow dragon (area 193), or the heroes leave Skullcap.

If Blaize fights the shadow dragon, run combat normally until the shadow dragon is dead.

If Blaize fights Verminaard and Ember, he flies up and engages the red dragon. When Ember uses his

breath weapon, the brass dragon flees and Ember pursues. Blaize flies toward the nearest mountain and weaves among the sandstone cliffs. Both weave out of sight and do not return.

Blaize is a small, adult brass dragon, and has the following spells:
1st Level: *magic missile*, *protection from evil*, *sleep*
2nd Level: *continual light*, *web*

The armory contains the following treasure: three suits of plate mail, three *shields +1*, two *javelins of lightning*, and two *cloaks of protection +2*.

205. West Guards Hall

This room is empty.

206. Arrow Slits

Six wraiths are in each of these rooms. They are armed with bows and arrows and fire through the slits at anyone in area 207.

207. Gateway

The iron doors are bowed inward, yet remain shut. A half-inch slit is open between the doors.

Any character checking the walls discovers the arrow slits. If anyone opens the doors at the northern end, the wraiths close the doors at the southern end and begin firing.

208-209. Trashed Halls

Each of these rooms contains lots of smashed furniture and a nest of 4d10 giant rats.

210. Guardians

The doors open to reveal a once-plush room, now in rags. Golden double doors at the far end of the room are closed. Shadowy forms lurk about.

These are the harmless spirits of the fine lords and ladies who once feasted in this hall, but died during Fistandantilus's defeat. They ignore

any attack and do not fight back.

211. Ballroom

An immense hall stretches into darkness. Shadowy figures swing and sway to a music that cannot be heard.

Most of the dancers are harmless spirits like those in area 210. However, the room contains two spectres that were once generals in the army of Fistandantilus. They move to attack.

212. Altar

A skeleton lies draped over a low altar along the far wall. Its armor is rusted, but a gleaming sword lies next to the figure, still grasped in its hand. A rolled parchment is clutched in its other hand.

This is the skeleton of a good warrior who died in battle here. It is not animated in any way. The armor is useless, but the sword is a *vorpal long sword +3*. The scroll shows general details of the mountain forest before its destruction. It shows that a gate-hall once extended from the north side of the mountain to what is now area 207. The map shows that the central stairwell was the only way to reach the lower levels. The chambers of Fistandantilus are marked on the map. They appear to be directly beneath the bottom of the staircase. The chambers can be reached only through a huge room that is not described on the scroll map.

213. Eastern Priests' Room

This room is empty.

214. Twisted Iron

The stone steps circle down about 20 feet, and then stop. The shaft once occupied by stairs is torn and blasted. A tangled mesh of twisted iron framework hangs down into the cold darkness below.

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All the floors between the first floor and the bottom of this staircase were gutted by Fistantilus's final spell. Nothing remains but rubble. Most of this shaft, in fact, is now made of the same glazed material as the exterior of Skullcap.

The iron framework hanging in the darkness once supported the center of the fortress. It now hangs suspended from the top seven floors of the collapsed area, and hangs freely down to a depth of 270 feet. By fate, one end of the frame was imbedded in the wall ten feet above the cavern entrance at area 215.

Although the frame looks dangerous, it is actually well secured. Climbing down, however, is torturous work at best. There is a 20% chance per turn that the characters' movement causes the entire structure to sway. Each person not secured by rope or other means must roll a Dexterity check. Characters who fail start to fall off the structure, but they get to roll a second Dexterity check, this one with a -5 penalty to their Dexterity, to catch onto another part of the frame. If the second check fails, the character falls to the bottom, suffering normal falling damage.

Blaize cannot climb down or fly down the shaft. He offers to wait until the characters return.

215-216. Crevasse Climb

The blast caused a deep fissure in the rock here. Although the fissure is made of glazed stone, cracks in the stone make convenient hand holds.

The tunnel rises steeply for 150 feet and then descends slightly to area 217.

217. Drain

This is where water from the tunnel at area 193 runs out. The tunnel continues west.

218. Waterway

The water from the tunnel at area 193 washes down here. The tunnel

cannot be climbed without magical aid.

219. Collapsed

Once, there were additional levels here. Now, only the edges of the floors remain, edges glazed smooth, jutting from the walls of the shaft.

Ropes can easily be secured on these ledges. If characters try to climb from ledge to ledge without ropes or equivalent aid, they must roll a successful Dexterity check when they reach each ledge, or they fall to the bottom.

220. Shifting Corridors

At the bottom of the shaft, a tangle of jagged stone and iron forms a steep mound. In the center of the mound, a narrow funnel leads down to the top of an iron framework that was once a dome. Beneath the dome is a rubble-strewn floor.

Climbing is easy here. If the rubble is searched, broken bones and skulls are found.

As soon as characters reach the iron framework, they are attacked by three skeleton warriors. These beings are still enslaved by Fistantilus's powerful magic, and they attack the adventurers until dead or the adventurers flee. While attacking, they beg the heroes to recover the circlets and free them from their servitude. If the characters succeed in recovering the circlets and give them to the warriors, the warriors instantly disappear. PCs should receive full experience points for such a noble act, as if they actually defeated the creatures.

221. Skeleton Key

A skeleton in once-fine robes slumps over a stone table in the center of the room. A set of rusted keys on a ring hang at its side.

Neither the skeleton nor the keys are magical. The keys (there are seven) are the Keys of the Guardian, and will come in handy later.

222. Locker

This room is empty.

223. Crystal Maze

You are standing on a balcony overlooking a 70-foot-square room that is 60 feet from floor to ceiling. The balcony you are on is ten feet from the ceiling. Across from you and on the wall to either side are identical balconies—four total, including the one you occupy. Beneath you is a second set of four balconies, each 20 feet above the floor. Four archways exit the room from the floor level. The room is brightly lit by a globe in the ceiling.

But none of this is as impressive as the creature in the middle of the room—a hydra constructed entirely of metal. As you enter the room, it grinds slowly into motion. One of its 12 heads turns toward you while another spews flame against the ceiling!

The iron hydra is a mechanical construct. It is AC 0 and hits as a 12-HD monster. Its breath weapon causes 6d6 points of damage (successful saving throw reduces this in half). Each head can attack once per round, inflicting biting damage of 2d8 points. Each head takes 20 points of damage to destroy; the entire monster can withstand 100 points of damage before falling apart.

Once, each of the 12 heads could breath fire three times per day. Now the hydra in the western room has only three functioning heads, while that in the eastern room has only one functioning head. Both creatures expend one breath against the ceiling in warning.

Both the eastern and western rooms are actually magical mazes. The open room the adventurers see is the product of *permanent invisibility* and *permanent illusion* spells.

Chapter 13: Skullcap

Actually, there are three floors of walls, ceilings, stairs, and shafts—a maze of crystal to trap the unwary.

The actual room contents can be seen only if a wizard casts both *detect invisibility* and *detect illusion* (either one alone will not suffice), or a *detect magic* spell.

The invisible walls of the maze resist the hydra's breath. If the proper route is followed, adventurers can walk through each level of the maze to the appropriate exit, descend to the next level, and eventually depart the maze. If a character walks into the shaded area of the map, he falls into the pit (there are no railings on the magically concealed stone walkways), suffering falling damage, and is attacked by the hydra. If a character walks into an area not protected from the hydra by a wall, the hydra first breathes and then attacks with 1d4 heads.

In addition to the iron hydra, the room is also occupied by three invisible stalkers (*detect invisibility* also detects them) that attack anyone not carrying one of the Keys of the Guardian (encounter area 121). If Fistandantilus is finally destroyed, these stalkers vanish.

Each room's maze occupies three levels. The exit from each maze (labeled "E" and "F" on the map) leads down to Level 3, where the PCs adventures in Skullcap will conclude.

224. Western Entrance

A grotesque statue of a man with a single huge eye stares at the staircase. A set of golden double doors stands on either side of the statue.

The giant eye seems to follow the characters as they move about the room. If they move toward the western doors, the statue appears to smile. If they move toward the eastern doors, the statue appears to frown. It does nothing else.

If the statue is attacked, it falls and shatters. The head continues to function as long as it remains intact.

225. Wrong Turn

This room is lit by dim red globes on the ceiling. In the center, a large stone statue of a dwarf stands. Its legs are planted on the floor, its hands press against the ceiling. Another set of golden doors is behind the statue.

The stone walls have scorch marks on them. If the golden doors are opened, a smaller room is revealed. There is nothing in it.

Once, long ago, there was a fireball trap here, but it was triggered long ago and never replenished.

226. Trap!

This room appears identical to area 225, including the stone statue.

This room has a permanent *reverse gravity* spell and a stone golem operating in it. There is only one way to travel through it without activating the golem.

When Fistandantilus wished to pass through this chamber, he entered through one set of doors and was immediately pulled to the ceiling by the reversed gravity. To avoid hitting the ceiling, he grasped an invisible stone ladder to the right of the doors. Once on the ceiling, he walked to the other set of doors, where the *reversegravity* spell ended, and he used the invisible stone ladder by those doors to prevent himself from smashing onto the floor.

If characters miss the invisible stone ladder, they fly up and hit the ceiling (or fly down and hit the floor, at the far doors) for 1d6 points of falling damage. Any character who falls to the ceiling or floor immediately activates the stone golem. The statue attacks all moving creatures in the room. The golem senses its prey by movement: if all characters stand still for two rounds, the golem returns to its original position and the characters can move safely. However, if anyone falls again, the golem is reactivated.

227. Eastern Entrance

This area is identical to area 224. The only difference is that the statue smiles at movement toward the eastern doors and frowns at movement toward the western doors.

228. Pressure Pot

This room is empty except for stone double doors in the middle of both end walls.

If the stone door at the southern end is opened, a *fireball* trap is sprung, causing 10d6 points of damage to everyone in the room.

229. Alcove

A statue stands in the shadows of an alcove where the two corridors meet. Double doors made of iron face north.

The iron doors are wizard locked and can be opened only by a *knock* spell or by the Keys of the Guardian (from area 221).

The statue is of Nuitari, the god of dark magic, in his aspect of Knowledge. This is one of the Seven Faces of Nuitari. A magical spell allows Fistandantilus to see any visitors through its eyes, so he cannot be surprised.

230. Rites of Passage

The iron doors open to reveal a short corridor 20 feet wide that leads to a second set of iron double doors. On either side, alcoves contain statues draped in heavy shadow.

Four sets of double doors separate area 229 from area 231. Signs of the final blast of Fistandantilus streak the walls here.

Each set of double doors is wizard locked, and can be opened only with a *knock* spell or with the Keys of the Guardian.

The shadowy figures in the alcoves (two in each segment of corridor) are

Chapter 13: Skullcap

statues of the remaining six faces of Nuitari. Each statue radiates magic. As the characters move through the corridors, they pass through the magic fields between the statues. The magic effects, described below, can be prevented either if a *dispel magic* spell is cast, or if the Keys of the Guardian are inserted in a small keyhole at the base of each statue.

The first pair of statues represents Death and Chaos. The magical field casts *dispel magic* on anyone and anything passing through. There is no keyhole in the base of these statues.

The second pair of statues represents Might and Wealth. The magical field polymorphs any weapon passing through it into wood. The weapons return to normal if they are passed through the field in the opposite direction (when exiting, for example).

The third pair of statues represents Youth and Passion. The magic field casts a *charm person* spell on any person passing through, with the specific effect that charmed characters cannot harm Fistandantilus.

231. Chambers of Fistandantilus

The ceiling, once a dome of marble, is now shattered. Huge stone blocks litter the floor and block the opening above. In the center of the room, a metallic object shines brightly.

The metallic object is actually three circlets—the controllers of the skeleton warriors at area 220.

The circlets lie next to the broken skull of a human lying among shattered bones in a pile of rubble in the center of the room. If the characters approach within 20 feet of the skull, the following occurs:

The broken skull rises into the air, the dust from the rubble swirling up in a howling wind and forming about it in the rough shape of a man!

This is the demilich form of Fistandantilus. If the characters do not attack it, after three rounds it settles back into dust. It does not move from the spot where it stands, and does not stop the passing of the adventurers into the next chamber.

Recovering the circlets is not considered an attack.

232. Treasure Junction

Twenty-foot-high archways open in both the western and eastern sides of this hall, leading into brilliantly lit treasure rooms. A set of iron doors to the north stands closed.

The doors to the north are *wizard* locked and can be opened only with a *knock* spell or the Keys of the Guardian.

If characters look through the archways, they see areas 235 and 236. Read the descriptions of those areas if requested.

The archways are actually teleportals. The western archway leads directly to area 233; the eastern archway leads to area 234.

The only way into the treasure rooms is by casting a *dispel magic* spell, which negates the teleportal for the duration of the spell, or by inserting the Keys of the Guardian in a secret keyhole (discover as a normal secret door).

233. Western Cages

Rows of cages contain the skeletal remains of those once trapped here.

Anyone entering the great archway leading to area 235 suddenly finds himself in area 232.

234. Eastern Cages

Rows of cages contain the skeletal remains of those once trapped here.

Anyone entering the great archway leading to area 236 suddenly finds himself in area 232.

235. Western Treasure

A dome of brilliant white light illuminates the room. Piled about the floor is the treasure of Fistandantilus. A shining dwarven helm adorned with large gems is prominent in the pile.

The treasure consists of 4,500 stl, 8,000 pp, 52 800-stl gems, 12 pieces of jewelry worth 1,000 stl each, a set of dwarven *plate mail* + 3, and the *helm of Grallen*.

The *helm of Grallen* is a dwarven helm set with 12 large gems (1,000 stl each). The enchantment of the helm is that if the wearer should be killed, his soul is instantly *magic jarred* into one of the gems.

The helm was made for Grallen, Prince of the mountain dwarves and son of the great dwarven king, Derkin, when he rode off to fight Fistandantilus in the Dwarfgate War.

Anyone who puts on the helmet activates the *magic jar* spell. The soul of Grallen possesses the wearer (no saving throw). The wearer's life force is transferred to a gem.

When this happens, Prince Grallen immediately bows to the characters and tells the following story:

I am Grallen, prince of the mountain dwarves, killed by the forces of evil in the Dwarfgate War.

By means of this magical helm, I have survived these centuries that my tale and fate may be told.

I rode forth on the morning of the last battle in the great charge of Hylar dwarves. We came from the North Gate of Thorbardin across the Plains of Dergoth. My troop assaulted the mountain home of the Dark Wizard here. My brothers fought with courage and valor; many fell with honor at my side.

Yet when the tide of battle turned in our favor, and I confronted the wizard in his lair, he smiled, and a great magic rushed from his being. A flame of power and horror broke through stone and steel.

Chapter 13: Skullcap

Thus, in his rage and despair, he destroyed both his allies and his enemies.

Thus did I die.

Now I beseech thee, return my soul to the kingdom of the Hylar in Thorbardin, tell my story to the Council of Thanes, and give me a proper resting place in the Valley of the Kings.

Grallen stands silently after his story is told. He explains how to find the North Gate entrance to Thorbardin if asked. He answers any other questions put to him to the best of his ability.

Once all questions have been asked and answered, Grallen sends his life force back into the gem. The wearer of the helm becomes normal again, though he is disoriented and cannot fight for 1d6 turns.

236. Eastern Treasure

A globe of brilliant white light illuminates the room. Piled about the floor is the glittering treasure of Fistandantilus. Prominent among the treasure is a dwarven map case.

The map case contains a map showing the route from Skullcap to the gates of Thorbardin.

In addition to the map, there are 5,000 stl, 5,000 pp, 42 500-stl gems, and 12 pieces of jewelry worth 1,000 stl each.

237. Access

The double doors open into a square room with great archways on either side. Each archway leads to a 10-foot-deep alcove.

The western alcove is a teleportal to and from the southern alcove in area 235. The eastern alcove is a teleportal to and from the southern alcove in area 236.





Epilogue

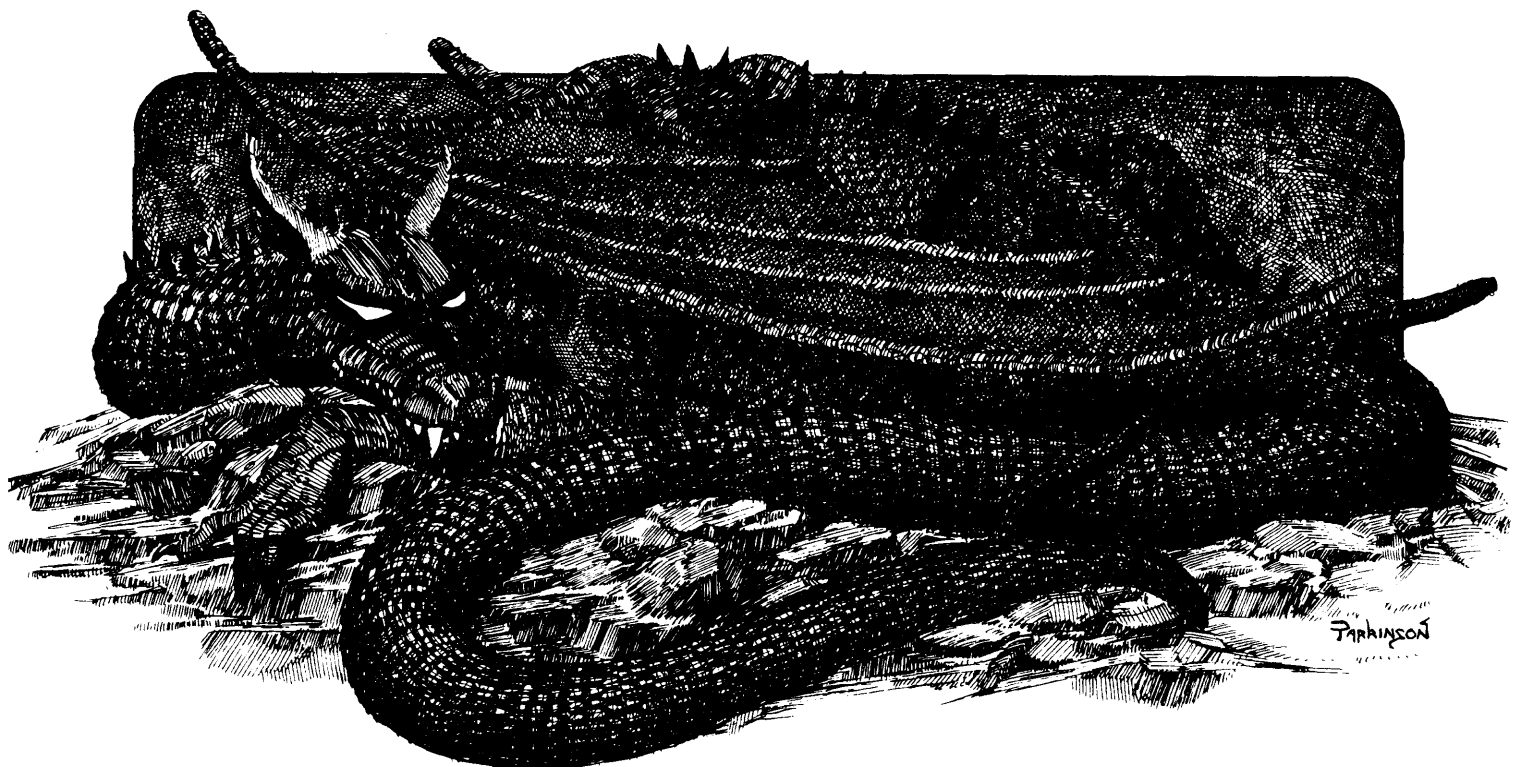


This portion of the adventure ends when the heroes find a safe temporary home for the refugees (area 163) and discover the route to the doors of the dwarven kingdom. When those conditions are met, read the following:

Tonight is a time for feasting and celebration—the first moments of happiness in many long days. For the refugees of Pax Tharkas have found at least temporary safety from the advancing Dragonarmy, and you have discovered information leading to the long-lost dwarven kingdom of Thorbardin.

Tomorrow you will adventure once more, but tonight the Council of Freedom toasts your success. Even dour Locar, the Seeker leader, praises you tonight. And Elistan, a true priest and good friend, pledges you the support of the people.

You accept the cheers of the refugees, and you drink the newly-made mead around the warm campfires. In spite of great dangers to come, tonight there is hope.





Chapter 14: The Doors of Thorbardin

The PCs' Mission

Eight hundred refugees are fleeing the army of the Dragon Highlord. They were forced to enter a wilderness ringed by impassable mountains. The only route to safety is through the ancient dwarven kingdom of Thorbardin—but the gates to Thorbardin have been hidden for over 300 years. The PCs must find the gates to Thorbardin, get permission for the refugees to cross through, and get back before the Dragonarmy attacks the refugee camp.

Time

As mentioned earlier in this adventure, the Dragonarmy conquers areas of wilderness on a regular basis. Be sure to keep track of the time available to the refugees. If you have lost track, assume that the heroes now have seven days to complete their quest. Do not tell the players how much time they have. The Epilogue tells what happens if the heroes succeed or fail.

Events

Event # 1: Departure of Elistan

The adventure begins in the camp of the refugees at midnight of the same night in the Epilogue after chapter 13.

You are summoned to a late night meeting of the refugees Council of Freedom. When you arrive, you notice that Elistan seems strangely peaceful. "The Dragonarmy is approaching, and now you must find the way to the gates of Thorbardin. It is the only hope for our people. There is little time; waste none of it. As for me, I now know what must be done," he says. "To the hope of safety!" he says, lifting a flagon and drinking.

Although the flagon contains only water, as soon as Elistan drinks, he grows pale and shudders once. Then, eyes rolling back, he pitches forward.

Elistan has received a dream vision from Paladine, and has gone into the dream world to battle Verminaard. The PCs do not learn this until the end of the adventure.

Elistan cannot be revived by any means available to the party. He appears dead, but his body does not grow cold.

The Council asks the PCs to leave in the morning to find a way through Thorbardin. If the characters found a map to the gates earlier, they know where to go—otherwise, Fizban the Fabulous (see the NPC Capsules) now reveals that he knows exactly where the gates are.

Event #2: Dreams of Darkness

This event takes place the same night as event #1, as soon as the heroes fall asleep. All sleeping characters have the following dream:

You are standing in front of a huge door. You feel that there is a great evil behind it. The voice of Elistan, now very weak, is calling for you.

"I have entered this door and cannot find my way back," he cries. "Please! Come and bring that which I left behind!" He does not seem able to hear anything you say; he just repeats his cry over and over again.

Ask each player in turn if his PC will open the door. If all players refuse, the dream ends and the PCs awake; skip event #3 below. If even one character opens the door, read the next boxed section.

You feel yourself floating in a vast nothingness for an uncertain length of time—whether moments or centuries, you cannot tell. Suddenly, you are standing on an empty plain. In the distance, mountains are silhouetted against a starry sky. Before you is a tower made of crystal, silver, and pure white marble. Beside you are your companions in adventure.

You walk toward the tower. The

ground is soft beneath your feet and a sweet, warm wind blows. But as you walk, the tower changes. Now it is made of steel and stone, and the wind is bitter. And now it is made of tough, decaying stone, and the tower is in ruins.

There are seven open archways into the tower. As you watch, a group of hooded pilgrims approaches. As they come closer, they begin to change into draconians, but they do not attack you. They enter the tower.

You see a long, dimly glowing tunnel that leads inside. You and your companions enter, and suddenly find yourselves in a large chamber!

Seven hallways radiate from this room. Six are brightly lit; one is dim. From the dim hall whispers the voice of Elistan: "I have entered this door and cannot come back. Please! Follow me and bring that which I left behind!"

In the six bright hallways are your heart's desires—glory, power, wealth. But you know that your doom lies down the dim corridor.

Suddenly, you wake in a cold sweat, deeply disturbed. Something horrible happened to you and your companions—but you can't remember what!

Event #3: The Dragon Highlord Arrives

This event takes place the following morning. If no hero opened the door, the event does not occur.

Out of the rising sun comes a dark shadow and a rush of wind. It is a huge red dragon, its wings terribly scarred. Astride it is the Dragon Highlord of Pax Tharkas—Verminaard!

The huge dragon hovers above you, its mammoth wings beating slowly.

Verminaard calls out to the heroes, using both voice and telepathy. "Pitiful fools," he sneers, "to think you could defeat me in the Mind of Evil!"

Chapter 14: The Doors of Thorbardin

When Verminaard uses the phrase, "the Mind of Evil," any hero who opened the door in event #2 suddenly remembers the terrible dream of the night before.

Memories flood into your mind. In the dream, you walk down the dim corridor, afraid and despairing. Each step you take is harder than the last. At last you enter a large chamber.

There, before you, stands Verminaard, holding Elistan prisoner in a crystal cage. A small golden lock holds the cage shut. Elistan sees you and tries to speak, but he cannot.

Verminaard raises his hand. Out of the darkness step fearsome fighters. He laughs, and lowers his hand in a chopping motion. The fighters attack!

Give each player an appropriate Dream Card (see the Appendix; you may photocopy these cards and hand them out). Once the players have read their dream cards, Verminaard laughs chillingly. "So, fools, now you remember your night in the Mind of Evil!"

The Dragon Highlord speaks to each member of the party, revealing that he knows exactly what happened to each person in the dream. He mocks the futile efforts of the heroes to resist him, and belittles their accomplishments both in the dream and in the real world. He gloats of his victories and their defeats.

"It is pointless for you to continue in this lost cause," he says. "Wealth and power can be yours if you but take your place beside me, and place your swords in my service."

Verminaard has no intention of keeping his word. If the heroes betray the refugees, Verminaard takes them back to Pax Tharkas with promises of rich rewards. Once there, he orders his troops to feed them to Ember.

If the heroes attack, Ember flies out of missile range. Verminaard laughs at the futility of the attack. If the heroes actually hit either Verminaard or the dragon, Ember attacks

with spells, but it does not use its breath weapon.

If the heroes reject Verminaard's offer, he says, "Fools! I could destroy you as you stand. But I have other uses for you...and there are things worse than death!"

With that, he commands the dragon to fly off to the north.

Event #4: the Dwarven Gates

After event #3 (or the next morning, if event #3 does not occur), the Council urges the PCs to seek out the dwarven gates without delay. Using the Abanasinia Wilderness map, a map discovered earlier, or instructions given by Fizban (who goes with the party in any case), the PCs reach the doors after four hours' travel. Run normal wilderness random encounters. After four hours' travel, the heroes see the following:

The steep defile suddenly opens up onto a narrow, five-foot-wide ledge. Below you, a cliff drops 1,000 feet to the valley. Above, the cliff climbs 500 feet to become part of the mountain range. Another defile can be seen at the far end of the ledge, almost 100 feet away.

A large secret door is in the middle of this cliff face. There is only a 15% chance that it can be found by non-elven races. Elves and half-elves have normal chances to find the door. If the PCs have a map, they know that the door is supposed to be here.

The defile on the far side of the ledge leads into a box canyon dead end.

If the PCs cannot find the door, Fizban locates it for them.

The following methods can open the great door:

* A fireball spell can open the door. If Fizban is with the party, he tells everyone to stand back, then casts his fireball. Fizban stupidly stands right in front of the door, and appears to be destroyed in the blast. The door slowly opens (see below).

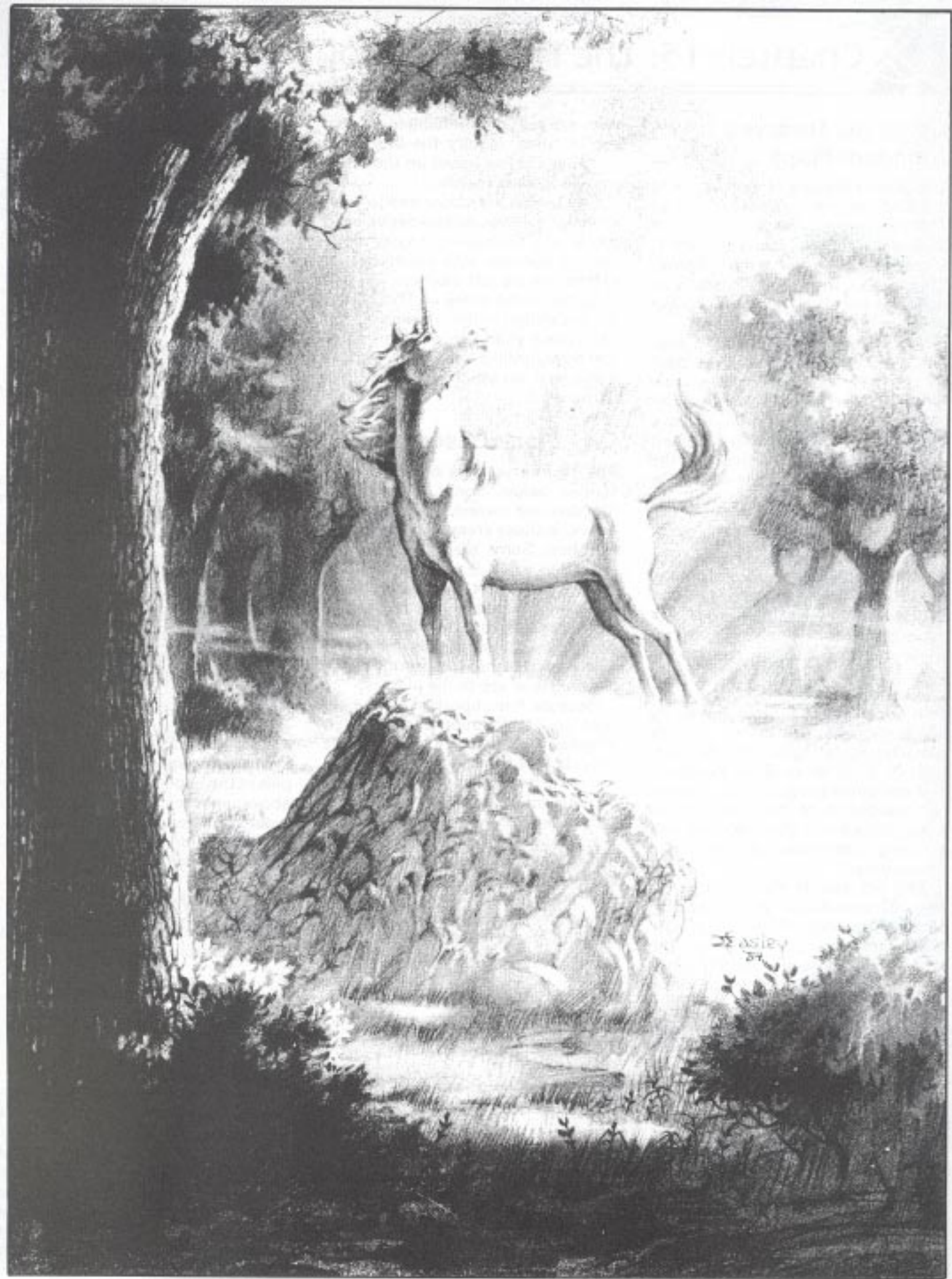
* A knock spell can open the door. Fizban does not use that spell.

* The door-opening mechanism can be found if any elven or half-elven character successfully checks for secret doors a second time. The device is a two-foot-square door that is easily opened. Within the door is a small opening with a mechanical hand in it. If any character shakes the hand, the door slowly opens.

When the door begins to open, a deep rumbling sound (like an earthquake) is heard. The ledge and cliff face begin to shake. The door suddenly breaks free and pushes out five feet; anyone standing in front of it must roll a successful Dexterity check to avoid falling off the cliff. No matter how the door is opened, Fizban manages to be caught on the ledge, and falls down, apparently to his death (though his body is not found). The door continues to move outward at a rate of five feet per round.

The door is built on a giant screw shaft propelled by a mechanism within the mountain. Originally, the door would rest on the wide ledge that once was here. However, during the Cataclysm, much of the ledge collapsed. Therefore, after the door has moved out 15 feet, the machinery begins to strain. Strange noises are heard. In the next round, the screw shaft breaks, and the door, which weighs several tons, plunges over the cliff face, falling 1,000 feet and crushing anything beneath it.

The entrance to the lost dwarven kingdom of Thorbardin has been found. The door, once opened, remains open forever.



Chapter 15: The Northgate of the Dwarves

Using the Dwarven Kingdom Maps

The great kingdom of Thorbardin is detailed on the color Kingdom of Thorbardin map. This map shows the locations of cities, major corridors, lakes, caverns, and the like. Also on the map are the 16 city blocks that make up the dwarven cities. All the city blocks have north at the top.

