

A HEROIC TIER ADVENTURE

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

ENCOUNTERS™

KEEP ON THE BORDERLANDS

A Season of Serpents™



AN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTERS OF 1ST - 3RD LEVEL

Chris Sims

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Chapter 1 of 5: A Season of Serpents™



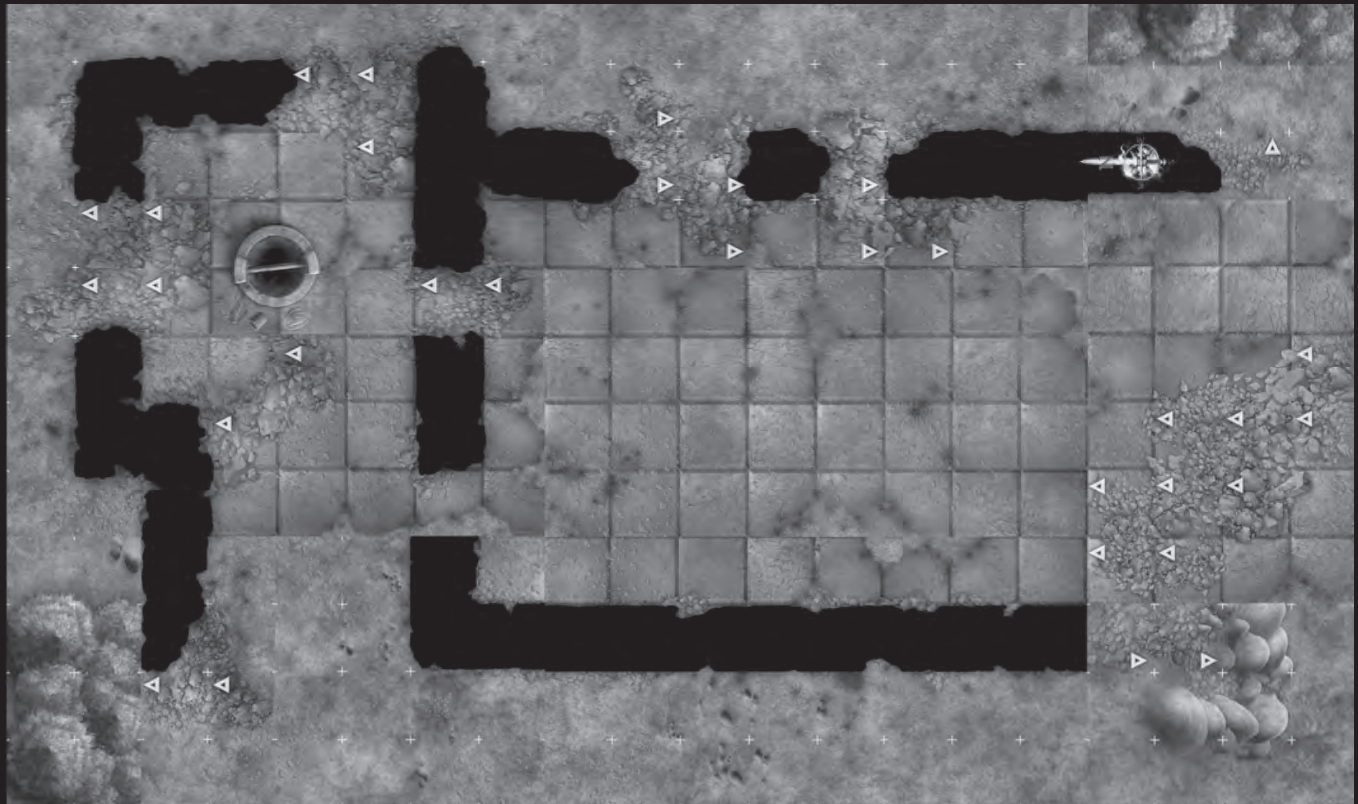
AN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTERS OF 1ST LEVEL

Chris Sims

ENCOUNTER 1-3:
PRESSURE COOKER



ENCOUNTER 1-4:
WELL WATCH



INTRODUCTION

A DUNGEON & DRAGONS Encounters™ adventure for four to six 1st-level characters

Welcome to DUNGEON & DRAGONS Encounters, an exciting official D&D program. This adventure is a mini-campaign season designed to be played in one-encounter sessions once per week at your local Wizards Play Network location. Each week, players can earn in-game rewards for their characters and Renown Points toward special program-exclusive D&D Encounters Cards that can be used in this and future seasons of D&D Encounters.

Preparing for Play

The D&D Encounters play kit provides all you need to DM this adventure, including poster maps of encounter areas and a sheet of tokens for monsters, adventurers, and battlefield effects. Follow the steps below to prepare for play.

Before you DM your first session:

- ◆ Read the Introduction, Adventure Synopsis, Adventure Summary, and Resting sections.
- ◆ Read Session 1: Rescue Mission and Encounter 1-1: Prison Grotto. If you are starting at another point, read the appropriate sections and what has come before.

At the table of your first session:

- ◆ Ensure each player has a character to play. Players may use one of the characters provided in the kit, or may create their own using the guidelines provided.
- ◆ Give each player has a D&D Encounters Play Tracker. This sheet is found in the play kit, and it allows the players to track treasure, experience, and Renown Points earned for each play session.
- ◆ Get a session tracking sheet from the organizer. Record all the players' DCI/RPGA numbers on it, along with your DCI/RPGA number. If you or any of the players don't have a DCI/RPGA number, ask the organizer for a membership card.

During the session:

- ◆ Each session is one encounter in length. Just DM the encounter assigned for that week's session. Typical play-time for one encounter is about 90 minutes to 2 hours.
- ◆ Make decisions and adjudications that enhance the fun of the game. As the DM, you can make some adjustments to the adventure (see the sidebar) to facilitate the fun for players.

At the end of your first session:

- ◆ Have the adventurers take a short rest if they want, but remind them to track their daily abilities. Healing surges used, daily powers expended, and other daily resources do not refresh in-between each session; only at the end of each chapter. Make sure your players track this information on their D&D Encounters Play Tracker.
- ◆ Turn in your session tracking sheet to the organizer. Make sure you've recorded all the DCI/RPGA numbers on it, along with names and the play date.
- ◆ Report Renown Point totals earned for each player to the organizer. The organizer fills out the Renown Point Tracker for the location and tells you if any players have earned D&D Encounters Cards.
- ◆ Give out treasure. Make sure the players write down rewards on the D&D Encounters Play Tracker.
- ◆ Collect your special reward for providing your time as a DM to make the event happen. Your organizer has more details on this reward.

At the end of the final session of a chapter:

- ◆ The adventurers take an extended rest, regaining all of their healing surges, hit points, and daily powers. In addition, their action point totals reset to 1.

Once you've been the DM for a session, it's easy to prepare for your next session. Simply read over the session's material, and you're ready to go.

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CREATING A CHARACTER

Players are responsible for bringing their own characters to each play session. A first-time player should bring a new 1st-level D&D character created using only the rules found in the *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Fantasy Roleplaying Game* boxed set or *Heroes of the Fallen Lands*.

If a player doesn't have a character or doesn't want to create one from scratch, several pre-generated characters are provided in the play kit. Get these from the organizer and offer a choice of one to each player that wants one.

At the end of each session, you award experience points, treasure, and Renown Points to each player. They'll track that information on their D&D Encounters Play Tracker and you'll report the Renown Points each player earned with the organizer.

CHARACTER DEATH

If a character dies during a session, the player has two choices. He or she can bring the same character back at the beginning of the next session with a death penalty of -1 to attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks until they've hit a milestone (two encounters), or he or she can start a new character of the appropriate level.

Advancement

At the end of each session, you award experience points when the characters complete encounters. Use this table below to award experience points for each session. Don't modify the amount of experience based on the number of characters.

EXPERIENCE POINT AWARDS

XP Description	XP/Character
Session 1	110 XP
Session 2	131 XP
Minor Quest: Rescue Gordi	20 XP
Session 3	120 XP
Session 4	110 XP
Minor Quest: Link Ronnik to Tiamat	20 XP

If the characters succeed at all the encounters and complete all quests, each should earn 511 XP by the end of Chapter 1.

Milestones: For every two encounters a character completes without taking an extended rest, the character reaches a milestone, gaining an action point.

A CHANGING GROUP

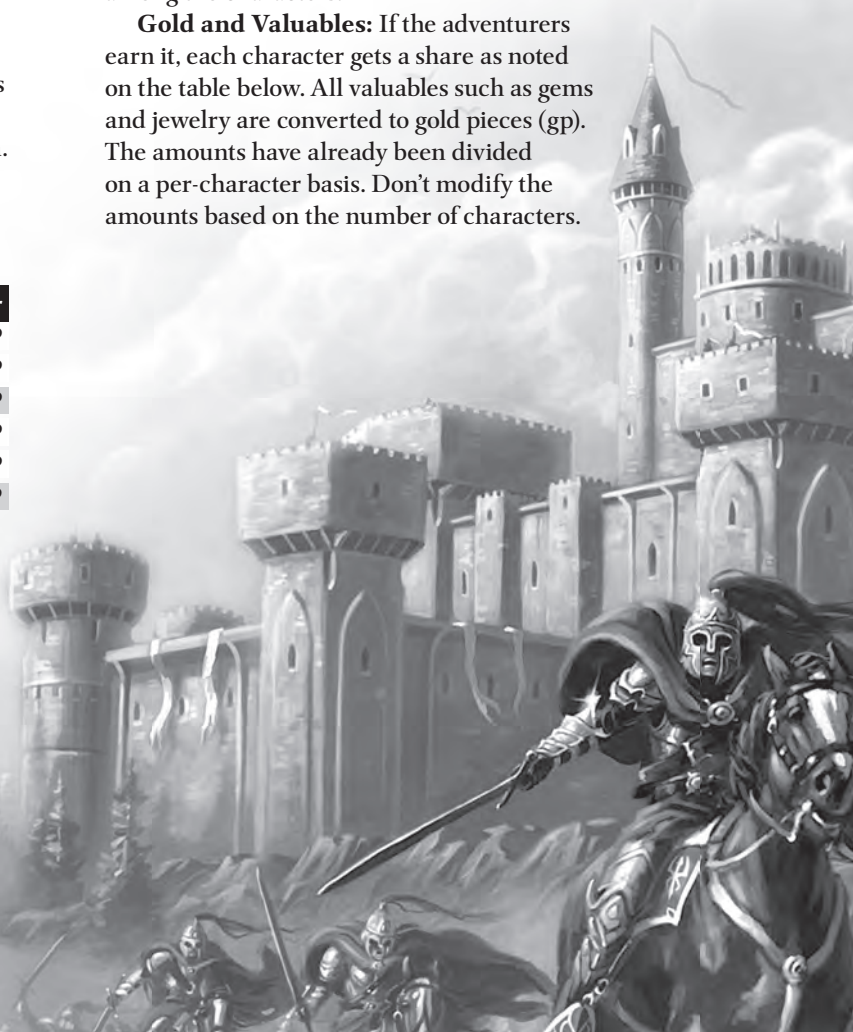
Since you can never tell who's going to show up to a D&D Encounters session from week to week, you might wind up with a different group of players. Some players might be starting in "mid-stream," some could have missed a session or two, and others might have played all the sessions with a different DM. That's fine. Update new players with a brief summary of what has come before, and make sure that returning players have marked off resources they spent (healing surges, daily powers, etc.) since their last extended rest.