It has been said that if you've seen one dwarven city, you've seen them all. Nothing could be more true. Once a dwarf finds something he likes, he sticks with it. Dwarves leave architectural innovation to the elves, who enjoy that sort of thing. In the world of Krynn, all dwarven cities are made of the same city blocks, repeated endlessly.

To find your way around a dwarven city, a third type of map is used. This map resembles a crossword puzzle, made up of small boxes with numbers and letters in them.

Each chapter has one or more of these maps in it. Each box on the map represents one of the 16 city blocks on the large map.

In each box is a place for a city block number (one of the 16 city block types), *facing* (a compass direction: N, E, S, W, or R for Random), and *encounter* (keyed to an encounter number in of the chapter). All boxes have a city block number and a facing; only some of them have encounters.

The left box in the example on page 97 contains a "2" and an "E." On the large map, "2" is a Great Hall. (Remember, all city blocks on the large map are facing north.) Since the direction is "E," rotate the block 90 degrees so that the top of the city block, which formerly faced north, faces east. It connects with an "8E." Looking again at the large map, you see that "8" is a Court of Thanos. Since it, too, faces north on the large map, you must rotate it to face east. The court contains an encounter, as well. Refer to the current chapter's encounter section to find out what happens in the court.

(Note: If the direction is "R," assign a facing at random.)

Some areas of the dwarven king-

dom are currently inhabited, others are in ruins. Modify the block descriptions below based on the information in each chapter.

City blocks are connected to each other by the little extensions on each block, which are open. If a city block doesn't connect with anything, the extensions are just alcoves.

Some of the cities of Thorbardin are not visited in this adventure. You can create your own dwarven cities just by preparing "crossword puzzle" maps, and set your own adventures therein.

City Block Descriptions

The 16 dwarven city blocks are described below. Some areas of the kingdom are currently inhabited and active. In those areas, use the full description. Some areas are deserted and lie in ruins. In those areas, machinery does not work and everything is covered with the dust of centuries. In the Northgate area, scars of the Dwarfgate War are everywhere: skeletons, rusty armor, etc. Nothing is of use to the players.

Because it is important for the heroes to get through the dwarven kingdom quickly, not a lot of detail is provided for the various cities. Keep the characters on track as they move through the kingdom. If they wander into areas not described, or need a level of detail not provided in the explanation, you must improvise to fit the situation.

If you decide to create additional adventures in the halls of the dwarves, you can add whatever additional detail you need to the city blocks.

1. Gatehouse

Gatehouse blocks control access to the dwarven city. The immense gate is powered by a water-driven machine that turns a huge screw.

2. Great Hall

The Great Hall forms the main street of a dwarven kingdom. Merchant shops line the passage.

3. Kings Wall Corner 1

The Kings Wall is an inner defense for the dwarven city. It is made up of city blocks 3-7. The Kings Wall is generally an upper-class area, filled with expensive inns, homes of the rich, and lush temples.

If there is a city level below a Kings Wall block, then the pit drops through to the next level, 100 feet below. If there is no level underneath, the pit is 50 feet deep.

The temple in this block is used by visitors to the city, rather than by city residents.

4. Kings Wall Gate

The Kings Wall Gate controls access to the inner city. The drawbridge is made of wood and can be burned (ten rounds until collapse) or removed by soldiers (this takes five rounds).

Beyond the drawbridge are heavy iron doors and portcullises lined with arrow slits on either side.

In inhabited areas, guards are stationed at the drawbridge and also occupy the guard houses inside the wall.

5. Kings Wall I

In this block are the homes and temples of the upper class. If this block is above another city block, the air moat opens onto the level below—otherwise it drops into water 20 feet below the floor.

6. Kings Wall II

This block contains upper-class homes, temples, and shops.

7. Kings Wall Corner II

This area is similar to city block 3.

8. Court of Thanos

The royal court is lined with sculpture and tapestry—the finest art of the dwarven kingdom.

The seven thrones are for the Seven Ruling Thanos Under the Mountain, the rulers of each of the major dwarf races. Once there was a High King of Thorbardin, but no one has risen to claim the throne since

Chapter 15: The Northgate of the Dwarves

the days of Derkin.

This block also contains quarters for visiting thanes, as well as temples for use by the court. Government offices are also located here.

9. Residence

Most dwarves live in residence blocks. A few stores operate in the residence blocks, but goods are mostly purchased elsewhere.

10. Transport Shaft

The Transport Shafts are the primary method of travel between levels in the dwarven kingdom. The central circular chamber is a shaft that stretches through many levels above and below.

Driven by a mechanism at the bottom of the shaft (city block 15), chain ladders and great hanging buckets move up on one side and down on the other. Platforms lead out over the pit so that it is easy for a traveler to step into one of the buckets as it moves slowly past, and then to step off when the desired level is reached.

In deserted areas of the dwarven kingdom, the shafts are abandoned and the driving mechanisms disengaged. The chains and buckets do not move unless someone climbs on, and then they allow only downward movement. The chains cannot be climbed unless the locking mechanism in city block 15 is engaged.

To get onto the chain or into a bucket in a deserted area, a character must jump ten feet from the edge and catch a chain. This requires a Dexterity check. If the check succeeds, he descends slowly. If the check fails, the player makes a second check to arrest the fall. If that check succeeds, he catches a chain, but suffers 2d6 points of damage. If the second check fails, a third check is made. If the third check succeeds, the character falls 30 feet before catching a chain, and he suffers 3d6 points of damage, but then descends normally. If the third Check fails, the character falls the full distance of the shaft and suffers normal falling damage of 1d6 (cumulative) per 10 feet fallen to a maximum of 20d6.

The Transport Block is in the cen-

ter of dwarven life. Assembly halls are the homes of plays and music. Major bazaars and shops are located here. There are also smaller public worship halls and guildhalls for the dwarven artisans.

11. Wharf

Dwarven cities sometimes open onto underground lakes and rivers. The dwarves in these cities carry on trade by water, and occasionally fish.

The wharf area contains boat slips, warehouses, government offices, and repair facilities for boats.

12. Great Temple

The dwarves of Thorbardin are among the few races of post-Cataclysm Krynna to retain knowledge of the True Gods. The primary god of the mountain dwarves is Reorx, the forger.

According to dwarven religion, the holy kingdom of Reorx is located far beneath the earth. If the temple is located above another city block, the pit opens up onto the next level. Otherwise it is at least 1,000 feet deep, for the dwarves believe the deeper the shaft, the more holy the temple.

Climbing down a Shaft of Reorx would be considered a vile sacrilege to a dwarf.

In a typical Great Temple block there are small stores selling religious items. Dwarven priests normally live in a Temple Block, and have a private temple in the block for their own use.

13. Dungeons

Although fierce in battle, the dwarves allow opponents to surrender.

The dungeons have cell areas accessed through special rooms called transit areas. A special mechanism controlled from the guard area operates first one portcullis, then the other, serving to control access to the cell blocks. A key is required to operate the mechanism. Outside the cell area are guard quarters and weapons storage areas.

The internal areas are the cells proper, including dining and exer-

cise facilities. Not all cells were locked, depending on the status and behavior of the prisoner, since exit from the cell area is so tightly controlled. If Dungeon Blocks are adjacent, there is frequently free movement between them, but all connection with the outside is still controlled by the guards.

14. Smithy

In the great smithies, the dwarves of ages past created wondrous works. Stone troughs convey metal from the central furnace to the many stalls where dwarven craftsmen work. A large cauldron hangs over the central fire pit, controlled by complex machinery. The cauldron can be swiveled, tipped, or pulled out of the fire to be filled. The floor of the fire pit is covered in several feet of soot and ashes. The floors and walls of the smithy are streaked with hardened bits of metal and scorch marks.

15. Transport Machinery

The large pit in the central chamber is filled with the machinery that operates the transport system. A net is suspended above the machinery. The net serves two purposes: it reduces falling damage by 50%, and it protects the machinery from anything falling into it.

16. Gardens

These beautiful, well-kept gardens are the parks of the dwarven realms. They are lighted by shafts of crystal leading to the surface (a primitive fiber optics system). The garden contains small trees, shrubs, mushrooms, and fungi.

Encounters in the Northgate

There are both random and set encounters in Northgate. Use the random encounter chart in the Appendix to determine random encounters; do this once for each city block the PCs enter in Northgate. Whenever the chart indicates that a random encounter occurs, roll 1d8. Each city block has

Chapter 15: The Northgate of the Dwarves

the numbers 1-8 located on it. The encounter occurs at the die result (e.g., a roll of "6" means that the encounter takes place in location 6 in that city block).

The heroes may decide to bring the refugees along with them into Thorbardin. If they do, 20 dwarves of the Theiwar kingdom (also known as dark dwarves) attack 1d6 turns after the refugees enter Northgate. An additional 20 Theiwar attack each 1d6 turns. After three attacks, if the heroes have not already decided to have the refugees retreat, the refugee council decides to turn back. The refugees make camp outside of Northgate to wait for the heroes' return with permission to enter. The refugees have heard many awful rumors about the dwarves of Thorbardin, and they are very fearful.

Because the refugees have now moved farther from the approaching Dragonarmy, the heroes have an additional 48 hours to get passage through Thorbardin.

All drawbridges in Northgate are down and can be crossed. The drawbridge mechanisms are rusted and cannot be repaired.

238. Dwarfgate

The scars of fierce battle streak the walls. The floor is littered with broken shards of pottery and rusted metal. Ancient wagons, their axles broken, litter the major corridors. The skeletons of dwarves and men lie where they died so long ago, clothed in rusted armor and rags, silent witnesses to the terrible conflict that once raged in these halls.

Everything is deserted and in ruins. There are no random encounters in this block. The mechanism that once operated the doors is rusted and broken.

239. Arman Kharas

If this encounter has already occurred, do not repeat it.

An armed party of dwarves steps into the corridor before you. The leader steps forward. Strength and confidence show in his every move. The large hammer at his side is held loosely but ready. He rumbles, "What business have you strangers among the halls of the Hylar?"

The leader is named Arman Kharas (see the NPC Capsules in the Appendix). With him are 12 Hylar dwarves, each wearing chain mail and carrying shield and war hammer.

If the heroes attack, the dwarves fight fiercely. If it looks like the Hylar will be beaten, Arman surrenders. If the heroes talk, Arman listens to their story, though his men remain ready to fight.

If the heroes treat Arman with respect and honor, he decides to take them before the Court of the Thanos for judgment. There they might be granted safe passage. If the heroes are disrespectful, Arman orders them out of Thorbardin and attacks if they refuse.

The Hylar usually avoid Northgate, since it is held by the Theiwar dwarves, sworn enemies of the Hylar. However, the Theiwar have captured Arman's half-brother Pick, and Arman is searching the halls of Northgate for him. If the heroes offer to help Arman rescue his half-brother, Arman takes them to the Court of the Thanos even if they are disrespectful.

Arman has an idea where Pick may be held (see encounter 241), and leads the heroes toward the dungeon if they agree to help him.

Once Pick has been rescued, Arman leads the heroes to the City of the Hylar (chapter 16) by the most direct route.

It is very important that the heroes accompany Arman and do not fight him. Encourage peaceful negotiation and highlight Arman's good intentions and behavior.

240. The Dark Guide

If this encounter has already occurred, do not repeat it.

A stunted dwarf, pale of skin and with large eyes, sits mumbling to himself and pulling at his hair. He is clothed in black, oily rags with bits of leather and metal sewn into them. He looks up and begins to cower before you.

This is Krothgar, a Theiwar, recently ousted by his clan for cowardice.

If he is offered food or safety, he agrees to guide the party through the dwarven kingdom. Actually, he plans to guide the party to the Theiwar community on the upper level (encounter 244) hoping to redeem himself by offering his clan these strangers from the outside world.

241. Prisoners

No random encounters occur in this block. In the spot labeled "1," two Hylar dwarves are held prisoner—one is Pick, Arman Kharas's half-brother. In the spot labeled "5" are 2d4 Theiwar guards. At the "8" are other prisoners, including Aghar, Hylar, and Klar dwarves.

If Pick sees the party, he calls out for rescue, and says his family will reward his safe return. The other Hylar dwarf in the cell is dying of a rotting disease; he dies an hour after rescue if nothing is done to cure him.

Once rescued, Pick would gladly lead the party through Thorbardin, but unfortunately doesn't know where he is or how to get home.

242. Anvil's Echo

A vast cavern opens up before you, spanned by a bridge that leads off into the darkness. The slightest whisper seems to echo endlessly in the black depths. Low stone rails, three feet high, line each side of the wide bridge. The rails are held up by carvings of small dwarves.

The cavern is called the Anvil's Echo. Legend has it that the sound of a dwarven hammer on an anvil will echo for eternity in this dwarf-made cavern. The ceiling is 100 feet above: the floor of the cavern (encounter

Chapter 15: The Northgate of the Dwarves

245) is 100 feet below.

The bridge is part of the Northgate defense system. Murder holes in the ceiling were used to drop missiles, boiling oil, molten lead, and boulders on attackers—but the defenders of Northgate are long dead.

Halfway across the bridge are two ropes, flattened against the stone guard rails, waiting to ambush the party.

Attack of the Theiwar

A clan of Theiwar dwarves is foraging in this block. Unless the party is totally silent, the Theiwar are not surprised. There are 75 Theiwar. As the heroes approach the center of the block, the dark dwarves fill the main hallways to the south and the east.

If the party is being led by Arman Kharas, he races down the west end of the hall shouting for all to follow him. He leads all who follow to the nearest Transport Block, and jumps to catch one of the chains. All of Arman's men follow him onto the chains; they all succeed in catching

the chains. See city block 10 for operation of the transport system.

The Theiwar can ride the chains, but they do so only in emergencies. Since they do not see this as an emergency, they do not pursue.

If Krothgar is guiding the party, he runs back in the direction from which he came, since these Theiwar are from a different clan, and would gladly kill him, too. Krothgar finds the nearest stair and runs to the upper level, which is occupied by his own clan. The Theiwar do not pursue into what they consider enemy territory.

244. City of the Theiwar

Krothgar's clan occupies the small walled fort on the upper level of Northgate. There are 250 Theiwar led by a savant. If the party enters the clan fort, the Theiwar try to capture the party, take their possessions, then throw them into the well of Anvil's Echo (encounter 242) to their deaths.

245. Floor of Anvil's Echo

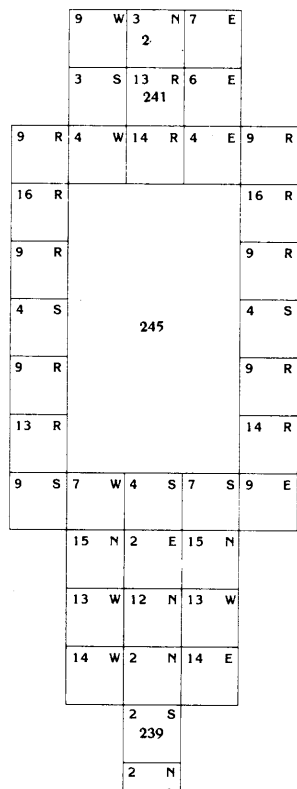
A huge, rectangular cavern is carved out of the solid stone. The floor is lined with rubble. Scattered about are skeletons long dead, fallen from the great bridge above.

Northgate

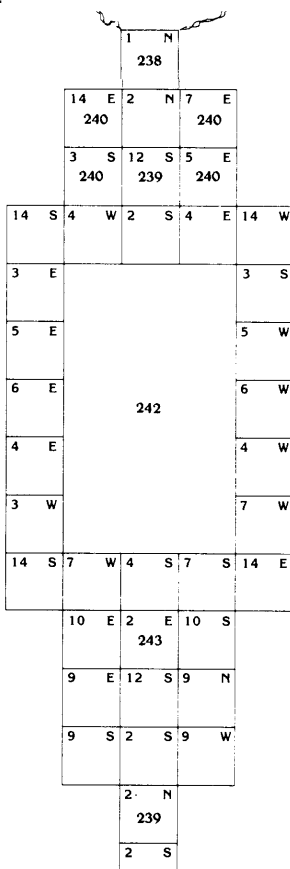


Example

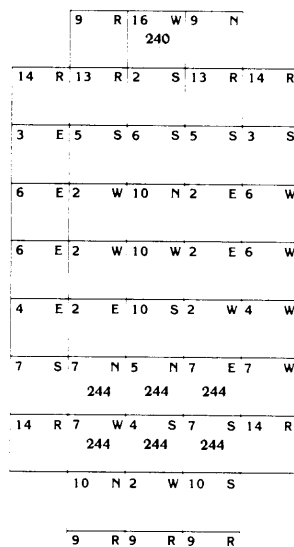
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Lower Level



Middle Level
(Entrance)



Upper Level

Encounters

246. Leaving Northgate

If the party leaves Northgate in the company of Arman Kharas, Arman guides them through the dwarven realms to the city of the Hylar by the safest and most direct route. He knows where the Theiwar strongholds are, and he avoids them whenever possible. Arman wishes to avoid combat, intending only to get his half-brother Pick to safety and to take the party before the Council of Thanes.

Arman answers questions about the dwarven kingdoms to the best of his ability. As a son of Thane Hornfel, leader of the Hylar, he knows much of the rivalry that plagues the kingdoms of Thorbardin (especially between the Hylar and the Theiwar). At every occasion, he talks about his supposed descent from the dwarven hero Kharas.

If the heroes depart Northgate without Arman, they must find out what to do and where to go by themselves. Most of the possible encounters in this region of Thorbardin are with Theiwar dwarves, who try to lure unwary adventurers into a trap. If the heroes reach the West Warrens, they encounter numerous Hylar farmers, who call for guards to capture the intruders. The guards imprison any

captured heroes for 24 hours, then bring them before the Council of Thanes in the Hylar city.

The party departs Northgate either on the First Road of Thanes (if they left Northgate from the lower level) or on the Second Road of Thanes (if they left from the middle level).

247. The First Road of Thanes

A wide tunnel through the mountain leads into darkness. Metal tracks in the center of the stone floor are worn smooth. Once, thousands of dwarves must have walked here. Now, there is only dust and emptiness. Your footsteps echo in the deserted corridor.

The Roads of the Thanes are the major highways that connect the cities and outposts of Thorbardin. In the civilized areas of the realm, small cars roll along the metal tracks, pulled by cables connected to dwarven engines. Cars pulled by beasts of burden travel along the roads, as do dwarves on foot.

The First Road leads to the lower level of the North Hall of Justice.

248. The Second Road of Thanes

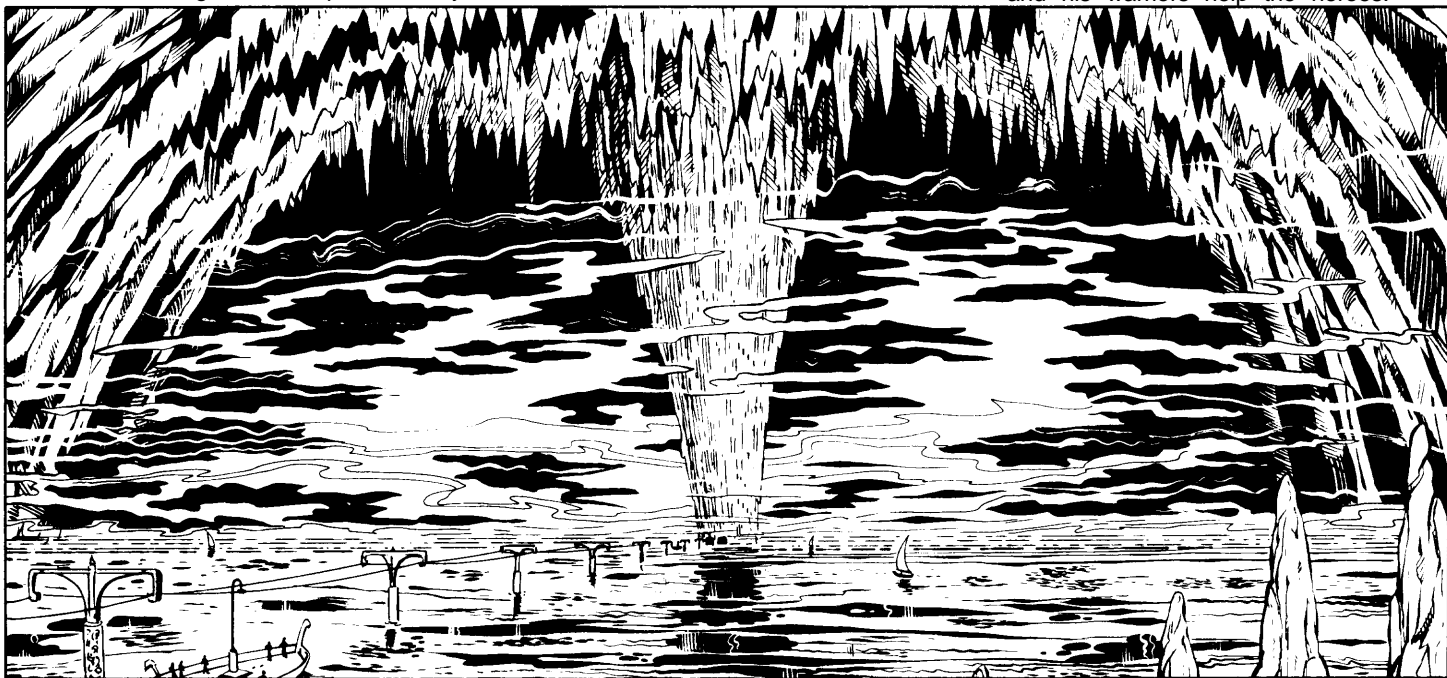
This is identical to the First Road, except it leads to the middle level of the North Hall of Justice.

249. The North Hall of Justice

The North Hall of Justice (see map) is a small complex of city blocks that once served as government offices and a second line of defense. When Thorbardin was sealed off from the outside world, the North Hall of Justice fell into disuse. It is now occupied by Theiwar, who prey on unwary travelers.

Sentries are posted in the Great Halls on the lower and middle levels. A party of 40 Theiwar wearing leather armor and carrying light crossbows with poison arrows is stationed in each Kings Gate Block in the complex, where they can fire on intruders through arrow slits in the Kings Wall. All Theiwar are of the lowest type. Arman knows nothing of their presence; he came to Northgate by a different and more dangerous route.

If the party inflicts more than 50% casualties on the Theiwar, the remaining fighters flee; they are not interested in prey that fights back. Arman and his warriors help the heroes.



An additional 250 Theiwar, led by a 7-HD savant and a 6-HD student savant, live on the upper level. They attack the party only if the PCs venture upstairs.

The First Road of Thanés (lower level) leads on toward the Hylar regions. The Second Road of Thanés leads southeast to the city of the Theiwar. Arman insists on traveling the First Road. If the party should depart the North Hall of Justice on the Second Road, they encounter a war party of 1d10 Theiwar led by a 5-HD commander after 1d4 turns. Every 1d4 turns thereafter, they encounter another party, each with 1d6 more Theiwar than the previous one, until they turn back, are killed, or are captured.

250. Road to the West Warrens

After many long hours of travel, the Road of the Thanés opens up into a large, natural cavern. The cavern teams with life—huge mushrooms, strange fungi, and other odd plants.

This area is called the West Warrens. The northern section, where the characters enter, is a wilderness. Much of the land in the Warrens is under cultivation: Farmers from several of the dwarven kingdoms raise food here.

251. The West Warrens

The wilderness of fungi gives way to greater order. Here are fields of mushrooms, carefully fenced in. Dwarven farmers labor in the fields. Cars full of mushrooms and fungi, pulled by stunted ponies, travel on dirt roads heading south.

Four shriekers are located at the northern edge of the farms. They begin to cry out when the party approaches. A patrol of 40 Hylar soldiers, wearing chain mail and carrying war hammers, arrives in 1d6 rounds. Their leader calls for the party to stop and identify them-

selves. If Arman Kharas is with the party, the guards behave with deference and offer to escort the party to their destination. If the heroes are without Arman Kharas, the guard leader orders them to surrender their weapons. If they refuse, the guards attack, and are joined by an additional 1d10 guards every five rounds until the party surrenders, is captured, or is killed.

If the characters are captured, they are held in the prisoner block in the Guardian Halls for 24 hours before being brought to the Council of Thanés.

252. Guardian Halls

The Guardian Halls (see map) control passage through the dwarven realms. The Gate Blocks at either side are normally open, but they can be shut in case of invasion. Guards in the block control who passes through. A large dungeon holds those who are caught crossing into the wrong kingdom.

If the heroes were captured in the farms, they spend 24 hours in one of the prison cells, and then the guards take them to the city of the Hylar. If the heroes are with Arman Kharas, they pass through the Guardian Hall without incident.

253. The Sixth Road of Thanés

This dwarven highway is in working order. An endless chain of cars travels along the metal tracks, pulled by a strange dwarven engine.

Either in chains or in the company of Arman Kharas, the characters board a car and are pulled slowly along the road. The ride lasts about half an hour.

254. Docks

The ride ends at one of the Hylar wharfs (see map). The wharfs give access to the Urkhan Sea. Looking out at the sea, the PCs' attention is drawn to an amazing sight: the Life-Tree of the Hylar.

The Life-Tree is truly one of the wonders of the world. It is an immense stalactite, half a mile high and

as wide at the top, inside which an entire city has been carved (see map).

The city can be reached only by cable-boat (another dwarven invention). The cable-boat leads to Level 1 of the Life-Tree.

If the characters should commandeer a boat and try to visit any of the other cities that line the Urkhan Sea, they are attacked by a dragon turtle.

255. The Life-Tree of the Hylar

A working transport shaft provides passage up the Life-Tree. Hundreds of Hylar dwarves clog the shafts. Most of them have never seen a non-dwarf before, and they gawk as the strangers pass. Young children make rude remarks. Riding the transport shaft is quite safe, though the characters may feel otherwise as they look down the long shaft.

The dwarven city is illuminated by a species of glowing coral that works as a *continual light* spell.

If the characters are currently prisoners, they are taken to a dungeon block on level 17 of the city (area "C" on the map). If the characters are with Arman Kharas, they are taken to a well-appointed inn (area "B") on level 28 (the home of the very rich and powerful) in the Kings Gate just outside the Court of Thanés (area "A").

If the characters are free, they can wander around the dwarven city while waiting for the meeting of the Council of Thanés on the following morning.

256. Audience With the Council of Thanés

The Council of Thanés rules Thorbardin. Each of the nine dwarven kingdoms is theoretically entitled to an equal seat on the council. In practice, this is not the case. The Neidar (Hill) dwarves split with the dwarves of Thorbardin during the Dwarfgate Wars, and so their seat is empty. The seat of the Kingdom of the Dead is also vacant. The Kingdom of the High King has been vacant for over 300 years—since the time of Derkin. The NPC Capsules of the Thanés of

Chapter 16: The honor of the hylar

Thorbardin provide some background on the six Thanes that are present.

The Thanes are Hornfel (Hylar), Bluph (Aghar), Gneiss (Daewar), Realgar (Theiwar), Rance (Daergar), and Tufa (Klar). Hornfel is the father of Arman Kharas; he is sympathetic to the heroes' plight. Realgar is an agent of Verminaard; he sees this as an opportunity to have the Theiwar rule Thorbardin.

To run the Council meeting, first have Arman Kharas (if present) introduce the heroes to the Council and introduce the Thanes to the heroes. Then have the heroes present their case and make their request. Hornfel listens with interest, but Realgar begins to speak with hatred about the hill dwarves and men that brought on the Cataclysm and the Dwarfgate Wars.

Have each player roll an Intelligence check with a -5 penalty to Intelligence. Any who succeed feel that Realgar's speech patterns are very similar to those of Verminaard. In fact, Realgar is being telepathically controlled by the Dragon Highlord.

During Realgar's tirade, tell the players that the Theiwar Thane seems to be swaying the Council against them. Finally, the discussion is finished, and the characters are

asked to leave the room so that the Council can make its decision.

The Council's debate lasts an hour, then the heroes are invited back in. Hornfel speaks.

"It is true that you humans brought the Cataclysm upon the world, and it is true that the Neidar made war on Thorbardin. But dark times are here again, and ancient grudges must not control our destiny.

"Here, then, is the decision of the Council—that whosoever recovers the hammer of *Kharas*, that person will the dwarves of Thorbardin befriend. If you agree to our terms, and bring the hammer to us, then your people may pass.

"There is one other condition—that one of your party remain here as a hostage for your safe return."

Hornfel names Eben as the hostage to be kept (this is Realgar's idea, but the heroes should not know this). If the heroes refuse the quest, they are imprisoned. If they agree, Hornfel tells them that the hammer lies somewhere in the Valley of Thanes, burial ground of the dwarves. If the heroes have the *helm of Grallen*, Hornfel thanks them for its return,

and asks them to take it to the Valley of Thanes and leave it in the tomb of Kharas. He tells them that the helm will be of help to them in their quest.

Hornfel raises his hand, and two dwarves enter the chamber. One carries a drum, the other a scroll. They chant the Song of Kharas (see Appendix).

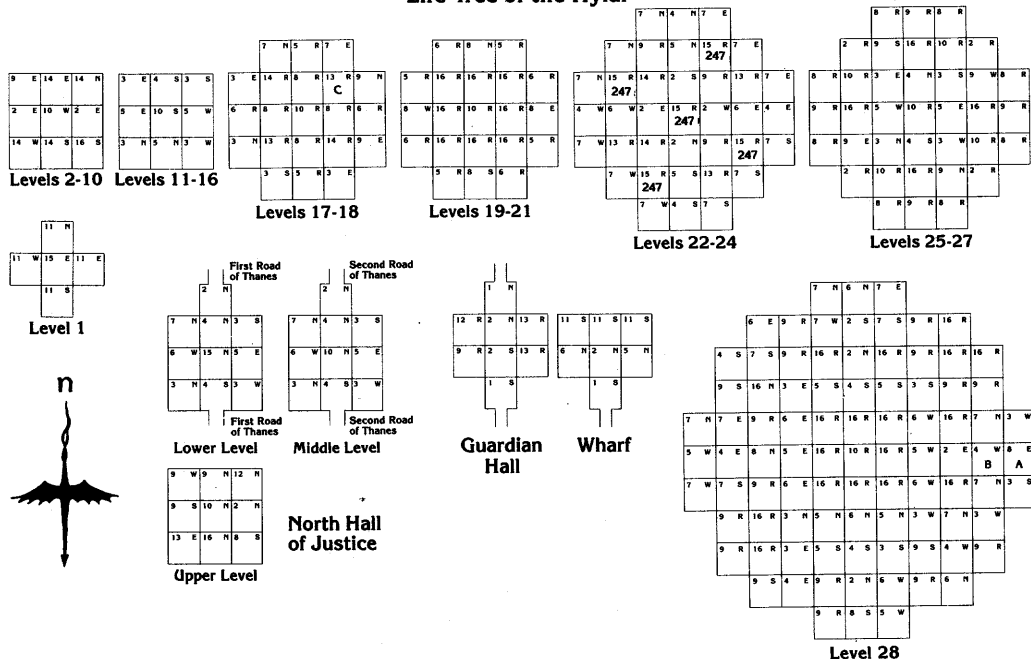
257. Leaving the Kingdom of the Hylar

If the heroes do not agree to the quest, they are imprisoned in the dungeon on level 17 of the Life-Tree and left to rot.

If they agree, Arman begs his father to allow him to accompany the heroes. Hornfel agrees. Arman and a party of Hylar guards escort the heroes away. Eben stays behind as a hostage.

The trip out of the Hylar city is the same as the journey in. The party takes a cable-boat across the Urkhan Sea to the Eighth Road of Thanes. The trip down the Eighth Road is by car. The journey ends several hours later at the Guardian Hall complex that adjoins the Valley of the Thanes—where all the dead of Thorbardin are buried.

Life-Tree of the Hylar



Chapter 17: Kalil S'Rith

The final kingdom of the dwarves is *Kalil S'Rith*, the Valley of the Thanes. Here are buried the dwarven dead. Those of royal lineage are entombed in cairns; commoners are interred in humble graves in the stony plain.

If the heroes possess the *helm of Grallen*, its wearer suddenly realizes that he has the power to turn undead as if he were a 12th-level priest.

Encounters

258. The Valley of the Thanes

The sun seems a strange sight after many hours underground. Ahead lies a dreary, barren valley between soaring mountains. Everywhere, desolate mounds in the naked earth form burial cairns. Far away, in the heart of the valley, there is a small patch of green. Rising from it, forming a stony pinnacle, is an awesome tomb. The

wind whines about the hillocks, seeming to carry the groans and laments of dying warriors. A freezing rain begins, soaking the ground and limiting vision to 100 yards.

259. Tomb Mounds of the Thanes

Carved tombs, pitted and worn, replace the simpler cairns. The wind and rain raise a mournful howl.

259a. Tomb of Rathkar

A rotting figure limps down from a large tomb. Its arms are outstretched and it is mumbling. Behind it trail dwarven undead.

This is the mummy of Rathkar, who cannot rest until forgiven by 77 men who listen to his entire life story. He has been forgiven by 31 so far.

Rathkar's story takes hours to tell, and he mumbles. His sin was that he never told his wife that he loved her.

If the party does not listen or refuses to forgive, Rathkar attacks. He commands 21 skeletons and 19 ghosts. None of the undead can leave this hex: they are turned as undead two levels higher (e.g., the skeletons are turned as ghouls and the ghosts as mummies). If destroyed, Rathkar regenerates, but this takes seven years.

259b. Spectral Tomb

The undead here hate all life and attack to destroy all intruders. One spectre, two mummies, and eight ghosts are present. They can leave the mound for one turn only, and then are teleported back to their graves for the rest of the day.

260. The Garden

A green oasis surrounds a lake at the valley's center. Stone tombs, cov-



ered with ice from the freezing rain, fill the oasis. As soon as the heroes enter the oasis, the rain ends and the sun comes out. Overhead, looming above the lake, is a giant floating rock crowned with a castle—the Tomb of Derkin.

One tomb stands empty before the heroes. On the opposite shore of the lake is a ruin.

260a. Tomb of Grallen

Regardless from which direction they approach, Grallen's tomb stands before the heroes. A 15-foot obelisk stands on the lake shore. Behind it is a statue of an armored dwarf, arms spread, bare head thrown back. There are Hylar carvings that read: "Raised to honor Prince Grallen, hero of the final assault on the fortress of Fistandantilus."

If the players have the *helm of Grallen*, it speaks to its wearer, saying, "Bless you, for my brow has been cold these long winters."

When placed on the statue, the helm turns to stone and the statue speaks. "What you seek is above. Its only entrance is across the lake. Say 'I mourn for Kharas' and step through the unbroken arch." The statue then crumbles. If the heroes keep the helm, the wearer must roll a successful saving throw vs. spell once per turn or throw the helmet to the ground. The helm vanishes once dropped.

260b. Broken Gateway

The ruins across the lake are overgrown with lilies, jasmine, and snapdragons. The ground is carpeted with petals. In the ruin's center stands an arch broken in the center. Nine fragments are scattered about it.

If the heroes search the area, they find the nine fragments and a stone plaque engraved in Hylar script. It reads, "I wait and watch; he will not return. Alas, I mourn for Kharas."

The heroes must fit together the nine pieces to rebuild the arch. When the pieces are put in place, they magically merge together until the arch is unbroken again. If the heroes do not think to rebuild the arch, Arman

suggests that they do so.

Once the arch is rebuilt, it becomes a teleportal leading to encounter 261. Saying the phrase, "I mourn for Kharas" activates it.

The Floating Tomb

Derkin's Tomb was built before the Cataclysm. Upon his death, Kharas carried Derkin to his final rest, and here Kharas met his own doom.

Shortly thereafter, Evenstar, the gold dragon, arrived in exile to guard the *hammer of Kharas*. Evenstar, using hidden knowledge, wrenched the tomb from the earth and set it in the sky. He then filled the tomb with magical perils. Yet his magic was not all danger, for Evenstar loves beauty and light and adorned the castle with these things too.

Derkin's Tomb is 400 feet above the ground. It is built in several levels in the rock on which it floats. Sheer cliffs separate the levels. Consult the Derkin's Tomb map as the players explore the tomb.

The tomb has a feeling of age and wonderful craftsmanship about it. Each room is more exquisite than the last. Even the halls and shafts are decorated with brilliant murals. At any moment it seems the beauty will come to life. (It frequently does through the magic of Evenstar's *ring of telekinesis*.)

Every six turns, a muted gong sounds throughout the tomb.

How to Run this Adventure

The tomb has only one occupant: Evenstar. He uses his spells and abilities to challenge the heroes. To play this section, first review the rules about dragons in the *Monstrous Compendium*, read the description of Evenstar in NPC Capsules, and study the map of Derkin's Tomb. Suggested uses for Evenstar's spells are noted in the encounters.

Evenstar casts *guards and wards* as soon as the heroes enter the tomb. This has the following effects:

- * All doors are wizard locked.
- * Corridors fill with a misty violet vapor that reduces sight to ten feet.
- * Inner stairwells, the Spiral Way, and

the elevator shaft fill with webs.

* Eight doors (pick at random) are hidden behind illusionary walls. They can be found only by touch.

* Every time the heroes choose a direction, they may (50%) move opposite the way they think they are moving.

* Everything radiates magic.

Evenstar is basically a peaceful, though world-weary dragon, amused at the heroes' struggle. It enjoys confusing people by changing shape when not observed. It does not reveal that it is a gold dragon until noted in the text, it reveals only that it is the guardian of the tomb. It does not use its powers to cause death.

If a hero falls down the shaft or off the tomb, he gets to roll a Dexterity check (with a -4 penalty to Dexterity) to catch himself; if he fails, he suffers 1d6 points of damage for each level fallen. At the bottom of the shaft there is a net that break the fall, but at the cost of 2d6 additional points of damage. If a character falls off the tomb and does not catch himself, he falls to the lake below, resulting in a total of 20d6 points of damage.

261. Reception Tower

A duplicate of the teleport arch from area 260b is here. As the last hero exits from the teleport, there is a flash of light and the arch vanishes behind him. There is a trap door in the roof here but no ladder.

262. Lower Gallery & Stairs

This wooden walk is weakened in several places. There is a 10% chance it breaks. Each character must roll a successful Dexterity check or fall ten feet.

Evenstar can cast grease on the stairs, causing the PC on that part of the stairs to topple back into the others. This causes all affected heroes to receive 1d6 points of damage.

263. Hall of Enemies

The booty of victory—the weapons, armor, and shields of Derkin's

Chapter 17: Kalil S'Rith

defeated enemies, is stored here. Evenstar may use his *ring of telekinesis* to make things appear to move.

264. Upper Galleries

This is a stone walkway. At the top of the stairs a voice (*magic mouth*) cries out in Hylar, "Defilers, begone! Disturb not the sleep of the ageless." The passage slopes upward to the north past several archways.

Evenstar may decide to cast *transmute rock to mud* and *dancing lights* here.

265. Votive Cells

These are bare, stone cells.

266. Overlook

From this overlook, the PCs can see the ruins to the east. In the distance to the west is another exit from the valley. South are the nests of giant vultures in caves. To the north, the snow-shrouded peaks of the mountains are covered by a huge army crawling down into the valley. The enemy is coming. (This sight can be seen from every overlook in the tomb.)

267. Fountain of Time

In the center of this room is a moss-covered fountain. Lying against the fountain is a white-bearded, sleeping dwarf. He meets the general description of Kharas. This is Evenstar. If the heroes awaken him, he appears dazed. He has trouble understanding that time has passed and he wants to know where his hammer has gone. He had stopped for a drink after burying Derkin and that's all he remembers. (If any heroes drink from the fountain, roll dice as if checking for an effect, then look relieved and say that they made it.) "Kharas" agrees to go with the heroes. After encounter 273 he slips away or changes form.

268. Antechamber

These walls are marbled and mirrored, making the room seem larger.

269. Banquet Hall

Long tables are lined with fine foods. Fruits and sweets are spread in the centers of the tables. The room is filled with the aroma of good cooking.

Upon closer examination, the food is found to be made of precious metal, gems, and jewels, worth thousands of stl. Making the best choices, each person might be able to take 2,000 stl worth. "Kharas" warns against theft here.

In the center of the room is a tall chair, a reading table, and a book. Lying on the book is a pair of ruby-colored spectacles. The book is a history of Derkin, written in an obscure tongue.

The spectacles have the properties of *infravision*, *comprehend languages*, and *read magic*. They also act as a *gem of seeing*. They can be worn for up to four hours a day without ill effects. If worn longer, they give the wearer a splitting headache (-4 penalty to THAC0).

270. Grand Overlook

See encounter 266 for what can be seen here. The floor here is rotted; there is a 10% chance per 50 pounds that a character falls through. Falling characters get a Dexterity check to catch themselves; failure results in a 20-foot drop to the support beams below for 2d6 points of damage.

271. Grand Promenade

This corridor is lined with shallow niches holding granite statues of noble dwarves. The pits drop the lead PCs 20 feet.

Evenstar can cast *stinking cloud* in this area.

272. Tipping Path

See the diagram on the map. This bridge is lined with crossbars supported by a central metal beam. When the party crosses the bridge, it flips to vertical once more than half the total party weight crosses the midpoint. Characters may catch hold of a crossbar by rolling a successful Dexterity check; if they fail, they fall

down the shaft to the ground 500 feet below (receiving the maximum 20d6 points of damage).

273. Elevator Shaft

This is a square shaft filled with webs. Ice chips fall from the shaft and evaporate as they strike the floor.

274. Ruby Tower of Singing Light

The room at the tower's base holds crystals and colored bits of glass. From above comes the sound of heavenly chimes. The tower itself is flooded with a rainbow of light dancing on the walls and crystal chimes ringing in the wind.

275. Shrine of Reorx the Forge

On the altar are three items and a tapestry that reads, "Take if in need." Any who enter the shrine are filled with a feeling of anticipated battle. The three items are a *potion of extra healing*, a scroll with a *remove curse* and a *prayer* spell, and a necklace with three *prayer beads*—*bless*, *cure*, and *karma*. Evenstar can identify the beads.

276-278. Histories of Derkin

These three chambers tell the story of Derkin's life, creations, and battles through dioramas and trophies. They include his triumph over Bonecrusher the Ogre and his final battle fought atop Mount Skull. Evenstar may use his *ring of telekinesis* to make things come to life or use *dancing lights* to lure party members to the elevator shaft.

279. Unseen Danger

This room is filled with red light from the level above. A hammer pendulum swings 30 feet overhead. This room has a red glass partial floor that is invisible in the light of the tower. It appears that the room opens onto the shaft. The real floor is a network with gaps. Invisible, overhead swinging logs strike (THAC0 15) at any-

thing above three feet tall. Any PC who is struck by a log suffers 2d4 points of damage and has a 15% chance of being knocked into a hole in the floor (he must then roll a successful Dexterity check or fall 550 feet to the ground). PCs who walk across the glass floor without checking the floor in front of their feet have a 50% chance of stumbling upon a hole (successful Dexterity check or a long fall, as above). On the far side of the room is a brass ladder leading up.

280. Courtyard

From this flagstone courtyard, the heroes can see sights as described in encounter 266. The cap of the large ruby tower bears a sharp spike. In the center of the courtyard, beside a hole, lies a 16-foot-long flagpole with a lance tip. This is a crude model of a *dragonlance*. An inscription on the wall of the Pilgrim's Hostel (area 281) reads:

*Lances did great Huma seek
To forge upon the dragon's peak
With silver arm and silver pool
And Hammer did he forge wylm's
doom.*

281. Pilgrim's Hostel

This is a refuge for visiting pilgrims. A ramp circles a fountain, providing two tiers of stone cells. Here is the gear and *plate mail +1* of Kharas.

282. Lonely Vigil

This tower is dark. A set of stairs spiral up around a water-filled cistern to a balcony. The stairs are covered with webs and broken in several places. A careless hero may fall 10-30 feet.

Evenstar may use a *phantasmal force* spell to make the cistern appear to release a flood of water for 3d4 points of damage.

At the top of the tower is a wooden cylinder containing a magical scroll with *flame arrow*, *fire shield*, and *haste* spells.

283. Dilemma

In this tower is a gushing fountain. A ramp leads downward. The room is

30 feet high, and the fountain spouts nearly to the ceiling. If a player decides to look closely, have him roll an Intelligence check. If he is successful, he sees a small wooden platform bobbing at the top of the fountain. This platform has a permanent *levitate* spell on it, but it can only support 20 pounds. On the platform is a potion of *superheroism* and a *wand of frost* with only three charges left. The command word ("O.G.") is written in runes on the wand.

284. Vestibule

This room is filled with an obscuring smoke that slowly dissipates once the door is opened. A broken phial lies on the floor.

On the floor before the second set of doors is the corpse of a dwarf. He wears the signet ring of Kharas. This is the true Kharas. If Evenstar is masquerading as Kharas, it admits that it is just the guardian of the tomb and has been testing them. It does not change into a dragon.

Beneath Kharas's heel are the remains of a small scorpion; he was ignobly stung to death. A stone phial attached to his belt contains a fluid that forms an obscuring cloud of smoke, 40 feet by 40 feet by 20 feet, when poured on the ground.

285. Ruby Chamber of the Hammer

This room is hot, lit with a sanguine light streaming through crimson windows. Only a narrow balcony thrusts over the shaft that opens to the distant lake below.

Hanging from a slender thread, a mighty bronze hammer swings back and forth. Every hour it strikes one of the gongs thrusting out from the walls.

As the PCs reach this room, Evenstar casts an invisible cylindrical *wall of force* over the swinging hammer. The hammer may now be retrieved only by finding some way to sever the cord and catch it, climbing up to it from below, or by waiting for the end of the spell.

Using a crystal and mirror or the ruby glasses to focus the red-tinted sunlight burns the cord through and

the hammer falls to the invisible floor of area 279.

Once the heroes obtain the hammer, see the "Raging Ember" section at the end of this chapter.

286. Watch Tower

This three-story tower contains two ballistae and ammunition. Bunks, kegs of oil, and a gong are above. A wooden ladder leads up to the steeple.

287. Test of Determination

Wind fills this room, moaning up from the shaft. Swaying in the wind across this pit is the remnant of a rope bridge. Now only a single strand remains with several boards still attached. A hand-over-hand crossing requires three successful Dexterity checks. To tightrope walk, roll two successful Dexterity checks (with a -4 penalty to Dexterity) or one climb walls check (for rogues only) with a -20% penalty.

288. Robbers' Trap

A fountain of flame is in the center of this room. Set in the wall is a door with a lever beside it.

This room is trapped to dispose of robbers. The trap is activated by moving the lever or opening the door (it only opens outward). When activated, a block of stone drops across the double-door entrance to the room, and the room's ceiling begins to drop, causing the flame to spread out. It drops to head height in one round and then descends one foot per round. By the time the ceiling is four feet from the floor, the flame fills the room. The ceiling stops two feet above the floor and then rises one foot per round until it is at its original height of ten feet.

The flame causes 1d4 points of damage per round. Everyone in the room suffers this damage while the ceiling is four feet high or lower (a total of four rounds).

The door with the lever is only a false door. The exit from this room is a concealed stone panel.

289. Derkin's Final Peace

In the center of this room is a bier holding the coffin of Derkin. The lid is carved to resemble Derkin. In this room are statues of servants and a golden anvil that weighs 800 pounds. Several sealed chests hold resplendent garments and furs worth 5,000 stl. On a stand is Derkin's golden *plate mail +3*, helm, and shield with the avenging flame emblem. The armor is cursed for any who steal it—it becomes AC 10 at a critical moment in battle. Also here is a two-handed bronze *war axe +2* and a *ring of protection +2*.

Raging Ember

This encounter occurs when the heroes enter area 280 with the Hammer of Kharas (if the heroes avoid this area after obtaining the hammer, this battle occurs at any overlook they enter or when they reach the ground. Adjust the circumstances of the fight accordingly). If Evenstar is not with the heroes, he is waiting for them as Kharas. A shadow crosses his face and he looks skyward. There on the tower's cap perches Ember, the red dragon. Verminaard is not astride Ember. Evenstar shakes his head at those who draw weapons.

In a voice that is a hissing roar, Ember speaks, "So Old One, you consort with my enemies! More, you hide behind their puny forms! Step aside, they are mine! Nothing holds back my claw now!"

Evenstar smiles, "Begone, child! Do not tempt my anger. Do you desire death so?"

Ember's lips curl in a cruel snarl. "No, Old One! It is you who tempt fate! I know the Oath; by the power of your word you are bound! Not even the terror of the *dragonlance* could bind one so well. Come, Evenstar, show these puny mortals what company they keep, or has the Council stripped you of your pride too?"

The dwarf's face clouds with anger; his form swells, taking on a golden hue, stretching and growing until there stands a golden dragon. Ember laughs in derision. Evenstar turns to the heroes and tells them Ember is right, it may not interfere.

Ember bellows, "Prepare to die!" and takes flight. If needed, review the dragon rules in the *Monstrous Compendium* and Ember's NPC Capsule in the Appendix. Ember does not attack Evenstar intentionally. It circles and breathes, then claws and bites as it glides the next two rounds. Then it climbs, banks, and swoops to breathe again. Finally, it dives for double claw damage and then lands to fight and cast spells.

Evenstar does not help unless Ember causes Evenstar damage or harms any part of the tomb. If this happens, Evenstar flies into a rage and attacks.

The hammer does not use its special abilities. If thrown off the tower, Evenstar has it after the fight.

If the heroes use the flagpole as a heavy lance (dmg 3d6) to set against Ember's dive, it causes double damage. Ember can avoid the lance if it is seen in time.

Evenstar suggests that the lance be used if the heroes do not think of it.

When Ember is reduced to 5 or fewer hit points, it screams in a final death cry, takes to the air, tries to fly away, falters, and tumbles backward onto the spike on the tower cap.

War horns sound from the valley below. The army approaches. Evenstar collapses and changes to Kharas. He is aging and the tomb trembles. He speaks, "I have completed at last my fateful mission, and now the end is upon me. Take the hammer—let it not fall into the enemy's hands! Flee to the Thanos and fail not."

He encourages Arman to guard the hammer and fulfill his destiny. He gives the heroes six horse statuettes. They are to throw these to the ground and cry "Branchala Guide Me!" The statuettes become living horses for three turns (move 24), and can be used three times.

As the heroes mount to flee, a raucous screeching is heard. Six young dragons, Ember's brood, are heading for the tomb. If the horses have been activated, they rear and then leap off the side of the tomb. Any riders must roll Dexterity checks; failure means that the hero is hanging from the sad-

dle. At the last moment, the horses *feather fall* gently to the ground.

Behind, the fledglings circle the tower in confusion. The tomb shudders, crumbling, until the spike breaks, tossing Ember's broken form earthward. Then the tomb slowly sinks.

The army starts a mile away from the party, but it moves a mile a turn. The heroes must flee or be captured.

As the heroes near the Guardian Hall out of the Valley of the Thanos, shadows glide past as a party of eight Kapak dragonmen drop from the cliff top. From the mouth of the tunnel rides a Bozak astride a subterranean lizard.



Chapter 18: Dark Realms

Events

Event #5: Escape

This event takes place immediately after the heroes leave Derkin's Tomb.

As the great tomb crumbles, you see the mass of the approaching Dragonarmy giving chase. Your horses gallop away, but your pursuers grow ever closer!

There is a 10% chance per turn that a scouting patrol of eight Baaz draconians comes within 1d6 x 10 yards of the heroes and charges to the attack.

Remember that the magical steeds last for only three turns, and that they can be regenerated only twice. Then the heroes must proceed on foot. The Dragonarmy has occupied most of the Valley of the Thanes. Draconians swarm over the northwestern parts of the valley; the only escape route for the heroes is in the direction of the Guardian Hall leading to the Ninth Road of Thanes.

The Gateway block leading into the Great Hall block to this road is cracked and broken. Regardless of

scouts encountered, the main body of the Dragonarmy is ten rounds behind the heroes. If not delayed, the army pursues the heroes onto the Ninth Road of the Thanes. This increases the frequency of random encounters in these tunnels to one check every two rounds.

In describing the Great Hall, note that the roof is supported by pillars that are cracked and fragile. Pulling down a pillar takes one round of tugging by a combined Strength of 45. If three pillars are pulled down, the ceiling collapses. It takes the Dragonarmy six turns to dig through and resume pursuit.

Event #6: The Hunt

This region is controlled by the Daergar kingdom, currently allied with the Theiwar and with Verminaard. In addition to normal random encounters, check three times (needing a 1 on 1d6) to see if the party encounters a Daergar patrol, consisting of 12 Daergar. The patrol always begins 1d6 x 10 yards behind the heroes. If encountered, the patrol gives chase.

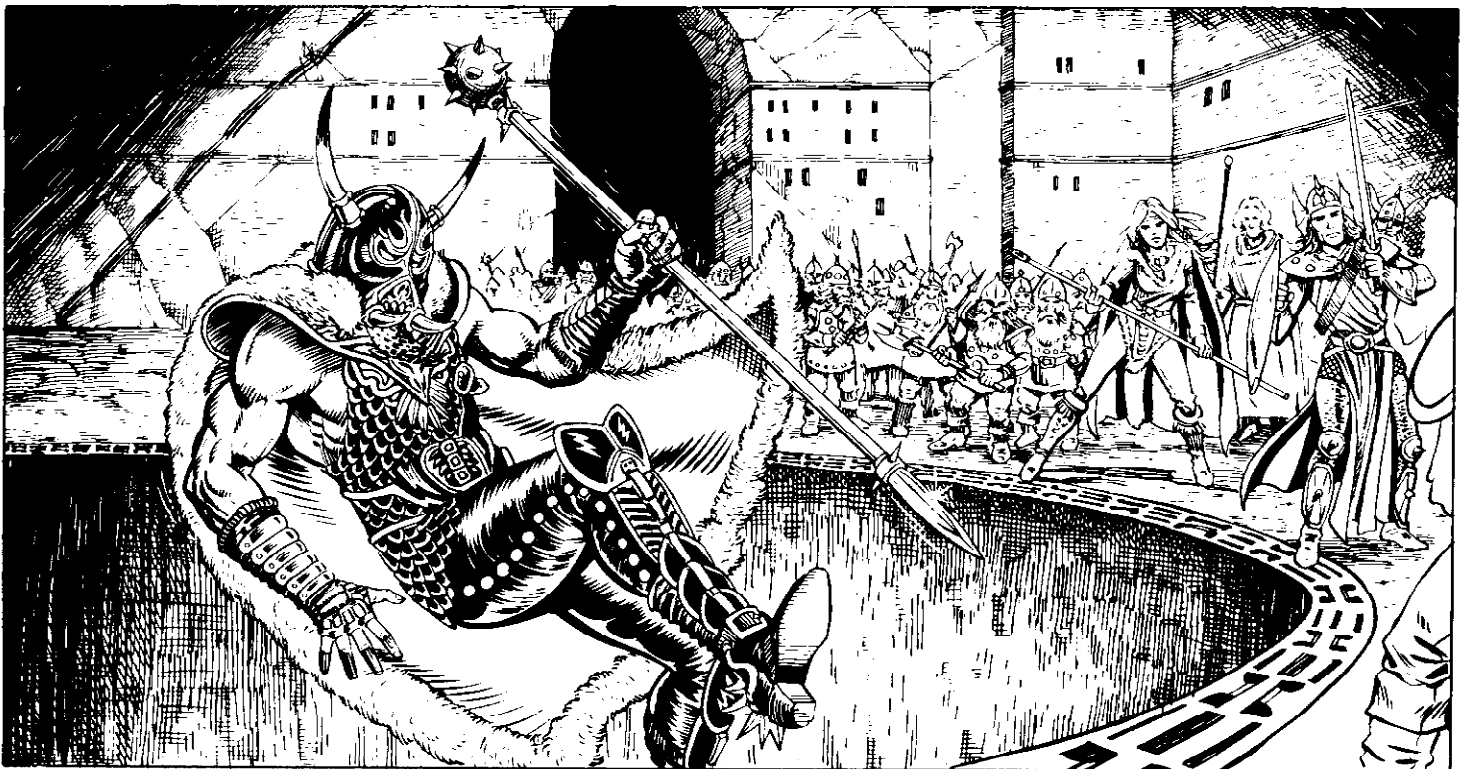
If a Daergar patrol attacks, each turn there is a 10% chance that an identical patrol joins the hunt.

Encounters

The South Hall of Justice once served a role similar to that of the North Hall, but it is now controlled by the Daergar. It is also occupied by Verminaard and his forces. Once the heroes have entered the Ninth Road of Thanes from the Guardian Hall, the only route leads to the South Hall. This is a very critical part of the adventure, and it must be carefully run.

The enemy forces should be in hot pursuit of the adventurers. Emphasize the urgent nature of their flight from the Theiwar and the Dragonarmy. If the heroes are cornered at any point, the enemy will call for them to surrender. If the heroes surrender, they are escorted under heavy guard to the Temple of Stars (encounter 299). Their weapons are taken from them, but they are not bound.

If the heroes are not captured, they should end up in the Prison (encoun-



ter 290), where they meet Eben and Berem. From there, Eben should urge them to go north to leave this complex. They must enter the Temple of Stars to escape, and there the final scene takes place.

290. Prisoners of the Daergar

As soon as the heroes cross the drawbridge in the King's Wall, they hear terrible cries coming from the next block. The next block is a dwarven prison guarded by 20 Daergar, who are outside the cell area. Once the Daergar are defeated, entering the cell complex is easy.

There are 100 prisoners held here, but only 20 Hylar, ten men, and five kender are in shape to fight. There are enough Daergar weapons to equip all fighters.

Eben is found in one of the cells, along with an old man. Eben is very glad to see the party; he says that after the heroes left on the quest, there was a raid on the Hylar city and he was kidnapped by Daergar. Eben's clothes are torn and he has bruises, but he is not actually hurt. The other prisoners confirm that he was brought into the prison by Theiwar guards, beaten, and thrown into the cell. In fact, Eben is here only to lead the party to Verminaard so that the Dragon Highlord can recover the *hammer of Kharas*. Verminaard arranged Eben's placement here through his puppet, Realgar.

Eben says he saw the Daergar commander's maps and thinks he can find the way out of the kingdom. If permitted to guide the party, he leads them to the final encounter in a roundabout fashion.

The old man in Eben's cell has forgotten how to talk and is slow to understand. He has evidently been here for a very long time; his beard and hair are waist-length and his clothes are in tatters. His long beard conceals a strange gem implanted in his chest. This is Berem Everman (see the NPC Capsules). He follows the party until the next fight. At that time, regardless of dice rolls, he suffers an evidently mortal wound and falls to the ground. When the party

moves on, one of the heroes looks back and sees Berem stand, look confused, and run off in another direction.

After the prisoners are freed, no enemies appear for ten rounds. The heroes can follow Eben, who claims to know the way out, find another way out, or stand and fight. Verminaard has ordered his forces to capture the heroes alive. If captured, the heroes are brought to the Temple of the Stars (encounter 299). If the heroes retreat or follow Eben, the enemy forces them in the direction of encounter 299.

291. Invasion of the Daergar

Enemy troops have entered the South Hall of Justice through the Seventeenth Road of Thanos. Whenever this encounter occurs, a party of 25 Theiwar, 25 Baaz draconians, and a Kapak draconian riding a subterranean lizard attacks the party. Their objective is to capture the PCs or to force them into the prison cell block (encounter 290).

Special Encounters

The following special encounters can take place anywhere in the South Hall complex. You may use some, none, or all of these to help guide the adventure. Normal random encounters can be used in addition to or in stead of these encounters.

292. Warning

Impaled on a staff is a grotesque, tusked skull. There is a 50% chance that there is a spiked spring trap hidden here (2d6 points of damage).

Each turn after the heroes pass, there is a 10% chance of a magic mouth shouting, "Intruders!"

293. Bonemaster

This rogue dwarf has a few assistants gnawing bones clean. He designs weapons, armor, and tools from the bones. He is able to animate bones; there are 20 Theiwar skeletons nearby. He uses the skeletons and his helpers to cover his escape.

294. Cricketherds

Here, a group of six Daergar tend their herd—20 giant cave crickets grazing on fungi and garbage. Their sudden chirping has a 2 in 6 chance of drawing a random encounter.

295. Curtained Alcove

As the party passes through this block, they see a curtained alcove off to one side. Inside is a pretty lady, dressed in rags, chained to the wall. (She is really a lamia noble. Oops.)

296. Survival of the Fittest

The heroes can slip by if they move quietly. If there is a commotion, the monsters turn on the party.

297. Petrified Remains

Here are the petrified remains of a mastodon. If the bonemaster (encounter 293) has followed the party, he animates the skeleton, which cannot be turned while the bonemaster is alive. (HD 13, hp 52, AC 4, THAC0 8, AT 2d8(x2)/2d6(x2))

The Final Battle

This is the climax of the first book of the DRAGONLANCE® saga. Read the following section carefully. Although this situation is extremely dangerous, it can be survived, if the heroes think and act intelligently. There is a lot of role-playing here; try to understand the needs and objectives of all the NPCs before beginning play.

298. Doorway to Despair

If none of the PCs experienced the full dream of event #2 and #3, eliminate the *deja vu* aspects of the following description, but try to give the players a feeling of dread nonetheless.

No matter which way the heroes come upon the final encounter, they find themselves heading down a strangely familiar corridor. . . .

The way ahead of you dims, as if the light of your torches and lan-

Chapter 18: Dark Realms

terns is being sucked up by the grim dwarven halls. Your surroundings take on the feeling of a dream, as if you are sleepwalking. An awful feeling of *deja vu* creeps up into your soul . . . for you were here once before, in a dream.

Memories of your nightmare in the Mind of Evil flood back, for the corridor stretching into the next dwarven block is the corridor in your dream!

If characters try to go in another direction, they encounter parties of Daergar and draconians that fight to either capture them or force them into the final encounter.

299. The Final Battle

This encounter takes place in the Temple of Stars (City Block 12). Review the map block carefully to place all the participants in it. In locations 2 and 4, the ceiling has caved in, blocking the passage so that the party must enter the main temple area (center of block).

If the party was captured previously, they are brought into this central area. Their weapons are piled nearby. If the party did not release Eben from the prison, he is brought in to stand by Verminaard, apparently a prisoner too.

The great hall north is barred by a locked golden gate. Suddenly, the face of Verminaard, ten feet tall, appears in mid-air, and a telepathic voice booms in your heads. "Finally! You are mine!" The doors fling open and nearly 200 Daergar rush in, weapons at the ready.

Verminaard laughs. "So now you know what lies beyond the doorway of dreams. Nothing can save you now!"

A horn sounds from behind the golden gates and the image fades. The Daergar cower as a light magically shines on the gates. Suddenly, the gates are flung open. A party of four warriors, four draconians, two ogres, and an ettin, all wearing the uniforms of officers in

the army of the Dragon Highlord enter. They part, and from behind them strides Verminaard, clothed in black armor. He steps up onto a balcony over the central pit, and laughs with sinister joy. "Welcome to despair!" he shouts.

In addition to all items and spells in Verminaard's NPC Capsule, he wears a *ring of protection +3*, a *ring of protection vs. normal missiles*, and a *brooch of shielding*. He has cast *resist fire* on himself. If the heroes attempt to attack, he shrugs it off. The Daergar fire a flight of darts to warn the heroes.

If the heroes entered the Mind of Evil in events #2 and #3, have them review their dream cards and remind them of the details of shifting and changing to become more and more like the dream. Sturm and Laurana feel that this is not where their dreams took place.

Verminaard speaks again. "Word has reached me that Ember has been slain! For that you will pay dearly! You thought to best me by gaining the *hammer of Kharas*, but I was in control all along. I permitted you to retrieve what I could not. Now I have you and the hammer, and with it I shall command the dwarven kingdoms. To show you how futile has been your struggle, one of your own will bring the hammer to me."

His gaze sweeps over the party members. Ask each player in turn if he will voluntarily take the hammer to Verminaard. If all refuse (as they should), Eben Shatterstone reveals himself as the traitor. Take Eben's character card back from the player who has been running him and have Eben tell the party that, indeed, he works for Verminaard. If Eben is not with the party, Verminaard can attempt to telepathically control anyone with a Wisdom of 10 or less. The person he attempts to control gets a saving throw vs. spell to resist. If all resist, Verminaard has his personal guard retrieve the hammer.

At this point, remember the special powers of the *hammer of Kharas* (see Magical Items in the Appendix). It can possess its wielder and personally act to make events come out to its satisfaction. Give the players a chance to save themselves, but if they fail, the hammer can take an active role.

Verminaard laughs as the *hammer of Kharas* is taken from you. The hammer-wielder says to you, "You are fools to resist my master! He will reward me richly; you will see your folly when I am made governor of this land!"