Majority Rules: If some element of the adventure plot hinges on the adventurers making a decision in a previous session, and the group is different during the current session, simply find out how the decision went down for that group. Go with the majority, and if it's an even split, side with the most positive result. For example, if three of five players' characters at your table rescued Gordi in a previous encounter and two didn't, Gordi is considered to be rescued for your session this week.

Treasure

As the characters progress through the mini-campaign, they have the opportunity to gain treasure in the form of gold pieces, valuables, and magic items. At the end of each session, determine if the players earned any treasure. Use the following rules to divide up treasure among the characters.

Gold and Valuables: If the adventurers earn it, each character gets a share as noted on the table below. All valuables such as gems and jewelry are converted to gold pieces (gp). The amounts have already been divided on a per-character basis. Don't modify the amounts based on the number of characters.



Magic Items: During the adventure, a number of magic items that might be discovered. They are listed on the table below. Give out magic items according to the sidebar Awarding Magic Items.

When to Gear Up: Characters can buy equipment before beginning play during Session 1. If a character gains a magic item that has only level and type described (for example, magic implement level 2), the player can select an item of that type and level after the session is complete, before starting the next one.

TREASURE FOUND

Treasure	Location
1 herbal poultice each	Encounter 1-1
Silver necklace (10 gp each)	Encounter 1-1
6 gp each	Encounter 1-1
Potion of healing	Encounter 1-1
Red garnet gems (20 gp each)	Encounter 1-3
40 sp each	Encounter 1-3
Magic implement (level 2; player choice)	Encounter 1-3

AWARDING MAGIC ITEMS

When the characters find a nonconsumable magic item, the players decide who receives what. If this is impossible or difficult, you assign the new item to the character who has no nonconsumable magic items. If all the characters have a nonconsumable magic item, the character with the lowest-level nonconsumable magic item receives the new item.

If more than one character has no nonconsumable magic item, or two characters tie for the lowest-level magic item, those the players decide who receives the new item. If they can't decide, have each roll a d20 until one rolls higher than the other. That player receives the new item.

You can distribute consumable items in the same way if the players can't decide who takes such items. Just remember not to count these items as nonconsumable magic items.

Renown Points

One of the great rewards for playing in a D&D Encounters season is the accumulation of Renown Points (RPs), which are given out for accomplishments made by players during, and sometimes in-between, sessions. These Renown Points are tracked at the Wizards Play Network location, and reaching certain thresholds garners the player a tangible reward—a D&D Encounters Card.

Players can use these cards during the current D&D Encounters season, as well as in subsequent seasons. Each card has all the information on how it works printed right on the card.

As the DM, it's your task to award Renown Points at the end of a session of play, just like you would award experience and treasure. Unlike experience and treasure though, Renown Point totals earned for each player must be reported to the organizer at the conclusion of the session when you turn in your session tracking sheet. The organizer can then tell you if any players have qualified for a card.

The Renown accomplishments, their frequency, and the point values of each are listed below.

RENOWN POINT AWARDS

Accomplishment	Frequency	RPs
Complete an encounter	Session	3
Hit a milestone	2/Chapter	2
Moment of greatness	1/Chapter	2
Create a D&D Essentials character	Season	5
Create a Character Builder character	Season	5
Revive a dying adventurer ally	Season	1
Hit for 15+ damage against 1 enemy	Season	1
Kill 3 minions in 1 attack	Season	1
Take 50 enemy damage in 1 session	Season	1
Survive 12+ sessions without dying	Season	2
Complete all quests	Season	5

Moment of Greatness: This is a discretionary award given out by the DM or through party vote to a player for doing something inventive, daring, or just plain cool during a session of play.

Renown Rewards

When a player earns 20 RPs, he or she earns the first D&D Encounters Card, called the Delver Reward. This is awarded to the player immediately following the session in which it is earned. The second award is called the Adventurer Reward, and a player qualifies for the reward by obtaining 100 Renown Points in the season.

The final award is given out at the conclusion of the season. At the end of the season, a number of D&D Encounters Cards are distributed among those who qualify for the reward. If more players qualify for the reward than the number of cards available, the organizer will determine how they will be distributed.

Keep on the Borderlands: A Season of Serpents™ pits a group of inexperienced adventurers against the unknown and dangerous borderlands near the Chaos Scar. These introductory pages provide background information for Dungeon Masters running the storyline.

Keep on the Borderlands

Legends claim that dwarven-built Restwell Keep has been the fortress of a hobgoblin king, the home of an infamous bandit lord, a linchpin garrison of fallen Nerath, and the lair of a dragon. Indeed, the keep has been all this and more. At present, it is a faint but steady light struggling against a growing darkness. Its intrepid folk are in constant danger from within and without.

Government: Not long ago, the Keep on the Borderlands was a freewheeling place with lax law enforcement. Lord Peridin Drysdale, paladin of Erathis, recently took command. More than a few residents, accustomed to the old regime, resent the paladin's uncompromising push toward order and morality. As a result, Drysdale's authority is weak in the outer bailey.

Defense: Mercenary guards watch the barracks, as well as the towers and gate of the outer bailey. Kendon Longstrider, a 60-year-old human veteran, is in charge.

Drysdale's soldiers patrol the keep proper and the inner bailey. The lord has mandated that capable individuals serve as militia if the need arises.

Room and Board: The gruff and greedy Nerrin Silverhand runs the seamy Travelers Inn on Fountain Square. A private room (suitable for four occupants) runs 1 gp per night; a spot in the common room costs 1 sp. Nerrin doesn't serve food or drink.

Victuals can be purchased from jolly Mother Aran of The Stumbling Giant, a fine tavern also on Fountain Square.

Temple: The local chapel (along the inner bailey wall) is open for worship of all accepted deities, but Avandra is esteemed above others. Chendera, the striking half-elf caretaker and priestess, is a devotee of the luck goddess. She spends much of her time mingling with folks in The Stumbling Giant. She counts among her friends the itinerant priest, Benwick.

Other Services: Local farmers and traveling merchants set up stands from time to time in the keep's Fountain Square. Regular establishments include a general store, a bank, a smithy, a jeweler, and a mage's guildhouse.

For those interested, more information on Restwell Keep can be found in *Dungeon* 176.

Serpent in the Fold

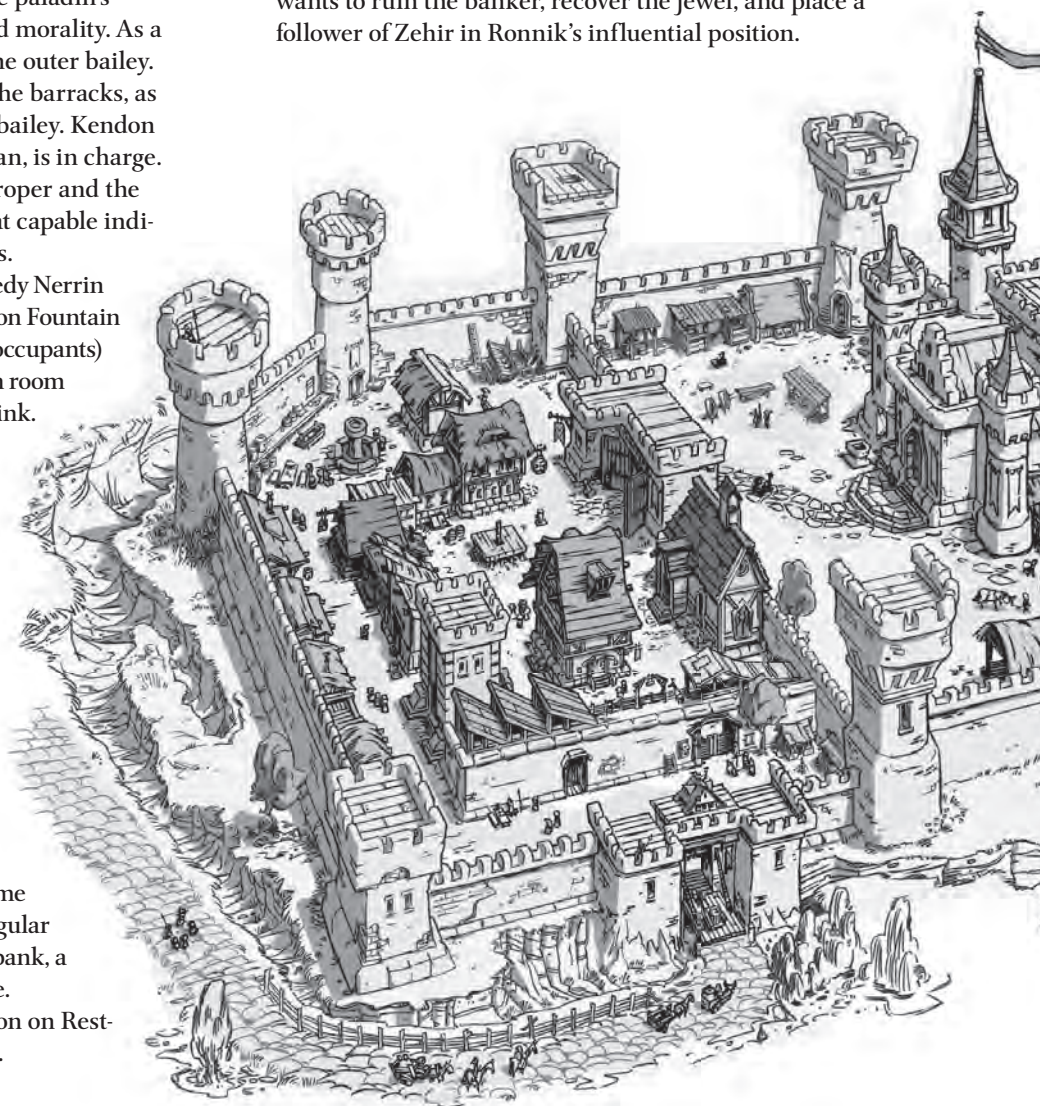
Benwick plays the part of a jolly, fat friar who worships Avandra, Ioun, and Sehanine. In truth, he and his acolytes are servants of the evil god, Zehir. Benwick has grand plans of turning the keep into a citadel for the snake god's faithful. He's courting the local lizardfolk for his plot.

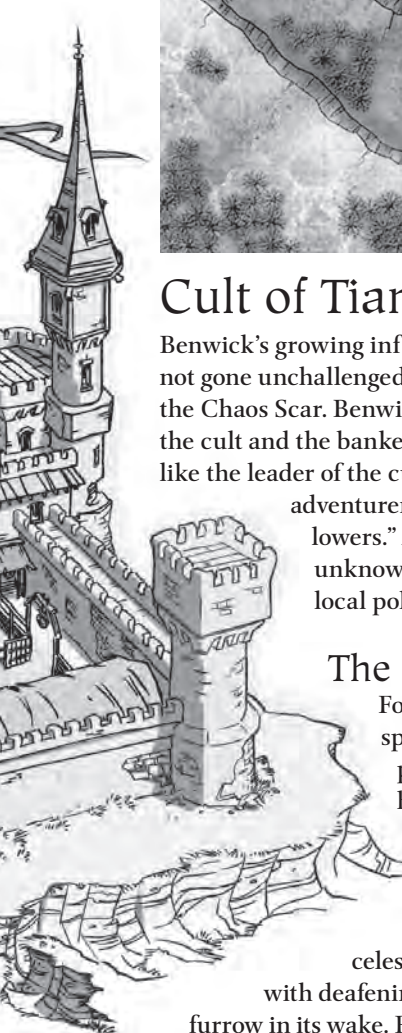
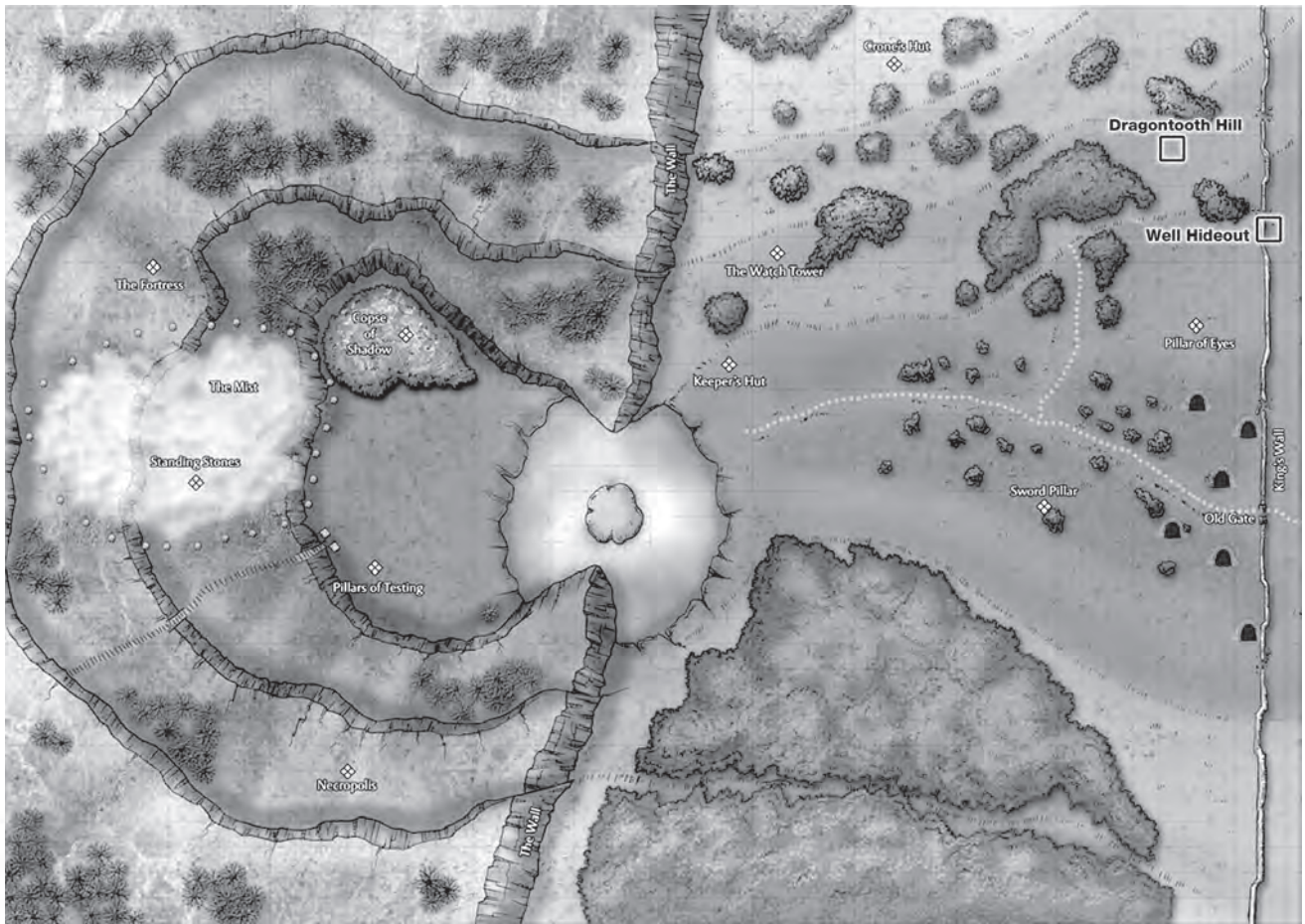
Most of the folks in the outer bailey are fond of Benwick, who is a subtle, entertaining critic of Drysdale's rule. He cheerfully feeds rumors that the paladin intends to impose Keep-wide worship of Erathis and to launch expeditions that might rile up the evil in the Chaos Scar. Benwick's allies include Kendon Longstrider and Chendera.

The Banker

A rogue-turned-banker, Ferdinand Ronnik is an athletic human with nice clothes, close-cropped dark hair, and a mustache. His latest and greatest heist involved a temple of Zehir in the town of Fallcrest, during which he scored a wondrous jewel known as the Serpent's Eye.

Ronnik is high on Benwick's hit list. The Zehirite wants to ruin the banker, recover the jewel, and place a follower of Zehir in Ronnik's influential position.





Cult of Tiamat

Benwick's growing influence with the lizardfolk has not gone unchallenged. A cult of Tiamat has arisen near the Chaos Scar. Benwick plans to rid himself of both the cult and the banker at once by making Ronnik look like the leader of the cult and setting some capable adventurers against him and his "followers." All he needs are some suckers unknown in the keep and unaware of local politics. Enter the characters.

The Chaos Scar

For eons, an evil star roamed the space between worlds, seeking a place to touch down and wreak havoc. It found this world.

As the falling star passed through the sky, milk curdled, livestock fell dead, and ill fortune flourished. The

celestial body crashed into the earth with deafening force, carving a valley-sized furrow in its wake. Red radiance lit the sky for a week. Thus, the Chaos Scar was born.

Over a mile long and several hundred feet deep, the Scar is an angry, blighted gash in the world. As the star carved its path through the earth, shards and fragments

tore away until only its heart remained, embedded in an escarpment at the far end of its new home.

Patient beyond mortal comprehension, the malevolent remains began to sow seeds of wickedness, to reach out to those of a perverse and corruptible bent. Over the centuries, creatures of evil spirit have been drawn to this beacon.

The dark sentience spurs competition among the malefactors who carve out dominions within the valley's many caves. The weakest ones settle near the mouth of the valley and the plain beyond. The strongest villains lair closer to the valley's terminus and in the fortress.

Rulers have tried to contain the threat of the Chaos Scar in the past, with little to no success. A long-forgotten king erected a wall across the valley's mouth. It still stands, partly in ruins, its gates open and unguarded.

The Chaos Scar is filled with malice, promising death to those who enter. It is riddled with caves natural and tunneled by generations of monstrous denizens. The deeper one travels into the valley, the deadlier the foes lurking in its hollows.

Many adventurers have entered the Chaos Scar seeking wealth and glory. Few have returned. Those heroes that survive its depths weave dark stories of cults, inhuman tribes, and monsters working in blasphemous concert. Other explorers tell of monstrous creatures engaging in vicious, unrelenting warfare. All agree that fatality is far more prevalent than fortune.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Keep on the Borderlands: A Season of Serpents is an adventure for the third D&D Encounters season. This adventure comes in chapters, each of which contains four sessions. Every session is one encounter in length and designed to be run once per week. The following section gives you an overview of the storyline in Chapter 1.

ROLEPLAYING

Some of the adventure's sections call for roleplaying, and all of the encounters allow for it. A portion of the information in this book exists to help you roleplay with the players. You might prepare a list of names to use if players want to talk to creatures unexpectedly. As long as all the players are having fun, and it's not going to make the session too long, play it up and enjoy. Just make sure to include everyone.

Further, allow for cinematic maneuvers and clever strategies. Try to reward bold play and clever play. Let players use their characters' skills and powers. Encourage this sort of gaming by being prepared and by using the monsters, NPCs, and scenarios with equal boldness and cleverness.

Chapter 1: Playing for Keeps

The characters recently arrived in Restwell Keep. Soon after, Benwick pegs them as capable, opportunity-seeking individuals with few ties to the area. That type is exactly what he needs to set his plan in motion to destroy Ferdinand Ronnik and secure power among the local lizardfolk.

Benwick gathers his troubleshooters, the characters, and entrusts them with dark information. He suspects Ferdinand Ronnik is a member of a burgeoning cult of Tiamat. Worse, Ronnik has imprisoned one of Benwick's spies. The false friar wants the adventurers' help, since Ronnik doesn't know them and won't immediately know whom they work for. Benwick, of course, cannot reveal his involvement. It's too risky.

In this first chapter, the characters follow Benwick's lead and rescue his friend. They quickly find out more about the darkness in the banker's heart from Benwick and through their own investigation. "Ronnik's thugs" attack them and the race to catch Ronnik is on.

Session 1: Rescue Mission

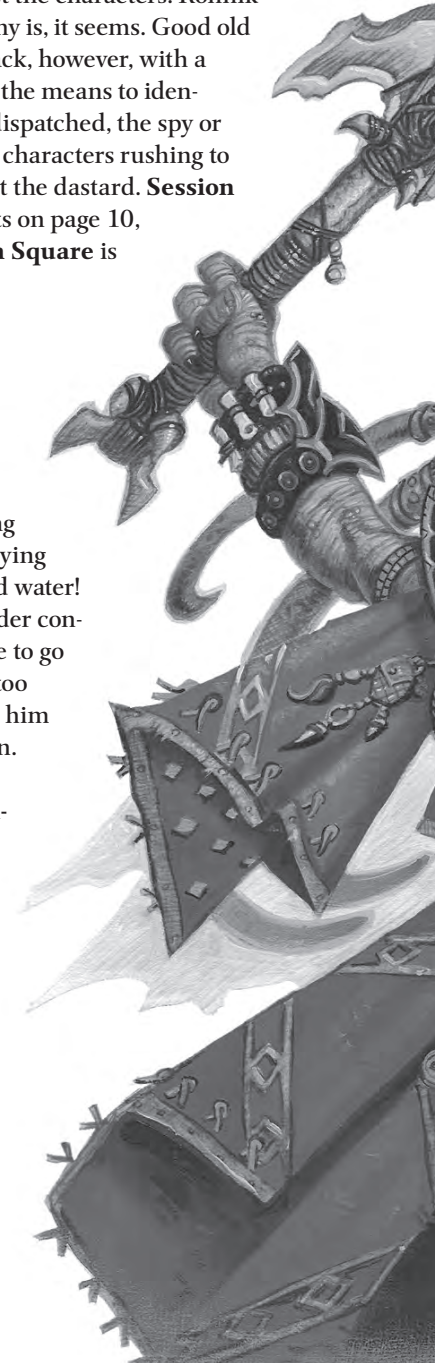
With a short introduction and a roll of initiative, a battle to rescue Benwick's mole unfolds. The rescuers have a pitched battle with kidnapper followers of Tiamat, possibly leading to the surrender of a dragonborn mercenary. But the liberators can't rest long, because the enemy has poisoned Benwick's infiltrator, and he must be returned to Restwell Keep quickly. **Session 1: Rescue Mission** starts on page 8, and **Encounter 1-1: Prison Grotto** is found on page 12.

Session 2: Jumped in the Bailey

Back at Restwell Keep, Benwick takes his friend to heal. While later wrapping up events with Benwick and learning more about the friar's spies among Ronnik's ruffians, the troubleshooters might spy an eavesdropper. Regardless, the keep's fountain square is the location for Ronnik's thugs' ambush against the characters. Ronnik has figured out whom his enemy is, it seems. Good old Benwick still has the party's back, however, with a plant among the attackers and the means to identify her. With Ronnik's goons dispatched, the spy or suspicious lights then send the characters rushing to Ronnik's apartment to confront the dastard. **Session 2: Jumped in the Bailey** starts on page 10, and **Encounter 1-2: Fountain Square** is found on page 14.