"Hold your tongue, lackey," snarls Verminaard. "You are simply a pawn, and you will serve your betters! Bring me the hammer!"

The traitor is outraged and protests, but Verminaard exerts his will and the unwilling lackey moves closer to Verminaard. But as he reaches the Dragon Highlord, the hammer suddenly begins to glow. The Daergar are awed and fall to their knees. The traitor passes from the influence of Verminaard to the influence of the hammer.

Verminaard is livid at the disobedience, and he demands again that the traitor bring him the weapon. But the traitor is fully under the hammer's control, and says, "With this hammer, I control the dwarven realms, not you!" He throws the hammer at Verminaard, automatically hitting for maximum damage. The hammer rebounds and lands at the edge of the pit. The Daergar begin to chant the name of the traitor as he bends to pick up the hammer.

But at that moment, Verminaard casts *spiritual hammer*, hitting the traitor automatically for maximum damage, and keeps him from retrieving the hammer. Each round thereafter, Verminaard strikes again for maximum damage, slowly crushing the hapless traitor.

Battle Royale

Now the heroes have a chance to break free. There is one Theiwar for each hero in the party; they must be

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overcome before the heroes can recover their weapons, if they were captured earlier.

The Daergar soldiers are only concerned with who possesses the hammer. Its influence keeps them from being active in the battle. If the heroes liberated the prisoners earlier, the prisoners fight an equal number of Daergar. The heroes must defeat Verminaard's guard and the Dragon Highlord himself to win.

Once the traitor is dead, Verminaard tears a dragon-headed necklace from around his neck and throws it into the pit, crying, "Come, oh mighty Queen! Send me your servant so that your child may be avenged!" Silence follows, and then from the pit arises a horror—a fireshadow! The fireshadow resembles a wraith-like dragon outlined by pale green fire.

The fireshadow first attacks one of the prisoners with its *ray of oblivion*, disintegrating him. Next, it strikes a Daergar, converting him into dark flame. The heroes must defeat the fireshadow and the dark flame Daergar, in addition to their other foes.

If the heroes do not think to retrieve the hammer and use it against the fireshadow, it glows and rings out. The hammer allows only Eben, Arman, Tasslehoff, Flint, or Caramon to pick it up. The fireshadow automatically attacks any person holding the hammer. The hammer can dispel the fireshadow if it hits the creature. The hammer arcs through the monster and it fades away, but then the hammer falls at Verminaard's feet.

If the heroes entered the Mind of Evil in their dreams, suddenly they sense the mind of Elistan among them. Hope floods into their souls, and they gain a +2 bonus to their attack and damage rolls and a -2 bonus to their ACs for the remainder of this battle. Verminaard staggers back under the mind of Elistan; he suffers a -2 penalty to attack and damage rolls and a +2 penalty to his AC.

Verminaard, reeling, stoops to pick up the hammer. "You may think you have won, but this battle is not

yet over!" he cries. But when he lifts the hammer, he cries out in pain and suffers 15 points of damage. He cannot hold the hammer and flings it away. Verminaard continues to fight, but when he is down to his last few hit points, he says, "You shall not have the satisfaction of taking me alive," wraps his cloak around himself, and steps into the pit, falling to his death without a sound.

Once Verminaard is dead, the Daergar flee and Verminaard's guard suffers -1 penalties to their attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws.

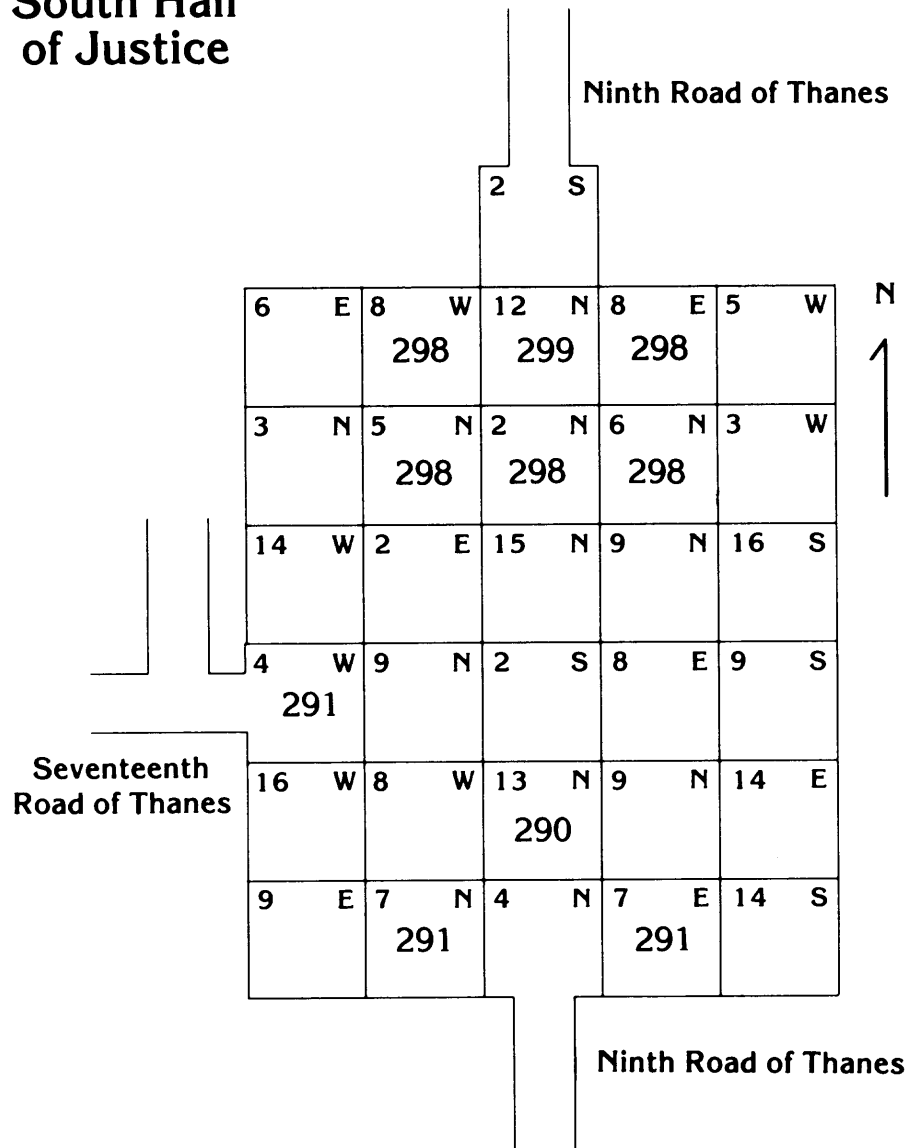
Death of a Hero

Regardless of actual battle events, Arman Kharas receives a fatal wound in this fight. As the final enemies flee or die, a faint whisper is heard from the crumpled form of Arman. There is no saving him; he seems to have been poisoned.

If the heroes attempt to aid him, he shakes his head and says, "No, I am undone. No aid will save me. Take the hammer to my father; he will unify the kingdom. Tell him not to mourn, I have served the Wheel well. I know I am not Kharas, but I have driven the darkness back."

And with his final words, he dies.

South Hall of Justice



Endgame

If the heroes fail to defeat Verminaard in the final battle, then the forces of darkness triumph. The heroes almost certainly are captured. The *hammer of Kharas* falls into the hands of evil, and the Theiwar Thane takes the throne of Thorbardin. The forces of evil prevail. This concludes the adventure in despair—though the heroes may yet escape to fight again.

If the heroes defeat Verminaard and recover the *hammer of Kharas*, a party of Hylar dwarves led by Hornfel arrives shortly after Arman Kharas's death. He asks the heroes to give him the hammer.

If the heroes give Hornfel the *hammer of Kharas*, he hails them as the saviors of Thorbardin, and he grants them and all their companions safe passage through the kingdom. Each character who survived is made an honorary War Leader (equivalent to a knighthood) and a citizen of Thorbardin.

If the heroes refuse Hornfel's request, the hammer uses its powers to take over its wielder, who is forced to hand it to Hornfel. Hornfel treats the heroes the same as if they gave him the hammer voluntarily.

It is vital that the hammer end up in the hands of Hornfel, for this is the only device that can forge *dragonlances*. The players, of course, should not learn this until much later.

Possession of the *hammer of Kharas* allows Hornfel to declare himself King of Thorbardin. As King, he can assert authority over the Theiwar and Daergar, and once again open Thorbardin to the outside world.

Rescue of the Refugees

At this point, determine how much time remains before the Dragonarmy reaches the refugee camp. Ask the players whether they want to travel quickly or slowly back to the camp. Quick travel takes one day from the South Hall; slow travel takes two days. Do not tell the players how much time is left!

If the Heroes Return Too Late

A vision out of nightmares greets you as you approach the refugee camp. For where there were once 800 living souls, now there is only death and destruction. Men, women, and children are strewn about like rag dolls. The wagons are smashed; the fragile lean-tos are burned. Mixed with the refugees are the remains of draconians—the defenders of the camp fought bravely to the end and took many enemies with them.

You have returned too late. The Dragonarmy has won yet another victory. Your quest to find safety for these people has come to naught . . . but the battle for Krynn is not yet over!

While in Dragonarmy-occupied territory, the characters have an encounter with eight Baaz draconians once every four game turns, in addition to normal random encounters.

Twenty refugees led by Laurana managed to escape, carrying the body of Elistan. They make their way to Northgate and are found there. Elistan revived shortly after the heroes defeated Verminaard. He has told the story of the final battle to the survivors.

Continue with the final scene below—but the final feast is dimmed with sorrow, and the ending of this saga is not a happy one. Instead of remaining at Southgate, the few surviving refugees elect to accompany the heroes south to Tarsis.

Because the players failed in their mission, they lose 50% of the experience points they earned in this adventure.

If the Heroes Return in Time

As you approach the refugee camp, a mighty cheer goes up. The survivors of Pax Tharkas are happier than they have been in many a day. Men, women, and children rush to greet you . . . and

at their head is Elistan, risen again.

Elistan lifts his hand, and the people fall silent. "Welcome!" he cries, and another great cheer erupts from the crowd.

"We must leave quickly, ere the Dragonarmy reaches our camp. But now that you are here, we know that safety and freedom are not far away."

As the refugees quickly pack their few belongings, Elistan takes the heroes aside. If the heroes entered the Mind of Evil in events #2 and #3 in chapter 14, Elistan says, "Thank you for bringing hope into the Mind of Evil. Thanks to you, I was able to stave off the dark forces and attack Verminaard at the critical moment. I witnessed your final battle, then awoke at the death of Verminaard to bring news of your victory to the people. We have awaited your coming, and now know that freedom is in our grasp."

If the heroes did not enter the Mind of Evil, Elistan says, "I was consumed by the darkness of Verminaard. My strength and faith were barely enough to keep me free. But Verminaard's death freed me, and I awoke to bring news of your victory to our people. We have awaited your coming, and now know that freedom is at last in our grasp."

Passage Through Thorbardin

The survivors of the 800 refugees follow the characters into Northgate and through the long halls of the dwarven kingdom to Southgate, its southern exit. (For mapping purposes, Southgate is identical to Northgate except for the compass direction.)

Hornfel, now wearing the crown of the High King, comes to Southgate to welcome the refugees. "We greet you, the first humans to pass through our kingdom in many centuries. For the courage of your leaders, and for their contribution to at last reuniting the dwarves of Thorbardin, we are pleased to grant you the land outside

Epilogue

the Southgate as a refuge until darkness lifts from Krynn.”

The land is able to support the surviving refugees, and it will be a long time before the Dragonarmy reunites under another leader. For the time being, the refugees are safe. The Council of Freedom elects to remain here, while the heroes, accompanied by Elistan, go south to the seaport of Tarsis to arrange passage for the refugees to lands free of the menace—if, indeed, such lands exist.

The characters should remain with the refugees for a few weeks, to recover from their trials and receive the level advancements they have earned by training with dwarven masters and rescued veterans.

If the characters saved the refugees, they each receive a bonus of 1,000 experience points in addition to any other points earned in the adventure.

The heroes have several meetings with Hornfel, and they attend the funeral of Arman Kharas. The dwarves gladly furnish the heroes with whatever supplies and equipment (no magical items) they need for their quest southward.

During this period, Riverwind and Goldmoon decide to marry. This is the occasion for a great feast—the final event of this story.

The Wedding of Goldmoon and Riverwind

Autumn warmth fills the glade of trees. Behind you, the shadow of the great mountain looms. The

huge dwarven gate is open, a sign of safety and refuge.

Everywhere there is peace and rejoicing. Children and parents alike dance in the glade's soft grasses. Music fills the air. The sunset is impossibly rich and brilliant.

It is a time of peace and rejoicing, for this is the marriage of Goldmoon and Riverwind. Celebration is in the air. And, as the sun sets, a line of dwarves, carrying torches, winds its way down from Southgate to attend the feast. Elistan calls the people together.

The Wedding Song (in the Appendix) was written for the feast of this marriage. You can perform it or read it aloud. Elistan conducts the wedding service, and when the two are joined, shouts of jubilation are everywhere. The feast lasts long into the night. And late, around the campfire, the Canticle of the Dragon may once again be recited.

The Story Ends. . .

Late at night, you join your companions on a ridge, looking south. The plains of Tarsis stretch to the flat horizon. Somewhere to the south the shining city of Tarsis stands, somewhere its towers gleam in the sunshine, and its ships set sail for lands free of tyranny.

Verminaard is dead, but soon another Dragon Highlord will arise

to take his place. The first battle has been won, but the war continues.

Perhaps in Tarsis answers can be found. Why have dragons returned to Krynn? What is the power of the Dragon Highlords? How can they be defeated?

And somewhere in the world is the key to the dragonlance—for if the *hammer of Kharas* was no myth, then the *dragonlance* may also exist. If they can be found, perhaps the tide can be turned, and you can take back the stolen northlands.

Here ends the first book of the DRAGONLANCE® saga. Knowledge of the true gods has returned to troubled Krynn, and with knowledge, hope.

The second book of the DRAGONLANCE epic tells of the heroes' role in the Great War, and of the discovery of the *dragonlances*. Many old mysteries are solved, but new ones arise.

In the third book of the saga, it is shown how the will of one man can change the fate of the world—for good or ill—and reveals the final mysteries and fate of the dragons of Krynn.

Dream Card—Sturm

Fierce draconian warriors attack, and you are consumed with battle-lust! You draw your sword and strike about you, cutting down your enemies.

Great elation fills your heart as you see Kitiara, the great love of your life, fighting at your side! You know that you are unbeatable, and that victory is in your grasp.

You realize suddenly that if you strike the golden lock with your sword, Elistan will be freed and Verminaard forever destroyed. But you must act now, for Verminaard is moving to take Elistan with him into the darkness!

As you lunge forward, you hear Kitiara cry for help. You turn and see her sorely beset by draconians. Without your help, it is obvious she will die. You hesitate, torn between your duty and your love.

At that moment, a draconian drives a spear deep into your chest. Your last, blood-dimmed sight is of Kitiara dying at the hands of the draconians.

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Dream Card—Sturm

Fierce draconian warriors attack, and you are consumed with battle-lust! You draw your sword and strike about you, cutting down your enemies.

Great elation fills your heart as you cut down the draconians surrounding you. You look around to see where you are needed. Magically, a wall rises before you, and you hear guards crying that the draconians are preparing to breach the wall. A huge blue dragon appears in mid-air, demoralizing all who face it. You know that you are the only one who can defeat the dragon. You start toward the wall as trumpets sound the retreat.

But you cannot go forward. Fear such as you have never known stabs into your heart. You know that if you confront this monster you will die.

You turn away, shaking and ashamed. Behind you, the wall is breached and the draconian hordes pour through. The dragon lands.

You do not resist as you are trampled by hordes of draconians pouring through the battlements. Bitterly despairing, you die a coward.

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Dream Card—Goldmoon

Out of the darkness come fierce warriors-members of your own Que-Shu tribe, murdered by draconians! You see their expressionless faces, and you realize that they are lost to evil.

You fight because you must, but tears run down your cheeks as you cut down people you loved dearly. Despair, guilt, and horror oppress your soul. Yet you fight on. Around you, your comrades die, one by one. You feel that the True Gods have abandoned you.

Suddenly you know what you must do. You step forward, and with a mighty blow shatter the glass case. Elistan steps out, looks at you and then at Verminaard. His eyes become cold, expressionless. You scream, and reach your hand out to him, ignoring the blows that fall upon you. Elistan reaches down to you, grabs the amulet around your neck, and tears it from you.

You collapse, weak and bleeding from the sword-thrusts in your body. As you die, you see Elistan's white robes turn to scarlet as he disappears into the void with Verminaard.

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Dream Card—Laurana

Fierce draconian warriors attack, and you are consumed with battle-lust! You draw your sword and strike about you, cutting down your enemies.

But the draconian hordes are endless, and around you there is death. Sturm falls beside you, draconians hacking at his body. You look around and see the horror. You falter.

Voices shout at you, asking you what to do. Another voice cries for you to take command. Everyone's eyes are on you; everyone is yelling your name, calling for help.

But you don't want to help. You want to be told what to do. You want to be helped. Finally, you can't stand it any more. You throw down your weapons and run out of the room into the darkness. You run farther, only to find that the darkness grows . . . and you cannot stop running.

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Dream Card—Riverwind

Out of the darkness come fierce warriors-members of your own Que-Shu tribe, murdered by draconians! You see their expressionless faces, and you realize that they are lost to evil.

You fight because you must, but tears run down your cheeks as you cut down people you loved dearly. Despair, guilt, and horror oppress your soul. Yet you fight on. Around you, your comrades die, one by one.

You see Goldmoon before you, fighting to reach Elistan as your own tribesmen stab her. You are bleeding from your many wounds, yet you shrug off the pain and fight your way toward Goldmoon.

Your legs and arms grow strangely heavy, and you can't seem to get closer to Goldmoon, no matter how hard you try. Despair and anguish stab into your heart as you see her fall, mortally wounded by her own tribesmen.

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Dream Card— Tika, Gilthanas, and other Warriors

Fierce draconian warriors attack, and you are consumed with battle-lust! You draw your sword and strike about you, cutting down your enemies.

You are determined to prove yourself in this battle, yet things start to go wrong. You stumble and accidentally trip Sturm, who falls under the flashing blades of the draconians. You jostle Raistlin just as he is about to unleash a spell. Your friends are yelling at you to get out of the way, to leave them alone.

Panicked, you look around. Enemies you thought you killed are standing up and attacking. Soon you are fighting through tears of frustration.

You fight on, stubbornly, but your mistakes get worse and worse. Suddenly, you see a huge, armored back—a draconian! You stab deeply, and your aim is true. You wipe tears from your eyes, and, too late, realize that you have stabbed Caramon!

You drop your sword and do not resist as the draconians stab you. You die, falling across Caramon's body.

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Dream Cards

Dream Card—Tasslehoff and other Rogues

Suddenly, battle rages all about you as draconian hordes attack! Your companions can take care of these monsters—only you can free Elistan! Carefully, you make your way to the crystal cage, and inspect the small golden lock. What luck! The lock is childishly simple.

You pull out a lockpick and go to work. But the lock doesn't yield. You try again, but you find that this simple lock resists your best techniques. You hear the sounds of combat behind you, and see your friends begin to die under the onslaught of the draconians.

You know that you can stop the slaughter if you can just open this simple, simple lock! Your hands begin to bleed from tearing at the lock in bitter frustration.

Finally, ignoring your better judgment, you try to force the lock open, but you trigger a very simple trap you knew was there all along. As the small, poisoned needle enters your hand, you realize that your quest is doomed. As the poison courses through your body, you know that this is the end.

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Dream Card—Caramon

Fierce draconian warriors attack, and you are consumed with battle-lust! You draw your sword and strike about you, cutting down your enemies.

You stand together with your brother Raistlin. His magic protects you as you slay enemies all around you.

You are fearless in your attack, but see your friends, one by one, overwhelmed by the draconian hordes. Yet you stand, and you and Raistlin are able to move toward the caged Elistan.

But suddenly the magical spell protecting you dissipates! You turn to see Raistlin, now dressed in black robes, leaving you for Verminaard. Your beloved brother has abandoned you, and you are bereft. You call his name, but a fierce pain in your back reminds you of the battle.

You have been stabbed in the back, and you cannot see your killer. You pitch forward, dying: your last thoughts are of your brother, forever lost to evil.

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Dream Card—Raistlin and other Wizards

A horde of draconians attack, but you know that your spells will protect you. The magic has never been more strong within you, and you know that today you are capable of feats far beyond what you thought possible. Victory is at hand!

Suddenly, you have a vision of yourself dressed in black robes, feared and respected, rich and powerful. Before you, opened, is the Book of the *Magius*, in which all the knowledge of mages throughout time is contained. All you have to do is walk through a door in front of you. You look at your companions, and then at the book. How pitiful they look; how doomed!

Without another glance, you stride through the door, noticing as you do so that your red robes turn black.

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Dream Card—Flint

Verminaard signals, and a horde of mountain dwarves—your sworn enemies—rushes to the attack. The battle-lust sings in your heart as you realize that your revenge is at hand!

But there seems to be an infinite supply of the foul creatures, and you and your fellows are slowly overwhelmed. "I led them into this fate," you think. "I am the oldest and thus responsible." Despair and guilt enter your heart as you see your dearest friends perish at the hands of your enemies. There Tasslehoff dies, trying to rescue Elistan; there Tanis dies: there Caramon dies.

All is hopeless. You keep fighting, now much weaker, as the mountain dwarves continue their assault. You hardly feel the axes cutting into your body. The loss of blood makes you weaker, and finally you fall. Your last thoughts are of your friends.

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Dream Card—Priests except Goldmoon

A horde of draconians attacks at Verminaard's signal. You call on the True Gods for support, then lay about you, hoping to destroy as many of the vermin as possible.

The draconians continue to attack, no matter how many are killed. Despair enters your heart as you realize that you and your companions cannot survive.

Suddenly you know what you must do. You step forward, and with a mighty blow shatter the glass case. Elistan steps out, looks at you and then at Verminaard. His eyes become cold, expressionless. You scream, and you reach your hand out to him, ignoring the blows that fall upon you. Elistan reaches down to you, grabs the amulet around your neck, and tears it from you.

You collapse, weak and bleeding from the sword-thrusts in your body. As you die, you see Elistan's white robes turn to scarlet as he disappears into the void with Verminaard.

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Supplemental Character Cards

CUT OUT CARDS

Tika Waylan *5th-Level Human Fighter
(3rd-Level Thief)*

STR 14 DEX 16 CON 13 THACO 16
INT 9 WIS 12 CHR 14 AL NG HP 30

AC 8 (Leather armor)

Weapons Short sword

Dagger

Frying pan (1d8)

Equipment Selected by player

Languages Common, Plainsman

See the back of this card for more information.

gilthanas *5th-Level Elf Fighter/4th-Level Mage*

STR 12 DEX 16 CON 12 THACO 16
INT 14 WIS 10 CHR 13 AL CG HP 26

AC 2 (Chain mail, shield, Dex bonus)

Weapons Long sword +1

Long bow, 20 arrows

Equipment Selected by player

Languages Qualinesti Elf, Silvanesti Elf,
Common

Spell Use 3 1st-Level and
2 2nd-Level per day

See the back of this card for more information.

Laurana—NPC *4th-Level Elf Fighter*

STR 13 DEX 17 CON 14 THACO 17
INT 15 WIS 12 CHR 16 AL CG HP 28

AC 0 (Chain mail +1, shield, Dex bonus)

Weapon Short sword

Equipment Selected by player

Languages Common, Qualinesti Elf,
Silvanesti Elf

See the back of this card for more information.

Eben Shatterstone—NPC *5th-Level
Human Fighter*

STR 14 DEX 13 CON 8 THACO 16
INT 15 WIS 7 CHR 15 AL CN HP 28

AC 4 (Chain mail and shield)

Weapons Long sword

Dagger

Equipment Selected by player

Languages Common

See the back of this card for more information.

Elistan—NPC *7th-Level Human Priest*

STR 13 DEX 12 CON 12 THACO 16
INT 14 WIS 17 CHR 16 AL LG HP 40

AC 5 (Chain mail)

Weapon War hammer

Equipment Selected by player

Languages Common, Seeker, Qualinesti
Elf

Spell Use None until *Medallion of Faith*
gained

See the back of this card for more information.

Gilthanas appears young, but his eyes reveal his true maturity. He moves nimbly and quietly.

He is the brother of Laurana and Porthios, and he is the son of the Speaker of Suns. He is unsure of the wisdom of Tanis and Laurana's relationship.

Gilthanas served as a messenger and spy in the occupied lands. While in Solace, he was captured by draconians, along with the other heroes. After their rescue by elves, Gilthanas elected to accompany the heroes in their desperate mission to free the captives from Pax Tharkas.

Tika is the daughter of a thief. She grew up fast and tough, but inside she remains vulnerable. At the age of 15, she tried to rob Otik Sandath, owner of the Inn of the Last Home, but she was caught in the act. Otik felt sorry for her and offered her a job, which she eagerly accepted. She grew to love Otik as a father.

Tika looks older and seems more worldly than she truly is. Her father left her a ring, which she wears on a necklace; it doesn't seem to be magical, she just keeps it for sentimental reasons. She hates the Dragonarmy and the loathsome draconians. She is fond of Caramon and fascinated by magic.

Eben Shatterstone was born to wealth and comfort. His father, a minor noble, sent Eben to the finest teachers. Eben grew to be a handsome, charming, and proud man.

But the family wealth was lost through poor management, excessive taxes, and bad luck. Eben was forced to become a wandering adventurer. He is proud of his past and ashamed of his current condition. He longs for wealth and the chance to rebuild his family's fortune.

Eben is charming and friendly, but he tends to dominate conversations. He is a capable fighter, but he does not hesitate to run if the odds aren't in his favor.

Laurana is the daughter of the Speaker of Suns and sister to Gilthanas and Porthios. She has been spoiled all her life, both for her royal lineage and her beauty. Her heart is good, though. She is used to getting her own way, but she can be diplomatic when she has to.

In childhood, she and Tanis were "pledged," though she took this more seriously than he.

Although Laurana is immature, she possesses great inner strength. It remains to be seen whether trials and danger will destroy her or forge her into a person to be reckoned with.

Elistan was once a Seeker priest and worshiped false gods. When the Dragonarmy took Haven, he was captured and brought to Pax Tharkas. There he met Goldmoon, a fellow prisoner. When she used magic that had not been seen for centuries, Elistan realized that her gods were the true ones.

He refused to join Verminaard's cause, and he suffered greatly for it. Then he was rescued along with the refugees of Pax Tharkas. Goldmoon shared with him the knowledge of the True Gods and he became a cleric of Paladine, the highest god of good.

Elistan now devotes his life to the service of Paladine and the welfare of his people. Although a man of peace, he fights to defend his people.

Verminaard

Dragon Highlord

8th-Level Lawful Evil Cleric

Strength 14	Intelligence 12
Dexterity 10	Wisdom 16
Constitution 15	Charisma 18
THAC0 16	Hit Points 50
AC 1	Movement 12

Spells:

1st Level: *cause fear, cause light, wounds (x2), command (x2)*
 2nd Level: *hold person (x2), resist fire, silence 15 ft. radius, spiritual hammer*
 3rd Level: *cause blindness, dispel magic, prayer*
 4th Level: *cause serious wounds (x2)*

Wears *plate mail +2*.

Carries *Nightbringer*, a *mace +2*. On a successful hit, the victim must roll a successful saving throw vs. spell or be blinded for 2d6 turns (+4 penalty to AC, lose shield and Dexterity bonuses to AC). If a character of good alignment tries to hold *Nightbringer*, he must roll a successful saving throw vs. spell, with a -2 penalty, or be permanently blinded.

Verminaard's face is concealed behind the grotesque mask of a Dragon Highlord—a vicious, almost machine-like visor that has a pair of wicked horns curving from the forehead. He wears shiny blue plate mail and a billowing blue cape. Standing well over six feet tall, Verminaard presents an imposing image of evil.

Verminaard is dedicated to the ruthless destruction of good in all its forms. No shred of conscience disturbs him in his quest for power.

He now controls all of the lands on the Abanasinian peninsula from the Seeker kingdoms to the Plains of Dergoth, and he works continually to extend his power.

Ember (Pyros)

Ancient, Huge Red Dragon

Chaotic Evil	Hit Points 88
AC -7	Movement 9, Fl 30
#AT 3	(C) Damage 1d10+8/ 1d10+8/3d10+8
HD 17	THAC0 5
Fire Breath	Spell Use

Spells:

1st Level: *sleep, detect magic*
 2nd Level: *web, mirror image*
 3rd Level: *haste*

Fewmaster Toede

Hobgoblin Subcommander

4th-Level Lawful Evil Fighter

Strength 16	Intelligence 8
Dexterity 10	Wisdom 11
Constitution 16	Charisma 6
THAC0 17	Hit Points 25
AC 8	Movement 12

Carries a short sword, dagger, and a shield. Wears leather armor.

Toede's wispy, white hair tops a very ugly face. His speckled gray skin, double chins, and pot belly all resemble those of a vicious little toad.

Toede is a bully. He snivels and whines around superiors, but he is full of bluster and threats when he has the upper hand. Like all bullies, he is cowardly, but he possesses a certain crude cunning which helps him to stay alive and prosper.

Evenstar (T'holoth)

Ancient, Huge Gold Dragon

Lawful Good	Hit Points 96
AC -8	Movement 12, Fl 42
#AT 3	(C) Damage 1d10+8/ 1d10+8/6d6+8
HD 20	THAC0 5
Fire & Gas Breath	Spell Use

Spells:

Magical: 1st Level: *dancing lights, grease*
 2nd Level: *pyrotechnics, stinking cloud*
 3rd Level: *phantasmal force, delude*
 4th Level: *fire charm, illusionary wall*

Priest: 1st Level: *cure light wounds*

T'holoth was exiled by his people for speaking out against an oath sworn by all good dragons after the Cataclysm. His punishment was to serve as the guardian of the *hammer of Kharas* until an ancient prophecy was fulfilled: "*When the power of the gods returns, then shall the hammer go forth to forge once again the freedom of Krynn.*"

He was forced to swear to the oath he despised, then banished to the Kallil S'rith (Valley of the Thanes) to guard the tomb of Derkin, where Kharas and the hammer were buried after the Dwarfgate Wars.

T'holoth took the name of Evenstar in his exile, since his light was dimmed by banishment from his fellows.

Evenstar arrived to find the tomb defenseless. Using the knowledge of his kind, he wrested the tomb mound from the earth and set it in the sky. He then crafted defenses—some magical and some mundane—and filled the tomb with peril.

In his loneliness, Evenstar used his magic to create life, beauty, and laughter to share the tomb with him. In his longing, he adorned the castle with those things which brought him joy.

Evenstar has the special ability to polymorph at will, and he changes shape frequently for pleasure. He often changes into the form of Kharas, and he always does so whenever anyone enters the tomb searching for the hammer. Other forms he chooses include a beautiful elven maiden named Serinda, a galeb duhr, an eagle, a pony-sized dog, an Aghar, and a pincus. If attacked by tomb robbers, he assumes the form of a wemic, but retains his gold dragon characteristics.

Evenstar, however, is not a fighter, but a poet and dreamer. He discharges his duty faithfully, testing all who seek the hammer until he finds those with bravery and knowledge of the True Gods. Then shall he be released, to return to his own people.

Fizban the Fabulous

Eccentric Mage, Level Unknown

Fizban is a mage of indeterminate level. He appears to be senile, but was obviously once a wizard of great power. He seems to lead a charmed life. Although he always appears befuddled and absent-minded, the things Fizban does always turn out for the best—but never in the way expected.

Play Fizban for comic relief—even to his apparent death, which happens in this adventure. His true nature and purpose will be revealed in future DRAGONLANCE® adventures.

Berem Everman

The Hunter

5th-Level Neutral Good Ranger

Strength 12	Intelligence 15
Dexterity 12	Wisdom 11
Constitution 13	Charisma 13
THAC0 16	Hit Points 37
AC 10	Movement 12

Immune to all fire, acid, poison, magic, disease, and petrification. Automatically regenerates any form of damage at a rate of 1 hit point per round.

Berem has a long, white beard and long, dirty hair. But beneath the concealing whiskers is the face of a middle-aged man.

Imbedded in Berem's chest, hidden by his beard, is a dull gray stone the size of a fist. It is this mysterious stone that gives him his great recuperative powers and makes him immortal.

Berem is nearly 400 years old, but he has been imprisoned away from the world for so long that he has forgotten how to speak. Only slowly does his speech return.

Berem serves a larger purpose in the great scheme of things. For now, he should remain a mystery.

Arman Kharas

7th-Level Lawful Neutral Dwarf Fighter

Strength 16	Intelligence 11
Dexterity 10	Wisdom 6
Constitution 17	Charisma 9
THAC0 14	Hit Points 69
AC 2	Movement 6

Wears *chain mail +2*. Carries small shield and footman's mace. Also carries a miner's pack with 100 feet of rope, hammer and chisels, sand, 12 spikes, a diamond (10 stl), a water skin, and iron rations.

A coarse black beard falls to the middle of Arman's muscular chest. A braid marking noble blood hangs from beneath a leather skullcap to the right of his troubled face. His features are worn, but the fire in his dark eyes shines brightly. His left hand is calloused and bruised and his thumb is scarred. Over his armor he wears a leather jerkin tied at his knees.

Arman Kharas is the son of Hornfel,

patriarch of the Kytill clan, Thane and prelate to the Hylar council. Fiercely loyal to his people, Arman is a dwarf with a vision and looks forward to the day when his people can return to the light.

Even though his name means "second" or "lesser" Kharas, he believes he is the true reincarnation of Kharas, greatest hero of the Hylar. He searches for a way he can prove his legacy and become the first King of Thorbardin in hundreds of years.

Thanes of Thorbardin

Once, a mighty king reigned over the nine dwarfrealms—now, the Council of Thanes rules Thorbardin. Six Thanes sit on the Council: Hornfel of the Hylar, Realgar of the Theiwar, Rance of the Daergar, Gneiss of the Dawear, Tufa of the Klar, and Bluph of the Aghar. Three thrones have been taken from the Council Hall: the throne of the Neidar (7th Kingdom), vacant since the Dwarfgate Wars; the throne of the Kingdom of the Dead (8th Kingdom), which is considered to be a kingdom though without representation; and the throne of the High King, vacant since the time of Derkin.

All the dwarfrealms agree that a strong king is needed, but none can agree on whom it should be. The Hylar and their allies seek a peaceful solution, but the Theiwar and their allies seek victory by whatever means they can.

The political division of the dwarfrealms is as follows: the Hylar are the oldest, the leaders. The Daewar and Aghar support them, and the Klar tend to follow their lead. Against the Hylar are the Theiwar and Daergar, both of the derro race. Recently, the Theiwar were contacted by agents of Verminaard, and an unholy alliance has sprung up between the derro races and the Dragon Highlords. Each side plans to double-cross the other at the first opportunity, but Realgar is unaware that Verminaard can control him.

Hornfel, Thane and prelate of the Hylar, is the father of Arman Kharas, and is loved by his people. He is a cautious leader and a veteran of wars. He is convinced that the days of dwarven isolation must end, and that Thorbardin must open its doors to the outside.

Realgar, a derro savant, believes himself destined to become King of Thorbardin, and he pursues his goal with all available means. His alliance with Verminaard is only the latest vehicle for his ambition. He wants the dwarves to become a

power to be feared.

Realgar has nine spells: *affect normal fires*, *blink*, *charm person*, *ESP invisibility*, *paralyzation*, *repulsion*, *shadow magic*, and *wall of fog*. He also has a *cloak of protection* and a *rod of beguiling*.

Rance, War Chieftain and Thane of the Daergar, is an angry and vicious fighter who plays dirty at every opportunity. He is a dangerous dwarf, but his temper and lack of control keep him from being the leader he thinks he is. He has a fearsome war club, encrusted with teeth, that causes double damage. His strength is 18 (75).

Gneiss, leader of the Daewar, is a war chieftain who administers his realm with a professional hand. He is calm and steady, but not an inspiring leader. His people admire and respect him, but do not love him.

Tufa, Thane of the Klar, is a modest, though respected man. He rules the Klar, a tribe of hill dwarves inside Thorbardin. Since the war with the Neidar, the Klar are at the bottom of the dwarven caste system, considered fit only for the most menial of work. He works to improve the lot of the Klar. He is allied with Hornfel, but does not wish the Klar to be puppets of anyone.

Bluph, Thane and Highbluph of the Aghar of Thorbardin, has great dignity and feels himself destined to be the first Aghar King of Thorbardin. Although actually no less stupid than the average Aghar, Bluph is considered to be a genius by his people. He is much-beloved and a great hero to the Aghar.

Blue Crystal Staff

(The Crystal of Mishakal)

This staff is carved from a single piece of blue crystal. It is about five feet long and has a two-inch-diameter shaft. The ornamentally bladed head of the staff bears a gem in its center.

Although Riverwind does not remember, a manifestation of the goddess Mishakal gave him the staff. It is an intelligent artifact of Lawful Good alignment with an Ego of 10. It can be used only by those of its alignment; others who try to wield it suffer 4d6 points of electrical damage. (Though a Lawful Good person may then wield the staff to heal the damage it caused.) The staff has the following powers:

Strikes as a staff of striking (1d3 charges per use)

Casts any of the following priest spells (two charges per level of spell cast):

1st Level: *command, cure fight wounds, remove fear*

3rd Level: *continual light, cure blindness, cure disease, remove curse*

5th Level: *cure critical wounds, raise dead*

7th Level: *restoration, resurrection*

Teleports (at its own discretion, using 15 charges)

Deflects dragon breath in a 10' radius (10 charges per use)

The staff holds up to 20 charges at a time. It regains one charge per day from the combined influences of Krynn's three moons, but it can be recharged immediately and completely at the statue of Mishakal (area 46b). Once the PCs complete the quest for the *disks of Mishakal*, the staff becomes part of the statue again.

The Disks of Mishakal

These are platinum disks 18 inches in diameter. Each disk is 1/16 inch thick. There are 160 of these plates in all. A bolt passes through one side of the plates, allowing each to swivel out and be viewed while keeping the

stack together. Each of the plates is engraved on both sides.

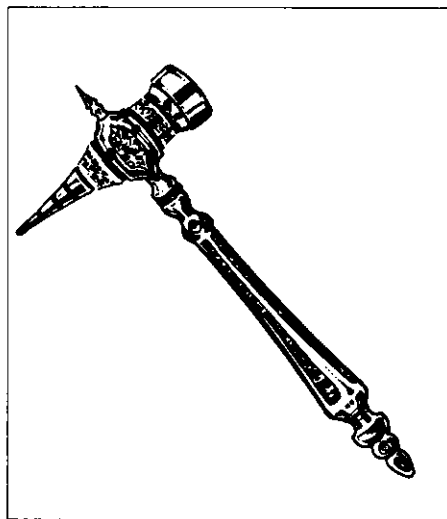
Anyone of Lawful or Neutral Good alignment may examine the disks. Others suffer 4d6 points of damage each time they try to touch or read the disks.

Priests who read this book gain knowledge of the True Gods of good: Paladine (rulership), Majere (meditation and control), Kiri-Jolith (war and battle), Mishakal (healing), Habbakuk (seas and animals), and Branchala (elves, forests, and music).

Any priest who worships these gods may receive spells as per standard AD&D® game rules. The book tells how to worship these gods and gain true priest abilities.

The Hammer of Kharas

The *hammer of Kharas* is a mighty artifact. It is the only hammer that can forge a *dragonlance*, and it is important to the ultimate success of the heroes. It is vital that this artifact not remain in the hands of the heroes! It must end up in the hands of Hornfel, Thane of the Hylar and father of Arman Kharas.



The hammer appears to be a *war hammer +2*, but twice normal size. It causes 2d4+2 points of damage on a successful hit. It cannot be lifted by a person with a Strength of less than 12, and anyone with a Strength of less than 18/50 has a -2 penalty to his attack roll.

The hammer acts as a *mace of dis-*

ruption against undead and creatures from the netherworld. It turns undead as a 12th-level priest.

This artifact is intelligent (Int 11, Ego 11), and can control anyone who touches it if their Intelligence and Wisdom scores total less than 22.

It has the following special abilities, at 20th-level of magic use:

Detects evil as a paladin.

Gives wielder immunity to fear, both normal and magical.

Cannot be affected by 1st- to 4th-level magic.

It can cast *prayer* once per day.

It provides *protection from normal missiles* once per day.

It can act as a *potion of fire giant strength* once per day.

It can *cure serious wounds* once per day.

It can inspire magical awe in all dwarves and derro.

The hammer chooses when to activate any of its abilities.

Helm of Griffon Mane

Discovered by Tasslehoff in the ruins of Xak Tsaroth, the helm was given to Flint. It is of dwarven make and fits only dwarves. It is decorated with a horse's mane. Since Flint has always claimed that he is allergic to horses, he insists that the mane is from a griffon.

The *helm of griffon mane* subtracts 1 from the AC of any dwarf who wears it.

Medallion of Faith

When this relic is first found, it is known to have only one power: To create another medallion when a good priest enters the worship of the True Gods.

It has other powers that are unknown to the PCs at first, but the DM may reveal each when the need arises. A power may be revealed through divine guidance, a dream, an omen, or any other method the DM can think of.

Bless — Once per day.

Protection, 10' radius—Once per day, lasts as long as the priest concentrates.

Slow Poison — As long as the me-

dallion is worn, it will sustain a poison victim in a semi-comatose state for up to one day.

Detect Evil — The medallion glows a pale blue and chimes when touched to an evil object or person.

Staff of Magius

This item is useable only by mages. The first set of abilities is known to the user automatically. The second set may be discovered when casting certain spells.

The staff functions as a *ring of protection* +3. It can strike as a +2 magical weapon and causes 1d8+2 points of damage. Once per day it can invoke a *feather fall* and a *continual light* spell.

In the hands of a mage of 6th level or higher, the *staff of Magius* can enhance spells cast by the mage. It doubles the duration of spells involving light, air, or mind influence. It maintains spells that require concentration for one round after concentration ends. It also adds +2 points of damage per die to any spell cast.

Tika's Ring

To Tika, this ring (worn on a necklace) is but a memento of her father. She has not yet discovered its true uses. In times of stress, she slips on the ring, asking her father for guidance. Unbeknownst to Tika, this activates the ring.

This is both a *ring of protection* +2 and a *ring of fire resistance*.

Wyrmslayer

This *two-handed sword* +1 causes double normal damage when used against a dragon or draconian. It is immune to the imprisoning effect that occurs when a Baaz turns to stone. Whoever holds *Wyrmslayer* by the hilt gains a +3 bonus to all saving throws vs. breath weapons and against any spells cast by dragons or draconians.

Wyrmslayer has a drawback, in that it emits a loud buzzing noise when within 30 feet of a dragon (not a draconian). This buzzing always wakes a sleeping dragon.



Random Encounter Charts

In addition to the set encounters and events in this adventure, the following random encounters can occur at the DM's discretion. You can alter the frequency if you choose, or omit them altogether if the party is seriously weakened. Properly run, random encounters can add flavor and excitement to the game.

Use the following sets of tables to set up random encounters. Each set of tables is to be used with a certain part of the adventure (listed according to chapter numbers). Within each set of tables, Table 1 contains a list of all the areas that might be explored during that part of the adventure. Next to each area is a column labeled "Check." This shows how often you should check to see if a random encounter occurs in that area. For example, "1/3 Hours" means that you should roll a random encounter check once every three game hours when in that area. Roll 1d10; if the result is a 1, a random encounter takes place.

Next look under the column labeled "Range." Roll the die listed and add the modifier (if any) beside it. Then look on Table 2 to find the random encounter that corresponds to that number. The statistics for each creature are listed on the Combined Monster Statistics Chart on the inside cover of this adventure.

Chapter 1 - Chapter 4

Table 1: Encounter Checks

Area	Check	Range
Town	1/3 Turns	1d6
Plains	1/6 Hours	1d12+2
Forest	1/4 Hours	1d12+3
Hills/Mtns	1/6 Hours	1d12+6
Marsh	1/3 Hours	1d12 + 12
Ruins	1/3 Turns	1d12+10
Darken		
Wood	1/3 Turns	2d4+23

Table 2: Creatures

1. 3d10 Townsmen
2. 3d4 Baaz
3. 1d10 Plainsmen
4. 1d4 Elves
5. 2d10 Townsmen
6. 1d6 Holy Guardians
7. The White Stag
8. 2d4 Giant Eagles
9. 1d4 Giant Boars
10. 4d4 Wild Dogs
11. 1d10 Baaz
12. 1d8 Bozaks
13. 1d12 Huge Spiders
14. 2d6 Ogres
15. 2d6 Wraiths
16. 2d4 Trolls
17. 1d3 Will o'wisps
18. 1d6 Poisonous Snakes
19. Khisanth
20. 1d10 Bozaks
21. 1 Catoblepas
22. 1d10 Black Dragon Hatchlings
23. 1d6 Poisonous Snakes
24. 2d6 Wraiths
25. 1d12 Griffons
26. 1d6 Treants
27. 2d4 Satyrs
28. 1d12 Centaurs
29. 1 Brownie
30. 10d10 Sprites
31. 1 Sylph

Chapter 5 - Chapter 10

Table 1: Encounter Checks

Area	Check	Range
Town	1/3 Turns	1d4
Ruins	1/3 Turns	1d8+2
Plains	1/6 Hours	1d8+6
Mountains	1/4 Hours	1d8 + 8
Sla-Mori	1/3 Turns	1d4+15
Pax		
Tharkas	1/3 Turns	1d6+19

Table 2: Creatures

1. 2d6 Townsmen
2. 2d4 Baaz
3. 1d4 Wild Dogs
4. 2d6 Kapaks
5. 3d6 Goblins
6. 2d12 Giant Centipedes
7. 266 Baaz
8. 3d6 Hobgoblins
9. 1 Wyvern
10. 1d3 Trolls
11. 3d10 Elk
12. 1d6 Wights
13. 2d4 Dire Wolves
14. 1d3 Griffons
15. 1d6 Giant Rams
16. 2d10 Zombies
17. 2d4 Carrion Crawlers
18. 1 Wraith
19. 2d6 Soldier Bees
20. 2d6 Baaz
21. 2d4 Kapaks
22. 3d4 Hobgoblins
23. 3d8 Goblins
24. 2d4 War Dogs
25. 1d4 Aghar Dwarves

Random Encounter Charts

Chapter 11 - Chapter 13

Table 1: Encounter Checks

Area	Check	Range
Mountains	1/3 Hours	1d10
Hopeful		
Vale	1/3 Hours	1d10+1
Dergoth		
Plains	1/4 Hours	1d10+7
Skullcap	1/3 Turns	1d10+14
Steam		
Tunnels	1/4 Turns	1d10+21

Chapter 14 - Chapter 18

Table 1: Encounter Checks

Area	Check	Range
Dergoth		
Plains	1/4 Hours	1d8
Hylar		
Kingdom	2/Hour	1d6+6
Empty		
Halls	1/4 Hours	1d6+8
Warrens	1/2 Hours	1d10+11
Dark		
Realms	1/3 Hours	1d10+18
Valley of		
the Thanes	1/2 Hours	1d6+26

Table 2: Creatures

1. The White Stag
2. 2d4 Bozaks
3. 2d6 Kapaks
4. 2d4 Hunters (Men)
5. 3d4 Ogres
6. 2d8 Wolves
7. 2d6 Warthogs
8. 3d10 Hylar Dwarves
9. 3d6 Hylar Dwarves
10. 1d10 Aghar Dwarves
11. 1d3 Giant Badgers
12. 1 Galeb Duhr
13. 2d4 Giant Spiders
14. 4d6 Theiwar Dwarves
15. 1d4 Violet Fungi
16. 2d4 Ropers
17. 1d4 Deadly Puddings (Dun)
18. 1d4 Giant Slugs
19. 2d10 Cave Crickets
20. 2d4 Klar Dwarves
21. 1 Cave Cricket
22. 1 Kender (Lost)
23. 1 Lamia Noble
24. 3d4 Ogres
25. 1 Ettin
26. 2d4 Wild Dogs
27. 5d6 Skeletons
28. 1 Subterranean Lizard
29. 3d4 Giant Vultures
30. 1d8 Ghosts
31. 1d3 Mummies
32. 1 Spectre

Table 2: Creatures

1. 1d12 Neidar Dwarves
2. 1d20 Giant Eagles
3. 1d4 Elk
4. 1d3 Cave Bears
5. 1d6 Dire Wolves
6. The White Stag
7. 1d12 Neidar Dwarves
8. 1d12 Neidar Dwarves
9. 2d20 Bandits (Men)
10. 1d3 Snow Leopards
11. 2d4 Winter Wolves
12. 2d10 Baaz
13. 2d10 Ogres
14. 3d6 Wolves
15. 1 Ghost
16. 1 Ghast
17. 2d10 Shadows
18. 1 Spectre
19. 2d4 War Dogs
20. 1d4 Wraiths
21. 2d10 Aghar Dwarves
22. 1d4 Violet Fungi
23. 2d10 Kender Prisoners
24. 1d3 Green Slime
25. 4d10 Giant Rats
26. 3d6 Piercers
27. 2d4 Shriekers
28. 1 Giant Slug
29. 2d10 Aghar Dwarves
30. 2d10 Aghar Dwarves
31. 2d10 Aghar Dwarves

SPECIAL CREATURES

Draconians

Draconians, or dragonmen, are the special troops of the Dragon Highlords. They are more predictable than humans and more apt to follow orders than the ogres and goblins that make up the bulk of the army. Draconians are not affected by dragon awe, indeed they seem to seek out evil dragons.

Draconians move either by walking upright, gliding down from heights (for a distance four times greater than the launching height), or running on all fours while flapping their wings. This latter form of movement is their fastest, and it kicks up an intimidating dust cloud on the battle field.

While units of draconians are often found in evil human armies, they remain aloof from other races. They answer directly to Takhisis, the Queen of Darkness, regardless of the command structure of the army they are in.

The statistics for the three types of draconians encountered thus far are in the Combined Monster Statistics Chart on the inside cover of this adventure.



Baaz

Baaz are the smallest and most plentiful of all draconians. They are the Dragon Highlords' common ground troops. At the bottom of the draconian social order, Baaz often tend to chaotic in nature and self-serving when they can get away with it.

Baaz are often encountered in disguise. They conceal their wings under robes and, wearing large hoods and masks, pass through civilized lands as spies.

When a Baaz reaches 0 hit points, it turns into a stone statue. The person who struck the death blow must roll a successful Dexterity check (with a -3 penalty) or his weapon is stuck in the statue. The statue crumbles to dust in 1d4 rounds, freeing the weapon. The Baaz's weapon can be picked up.



Bozaks

Bozaks are magic wielders, able to cast spells as 4th-level mages. They are cruel and cunning warriors, sparing a life only if it directly benefits them. Their favorite spells are *burning hands*, *enlarge*, *magic missile*, *shocking grasp*, *invisibility*, *levitate*, *stinking cloud*, and *web*.

When a Bozak reaches 0 hit points, its scaly flesh shrivels and crumbles from its bones in a cloud of dust. Then the bones explode, causing 1d6 points of damage to all within ten feet (no saving throw).

Kapaks

Kapaks are distinguished by their venomous saliva. They often lick their weapons before attacking.

Kapaks are larger than Baaz, and they often bully and abuse their smaller cousins. Because of the Kapaks' venomous nature, the Dragon Highlords employ them as assassins as well as combat troops. Kapaks are sly and conniving, seeking to lure prey into traps and tripping foes to gain an advantage.

The paralysis induced by a Kapak's poison lasts for 2d6 turns if the victim fails his saving throw vs. poison. Weapons licked with poison remain poisoned for only three rounds.

When a Kapak reaches 0 hit points, its body instantly dissolves into a ten-foot-wide pool of acid. All within this area suffer 1d8 points of damage each round they remain in the pool. The acid evaporates in 1d6 rounds. All items the Kapak was carrying are useless.



The Dwarves of Thorbardin

There are seven major races of dwarves in the lands of Krynn: the Hylar, the Theiwar, the Daewar, the Daergar, the Neidar, the Klar, and the Aghar.

The Hylar

The Hylar are mountain dwarves, the oldest and most noble of the dwarven races of Thorbardin. Most of the great dwarven kings have been Hylar, including both Derkin and Kharas. Even in the dark days since the Cataclysm, the Hylar retain great influence. Most Hylar live in the famous Life-Tree, an incredible feat of dwarven engineering. The Hylar invented many of the mechanical devices for which the dwarves are justly famous.

The Theiwar

The Theiwar are derro, a strange, degenerate dwarven race. They hate light and suffer from nausea in sunlight. Nevertheless, their dreams are of world conquest and domination. Of the dwarven races, they are the most concerned with spells and magic—most of their leaders are savants with spellcasting powers.

The Theiwar consider themselves the highest of the dwarven kingdoms, and they seek to wrest leadership of Thorbardin away from the Hylar. They look forward to winning by whatever means are closest to hand.

The Daewar

The Daewar are mountain dwarves, like the Hylar. They are justly respected, and many important leaders have come from their midst. The Daewar are great soldiers, and they were at the forefront in the Dwarfgate Wars. In peacetime, they

leave the leadership of Thorbardin to the Hylar, but they take an active interest in public safety and public works projects.

The Daergar

The Daergar are derro who split off from the Theiwar many hundreds of years ago. Their culture has flourished, and now they are powerful in Thorbardin. They are, if possible, even more evil and dangerous than their Theiwar cousins, favoring murder, torture, and thievery to get their way. Their leader is always the most powerful warrior of the Daergar kingdom, "elected" in a bloody combat against all rivals.

The Neidar

The Neidar are the hill dwarves who lived outside Thorbardin at the time of the Cataclysm. Based on old treaties, they felt they had the right to seek refuge in the underground kingdom, but Thorbardin could not absorb all the Neidar. Thus came about the tragic Dwarfgate Wars, which pitted cousin against cousin. Hatred between the Neidar and the dwarves of Thorbardin continues to this day.

The Klar

The Klar are hill dwarves who lived inside Thorbardin at the time of the Dwarfgate Wars. Following the wars, the Klar were deprived of property and persecuted terribly for their supposed sympathy for the Neidar (in fact, many Klar fought with bravery in the war). Now they serve the wealthy dwarves of Thorbardin in menial roles. After centuries of suffering, they long for someone to deliver them from their plight.

The Aghar

The ludicrous Aghar, or gully dwarves, are the lowest members of the dwarven caste system. Other dwarves and humans find them comical for their stupidity (few can count higher than two) and their incredible egos. They work at dirty, menial tasks, but that is all they are qualified to do.

The Kingdom of the Dead

The dwarves venerate their dead, and they consider the kingdom of the dead to be the eighth kingdom of Thorbardin. This has little practical effect on politics, as you might expect, but it says a lot about dwarven thinking on the afterlife. Dwarves use a variety of divination methods to speak with their ancestors—some are valid and work fairly well, but others are merely superstitious nonsense.

The High King

The last dwarven kingdom is that of the High King of the Dwarves. The high throne has been vacant since the days of Derkin. No one has yet managed to claim it, though many





Fireshadow

The Combined Monster Statistics Chart, on the inside cover of this adventure, contains the statistics for these dreaded creatures.

Fireshadows are creatures from the lower planes. They can be summoned by an evil priest of 8th level or higher, with the permission of his deity.

Fireshadows are made of dark, cold, green flame. they can assume any shape specified by their summoners.

The dark flame works like green slime: It converts flesh to dark flame on contact at the rate of 1d8 hit points per round. The spread of dark flame on flesh can be stopped by a cure spell or by holy water (cures 1d6 + 1 points per vial).

If a begin is completely converted to dark flame, the fireshadow can absorb it or control it as a smaller fireshadow with the statistics the creature had before conversion. Absorption restores 1d20 points of damage to the creature.

The fireshadow has a special attack called the *ray of oblivion*. Every other round it can use this ray to inflict 16 points of damage to all in the area of effect. A successful saving throw vs. breath weapon will cut the damage in half. If this damage slays a target, its body is disintegrated. The ray is five feet wide and 130 feet long, and it comes from the creature's mouth.

A fireshadow cannot be turned,

but a *mace of disruption* affects it as a vampire. The *hammer of Kharas* destroys a fireshadow on a successful hit.

Fireshadows are immune to fire-based attacks. The dark flame causes 1d6 points of damage to all within ten feet (no saving throw, but fire-resistance effects apply).

The fireshadow's most feared enemy is the light of day, which will destroy it within 1d4 rounds.

Spectral Minions



The statistics for spectral minions are given in the Combined Monster Statistics Chart on the inside cover of this adventure.

Spectral minions are the spirits of humans or demihumans who died before they could fulfill powerful vows or quests. Even in death, spectral minions are bound to the vows or quests placed upon them when they were alive. Every day they must relive the events leading to their deaths, trying to fulfill their missions.

Outdoors, spectral minions must stay within 1,000 yards of where they died. Indoors, they must stay in the corridor or room in which they met death. On very rare occasions, when the quest was to perform an act over an area, they are free to roam within the area.

Spectral minions can inflict damage only if they died holding weapons. Such weapons become part of

them. The weapons and the spectral minions disappear if the minions' vows or quests are fulfilled or if a spell is cast to remove their curse.

Spectral minions appear as they did in life, but they are almost transparent. While spectral minions are hard to tell apart, they seem to fall into distinct categories.

Guardians: These minions were quested to guard some area or object. Usually they require only a password or signal to allow a person to pass safely. Unfortunately, everyone who knew the password is usually long since dead. Guardians are always honest and good spirits endeavoring to complete their assigned task. Once the password is given, they are freed of their responsibility.

Philosophers: Philosophers love libraries and books. They can spend decades studying the nuances of a single book. They usually attack an intruder only if their honesty is questioned. Philosophers can be of any alignment. Often they are found in groups of two or more, engaged in heated debates.

song of Goldmoon

ANDANTE 3/4

Em Em D Em G Em

The 1. Grass — lands are end — less. And sum — mer sings on. And Gold moon the prince — ess loves
 2. Grass — lands are wav — ing. The sky's rim is gray. The chief — tain sends Riv — er — wind

G Bm G Em G D Em

a poor man's son. Her fa — ther the chief — tain makes long roads be — tween them: the grass — lands are
 east and a — way, to search for strong ma — gic at lip of the morn — ing the grass — lands are

C MAJ7 D 1. Em 2. Em CHORUS C G D

end — less. And sum — mer sings on. 2. The Oh Riv — er — wind where have you gone? —
 wav — ing. The sky's rim is 2. gray.

D C G D D Em D Em

— Oh Riv — er — wind au — tumn comes on. — I sit by the ri — ver and look to the

G Em C MAJ7 D D.S. AL FINE Em FINE

sun — rise, but the sun ris — es o — ver the moun — tains a — lone. 3. The au — tumn is here.

Sing verses 1,2 and chorus then sing verses 3,4,5, and chorus

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>3). The grasslands are fading,
 The summer wind dies,
 He comes back, the darkness
 Of stones in his eyes,
 He carries a blue staff
 As bright as a glacier:
 The grasslands are fading, the summer winds die.</p> | <p>4). The grasslands are fragile,
 As yellow as flame,
 The chieftain makes mockery
 Of Riverwind's claim,
 He orders the people
 To stone the young warrior:
 The grasslands are fragile, as yellow as flame.</p> | <p>5). The grasslands are faded,
 And autumn is here.
 The girl joins her lover,
 The stones whistle near,
 The staff flares in blue light
 And both of them vanish:
 The grasslands have faded, and autumn is here.</p> |
|---|---|--|



♩ = 220
Allegro Con Espressivo

Elvenhome



mf DUE.

The sun, the splen—did eye of all our hea—vens, dives from the day — and leaves the do—zing sky dap—pled with fire—flies —, deep'ning in

gray —. Now sleep, our ol—dest friend, lies on the deep—wood trees and calls us in —. The 1. leaves — are
2. birds ca—

(And calls us in —.)

1. *mp*

fi—rey cold; they blaze in—to ash at end of year—. The The day grows dark with sun—set's pyre —; so we a—wait the
ress the wind; they wheel to the north when au—tumn ends—

mf 1.

sun's green fire u—pon the trees —. The wind blows through the days, by sea—son, by moon; great king—doms rise. The
(the trees.) breath of fi—re flies; the trees of man—kind fade in a

2. *f*

word. Now sleep, our ol—dest friend lies on the deep—wood trees and calls us in —. The age! The (And calls us in —)

mp rit.

thou—sand lives of men and their tales go to their graves; but we the peo—ple long in po—em and sto—ry, fade from the song.

The Song of Kharas

*Three were the thoughts of
those in Thorbardin
In the dark after Dergoth when
the ogres danced.*

*One was the lost light, the
limping darkness
In the caves of the kingdom
where light crumbles.*

*One the despair of the
Dwarfthane Derkin
Gone to the gloom of the
tower of Glory.*

*One the world, weary and
wounded*

*Down to the deep of the
Darkling's waters.*

*Under the heart of the
highland,*

*Under the ceiling of
stone,*

*Under the wane of the
world's glory,*

Home under home.

*Then was Kharas among us,
the Keeper of Kings,
The Hand on the Hammer,
Arm of the Hylar.*

*At the gleaming grave site of
gold and garnet*

*Three sons of the thane he
buried thereunder.*

*While Derkin saw dark upon
dark in the runnels,*

*In the halls of the nation saw
nooses and knives,*

*Killers and kingmakers came
to Kharas*

*With agate and amethyst,
asking allegiance.*

*Under the heart of the
highland.*

*Under the ceiling of
stone,*

*Under the wane of the
world's glory,*

Home under home.

*But the stalwart in heart is
strong as a stone,
And bold and unbending his
mind to the better:*

*The Hammer of Hylar was firm
in the halls.*

*Denying all discord, all doubt
and division,*

*He turned from intrigue, from
the wild tunnels,*

*Out to the open, one oath
swearing*

*That time nor treachery shall
ever tarnish*

*The Hammers return in a time
of great troubles.*

*Under the heart of the
highland,*

*Under the ceiling of
stone,*

*Under the wane of the
world's glory,*

Home under home.

Wedding Song

For Tenor Solo and 5-String Lute (or Guitar)

Music composed and arranged by Frank Mentzer

♩ = 72 *Andante Espressivo*

Voice (Riverwind)

1. Wars have set-tled on the north, and dra-gons ride the skies, "Now is the time for wis - dom and the
 2. Now, in the depths of win - ter when ground and sky are gray, un - der the blan-ket snow - fall and the

Lute (Strum)

cou - rage" say the wise. "This is the time of bat - tle; Now we must take a stand; and
 time is now to say "Yes" to the bud - ding vallen - wood, "Peace" to the coun - try - side; for

Now these things are lar - ger than the pro-mise of wo-man to man." But you and I, now stand-ing here a -
 These are things far lar - ger than a man's word to his bride. And through these pro-mi - ses we keep, now

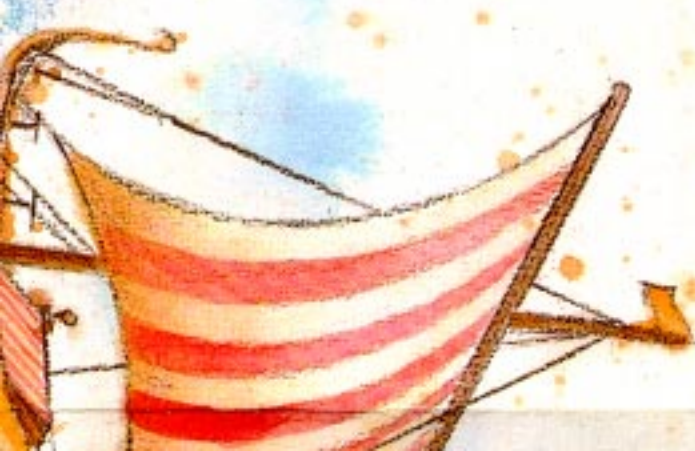
midst the trou-bled days of earth, af - firm our world, its peo - ple, the heav'n's that give them birth,
 forged in dark-ness of the night, now prov'd in the pre - sence of he - roes and spring-time's com - ing light,

feel - ings that flow be - tween us, this al - tar where we stand, and all those things made lar - ger
 child-ren will see the moons and stars where now the dra-gons ride, and hum - ble things made lar - ger

1. by the pro - mise of wo-man to man. 2. by this man's word to his bride.