Session 3: Rush to Ronnik's

Bursting through the door into Ronnik's bank and apartment, the characters receive a warm welcome from rampaging elementals. The scoundrel is trying to cover his tracks with fire and water! After bringing the problem under control, the characters learn where to go next. It looks like Ronnik isn't too far ahead, and maybe catching him before bedtime is within reason. **Session 3: Rush to Ronnik's** starts on page 10, and **Encounter 1-3: Pressure Cooker** is found on page 16.



Session 4: King's Wall Hideout

It turns out that evildoers sometimes fool would-be heroes, and Benwick's troubleshooters have stumbled into a trap.

Although the party's information indicates Ronnik has a hide hole in part of the King's Wall, the followers of Tiamat know to murder anyone who snoops around there.

Session 4: King's Wall Hideout starts on page 11, and **Encounter 1-4: Well Watch** is found on page 18.

Resting

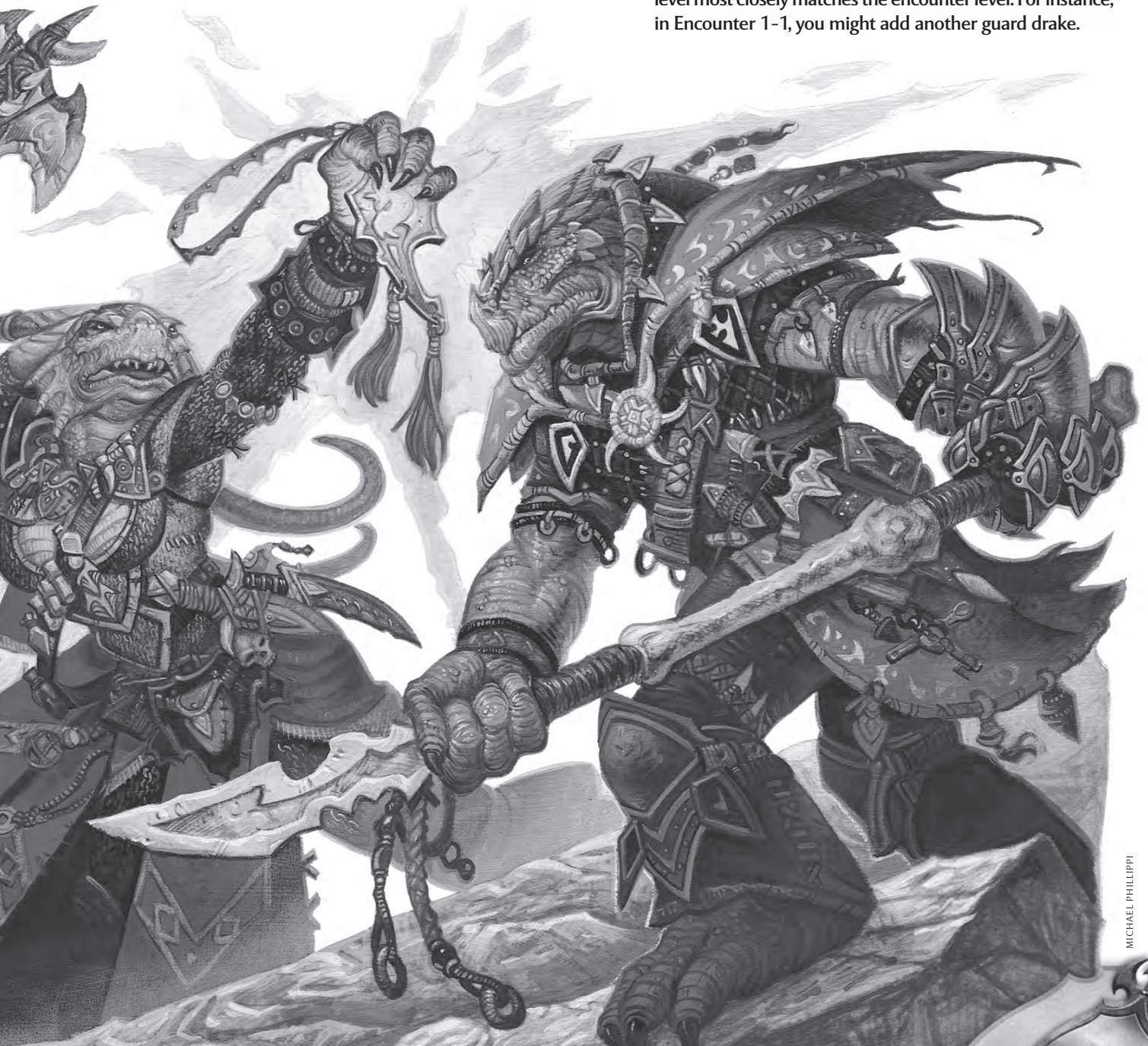
The adventurers could afford only short rests between encounters (and sessions) until this point. After session 4, the characters can rest at the King's Wall before heading toward Ronnik's real lair at Dragontooth Hill. They know that Ronnik has nowhere else to go, so they can take a few hours to rest before continuing their adventure.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTERS

Chapter 1 assumes you have a normal party of five 1st-level characters and players familiar with the D&D game at your table. Compare the party at your table to this assumption, using the following guidelines.

Weak Party: You have a weak party at your table if it consists of only four characters, or if most or all the players are new to the D&D game. If you have a weak party, remove one of the lowest level or least important non-minion monsters from the encounter. For instance, in Encounter 1-1 (level 1 encounter), you might subtract the guard drake.

Strong Party: You have a strong party at your table if it consists of six characters, or if most or all the players are veteran 4th-Edition D&D players who want an extra challenge. If you have a strong party, add one of the simplest non-minion monsters among those in the encounter whose level most closely matches the encounter level. For instance, in Encounter 1-1, you might add another guard drake.



This chapter is the first of five chapters for this D&D Encounters season. The subsequent adventures will be available separately as the season progresses. Check with your organizer upon completion of this adventure to receive the next one.

Chapter 1: Playing for Keeps

The encounters of this chapter start with the characters taking action on Benwick's behalf. Events quickly lead the adventurers into the Chaos Scar.

Session 1: Rescue Mission

When everyone is ready, set up the action.

After traveling with a trade caravan for a time—common work for beginning adventurers—you arrive at Restwell Keep. You've heard that fortune and glory await those bold enough to brave the dangers of the nearby Chaos Scar, a valley carved ages ago by a fallen star. The same tales warn that this Chaos Scar draws wickedness to it. Perhaps you can help stem this tide . . . and gain some treasure as you do so.

A thin, bald human friar named Venn approached you shortly after your arrival at the Keep. He said his teacher, another holy man named Benwick, craved the pleasure of your company to discuss important matters. A free meal was to be your reward for merely accepting the invitation.

Thus, this evening, you are visiting a comfortable apartment on the west side of the keep's inner bailey. At the table is your host, the well-proportioned Benwick, along with fellow adventurers both familiar and newly met. Venn and another priestly man, Jarell, serve victuals to you and Benwick.

Give the players time to introduce themselves and their characters. They can roleplay dinner with Benwick or get straight to the point, as they like.

Roleplaying the Scene

Benwick is jolly and bright-eyed, given to smiling and laughing. His acolytes grin and interact briefly with the characters when addressed, but they are not nearly as outgoing as their mentor. In securing the heroes' aid, Benwick is happy to impart a number of facts:

- ◆ Benwick and his followers belong to an order that holds Avandra, Ioun, and Sehanine in high regard.
- ◆ The priest is a nonmagical healer and herbalist (Heal +14).
- ◆ Although Benwick is certain that Lord Drysdale, the keep's lord and a staunch adherent of Erathis, has the best intentions, the friar has grave concerns. The lord

seems intent on imposing devotion to Erathis, on militarizing the keep, and on launching an ill-prepared attack that will serve only to rile up the monsters of the Chaos Scar.

- ◆ Benwick is dedicated to humbly offering aid and guidance to the people of the keep. He is most concerned with preventing insidious Chaos Scar influences from infiltrating Restwell Keep.
- ◆ The friar admits to having widespread influence in the outer bailey—influence that is sure to benefit those who help him. He considers most people in the outer bailey friends or allies, especially the priestess Chendera of the chapel.

The Tasks

When prompted or when he feels the time is right, Benwick turns solemn and begins discussing the mission. He says,

"Friends, here on the borderlands, we must be ever mindful of dark influences creeping in the night. In doing so, I have become suspicious of the banker, Ferdinand Ronnik. His wealth and greed are well known. Also, he has never publically denied that he was once a successful thief in the city of Fallcrest. To learn more, I asked a trusted friend—a man named Gordi who worked for Ronnik—to inform me of anything unusual.

"I say 'worked,' because Gordi is now missing. Before his disappearance, Gordi provided me with two grave reports. First, he glimpsed accoutrements of Tiamat worship hidden among Ronnik's belongings. Second, Gordi recognized a jewel in Ronnik's possession known as the Serpent's Eye. As you might know, that item was treasured by Moonsong Temple in Fallcrest before disciples of Zehir pilfered it.

"Ronnik and his lackeys didn't try to hide the fact that they spirited Gordi to a grotto near the northern swamps. I believe Ronnik hopes to flush out me and Gordi's other allies when we attempt a rescue.

"I truly believe that you all are a blessing sent to me. No one in this keep yet knows you. I realize that I'm about to ask much of you, but you can act boldly where I cannot.

"First, I want you to go to Ronnik's prison grotto and rescue Gordi. Also, I hope that you are able to secure proof that Ronnik is an unholy follower of Tiamat. If all else fails, at least try to recover the Serpent's Eye so we can return it to Avandra's chapel.

"If you're willing, I suggest an early start after a full night's rest. Although I hope that I've impressed on you my sincere purpose, I would take no offense if you wish to confirm my reputation among the folks of the outer bailey. Still, I ask that you be discrete about your task. No need to provide the scoundrels more warning than we must.

"So, what say you?"

Any character who makes an Insight check gathers that Benwick is genuine in his desire to recover Gordi and the Serpent's Eye, as well as to stop Ronnik. A character that succeeds on a DC 19 Insight check also gathers that he is hiding something. If pressed, Benwick confesses that he has a small personal interest in seeing the Serpent's Eye returned to its rightful owners.

Benwick wants the characters to leave early the next morning and return directly to him when they finish the task. He describes Ronnik (see "The Banker," page 4) and offers one *herbal poultice* (see below) per hero, as well as a map of the keep's region with the prison grotto marked on it. Finally, he offers his skills and influence at the Keep in aiding the characters. To any request for pay, he responds with a wink, a smile, and the promise, "Ronnik's lackeys are likely to be funded well, considering their boss's line of work."

Quests: The adventurers have three minor quests (20 XP each) at this point. The first is to rescue Gordi and return him to Benwick. The second involves proving Ronnik's link to Tiamat. Finally, the characters should keep an eye out for the Serpent's Eye. Returning it can provide a large reputation boost.