Dragon





San Crist

ergoth
northern

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Gunthar

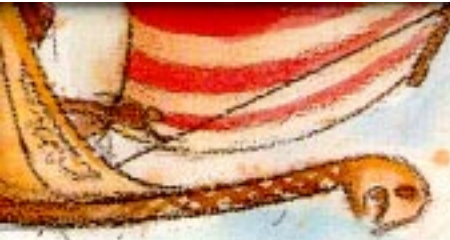
Southern erc

San

AE

Fortified City	Fortress	Barber	Glade Steppe	Glade: Grassland
Mountain Pass	Mountains	Desert (Impassable)	Marsh (Impassable)	Forest
Bridge	River (Unwadeable)	River (Wadeable)	Tunnel	Tunnel Entrance
Island	Overseer's Fortress	Maelstrom	Ocean	Coastal hex





Map



hylio

high Clerist lower

solanthus

vingaard

balanthus

throth

Dargard Keep



Goth

Qualnesti

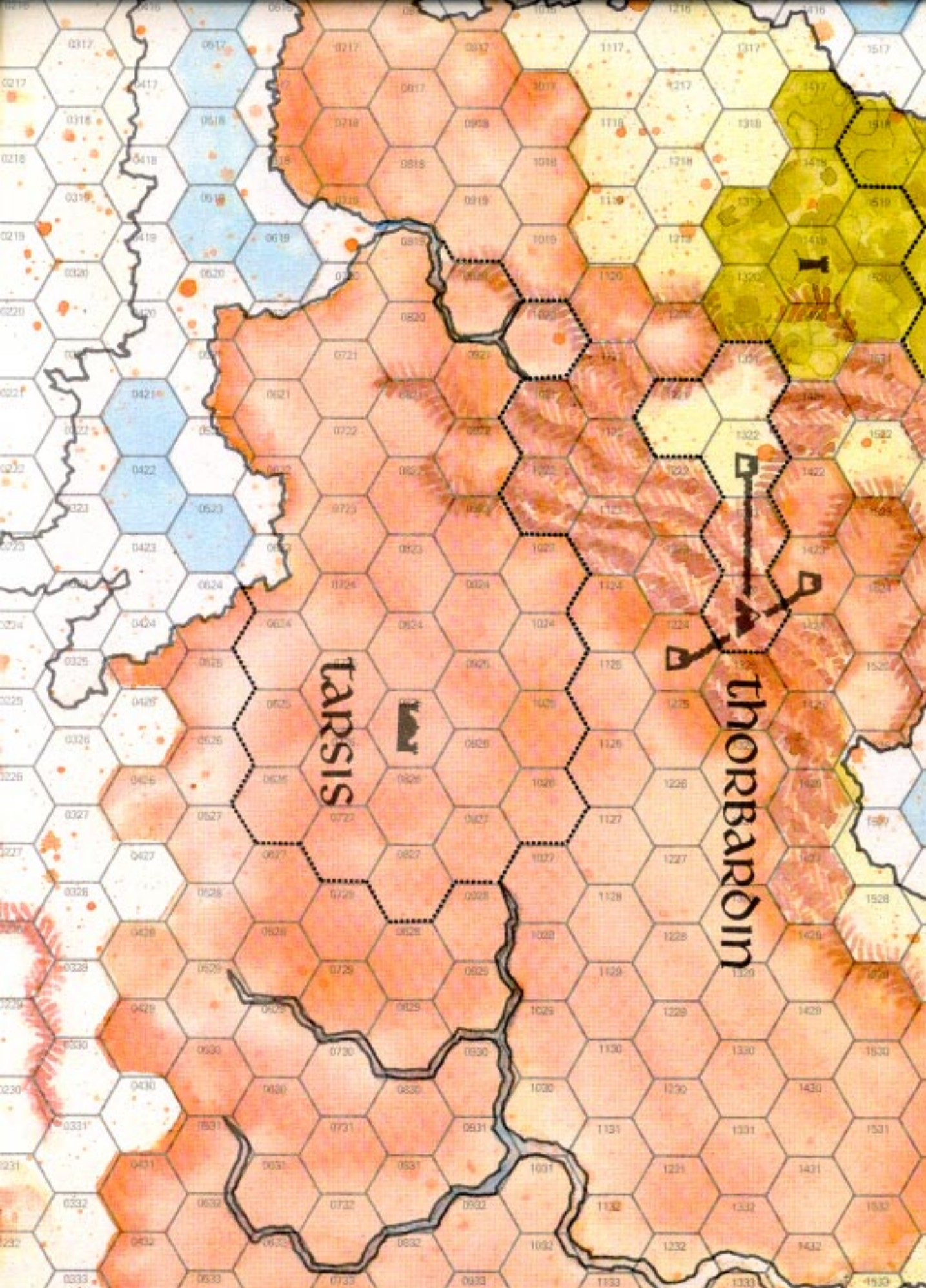
Abamasmia

Caergoth

Kaolvn

lemish

New Sea









TARSIS

THORBARDIN

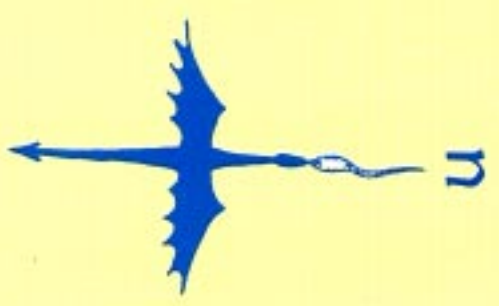


The Kingdom of Thorbarðin

City Block Key

	Solid Stone		Open Pit		Chair
	Stone Pillar		Trough		Low Balcony Wall
	Door		Portcullis		
	Secret Door		Net		
	Staircase Down		Water		
	Staircase Up		Plants		

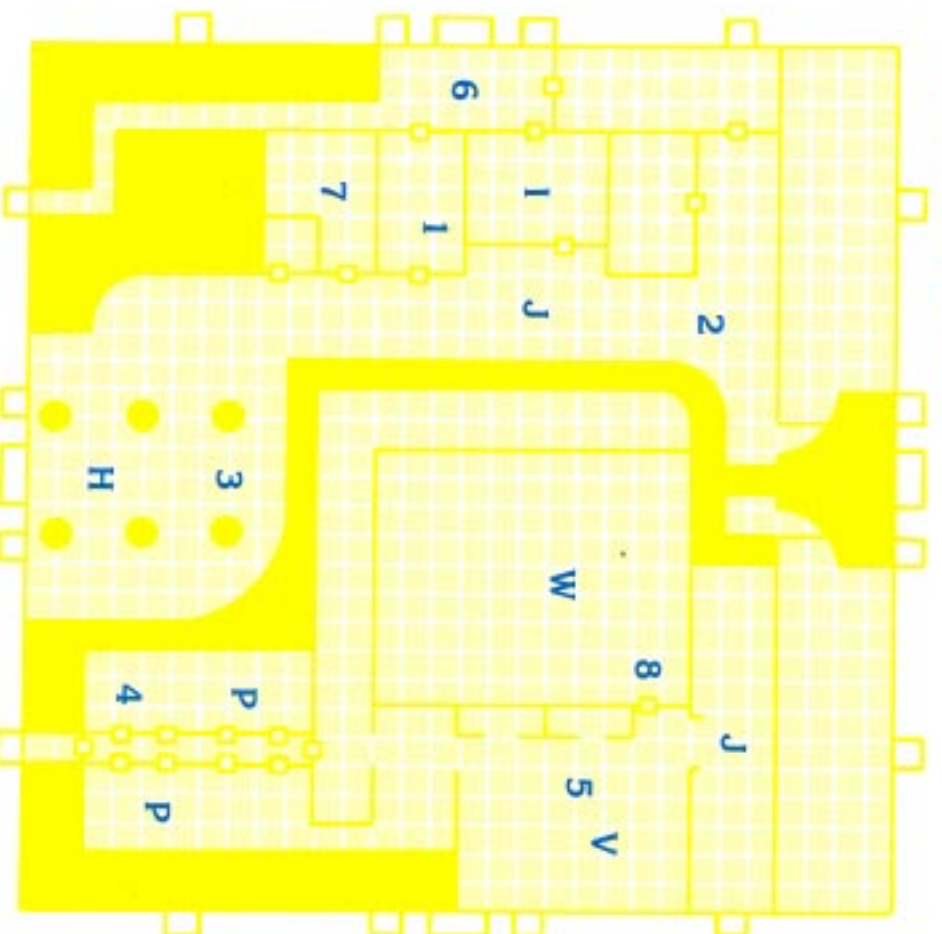
Scale: 1 square = 10 feet
Facing: North



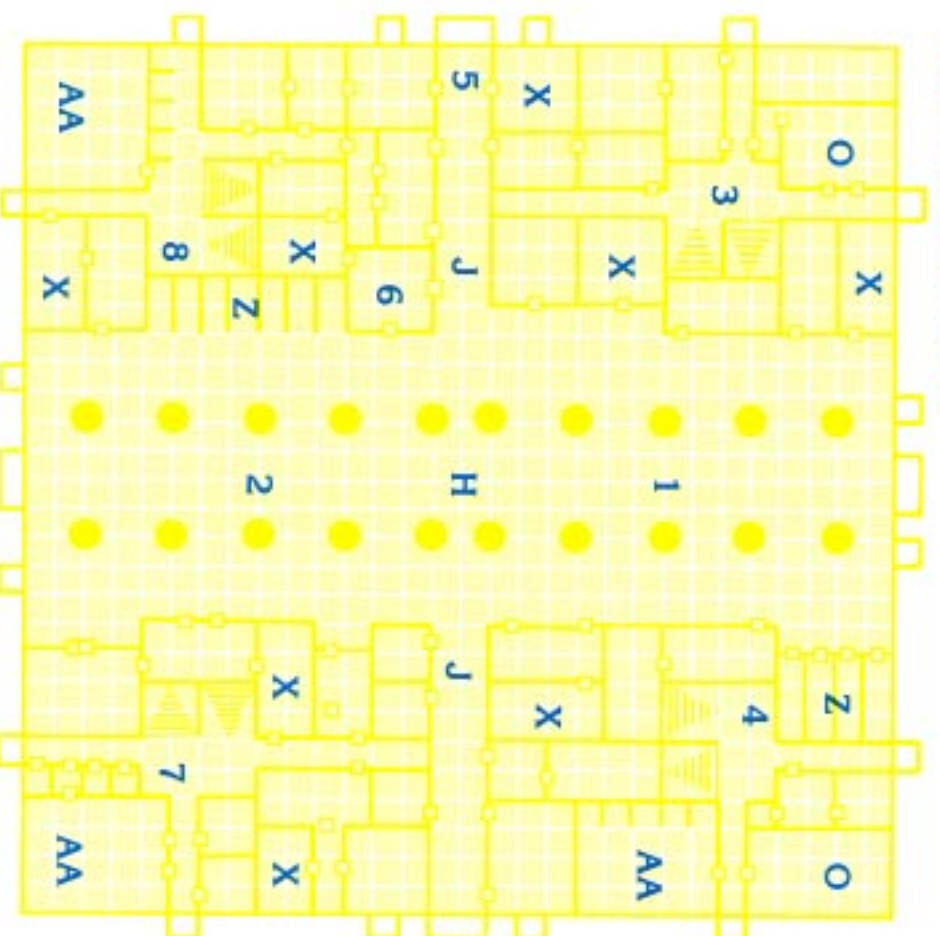
Room Key

- | | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| A Court | I Guard Quarters | Q Pathway | Y Soldiers' Stations |
| B Courtyard | J Hallway | R Plants | Z Stalls |
| C Display Rooms | K Harbor | S Pond | AA Store Rooms |
| D Docks | L Homes | T Prison Cells | BB Transport Machinery |
| E Drawbridge | M Intersection | U Promenade | CC Transport Shaft |

1. Gatehouse



2. Great Hall

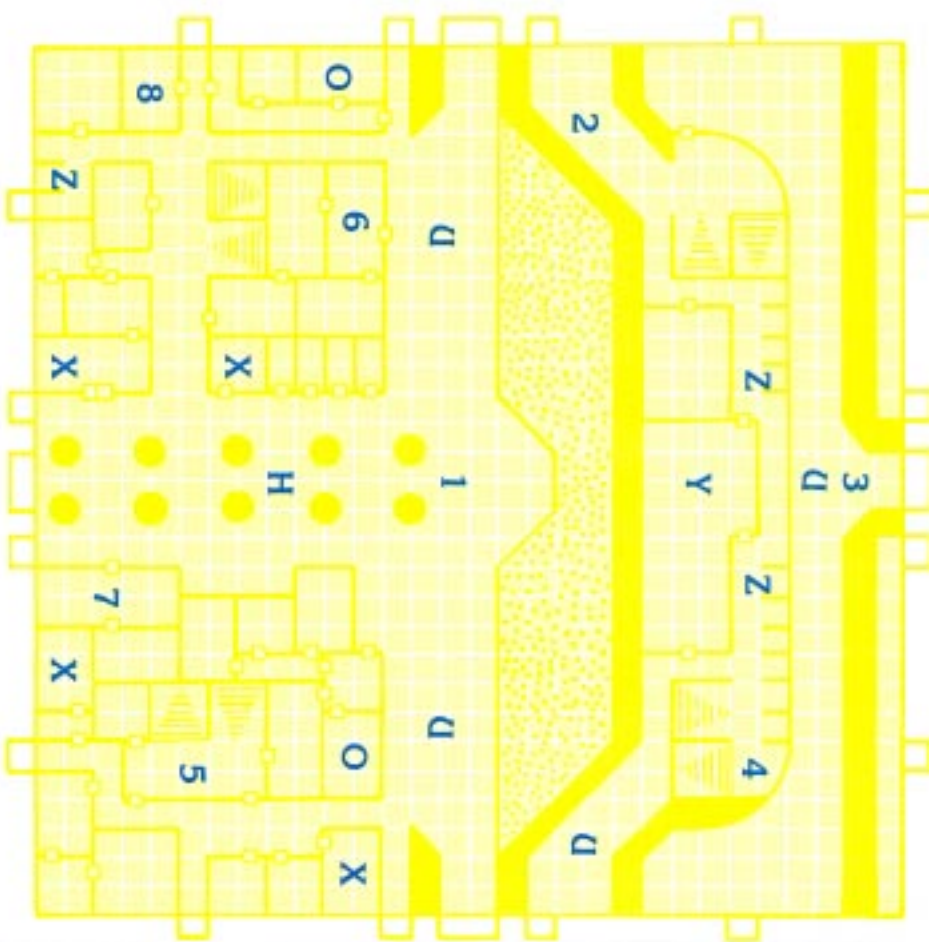
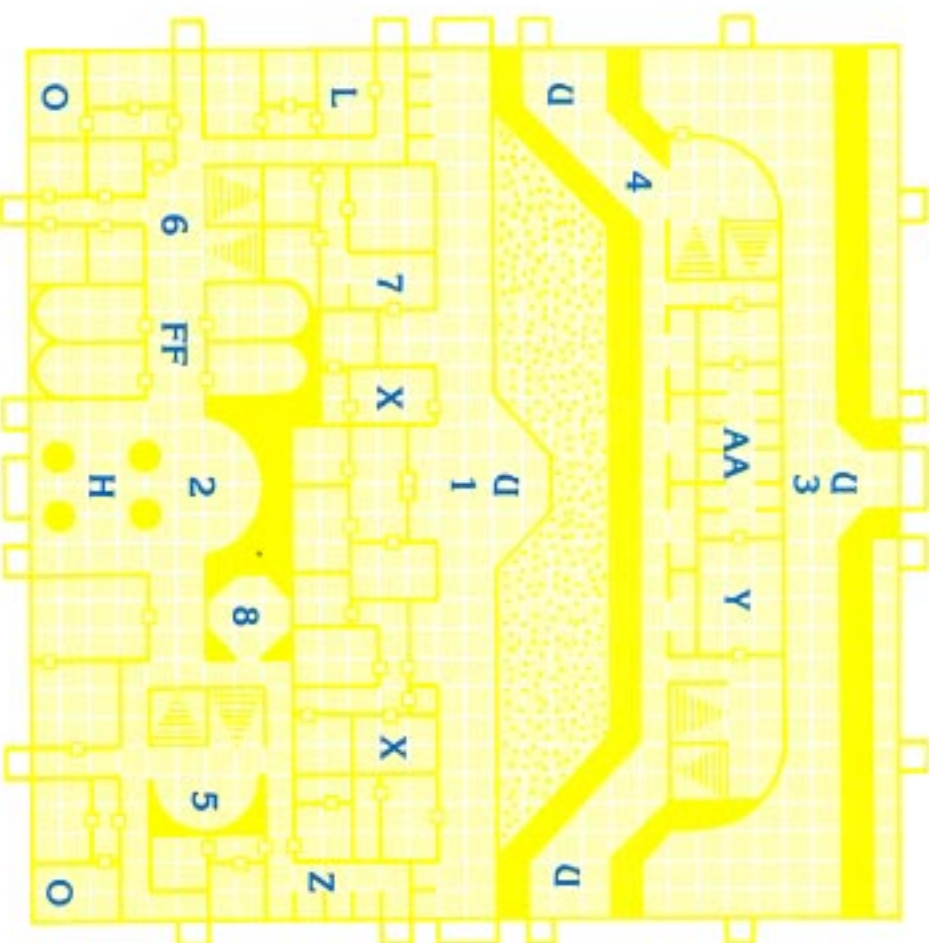


5. Kings Wall I



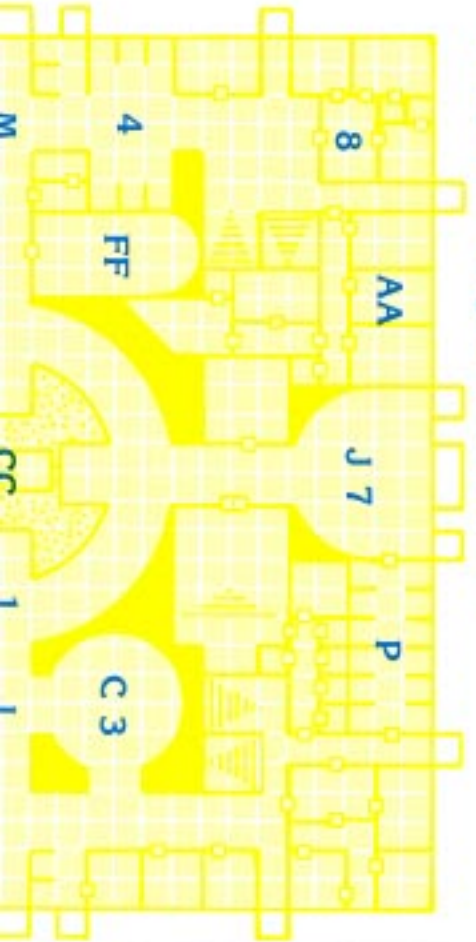
6. Kings Wall II

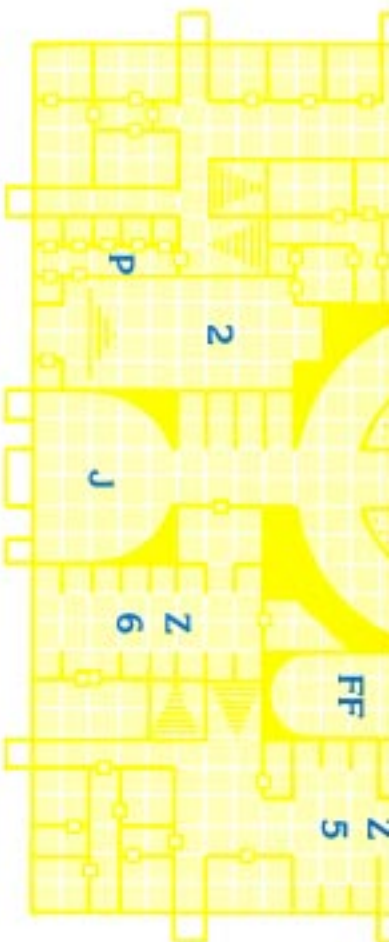




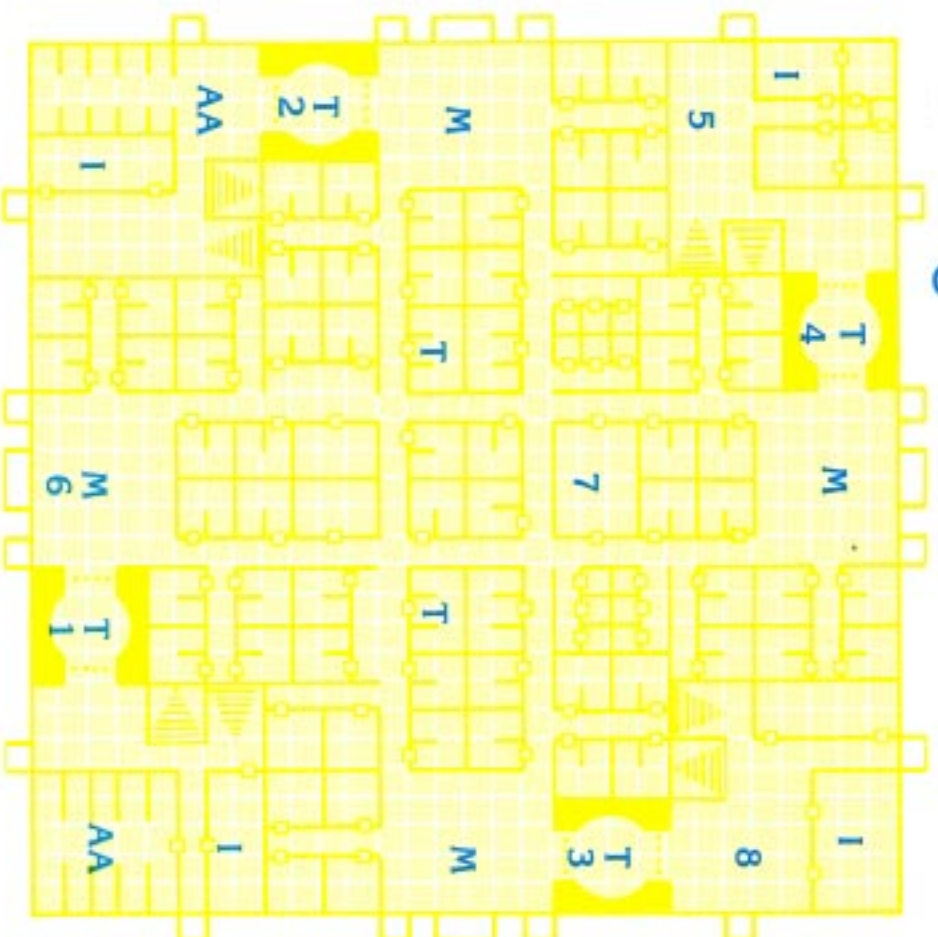
9. Residence

10. Transport Shaft

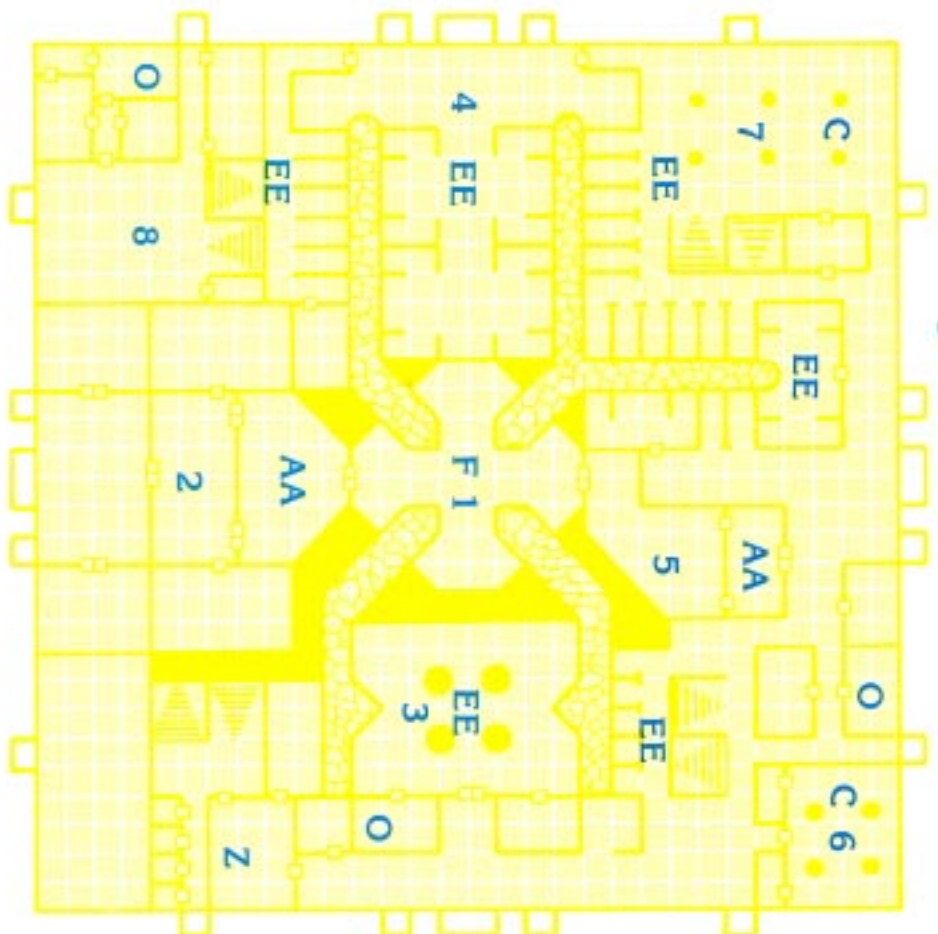




13. Dungeon



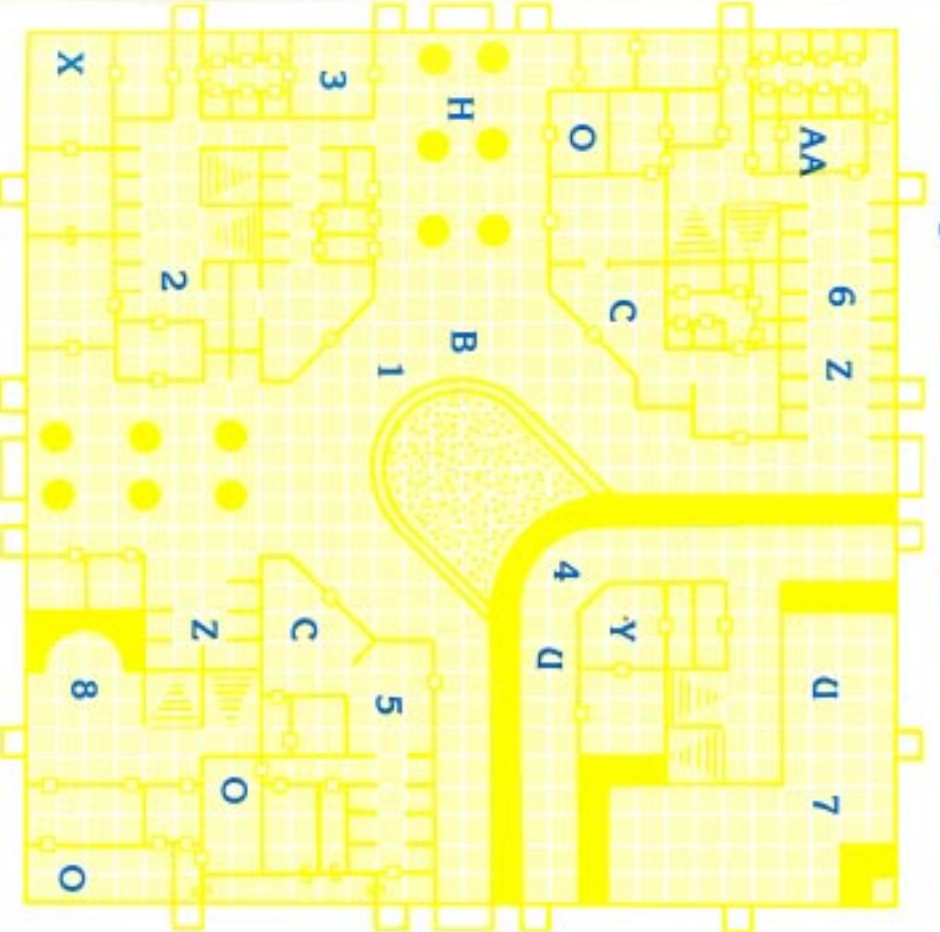
14. Smithy







3. Kings Wall Corner I



4. Kings Wall Gate

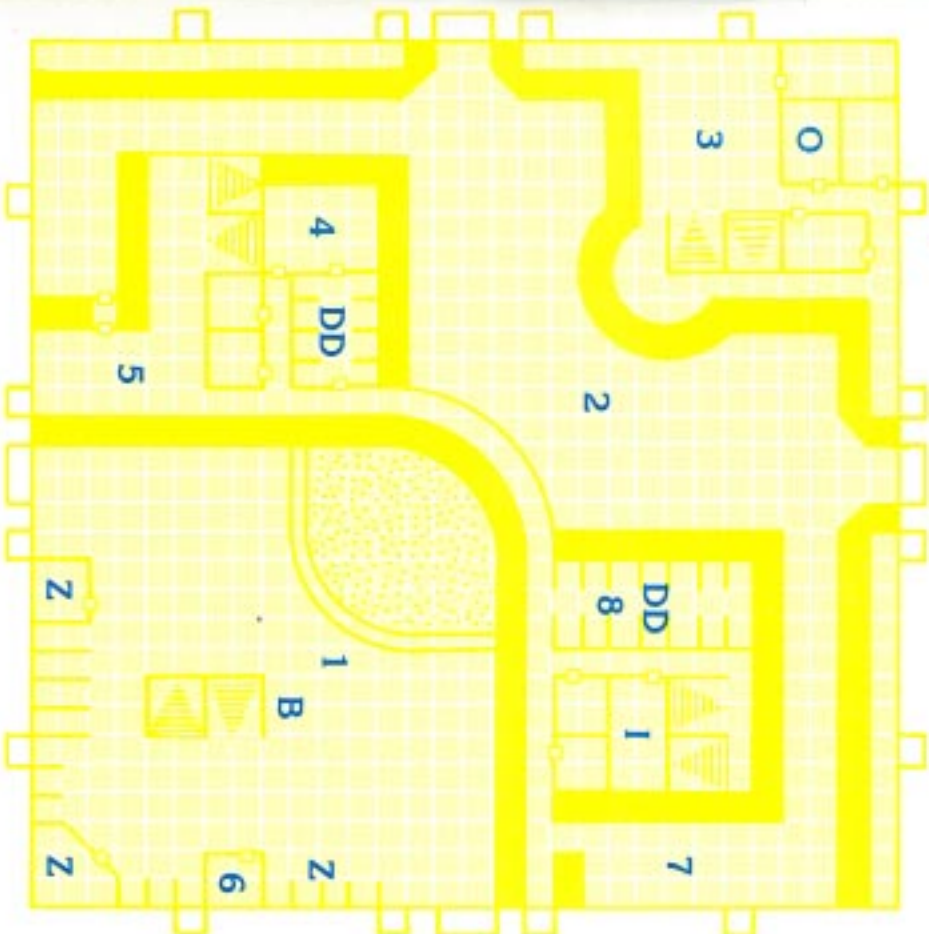


7. Kings Wall Corner II

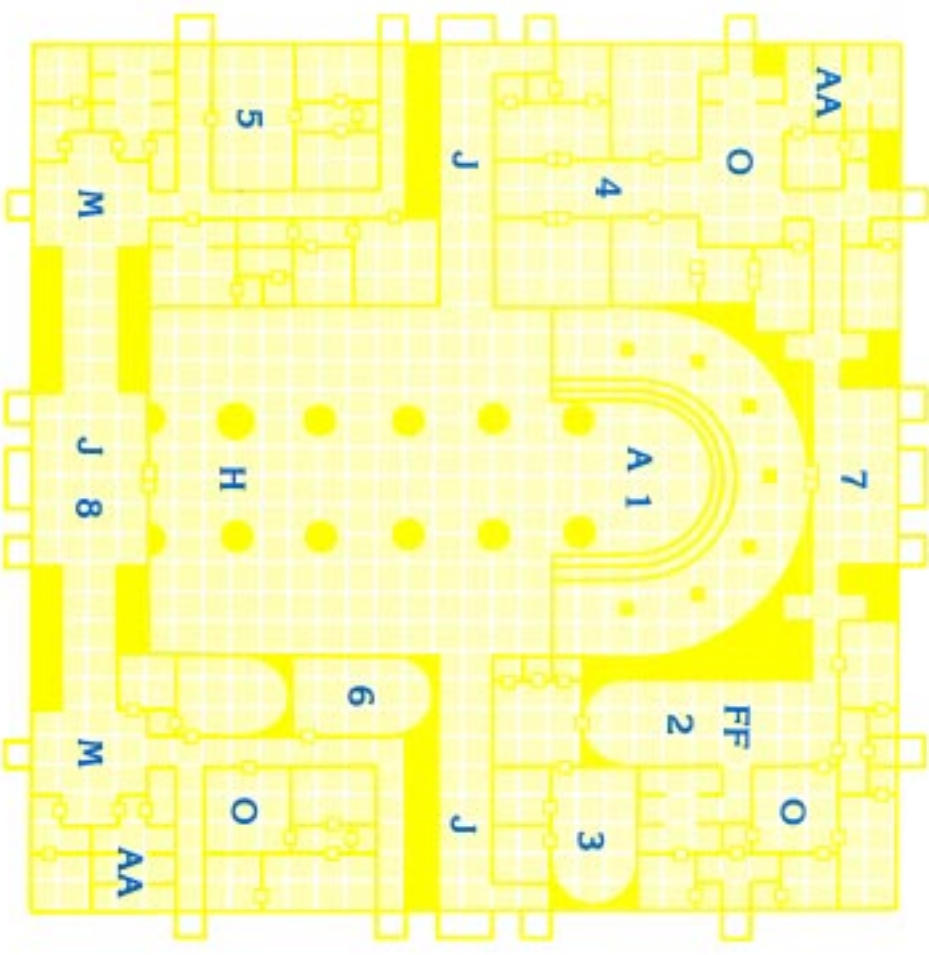
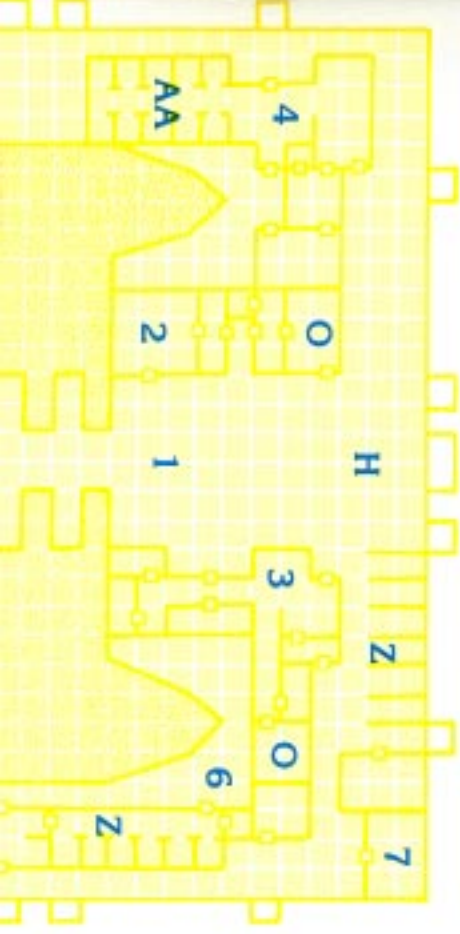


8. Court of Thanes

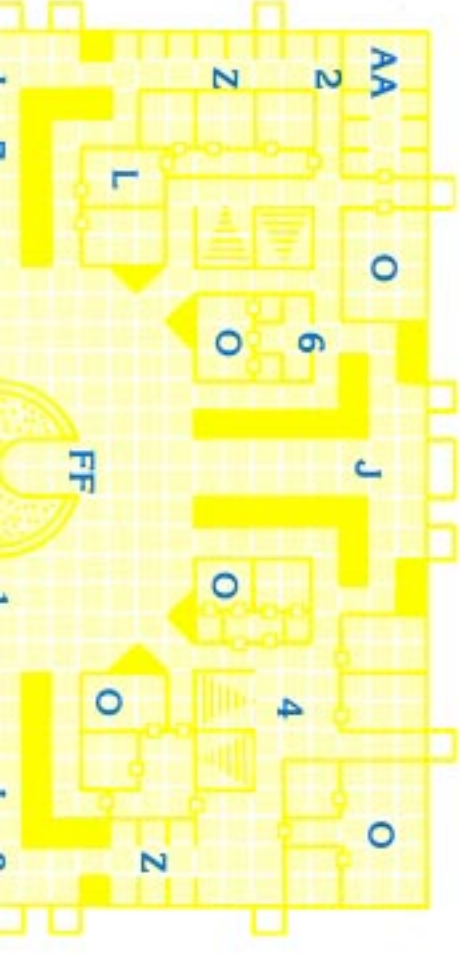


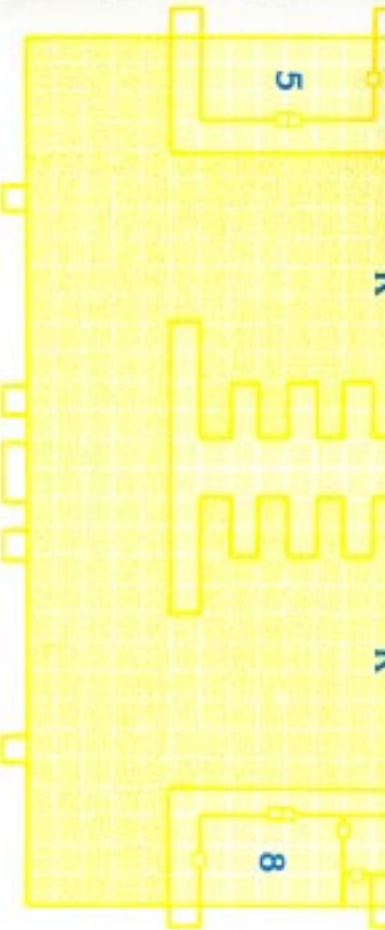


11. Wharf



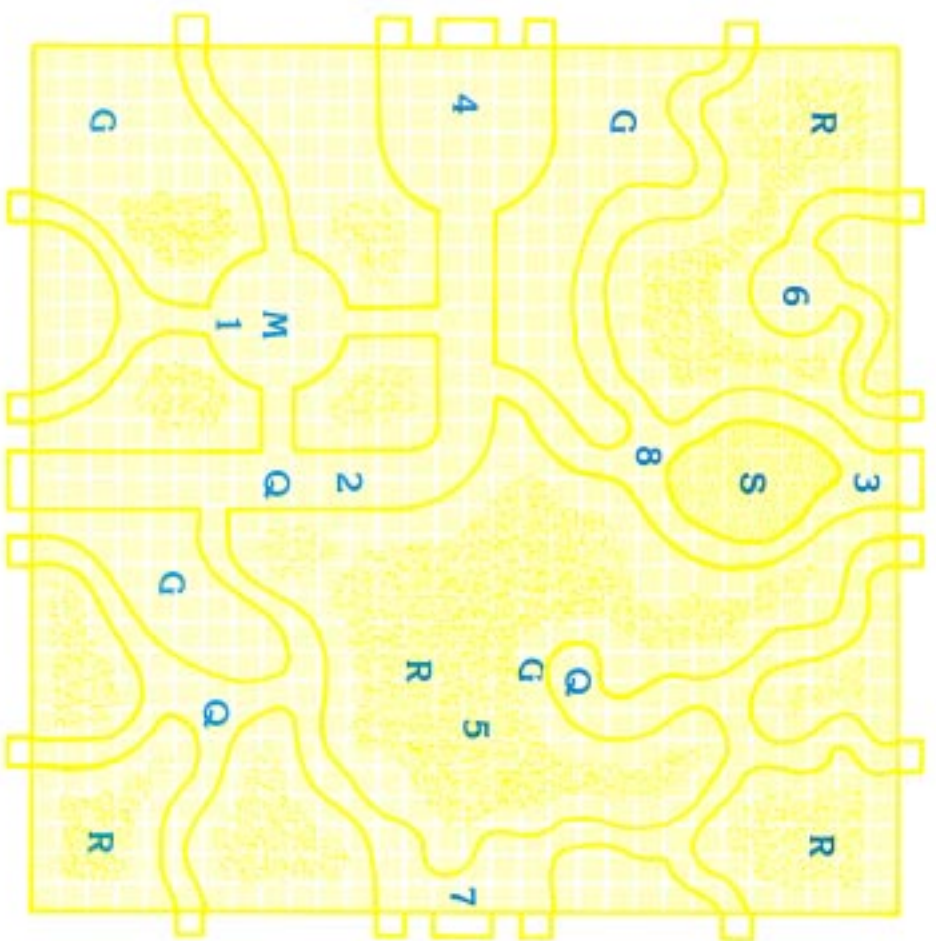
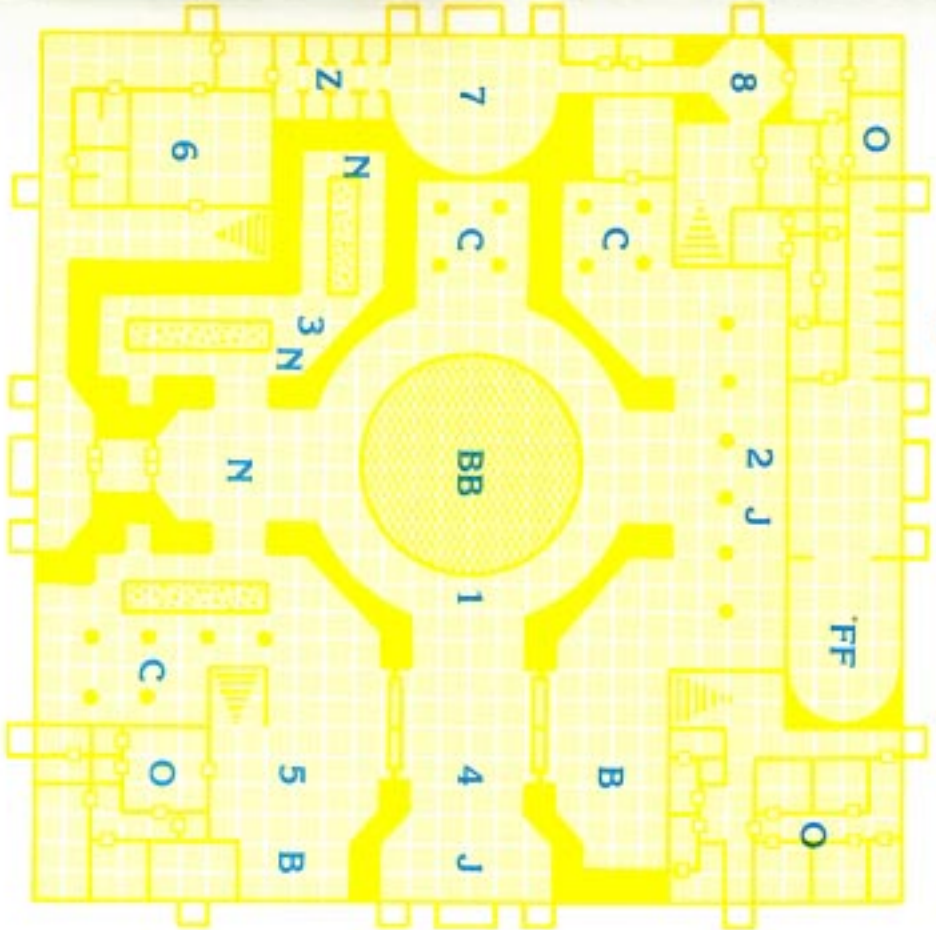
12. Great Temple



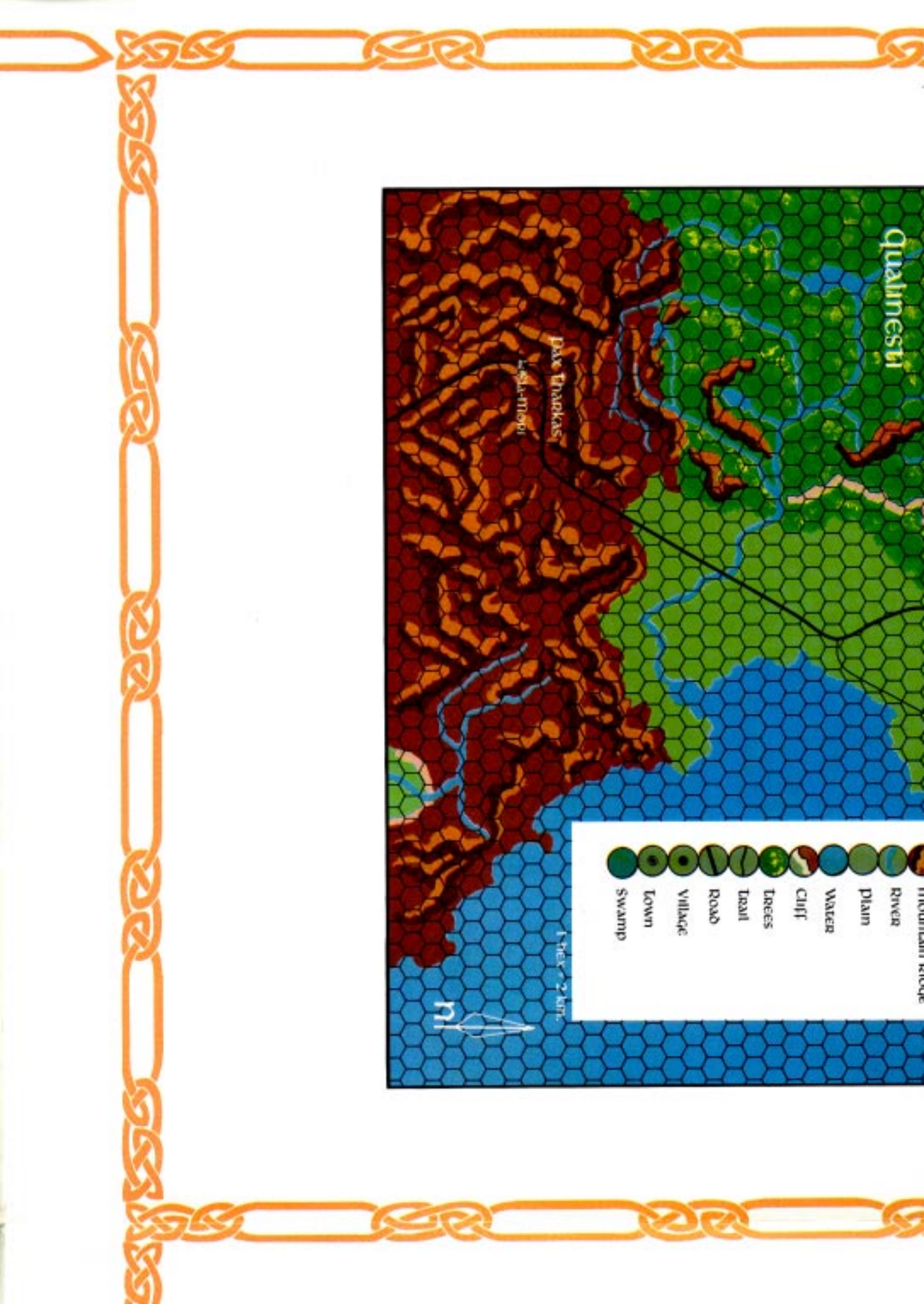


15. Transport Machinery

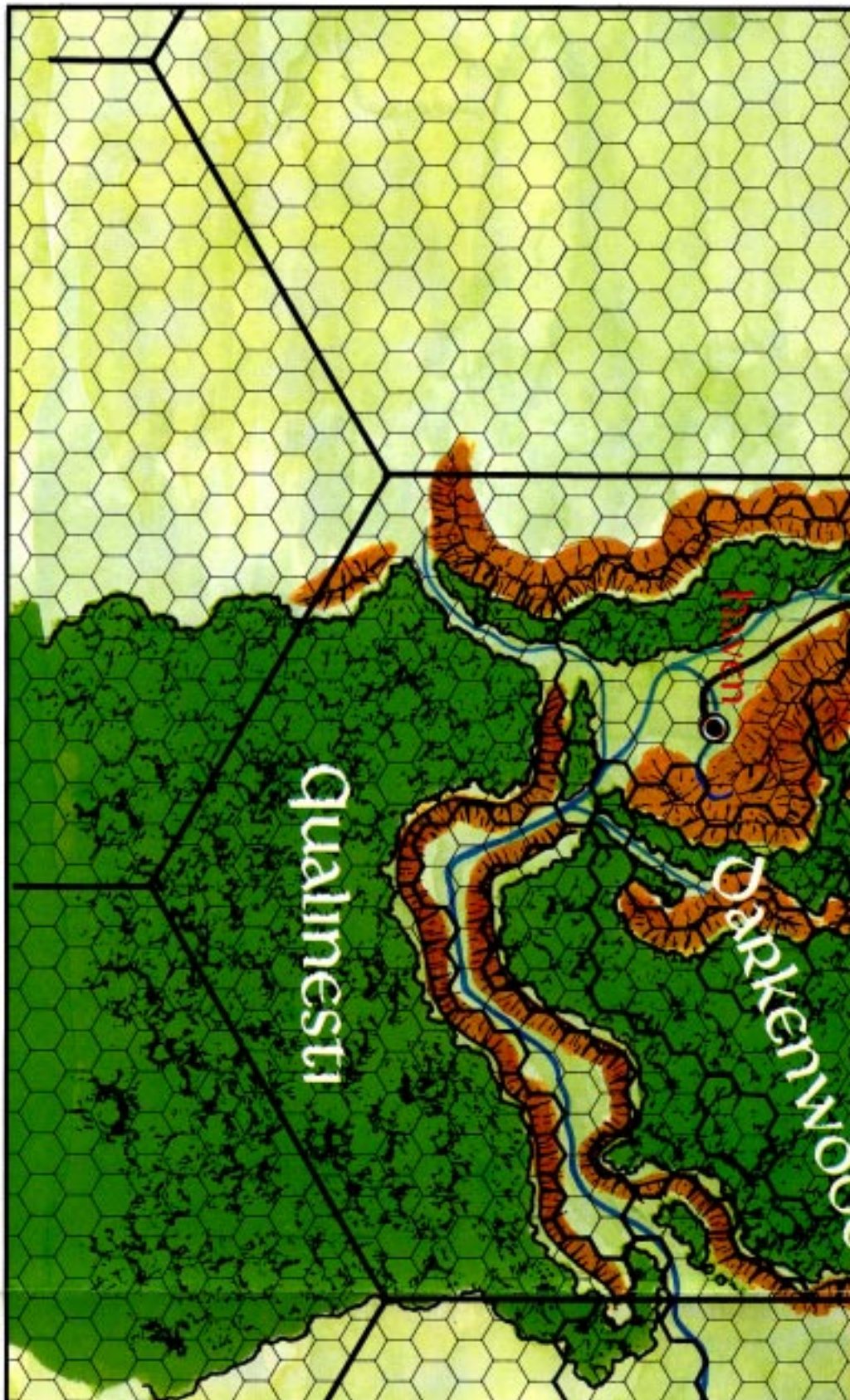
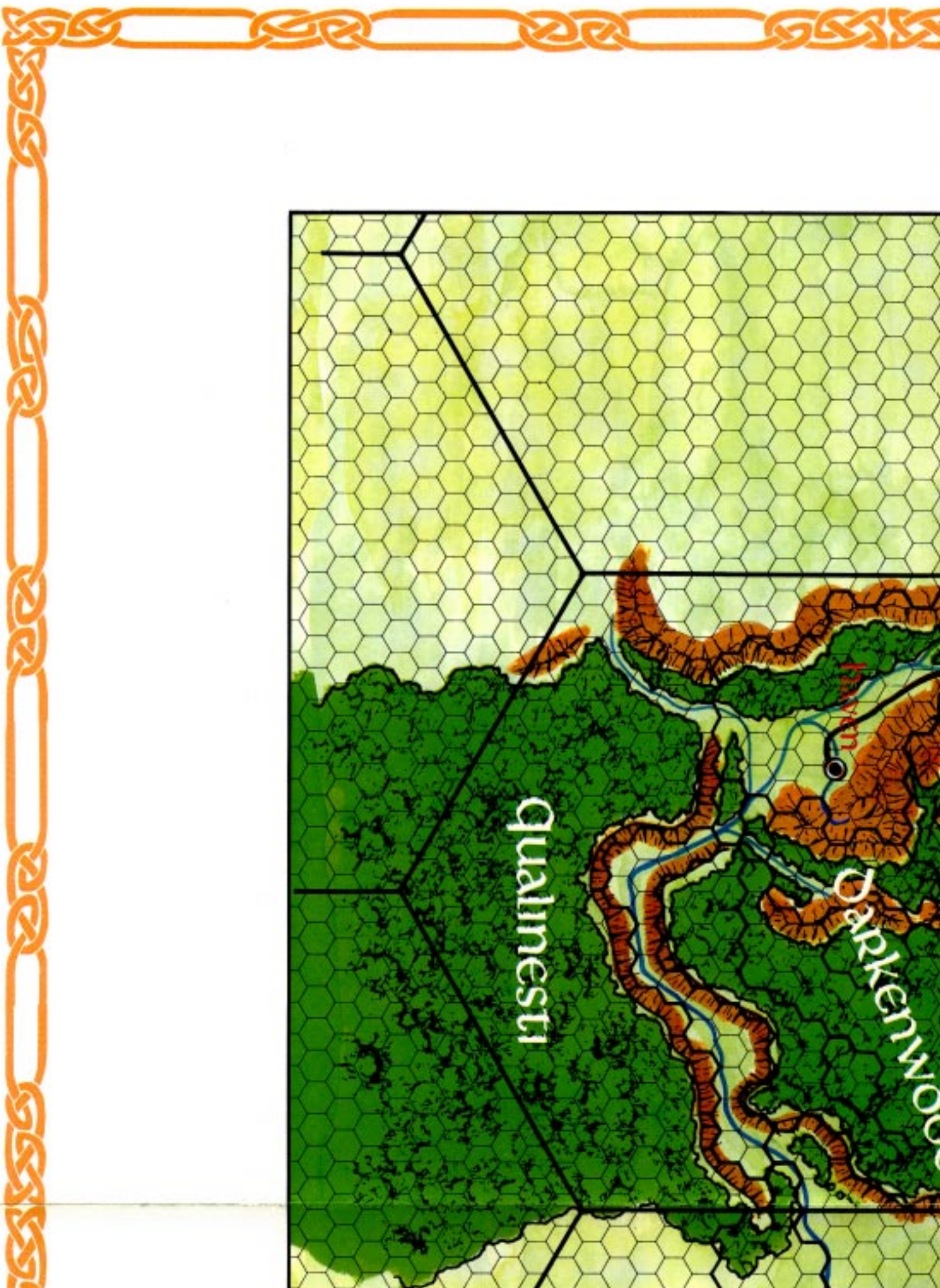
16. Gardens







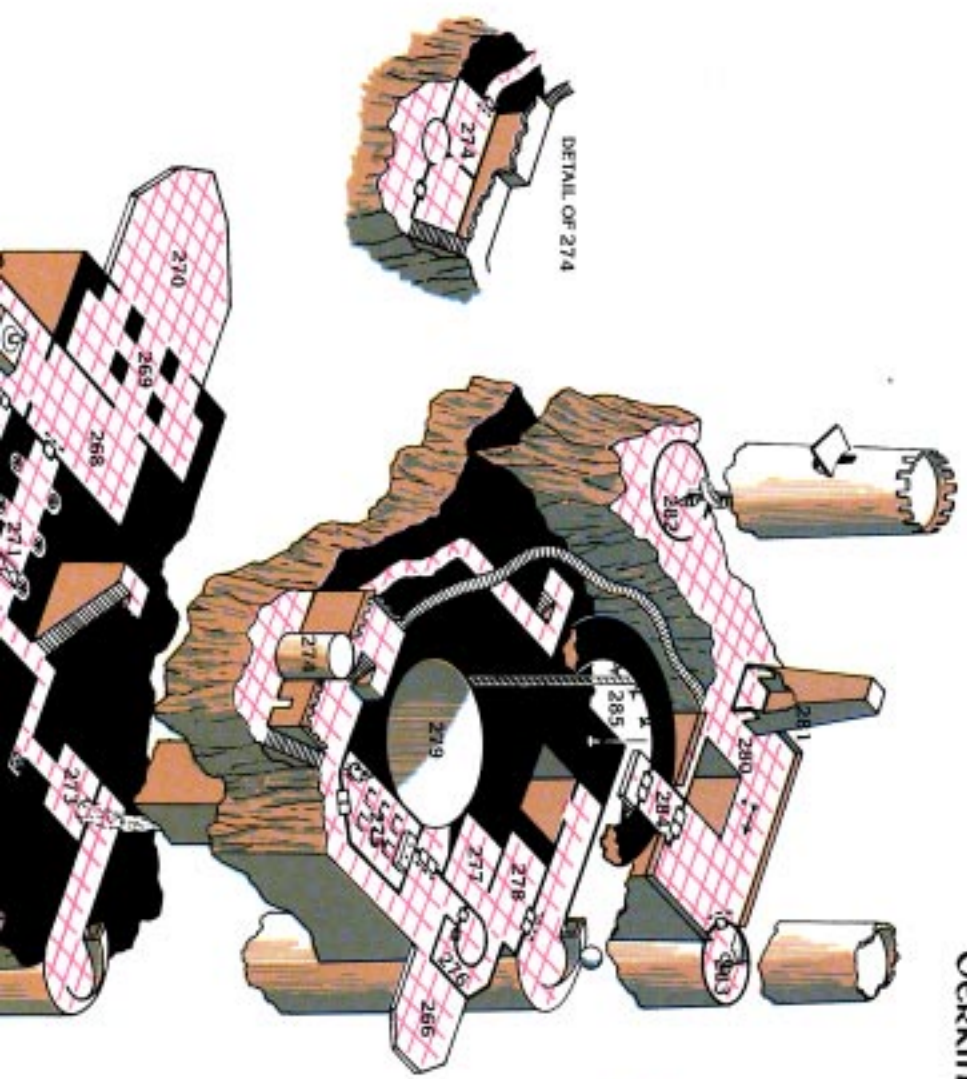




quainesti

Darkenwood

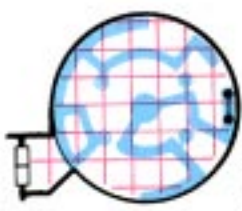
Derkin's Tomb



DETAIL OF 274

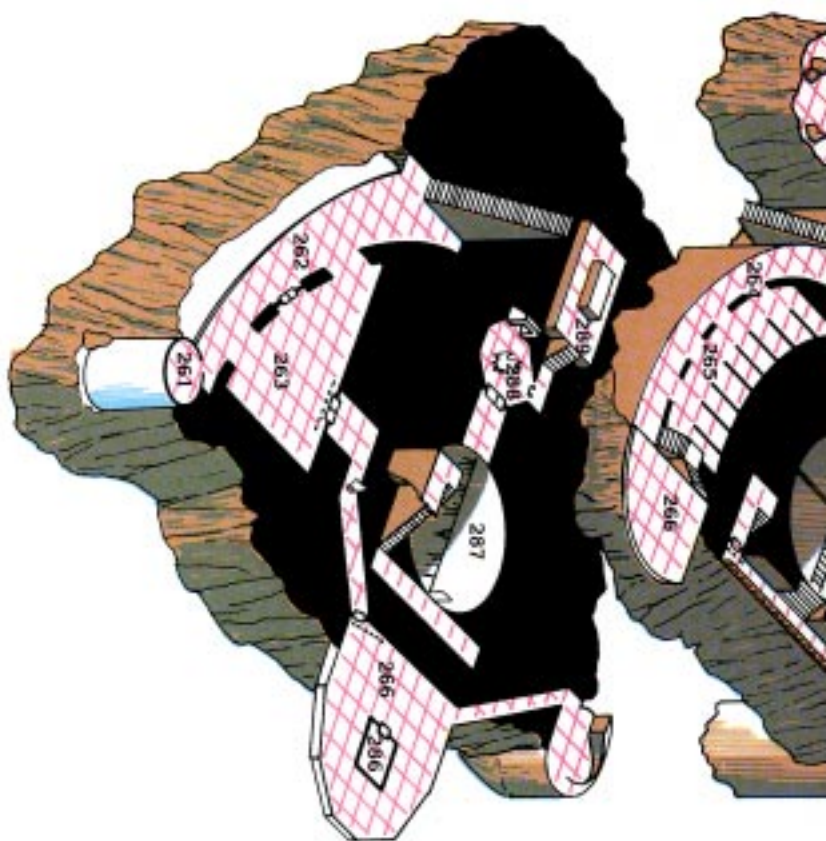


DETAIL OF 279



Key to Derkin's Tomb

	Stone floor
	Wooden floor
	Wall
	Door
	Stair
	Trap
	Pit
	Hazard
	Secret passage
	Room 279
	Room 274
	Room 270
	Room 269
	Room 268
	Room 267
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	Room 7
	Room 6
	Room 5
	Room 4
	Room 3
	Room 2
	Room 1



Scale: 1 square = 10 feet



DETAIL OF 272

TRAP EFFECTS

All traps are triggered by a tripwire or by walking past them or onto them.

Roll: Damage = 1d6.

Save vs. Paraly to avoid.

Blade: Damage = 1d10.

When activated starts dropping.

Deceitful: Check to pass or pass to right or left of wedge-shaped blade.

Flame: Damage = 2d6.

If turned out in some way.

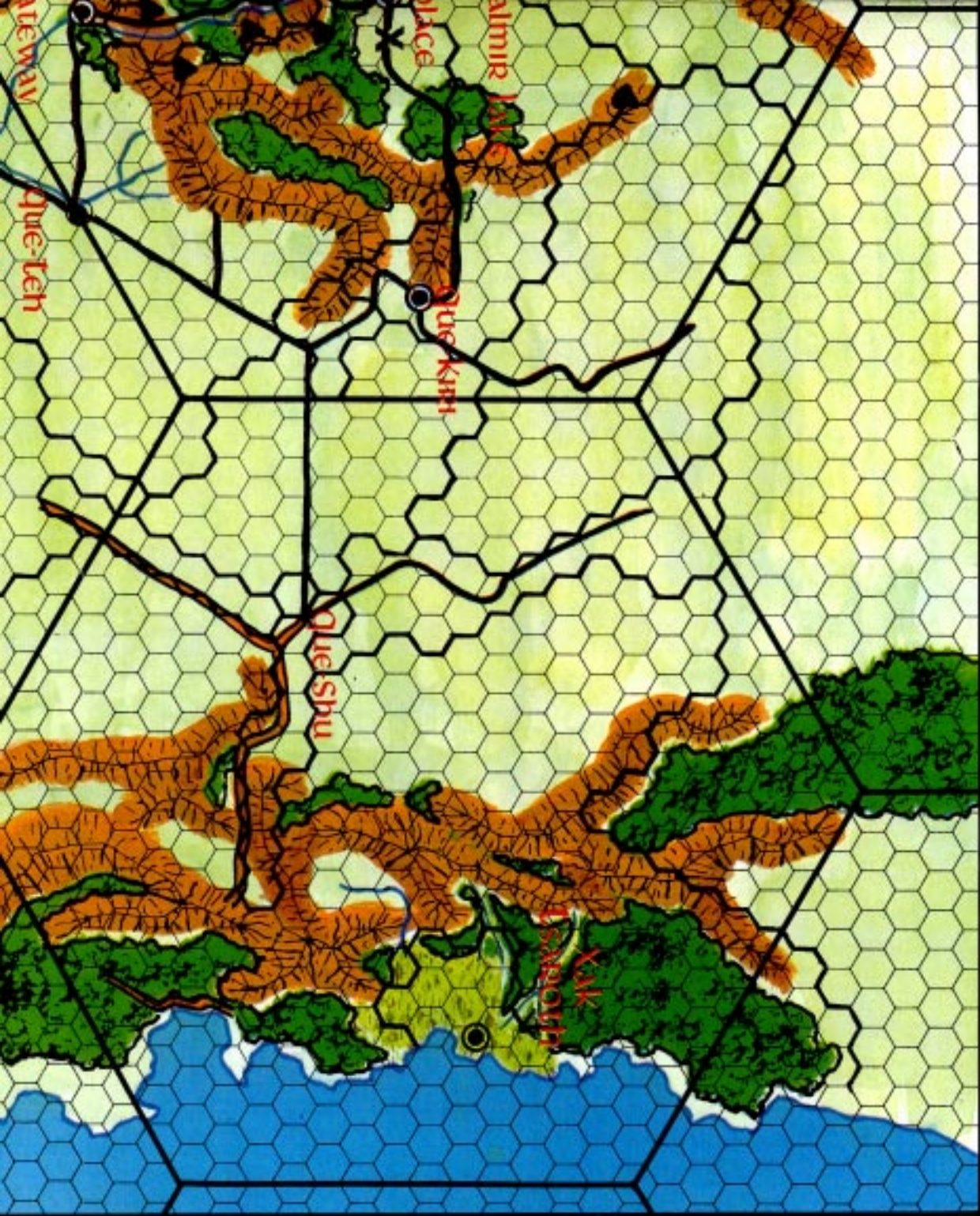
Ice Field: Damage = 1d6.