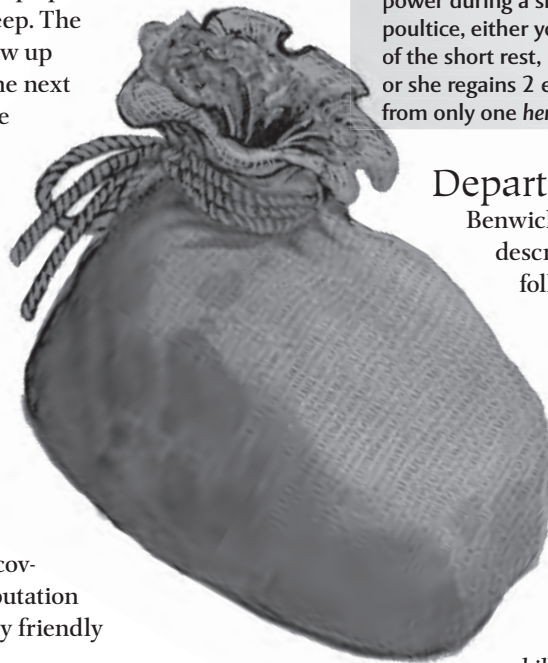
Preparation

The characters have no time to outfit themselves further before the mission. No shop opens until after the party leaves the keep. The adventurers do have time to follow up on Benwick's assertions before the next morning. If you have access to the *Dungeon* 176 article entitled "Keep on the Chaos Scar," and are comfortable with an evolving series of improvised encounters, you can roleplay the night's activities based on the information given below. Alternatively, you can announce the skills below and allow each hero to make a skill check or aid in one.

Diplomacy DC 12: Schmoozing at The Stumbling Giant (page 4), the character discovers that Benwick has a stellar reputation in the outer bailey. He's especially friendly with the priestess at the chapel.

DC 15: Mother Aran, the alehouse's owner, considers Benwick's suspicions of Lord Drysdale understandable, but misguided. The lord is clearly an ardent follower of Erathis, but Mother Aran doesn't believe he's going to enforce Erathis worship or a military takeover of the keep.

Heal or Nature DC 12: The *herbal poultices* are genuine articles and attest to Benwick's skill in herbalism.



History DC 12: The Serpent's Eye was once stored in the Moonson Temple of Fallcrest.

DC 15: The jewel was stolen from the temple long ago. Because several of the priests guarding it were poisoned, rumor has it that disciples of Zehir were responsible.

DC 19: The Serpent's Eye was seen in Fallcrest a few years ago in the hands of a thief who claimed to have "recovered" it from a hidden temple.

Religion DC 12: If Ronnik is a worshiper of Tiamat, deity of greed, he has something in common with numerous types of evil draconic and reptilian creatures, such as kobolds, lizardfolk, and some dragonborn.

Streetwise DC 8: Ferdinand Ronnik has a reputation for exorbitant loan rates. He's often seen at The Stumbling Giant, but he's been in and out of the keep a lot recently.

DC 12: The banker makes no effort to quiet rumors that he was a thief in Fallcrest. If the character asks, Gordi did work for Ronnik, and he hasn't been seen for a short while.

Herbal Poultice

Level 3 (Common)

This pungent bundle of specially prepared medicinal herbs aids the body's natural recuperative ability.

Alchemical Item 30 gp

Power (Consumable ♦ Healing): Standard Action. Use this power during a short rest. Choose a target for the herbal poultice, either you or an ally adjacent to you. At the end of the short rest, if the target spends a healing surge, he or she regains 2 extra hit points. The target can benefit from only one *herbal poultice* at a time.

Departure

Benwick's map makes travel easy. Quickly describe it to the players and then read the following text.

You depart early under a gloomy sky and travel northwest from the keep. The ridges of the Chaos Scar loom in the distant west as you pass over a rolling, sparsely wooded plain and enter marshy woodlands punctuated with stony outcroppings. In the late morning, you come to the bog surrounding the hill that contains the prison grotto.

Wisps of smoke curl from a cave on the hill's south side.

While players decide how to approach the grotto, set out the map and proceed to **Encounter 1-1: Prison Grotto** (page 12).

Session 2: Jumped in the Bailey

At the start of the session, read the following text.

As you head back toward Restwell Keep, the afternoon grows late. The rain falls in heavy sheets, soaking you and Gordi. Over the course of the trip, Gordi becomes sicker, babbling incoherently between his heaving coughs.

He needs treatment he can't receive on the road. A character trained in Heal that succeeds on a DC 15 Heal check can help him move easier, though it does not cure him.

Gordi is coherent enough to suggest that he be cloaked before entering the keep to avoid arousing undue suspicion. Otherwise, the heroes notice quizzical looks from the gate guards and other citizens as they arrive under thunderous skies with an obviously sick man.

Returning to Benwick

Benwick is happy to have Gordi back and takes some time to treat him in his residence in Fountain Square. (The characters gain 20 XP for completing the minor quest of rescuing Gordi.) A hero trained in Heal is welcome to assist Benwick. The treatment goes well, but Gordi remains too ill to divulge any information. Benwick offers to pay for an early dinner at The Stumbling Giant. (Ronnik's bank is closed for the day, in case it matters.) After the party is seated, read:

In the boisterous atmosphere of the tavern, Benwick joins you, bringing ale with him.

"You were truly sent from on high, friends. Gordi is recovering as we speak. Tomorrow, once this beastly weather passes, we can decide how to move against Ronnik. Enjoy tonight. I've paid for your rooms in the Travelers Inn next door. Rest well."

His voice drops to a whisper.

"I have secured the aid of a spy among Ronnik's guards. Her name is Sal. She's a human with blond hair and gray eyes. She'll help us in what's to come."

Benwick then stands up to leave.

Eavesdropper

While speaking with Benwick, the adventurers might notice a suspicious halfling near the alehouse's front door (DC 19 passive Insight). The halfling has long, braided hair and nice leather armor. He seems interested in the adventurers' meeting. If anyone makes a move toward him, he leaves with haste. Those who follow this halfling run into **Encounter 1-2: Fountain Square** (page 14). However, the characters' suspicions are aroused and they cannot be surprised.

Fountain Square Ambush

If none of the characters notice the halfling, they can stay in the tavern for a while. When they leave The Stumbling Giant, they enter the ambush unprepared and might be surprised. See **Encounter 1-2: Fountain Square** (page 14).

Session 3: Rush to Ronnik's

At the start of the session, read the following text.

The rain has slackened only slightly and the early evening remains gray. Smoke rises from Ronnik's bank on the other side of the plaza. Flickering flames are visible through gaps in the shutters, and you can hear sinister, crackling laughter. Sal looks at the party anxiously and says, "Ronnik must have seen that his ambush failed and is trying to destroy evidence of his treachery. We must hurry!"

Reveal the encounter map and allow the players to place their miniatures in the starting area. Time is of the essence, so have the players roll initiative.

Breaking In

The adventurers will quickly discover that the bank's windows are barred and its doors are locked. To gain entry, characters can take the following standard actions.

Bending Bars (Athletics DC 19): The windows are above the bench and planter on the map. Success removes the bars on one window. Once the bars are gone, a move action opens the window.

Breaking the Door (Athletics DC 15): Success bursts the door open.

Detect Magic (Arcana DC 12): Something magical is going on within the bank. If the character succeeds by 5 or more, he or she detects elemental influences.

Open Locks (Thievery DC 19): Success opens the door.

When the characters open the way, go to **Encounter 1-3: Pressure Cooker** (page 16).



Session 4: King's Wall Hideout

At the start of the session, read the following text.

After the flames subsided, you recovered a map of the nearby area. Most of the map's labels appear to indicate locations around the Chaos Scar. You take interest in one part near the King's Wall that is labeled "Well Hideout." If that location is indeed Ronnik's hideout, you might be able to catch him if you hurry.

The players hopefully want to chase Ronnik. If they don't, Sal or Benwick can show up to encourage the adventurers to catch the banker before he reaches "his followers." Given the state of Ronnik's safe, the banker is likely to have taken the Serpent's Eye with him.

Approaching the Wall

After the players leave Restwell Keep, read the following text.

The rain intensifies during your dark trip to the King's Wall. After a short search, you find a section of the wall that has an old well house in it, as depicted on your map.

Darkness has fallen by the time the adventurers reach Ronnik's false hideout in the King's Wall. Despite the darkness, it is easy to find the hideout using the map. Reveal the encounter map and allow the players to place their miniatures in the starting area. Go to **Encounter 1-4: Well Watch** (page 18).

Resting

If the characters survive their ordeal at the King's Wall, the hideout is a fine place to camp before heading toward Dragontooth Hill. The adventurers could afford only short rests between encounters (and sessions) up until this point. Now they're sure where Ronnik is, and they know he has nowhere else to go. Exhausted after a day's work, the heroes can take a well-earned extended rest, concluding Chapter 1.



ENCOUNTER 1-1: PRISON GROTTO

Encounter Level 1 (552 XP)

Setup

Kesk, dragonborn mercenary (D)

Guard drake (G)

Greenscale trapper (T)

4 poisonscale needlers (N)

A character can approach unobserved and learn the location of the trapper, dragonborn, and drake with a successful DC 19 Stealth check. Otherwise, the guard drake is alerted and hisses, warning its handlers.

When the party enters the area, read:

Redolent with the smell of swamp and the smoke of two small fires, the grotto is a well-lit cave featuring a couple pools. Near the fire to the left of the entrance is a pile of furs and a hole in the floor. A reptilian humanoid with yellow-green scales and a net and spear rests there. A dragonborn in heavy leather tends the other campfire to the right of the entrance, with a green drake at his side. The firelight doesn't reach the rear of the grotto.

The needlers are initially on the ledge in total concealment. A character that succeeds on a DC 15 Perception check or has a passive Perception of 15 or higher ignores the concealment. Kesk, the dragonborn mercenary, and his drake, as well as the greenscale trapper do not welcome intruders.

Roleplaying

Kesk, the dragonborn mercenary, might speak with the characters if approached correctly. He's aggressive and challenges them as to why they're here. If he can, he speaks in Draconic so the lizardfolk can understand. Regardless of the discussion, the prisoner won't be released without a fight.

Tactics

As combat opens, Kesk uses overwhelming strike quickly, hoping to give the trapper combat advantage as it throws its net over clustered adventurers. When it can, the trapper drags enemies into the prison pit. The needlers fire from the dark ledge into the lighted area, remaining there even if attacked.

The lizardfolk fear Tiamat's wrath and will not flee. The dragonborn surrenders if the situation appears hopeless.

Features of the Area

Illumination: The campfires brightly light the grotto to the northern ledge. The upper area on the ledge is dark.

Campfire: A creature that enters a square of campfire or ends its turn there takes 1d6 fire damage.

Fur Pile: Loosely stacked to form bedding, these cured hides are difficult terrain.

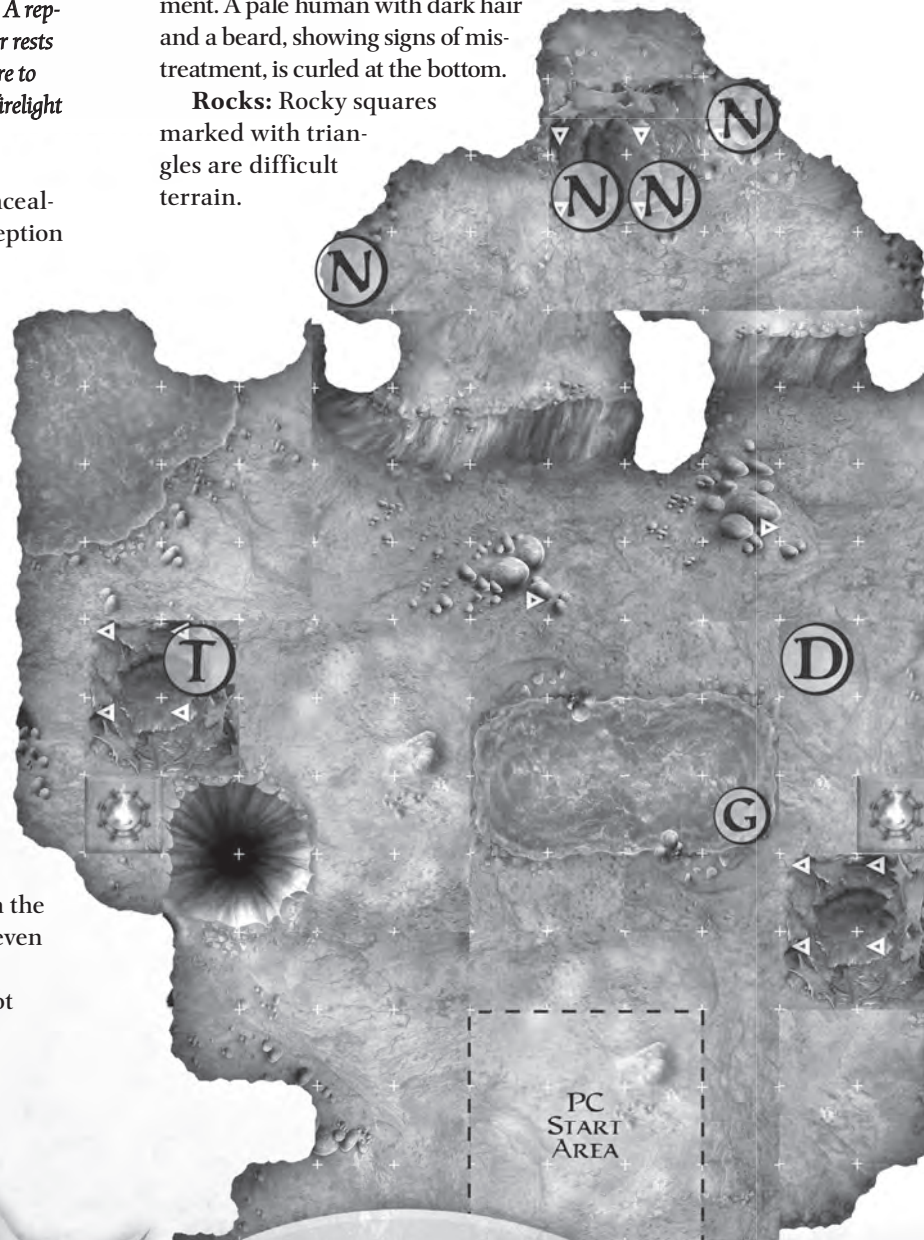
Goods: The containers for food, ale, and other supplies are difficult terrain.

Ledges: These rises are 15 feet high. Climbing up or down requires a DC 12 Athletics check and 5 squares of movement.

Pools: The pools are shallow and are difficult terrain. The water is fresh and cool.

Prison Pit: This hole is 10 feet deep. Climbing in or out requires a DC 12 Athletics check and 3 squares of movement. A pale human with dark hair and a beard, showing signs of mistreatment, is curled at the bottom.

Rocks: Rocky squares marked with triangles are difficult terrain.



Conclusion

If captured, Kesik bargains for his life honorably. The only way he'll reveal anything is if the adventurers promise him release or he is threatened (DC 19 Intimidate check). He reveals a human named Ronnik hired him to kidnap Gordi, and he describes Ronnik accurately (In reality, the person Kesik met was the dopelganger Sal, disguised as Ronnik; see Session 2). If the characters decide to execute Kesik, the dragonborn asks for a duel to the death.

Prisoner: Gordi is ill (DC 12 Heal check reveals he's poisoned by a slow-acting agent). He claims Benwick can restore him to health if he returns to the keep quickly (see **Session 2: Jumped in the Bailey**, page 10).

Treasure: Kesik has a silver necklace with a pendant bearing the symbol of Tiamat (50 gp) and 30 gp. The supplies contain a *potion of healing* (see the *Heroes of the Fallen Lands™* supplement).

Kesik, Dragonborn Mercenary (D) Level 2 Skirmisher	
Medium natural humanoid XP 125	
HP 38; Bloodied 19	Initiative +6
AC 16, Fortitude 13, Reflex 14, Will 14	Perception +2
Speed 6	
TRAITS	
Skirmish	
If the dragonborn ends a move on its turn at least 4 squares from where it started the move, it deals 1d6 extra damage with melee attacks until the start of its next turn.	
STANDARD ACTIONS	
⊕ Battleaxe (weapon) ♦ At-Will	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC, or +8 vs. AC while the dragonborn is bloodied.	
Hit: 1d10 + 4 damage, and the dragonborn shifts up to 2 squares.	
⊕ Overwhelming Strike (weapon) ♦ Encounter	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC	
Hit: 2d10 + 4 damage, and the target grants combat advantage (save ends).	
Miss: Half damage.	
MINOR ACTIONS	
⚡ Dragon Breath (lightning) ♦ Encounter	
Attack: Close blast 3 (creatures in the blast); +5 vs. Reflex	
Hit: 1d6 + 2 lightning damage.	
TRIGGERED ACTIONS	
⚔ Tactical Withdrawal ♦ Encounter	
Trigger: The dragonborn is bloodied.	
Effect (Immediate Reaction): The dragonborn shifts up to 3 squares.	
Str 18 (+5)	Dex 16 (+4) Wis 13 (+2)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 8 (+0) Cha 10 (+1)
Alignment unaligned Languages Common, Draconic	
Equipment hide armor, battleaxe	

Guard Drake (G) Level 2 Brute	
Small natural beast (reptile) XP 125	
HP 48; Bloodied 24	Initiative +3
AC 15, Fortitude 15, Reflex 13, Will 12	Perception +7
Speed 6	
STANDARD ACTIONS	
⊕ Bite ♦ At-Will	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d10 + 3 damage, or 1d10 + 9 while the drake is within 2 squares of an ally.	
Str 16 (+4)	Dex 15 (+3) Wis 12 (+2)
Con 18 (+5)	Int 3 (-3) Cha 12 (+2)
Alignment unaligned Languages –	

Greenscale Trapper (T) Level 3 Controller	
Medium natural humanoid (reptile), lizardfolk XP 150	
HP 46; Bloodied 23	Initiative +5
AC 17, Fortitude 14, Reflex 16, Will 14	Perception +3
Speed 6 (swamp walk)	
STANDARD ACTIONS	
⊕ Spear (weapon) ♦ At-Will	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d8 + 6 damage.	
⚡ Net Toss (weapon) ♦ At-Will	
Requirement: The trapper must be wielding a net.	
Attack: Close blast 2 (enemies in the blast); +6 vs. Reflex	
Hit: 1d4 + 3 damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).	
Miss: The trapper can slide the target 1 square to a square not in the blast.	
MOVE ACTIONS	
⚡ Net Drag ♦ At-Will	
Effect: The trapper moves up to its speed, pulling creatures immobilized by its net an equal number of squares. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks from creatures immobilized by the trapper's net.	
MINOR ACTIONS	
⊕ Feral Kick ♦ At-Will	
Requirement: The trapper must be bloodied.	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. Reflex	
Hit: The trapper can slide the target 1 square.	
Skills Athletics +7, Stealth +10	
Str 13 (+2)	Dex 18 (+5) Wis 14 (+3)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 8 (+0) Cha 8 (+0)
Alignment unaligned Languages Draconic	
Equipment 3 nets, spear	

4 Poisonscale Needlers (N) Level 3 Minion Artillery	
Medium natural humanoid (reptile), lizardfolk XP 38 each	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	Initiative +5
AC 17, Fortitude 13, Reflex 16, Will 14	Perception +3
Speed 6 (swamp walk)	
TRAITS	
Sniper	
A hidden needler that misses with a ranged attack remains hidden.	
STANDARD ACTIONS	
⊕ Claw (weapon) ♦ At-Will	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC	
Hit: 5 damage.	
⚡ Blowgun (poison, weapon) ♦ At-Will	
Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +10 vs. AC	
Hit: 5 poison damage. On a critical hit, the target also falls unconscious (save ends).	
Str 12 (+2)	Dex 18 (+5) Wis 15 (+3)
Con 11 (+1)	Int 7 (-1) Cha 9 (+0)
Alignment unaligned Languages Draconic	
Equipment blowgun, 10 poisoned blowgun needles	

ENCOUNTER 1–2: FOUNTAIN SQUARE

Encounter Level 2 (655 XP)

Setup

Halfling thief (H)
3 common bandits (B)
5 human goons (G)

The characters start in the indicated area, in the middle of the plaza.

If the characters pursued the halfling, read:
The halfling runs through the rain and down the wet street toward the keep's fountain. At the last possible moment, he veers off to the side, leaving you exposed as several rough-looking individuals come out of the shadows.

"They're onto us," cries the halfling. "Get 'em!"

If the characters arrive unaware, read:
Heading through the rain to your inn, you hear a whistle as you enter the keep's Fountain Square. In the dying light of the day, you see the flash of steel as a few rough-looking individuals emerge from the shadows in the empty plaza.

A character is surprised unless he or she has a passive Perception of 12 or higher.

Tactics

If the characters are surprised, the bandits throw daggers. They and the goons try to force enemies to close in the open plaza. Otherwise, each thug fights as best it can, according to its powers.

Sal surrenders as soon as the characters are clearly gaining the upper hand. Choose an exciting moment. The other thugs try to flee.

Features of the Area

Illumination: Evening approaches but the area is still brightly light.

Benches/Planter: Squares containing these obstacles are difficult terrain.

Fountain: A creature pushes, pulled, or slid into a fountain square must succeed on a saving throw or else fall prone in the fountain. Otherwise, the fountain is difficult terrain.

Sal

During the fight, Sal remains hidden in the shadows, watching from under the eaves of one of the buildings. A character that has a passive Perception of 19 or higher notices her and can recognize her from Benwick's description. She doesn't assist in battle, instead following her instructions from Benwick to keep an eye on Ronnik's bank.