Save vs. Spells or crossed to see.

3 turns to thaw.

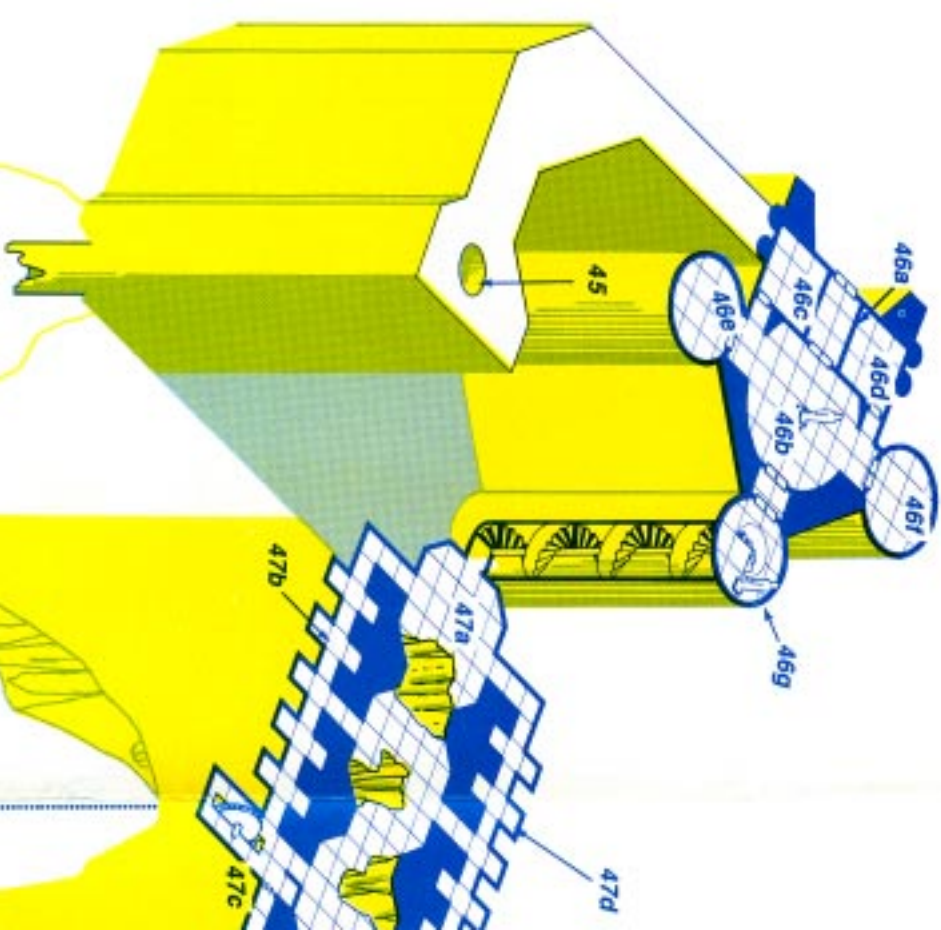
Speedy Pit: Damage = 1d6.

3' deep, trapdoor traps shut.

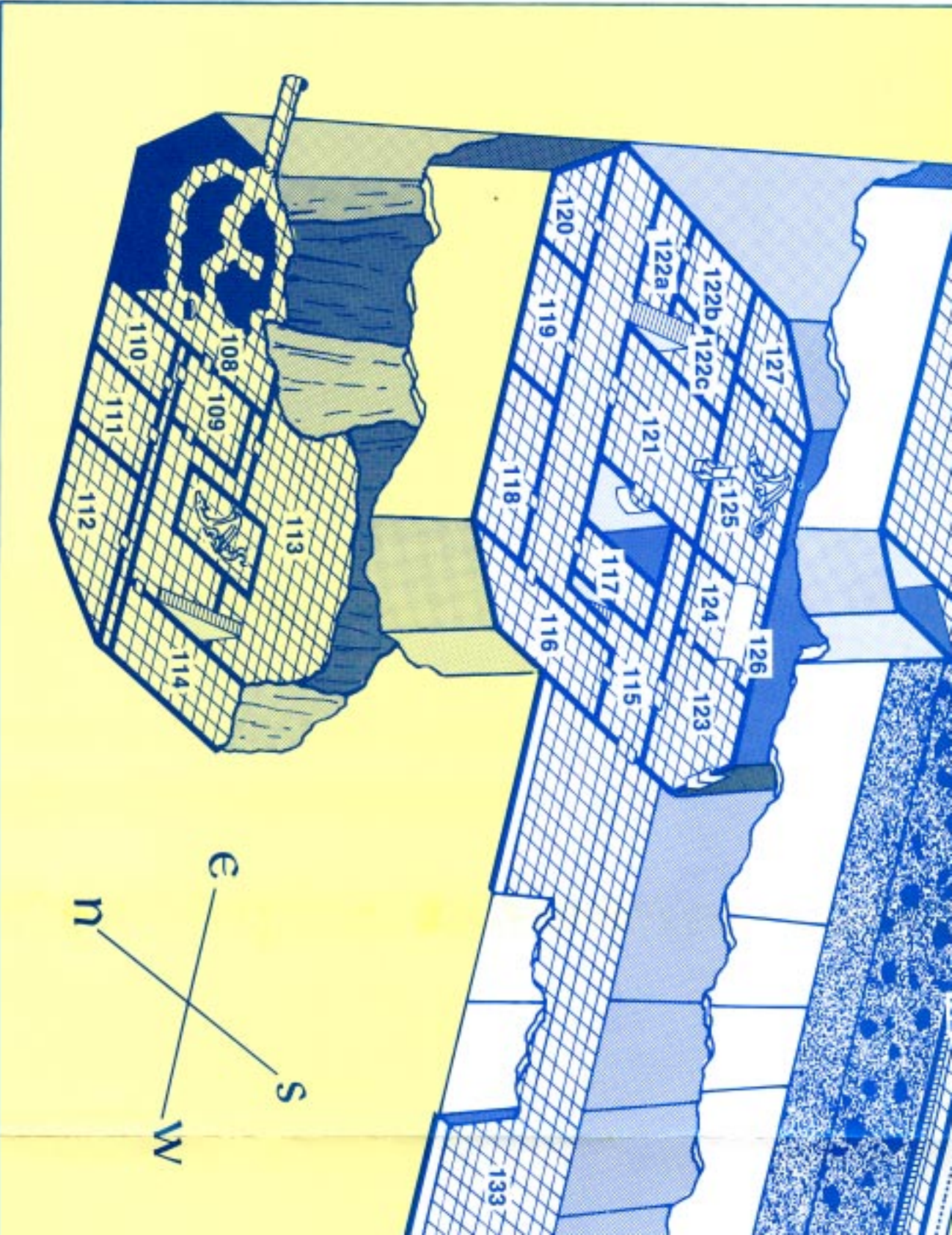


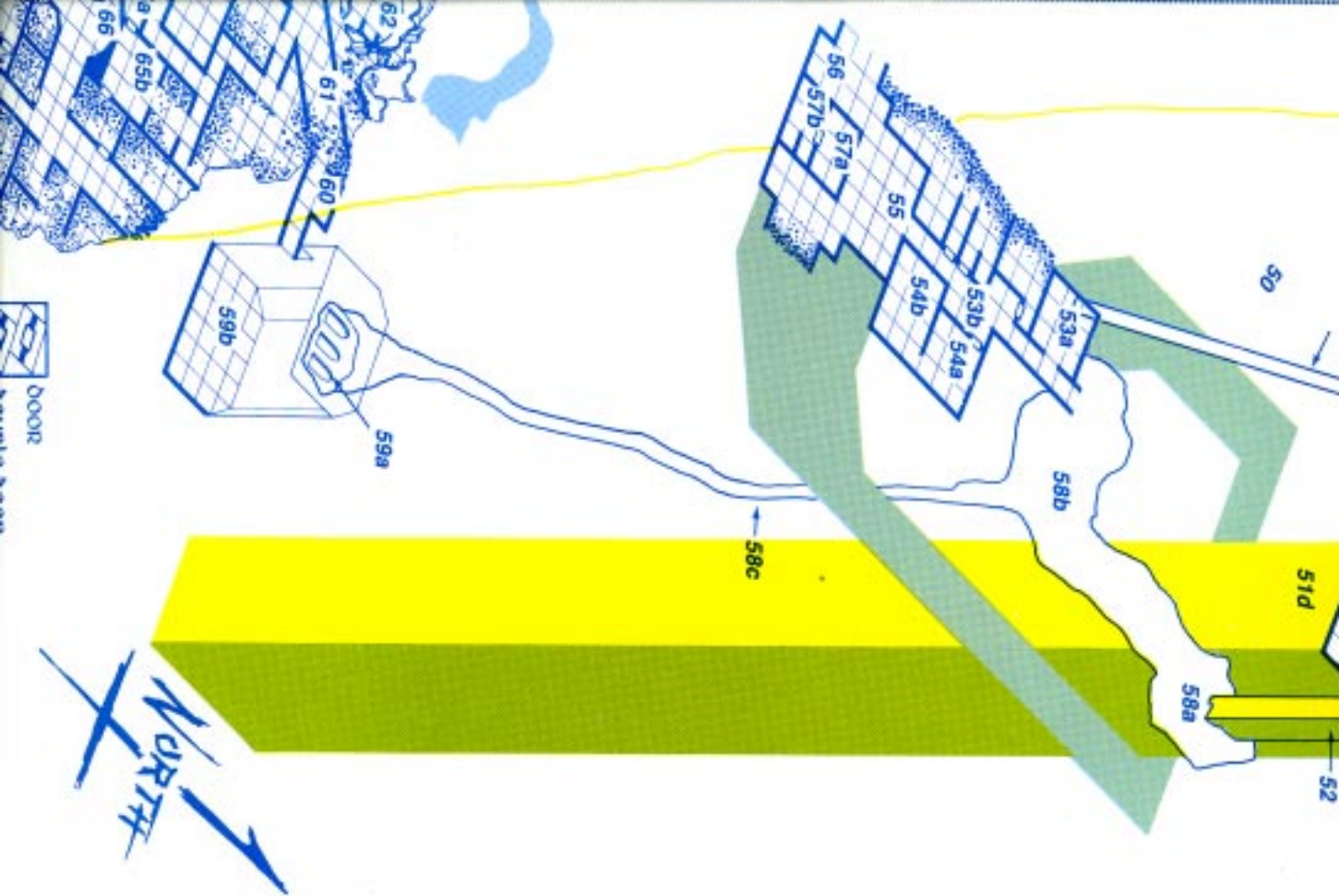


1 hex = 1 mile







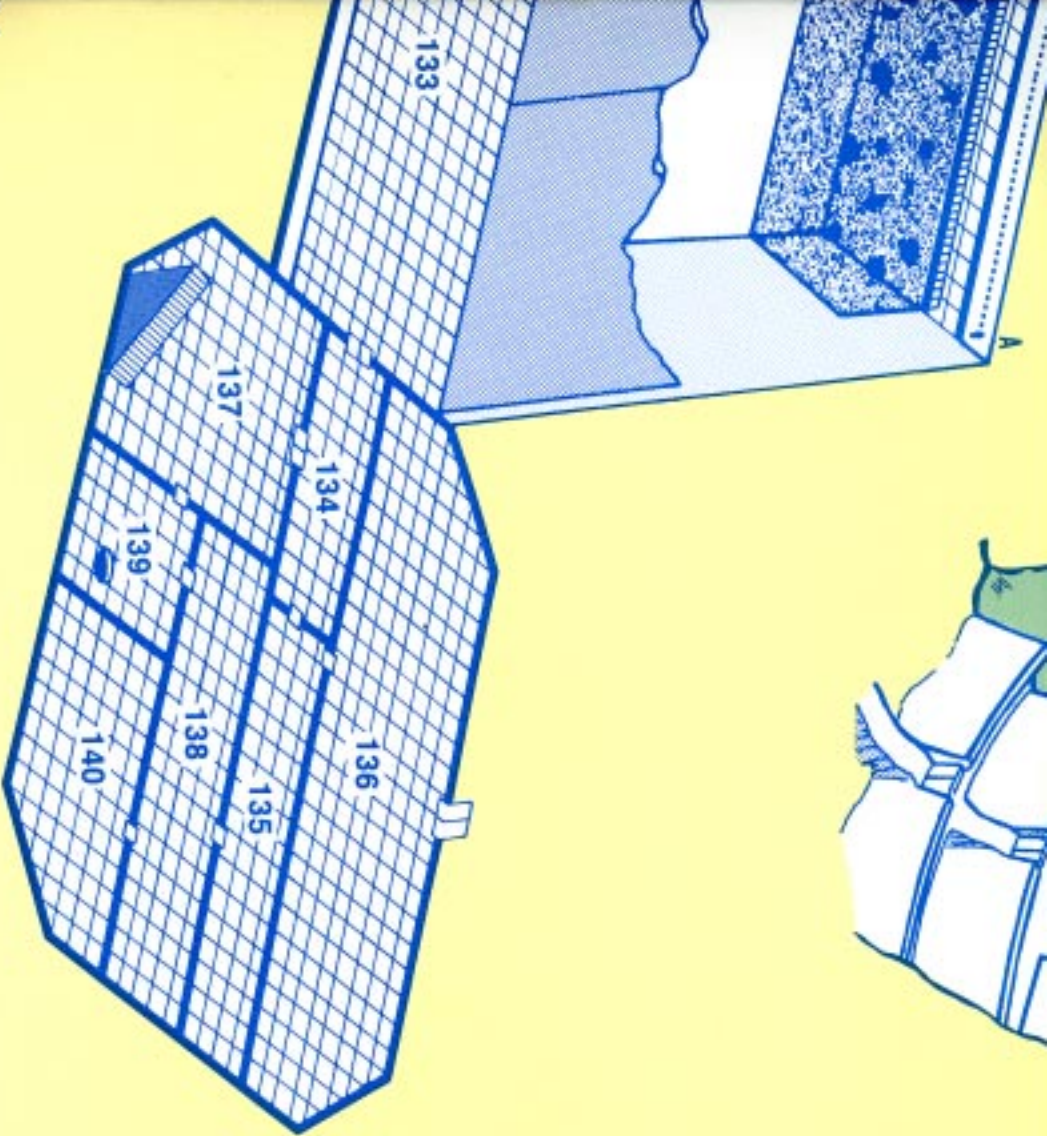




DOOR
 DOUBLE DOOR
 SECRET DOOR
 WATER
 RUBBLE
 CHAIN
 STATUE
 SPIRAL STAIRS

Markas





	Door
	Secret Door
	Column
	fallen Column
	Giant Stug
	Rubble
	Cham
	Closing Wall
	Trap
	Railing
	~10 ft.

Character Cards

Tanis 5TH-LEVEL HALF-ELF FIGHTER

STR 16 DEX 16 CON 12 THAC0 16
INT 12 WIS 13 CHR 15 AL NG HP 35

AC 4 (LEATHER ARMOR +2, DEX BONUS)

Weapons LONG SWORD +2

LONG BOW, 20 ARROWS
DAGGERS (2)

Equipment SELECTED BY PLAYER

Languages COMMON, QUALINESTI ELF,
HILL DWARF, PLAINSMAN



See the back of this card for more information.

Goldmoon 5TH-LEVEL HUMAN CLERIC

STR 12 DEX 14 CON 12 THAC0 18
INT 12 WIS 16 CHR 17 AL LG HP 25

AC 8 (LEATHER ARMOR)

Weapon SLING +1, 20 BULLETS

Equipment BLUE CRYSTAL STAFF

Languages COMMON, PLAINSMAN, HILL DWARF,
QUALINESTI ELF

Spell Use 5 1ST-LEVEL, 5 2ND-LEVEL, 1 3RD-LEVEL



See the back of this card for more information.

Caramon 6TH-LEVEL HUMAN FIGHTER

STR 18/63 DEX II CON 17 THAC0 15
INT 12 WIS 10 CHR 15 AL LG HP 56

AC 6 (RING MAIL ARMOR AND SHIELD)

Weapons LONG SWORD

SPEAR

Equipment SELECTED BY PLAYER

Languages COMMON, PLAINSMAN



See the back of this card for more information.

Riverwind 5TH-LEVEL HUMAN RANGER

STR 18/35 DEX 16 CON 15 THAC0 16
INT 13 WIS 14 CHR 13 AL LG HP 41

AC 5 (LEATHER ARMOR, SHIELD, DEX BONUS)

Weapons LONG SWORD +2

SHORT BOW, 20 ARROWS
DAGGER

Equipment SELECTED BY PLAYER

Languages COMMON, PLAINSMAN,
QUALINESTI ELF, HILL DWARF



See the back of this card for more information.

Rastlin 3RD-LEVEL HUMAN MAGE

STR 10 DEX 16 CON 10 THAC0 20
INT 17 WIS 14 CHR 10 AL N HP 8

AC 5 (STAFF OF MAGIUS, DEX BONUS)

Weapon STAFF OF MAGIUS

Equipment STAFF OF MAGIUS;

REST AS SELECTED BY PLAYER

Languages COMMON, QUALINESTI ELF, MAGIUS

Spell Use 2 1ST-LEVEL AND 1 2ND-LEVEL PER DAY



See the back of this card for more information.

Flint Fireforge 4TH-LEVEL DWARF FIGHTER

STR 16 DEX 10 CON 18 THAC0 17
INT 7 WIS 12 CHR 13 AL NG HP 45

AC 6 (STUDED LEATHER ARMOR AND SHIELD)

Weapons 2 HAND AXES +1

Equipment SELECTED BY PLAYER

Languages COMMON, HILL DWARF



See the back of this card for more information.

Sturm Brightblade 6TH-LEVEL HUMAN FIGHTER

STR 17 DEX 12 CON 16 THAC0 15
INT 14 WIS II CHR 12 AL LG HP 49

AC 5 (CHAIN MAIL)

Weapon TWO-HANDED SWORD +3

Equipment SELECTED BY PLAYER

Languages COMMON, QUALINESTI ELF,
SOLAMNIC



See the back of this card for more information.

Tasslehoff Burrfoot 4TH-LEVEL KENDER THIEF

STR 13 DEX 16 CON 14 THAC0 19
INT 9 WIS 12 CHR II AL N HP 16

AC 6 (LEATHER ARMOR, DEX BONUS)

Weapons HOOPAK (COMBINATION BULLET SLING
AND +2 QUARTERSTAFF)

Equipment THIEVES' TOOLS, LEATHER MAP CASE;
REST SELECTED BY PLAYER

Languages COMMON, KENDER



See the back of this card for more information.

I AM PRINCESS OF THE QUE-SHU TRIBE. RIVERWIND IS MY GUARDIAN AND MY BETROTHED. WE SEEK TO DISCOVER THE NATURE AND USE OF THIS STAFF THAT RIVERWIND FOUND.

SOME MONTHS AGO, RIVERWIND WENT TO MY FATHER AND ASKED FOR MY HAND. FATHER HAD ANOTHER MARRIAGE IN MIND FOR ME, AND HE DEMANDED THAT RIVERWIND PROVE HIS WORTH BY BRINGING BACK THE MAGIC OF THE FORSAKEN LANDS.

FOR MONTHS I RECEIVED NO WORD OF RIVERWIND. THEN HE RETURNED, BEARING THIS STAFF. FATHER THOUGH HE HAD RID HIMSELF OF RIVERWIND, AND IN HIS ANGER HE DECLARED THE STAFF WORTHLESS AND ORDERED THE VILLAGERS TO STONE RIVERWIND. AS THE STONES FELL UPON HIM, I RAN TO HIS SIDE. AT THAT MOMENT THE STAFF BLAZED WITH A BLUE LIGHT AND WE FOUND OURSELVES ON THE PLAINS FAR WEST OF THE VILLAGE. WE DO NOT KNOW HOW TO WORK THE STAFF; WE CANNOT RETURN TO OUR VILLAGE UNTIL WE CAN CONTROL THE STAFF POWER.

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I HAVE WANDERED THROUGH FOREST AND WILDERNESS FOR FIVE LONG YEARS. THROUGH QUALINESTI WEST OF THE KHAROLIS MOUNTAINS, THROUGH THE FORESTS OF KITH-KANAN, ALL THE WAY TO THE DISTANT SEA. FOUND NO TRACE OF MYSTICAL HEALERS—NOT EVEN TALES OR RUMORS OF THEM—IN MY TRAVELS. STILL, I CERTAIN THE TRUE GODS MUST EXIST; THE SIGNS OF THEIR HANDIWORK ARE EVERYWHERE. THE WHITE STAG LED ME TOWARD THE BEST PATHS, WHEELING BIRDS FORETOLD WAR, AND THUNDERCLOUDS WARNED ME OF DANGER. THESE MUST BE THE WORK OF THE TRUE GODS! BUT STILL I FOUND NO PRIEST TO THE WEST.

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I AM A WARRIOR OF THE QUE-SHU TRIBE. I HAVE LOVED GOLDMOON FOR MANY TURNS OF THE SUN.

I REMEMBER LITTLE OF WHAT HAPPENED TO ME AFTER I REACHED THE FORSAKEN LANDS. EVERYTHING SEEMS AS IF A DARK DREAM: A BLACK SWAMP, A WELL, A SHINING LADY, AND A LEATHE-WINGED CREATURE OF PURE EVIL. HOW MUCH OF THIS IS REAL AND HOW MUCH IS MADNESS, I CANNOT SAY.

MONTHS LATER I SOMEHOW RETURNED TO QUE-SHU, BLEEDING, CRAZED WITH FEVER AND VISIONS. I PRESENTED THE STAFF, BUT THE VILLAGE COUNCIL SCORNE IT. SOMEHOW THE STAFF SAVED US FROM THE STONING, BUT WE KNOW NOT HOW.

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MY BROTHER RAISTLIN AND I ALSO WANDERED OVER THE KHAROLIS MOUNTAINS, BUT WE JOURNEYED TO THE SOUTHWEST, BEYOND THE REALMS OF THE ELVES. WE SEARCHED FOR THE FABLED TOWERS OF HIGH SORCERY. DEEP IN DARK, EERY MISTS THAT ALWAYS SEEM TO COVER THAT LAND, WE FOUND THESE MYSTERIOUS TOWERS. RAISTLIN ENDURED GREAT HARDSHIP WITHIN, AND HE HAS CHANGED GREATLY SINCE WE LAST GATHERED TOGETHER. HE SPEAKS LITTLE OF HIS EXPERIENCES WITHIN THE TOWER.

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I HAVE SEARCHED THESE FIVE YEARS FOR A HOLY MAN AND FOR A WAY TO AVENGE THE WRONGS DONE TO MY PEOPLE. I FAILED AT BOTH PURPOSES.

YEARS AGO, THE KINGDOM OF THORBARDIN HOUSED ALL THE DWARVES. WE HILL DWARVES LIVED ABOVE GROUND AND FARMED FOOD FOR THOSE BELOW. THE MOUNTAIN DWARVES GAVE US METALWORK IN RETURN. BUT WHEN THE CATAclySM CAME, THEY CLOSED THE GATES OF THORBARDIN TO US, LEAVING US TO THE WRATH OF THE GODS.

I SEARCHED FOR THE DOORS TO THORBARDIN, BUT ALL WAS CHANGED. CURSES ON THE MOUNTAIN DWARVES AND THEIR VILE GULLY DWARF COUSINS!

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AT THE TOWERS OF HIGH SORCERY, I PASSED GREAT TESTS SET BY THE SPIRITS OF LONG-DEAD SAGES AND WIZARDS. THE TESTS TRIED ME GREATLY AND ALMOST BROKE ME. NOW I SEE THE WORLD THROUGH HOURGLASS EYES THAT SHOW ME MANY THINGS THAT I CANNOT SPEAK OF. MUCH OF MY HEALTH IS GONE, YET THE MAGICAL POWERS THAT I POSSESS MAY PROVE TO BE MORE VALUABLE THAN GOOD HEALTH.

AS WE DEPARTED THE TOWERS, I HEARD THE VOICE OF AN ANCIENT MAGE SAY TO ME ALONE: "USE WELL YOUR POWERS, FOR THE TIME IS NIGH WHEN YOUR STRENGTH IS NEEDED IS THE STRUGGLE TO REBALANCE THE WORLD."

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I'VE ALMOST FORGOTTEN WHERE I'VE BEEN. I MEANT TO MAKE MAPS, BUT THERE WAS SO MUCH TO SEE, I NEVER FOUND THE TIME. TO THE NORTH AND WEST THE WORLD HAS CHANGED MORE THAN OUR LANDS. A SEA NOW LIES TO THE NORTH WHERE OLD MAPS SHOW PLAINS BEFORE THE CATAclySM. WHERE THE EMPIRE OF ERGOTH ONCE STOOD, NAUGHT IS LEFT BUT A COUPLE OF ISLANDS.

SO NOW I GET BACK TO SOLACE EXPECTING TO SLEEP FOR A FEW WEEKS, AND IT'S A DUMP! SOME HOLY TYPES CALLED PEEKERS OR SEEKERS OR SOMETHING ARE TRYING TO TAKE CONTROL OF EVERYTHING. I'M ALL FOR PACKING UP AND HEADING OUT AGAIN!

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I VISITED THE NORTHERN LANDS WHEN I CROSSED THE SEA IN THE COMPANY OF OUR FRIEND KITIARA. ONCE OVER THE SEA, WE PARTED COMPANY—SHE WENT WEST AND I VENTURED EAST. THOUGH I SEARCHED FOR A HOLY MAN, I ALSO SOUGHT MY BIRTHRIGHT.

FOR YOU SEE, I KNOW ONLY THAT MY MOTHER FLED THE NORTHERN LANDS WHEN I WAS YOUNG. SHE CARRIED ALL MY DEAD FATHER HAD LEFT HER: HIS SWORD AND HIS RING. FROM THESE I KNOW THAT HE WAS ONCE A KNIGHT OF SOLAMNIA. SO I JOURNEYED TO TAKE MY FATHER'S PLACE IN THAT GOOD AND JUST ORDER. BUT I DISCOVERED THAT THE SOLAMNIC KNIGHTS HAVE FALLEN INTO DISFAVOR WITH THE PEOPLE OF THE NORTH, AND I COULD FIND NO MEMBERS; OF THE ORDER. THUS MY PAST REMAINS A MYSTERY.

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Combined Monster Statistics Chart

Monster	AC	MV	HD	THAC0	#AT	Damage	SA	SD	AL
Apparition									
Badger, Giant	4	6, Br 3	3	17	3	1d3/1d3/1d6	Nil	Nil	N
Bear, Cave	6	12	6+6	13	3	1d8/1d8/1d12	Hug	Nil	N
Bee, Grant (Queen)									
Bee, Giant (Soldier)									
Bee, Giant (Worker)									
Beetle, Boring	3	6	5	15	1	5d4	Nil	Nil	N
Boar, Giant	6	12	7	13	1	3d6	Nil	Nil	N
Brownie	3	12	½	20	1	1d2	Spells	Save as 9th-lvl priest	LG
Carrion Crawler	3/7	12	3+1	17	8	1d2	Paralysis	Nil	N
Catoblepas	7	6	6+2	15	1	1d6+stun	Death gaze	Nil	N
Cave Cricket									
Centaur	5(4)	18	4	17	3	1d6/1d6/weapon	Nil	Nil	N (CG)
Centipede, Giant	9	15	2hp	20	1	Nil	Poison	Nil	Nil
Demilich	-6	Sp.	50 hp	11	Sp.	Sp.	Nil	Nil	NE
Dog, War	6	12	2+2	19	1	2d4	Nil	Nil	N
Dog, Wild	7	15	1+1	19	1	1d4	Nil	Nil	N
Draconian, Baaz	4	6/15, GI 18	2	19	2 or 1	1d4/1d4 or weapon	Nil	Nil	LE
Draconian, Bozak	2	6/15, GI 18	4	17	2 or 1	1d4/1d4 or weapon	Spells	+2 to saves	LE
Draconian, Kapak	4	6/15, GI 18	3	17	1	1d4	Poison	Nil	LE
Dragon, Black									
Hatchling	4	12, FI 30(C), Sw 12	6	15	3	1d6/1d6/3d6	Acid	Nil	CE
Dragon, Black (Khisanth)	-3	12, FI 30(C), Sw 12	16	5	3	1d6+8/1d6+8/3d6+8	Acid	Sp.	CE
Dragon, Brass (Blaise)	-2	12, FI 30(C), Br 6	14	7	3	1d6+6/1d6+6/4d4+6	Sleep gas	Sp.	CG (N)
Dragon, Gold (Evenstat)	-8	12, FI 42(C)	20	5	3	1d10+8/1d10+8/6d6+8	Spells	Sp.	LG
Dragon, Red, Old	-	9, FI 30(C)	17	5	3	1d10+8/1d10+8/3d10+8	Spells	Sp.	CE
Dragon, Red (Ember)	-	9, FI 30(C)	1,	5	3	1d10+8/1d10+8/3d10+8	Spells	Sp.	CE
Dragon, Red (Flamestrike)	-7	9, FI 30(C)	17	5	3	1d10+8/1d10+8/3d6+8	Spells	Sp.	CE
Dragon, Shadow	-2	12, FI 24(C)	10	11	3	1d6+8/1d6+8/1d4+8	Spells	Sp.	NE
Dragon Turtle	0	3, SW9	14	7	3	2d6/2d6/4d8	Steam	Nil	N
Dry ad	9	12	2	19	1	1d4	Charm	Sp.	N
Dwarf, Aghar (Gully)	7	6	1	19	2 or 1	1d4/1d4 or weapon	Sp.	Sp.	CN
Dwarf, Hylar (Mountain)	4	6	1	19	1	1d8	Sp.	Sp.	LN
Dwarf, Klar (Hill)	6	6	1	13	1	1d8	Sp.	Sp.	NG
Dwarf, Neidar (Hill)	6	6	1	19	1	1d8	Sp.	Sp.	NG
Dwarf, Theiwar		6	1	10	1	1d8	Sp.	Sp.	CE
Dwarf, Theiwar Savant	5	6	3	17	1	1d8	Spells	Sp.	CE
Eagle, Giant	7	3, FI 48(D)	4	17	3	1d6/1d6/2d6	Dive	Sp.	N
Elf	5	12	1+1	19	1	1d10	+1 to hit	Sp.	CG
Elf, Fighter	4	12	3	17	1	1d8+2	Sp.	Sp.	CG
Elf, Mage	5	12	5	15	1	1d4	Spells	Sp.	CG
Elk	7	15	3	17	1	2d6	Nil	Nil	N
Etтин	3	12	10	11	2	1d10/2d6 (2d8/3d6 w/club)	Nil	Sp.	CE
Fireshadow	0	6	13+3	7	3 or 1	1d6/1d6/3d6 or 2d20	Sp.	Sp.	CE
Forestmaster Unicorn	2	24	10	11	3	1d8/1d8/2d10	Charge	Sp.	CG
Fungi, Violet	7	1	3	17	1 to 4	Sp.	Sp.	Nil	N
Galeb Duhr	-2	6	9	11	2	3d6/3d6	sp.	Sp.	N
Ghost	4	15	4	17	3	1d4/1d4/1d8	Sp.	Sp.	CE
Ghost	0 or 8	7	10	11	1	10-40 years	Sp.	Sp.	LE
Goblin	6	6	1-1	20	1	1d6	Nil	Nil	LE
Golem, Stone	5	6	14	7	1	3d8	Sp.	Sp.	N
Green Slime	9	0	2	19	0	Nil	Sp.	Sp.	N

Abbreviations

AC = Armor Class, AL = Alignment, #AT = Number of attacks per round, CE = Chaotic Evil, CG = Chaotic Good, HD = Hit Dice. hp = hit points. LE = Lawful Evil, LG = Lawful Good, MV = Movement Rate, N = True Neutral, NE = Neutral Evil, NG = Neutral Good. SA = Special Attacks. SD = Special Defenses. Sp. = Special, THAC0 = Number needed To Hit AC 0

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®

Dragonlance® SAGA

CLASSICS VOLUME I

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