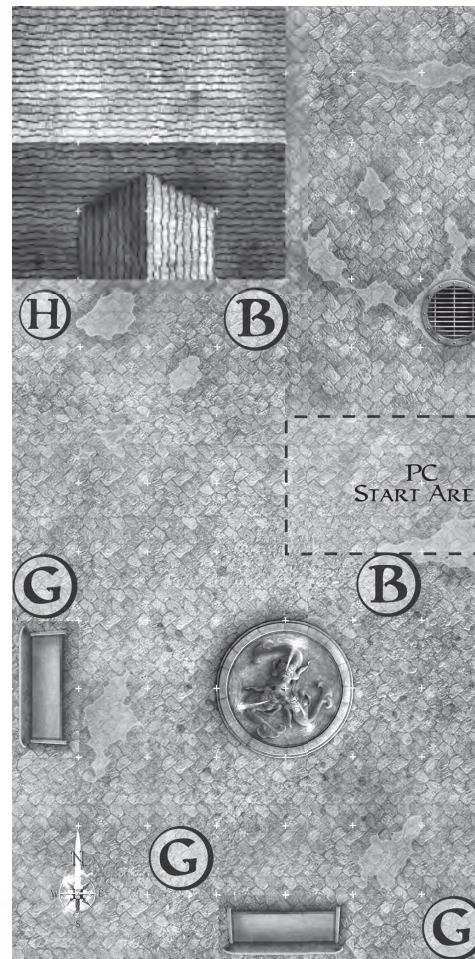
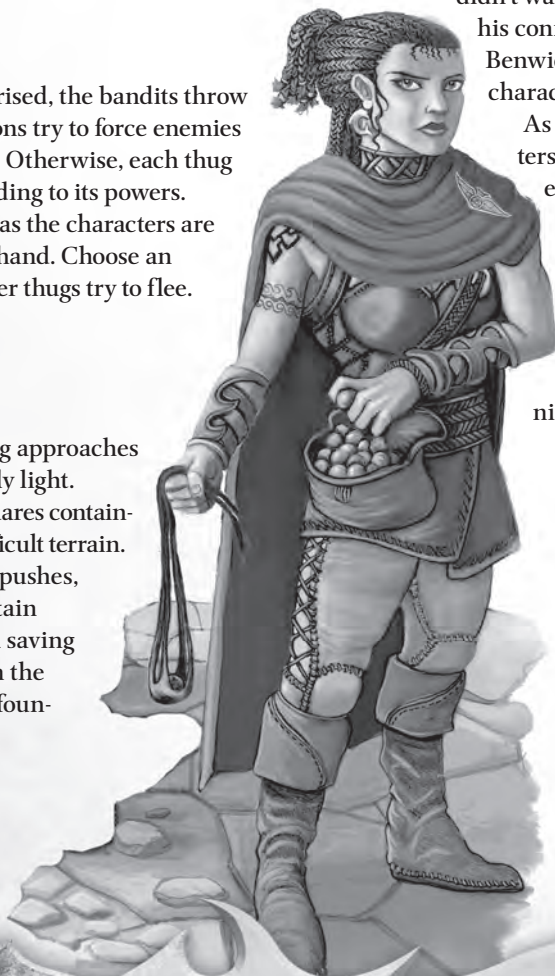
Conclusion

The thugs and the halfling believe that Ronnik ordered them to eliminate the party, but in fact it was Sal acting under Ronnik's guise.

When the fight concludes, Sal approaches the party. It's not obvious that Sal is a doppelganger. She says she saw Ronnik enter the bank several hours ago and hasn't seen him leave. She suggests the party wait and search his place when it gets dark.

If the party questions why Sal did not join them in the fight or warn them of the ambush, he answers that he couldn't risk blowing his cover. He is well known in The Stumbling Giant, and he didn't want to reveal his connection to Benwick and the characters.

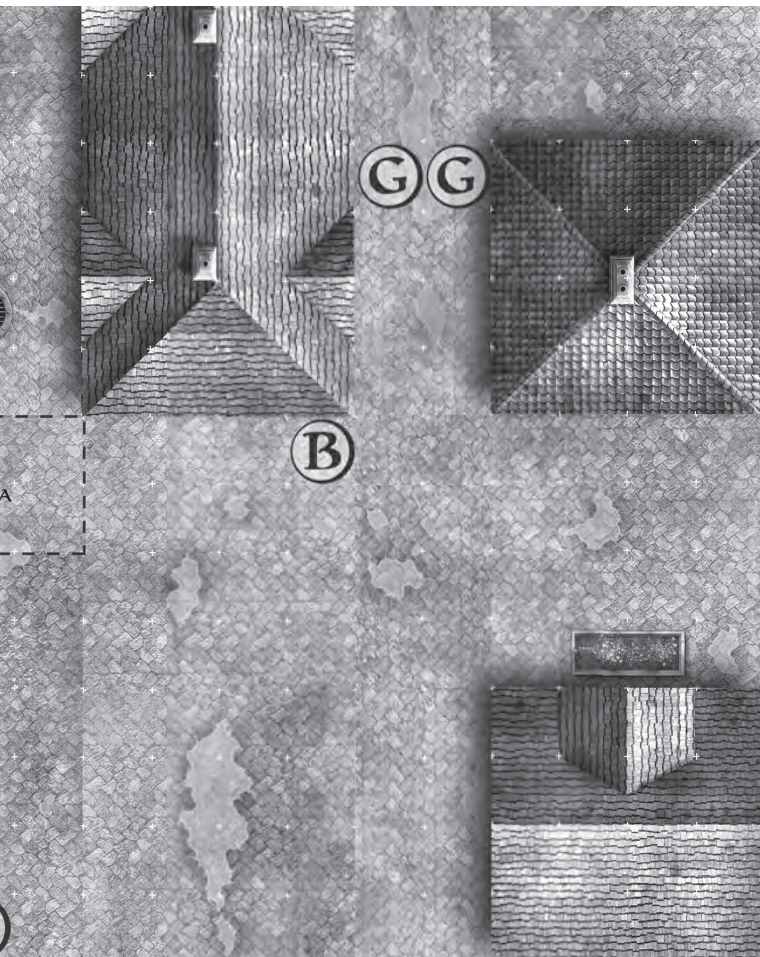
As the characters' short rest ends, smoke starts to come out of a shuttered window of Ronnik's bank.



Halfling Thief (H)		Level 2 Skirmisher	
Small natural humanoid		XP 125	
HP 34; Bloodied 17		Initiative +6	
AC 16, Fortitude 13, Reflex 16, Will 14		Perception +1	
Speed 6			
TRAITS			
Nimble Reaction			
The halfling gains a +2 bonus to AC against opportunity attacks.			
STANDARD ACTIONS			
⚔ Dagger (weapon) ♦ At-Will			
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC			
Hit: 2d4 + 5 damage, plus 1d6 if the halfling has combat advantage against the target.			
Effect: The halfling can shift 1 square.			
⚔ Throwing Dagger (weapon) ♦ At-Will			
Attack: Ranged 5 (one creature); +7 vs. AC			
Hit: 2d4 + 5 damage, plus 1d6 if the halfling has combat advantage against the target.			
⚔ Mobile Melee Attack ♦ At-Will			
Effect: The halfling moves up to 4 squares, using <i>dagger</i> at any point during the move. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks from the target of the attack.			
Skills Acrobatics +9, Stealth +9, Thievery +9			
Str 12 (+2)	Dex 16 (+4)	Wis 11 (+1)	
Con 10 (+1)	Int 10 (+1)	Cha 14 (+3)	
Alignment unaligned		Languages Common	
Equipment leather armor, 6 daggers			

3 Common Bandits (B)		Level 2 Skirmisher	
Medium natural humanoid, human		XP 125 each	
HP 37; Bloodied 18		Initiative +6	
AC 16, Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 12		Perception +1	
Speed 6			
TRAITS			
Combat Advantage			
The bandit deals 1d6 extra damage against any creature granting combat advantage to it.			
STANDARD ACTIONS			
⚔ Mace (weapon) ♦ At-Will			
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC			
Hit: 1d8 + 5 damage, and the bandit can shift 1 square.			
⚔ Dagger (weapon) ♦ At-Will			
Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +7 vs. AC			
Hit: 1d4 + 5 damage, and the bandit can shift 1 square.			
⚔ Dazing Strike (weapon) ♦ Recharge when the attack misses			
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC			
Hit: 1d8 + 5 damage, and the target is dazed until the end of the bandit's next turn.			
Effect: The bandit can shift 1 square.			
Skills Stealth +9, Streetwise +7, Thievery +9			
Str 12 (+2)	Dex 17 (+4)	Wis 11 (+1)	
Con 13 (+2)	Int 10 (+1)	Cha 12 (+2)	
Alignment unaligned		Languages Common	
Equipment leather armor, mace, 4 daggers			

5 Human Goons (G)		Level 2 Minion Soldier	
Medium natural humanoid, human		XP 31 each	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.		Initiative +3	
AC 15, Fortitude 13, Reflex 11, Will 11		Perception +2	
Speed 6			
TRAITS			
Mob Rule			
While at least two other human goons are within 5 squares of the goon, it gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses.			
STANDARD ACTIONS			
⚔ Club (weapon) ♦ At-Will			
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC			
Hit: 5 damage.			
Str 14 (+3)	Dex 11 (+1)	Wis 12 (+2)	
Con 12 (+2)	Int 9 (+0)	Cha 13 (+2)	
Alignment unaligned		Languages Common	
Equipment club			



ENCOUNTER 1–3: PRESSURE COOKER

Encounter Level 1 (600 XP)

Setup

Lesser water elemental (W)

4 lesser fire elementals (F)

You also need hazard tokens or some other easy, flat way to mark squares that are on fire.

When the party enters, read:

Ronnik's bank looks to be part comfortable home, part business. It's furnished in a manner suitable for a successful merchant—a business counter divides the central hall. All very mundane ... if it weren't for the fiery humanoids capering through the place, and the watery humanoid, gurgling with mirth

Behind the counter, a circle of arcane sigils glows blue, pulsing in time with the elementals, who seem fueled by its power. Two other objects, a brazier and a basin, also pulse in time with the circle.

Skill Challenge: Putting Out Fires

The goal in this skill challenge is to shut down the magical system fueling the flames. Arcane skill can be used to draw power out of the network. Also, knocking over the brazier or the basin disturbs the system. Finally, the sigil can be deftly marred to help quench the flames.

If the players are unfamiliar with skill challenges, you can explain how they can use their skills or you can provide descriptions that suggest how they can tamper with the various components of the magical system.

Level: 1 (XP 100).

Complexity: 1 (requires 4 successes before 3 failures).

Primary Skills: Arcana, Athletics, Thievery.

Arcana (DC 12, standard action): The character draws magic out of the system, diminishing it and gaining a success.

Thievery (DC 12, standard action): A hero adjacent to the sigil circle mars the signs, weakening the magical system.

Athletics (DC 12, standard action): An adventurer adjacent to the water basin or the brazier can make one of the following attacks when he or she achieves a success. The attack is based on the item the character successfully knocks over. Each of the items can be used to achieve only one success.

Water Basin

Single-Use Terrain

Frigid water washes out, chilling all it touches.

Target: Each creature in a close blast 3, treating the basin's square as the blast's origin

Attack: +4 vs. Fortitude

Hit: 1d6 + 4 cold damage.

Effect: Fire hazards in the blast's area are removed.

Fire Brazier

Single-Use Terrain

The burning fuel scatters about the room, burning all it touches.

Target: Each creature in a close blast 3, treating the brazier square as the blast's origin

Attack: +4 vs. Reflex

Hit: 1d6 + 4 fire damage.

Success: The elemental fires in the room go out. Remove all fire tokens from the map. No more are placed during the combat.

Failure: If the heroes fail the skill challenge, the flames burn throughout combat until all the elementals are destroyed. The heroes receive experience for this skill challenge even if they fail it.

Burning the Bank

The elementals aim to burn down the bank. Use fire tokens to represent the spread of their elemental fire.

Placing Fire Tokens: At the start of the combat, place a fire token in each fire elemental's starting square.

Whenever a fire elemental ends its turn, one unoccupied square adjacent to it ignites. Place a fire token in one of those squares if the square does not already have one. Favor any square that is also adjacent to characters.

Effects Fire Tokens: Whenever a nonelemental creature enters or ends its turn in a square containing a fire, that creature takes 1d6 fire damage. Whenever a nonelemental creature ends its turn, it takes 2 fire damage for each square adjacent to it that contains a fire.

Tactics

The fire elementals rush to take out intruders, moving about to spread fires. The water elemental does its best to guard the circle of arcane sigils, pushing enemies away and into burning squares, where they will take damage.

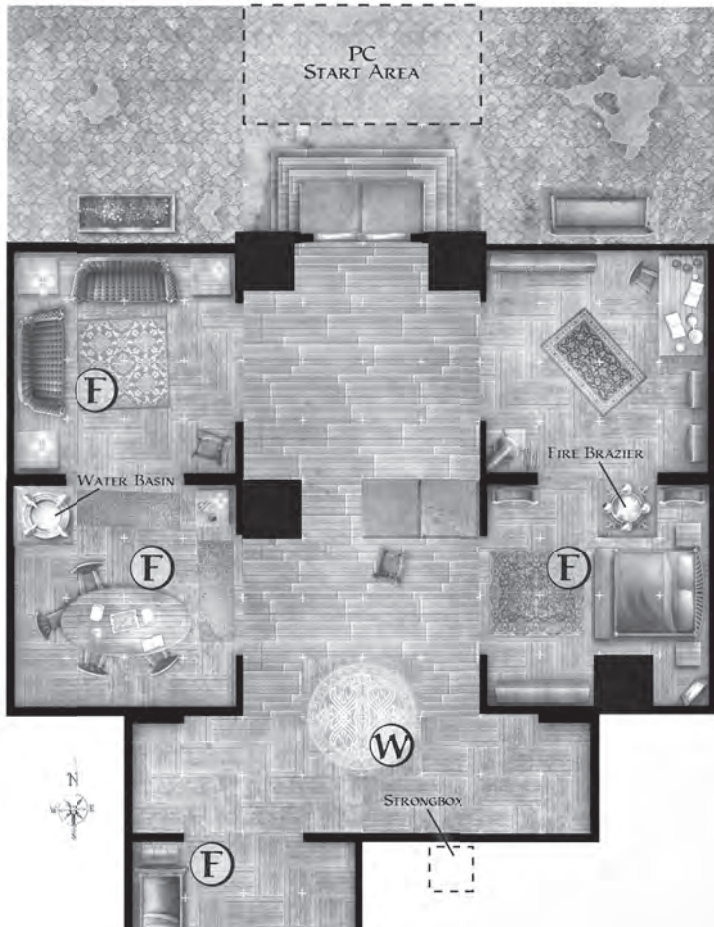
Features of the Area

Illumination: The fires and sigil circle brightly light the area.

Furniture: Squares containing furniture are difficult terrain. The stove, which is not lit, is furniture for this purpose.

Sigil Circle: If a character succeeds on a DC 19 Arcana check, he or she can tell that the circle was created within the last half hour. (In reality, Benwick created the circle after leaving the The Stumbling Giant and then activated it in an attempt to set the heroes on Ronnik's trail).

Treasure: Ronnik's strongbox is in the wall niche noted on the tactical map. It is open and disheveled, but it still contains one red garnet (100 gp), 200 sp, and a level 2 magic implement.



Conclusion

Whether or not the adventurers put out the fires, eventually the flames subside, and they are able to search the bank. Inside the desk, they find singed papers, including a map of the keep's environs. The map reveals a location called "Well Hideout," where the characters can assume Ronnik has fled (See **Session 4: King's Wall Hideout**, page 11). In reality, Benwick planted the map, intending that the heroes go there to deal with part of the Tiamat cult before moving on to Dragontooth Hill where the bulk of the cult is hiding.

Lesser Water Elemental (W)		Level 1 Controller
Small elemental natural beast (aquatic, water)		XP 100
HP 29; Bloodied 14		Initiative +2
AC 15, Fortitude 14, Reflex 13, Will 12		Perception +0
Speed 6, swim 6		
TRAITS		
Aquatic		
The elemental can breathe underwater. In aquatic combat, it gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls against nonaquatic creatures.		
Sensitive to Cold		
Whenever the elemental takes cold damage, it gains vulnerable 5 against the next attack that hits it before the end of its next turn.		
STANDARD ACTIONS		
⬇️ Slam ⬆️ At-Will		
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +4 vs. Reflex		
Hit: 1d6 damage, and ongoing 5 damage (save ends).		
⬅️ Whelm ⬆️ Encounter		
Attack: Close blast 3 (enemies in the blast); +4 vs. Fortitude		
Hit: 2d6 + 2 damage, and the elemental pushes the target up to 2 squares and knocks it prone.		
MINOR ACTIONS		
⬇️ Drowning Essence ⬆️ At-Will (1/round)		
Effect: The elemental slides each creature taking ongoing damage from its <i>slam</i> 1 square.		
Str 16 (+3)	Dex 14 (+2)	Wis 11 (+0)
Con 13 (+1)	Int 5 (-3)	Cha 8 (-1)
Alignment unaligned		Languages understands Primordial

4 Lesser Fire Elementals (F)		Level 1 Skirmisher
Small elemental magical beast (fire)		XP 100 each
HP 27; Bloodied 13		Initiative +6
AC 14, Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 13		Perception +1
Speed 8, fly 4 (clumsy)		
TRAITS		
Frozen in Place		
Whenever the elemental takes cold damage, it cannot shift until the end of its next turn.		
Heart of Flame (fire)		
Whenever an enemy adjacent to the elemental misses it with a melee attack, that enemy takes 3 fire damage.		
STANDARD ACTIONS		
⬇️ Slam (fire) ⬆️ At-Will		
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +4 vs. Reflex		
Hit: Ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).		
MINOR ACTIONS		
⬆️ Flickering Flame ⬆️ At-Will		
Effect: The elemental shifts 1 square.		
Str 10 (+0)	Dex 19 (+4)	Wis 13 (+1)
Con 11 (+0)	Int 5 (-3)	Cha 6 (-2)
Alignment unaligned		Languages understands Primordial

ENCOUNTER 1–4: WELL WATCH

Encounter Level 1 (550 XP)

Setup

Kobold dragonshield (D)
Kobold slinger (S)
2 kobold quickblades (Q)
5 kobold tunnelers (T)

After the players place their miniatures, read:
The well looks as weathered as the surrounding ruins. You can also see a new wooden frame has been erected above the well, and a rope is tied to this frame. An old bucket has been cast aside nearby, and a coil of unused rope lies beside it.

Also, not far from the well is a portion of wall that looks odd.

If the adventurers look down the well, they discover that it is dry. The characters can also inspect the wall more closely (have them move their miniatures up to the section marked “Weak Wall” on the tactical map). A character that succeeds on DC 12 Dungeoneering check discovers that the wall has been recently weakened using tools.

In the mean time, the kobolds stealthily approach the party, taking advantage of the shadows and remaining hidden. A character that has a passive Perception of 19 or higher hears the kobolds coming. If a character detects the kobolds, place them as indicated on the tactical map. If the heroes do not detect the kobolds, move each kobold up to 6 squares, keeping them near the walls. Place the dragonshield next to the weak wall. It attempts to collapse the wall on nearby characters, initiating combat. A character that succeeded on the Dungeoneering check gets a +2 bonus to Reflex against the wall’s attack.

Weak Wall

Single-Use Terrain

The wall section has been undermined; a solid push will topple it.

Standard Action

Requirement: The creature collapsing the wall must be adjacent to it.

Check: Athletics DC 15

Success: Make the following attack.

Target: Each creature in a close blast 2, treating one of the weak wall’s squares as the blast’s origin square

Attack: +4 vs. Reflex

Hit: 1d8 + 3 damage, and the target is pushed up to 2 squares and knocked prone.

Miss: Half damage, and the target is pushed 1 square.

Effect: The blast’s area becomes difficult terrain. The wall’s squares remain blocking terrain, though.

Tactics

Unless they’ve already done so, the quickblades and dragonshield try to push the wall over on the characters if it’s possible to catch two or more enemies within the area. Make checks for the kobolds when they push the wall. If they fail, the adventurers understand their intent and can turn the tables on the kobolds. Otherwise, the kobolds attack normally, trying to avoid being cornered.

The kobolds are all cultists of Tiamat and fight to the death. Near the end of combat, though, one of the kobolds instructs another one to run to Dragtooth Hill to warn Ronnik and the others.

Features of the Area

Illumination: The area is dark.

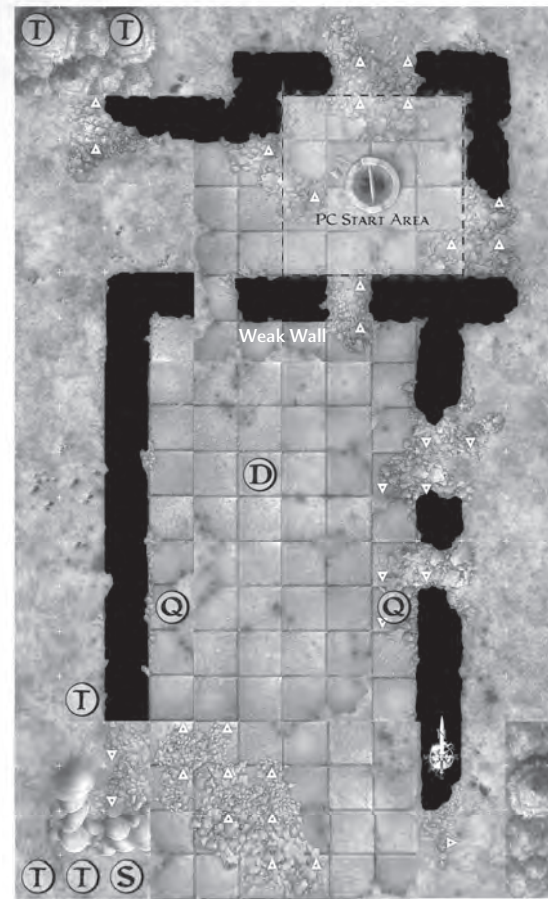
Boulders: The boulders are blocking terrain and require a DC 8 Athletics check to climb.

Rubble: The rocky squares are difficult terrain, as indicated by the triangles on the tactical map.

Trees: Forested squares are difficult terrain.

Walls: These sections of blocking terrain are 20 feet high (DC 15 Athletics check to climb).

Well: The well is dry and 10 feet deep. A creature forced to move into a square containing the wall can fall into it. Climbing out requires 5 squares of movement and a DC 10 Athletics check.



Kobold Dragonshield (D)	Level 2 Soldier
Small natural humanoid (reptile)	XP 125
HP 36; Bloodied 18	Initiative +4
AC 18, Fortitude 14, Reflex 13, Will 13	Perception +2
Speed 5	Darkvision
STANDARD ACTIONS	
⬇ Short Sword (weapon) ♦ At-Will	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d6 + 6 damage.	
Effect: The kobold marks the target until the end of the kobold's next turn.	
⬇ Dirty Tactics (weapon) ♦ Encounter	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +5 vs. Reflex	
Hit: 2d6 + 7 damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of the kobold's next turn.	
Miss: Half damage, and the target is slowed until the end of the kobold's next turn.	
MINOR ACTIONS	
Shifty ♦ At-Will	
Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.	
TRIGGERED ACTIONS	
Dragonshield Tactics ♦ At-Will	
Trigger: An enemy adjacent to the kobold shifts or an enemy moves to a square adjacent to the kobold.	
Effect (Immediate Reaction): The kobold shifts 1 square.	
Skills Athletics +8, Stealth +7, Thievery +7	
Str 14 (+3)	Dex 13 (+2) Wis 12 (+2)
Con 12 (+2)	Int 9 (+0) Cha 10 (+1)
Alignment evil Languages Common, Draconic	
Equipment scale armor, light shield, short sword	

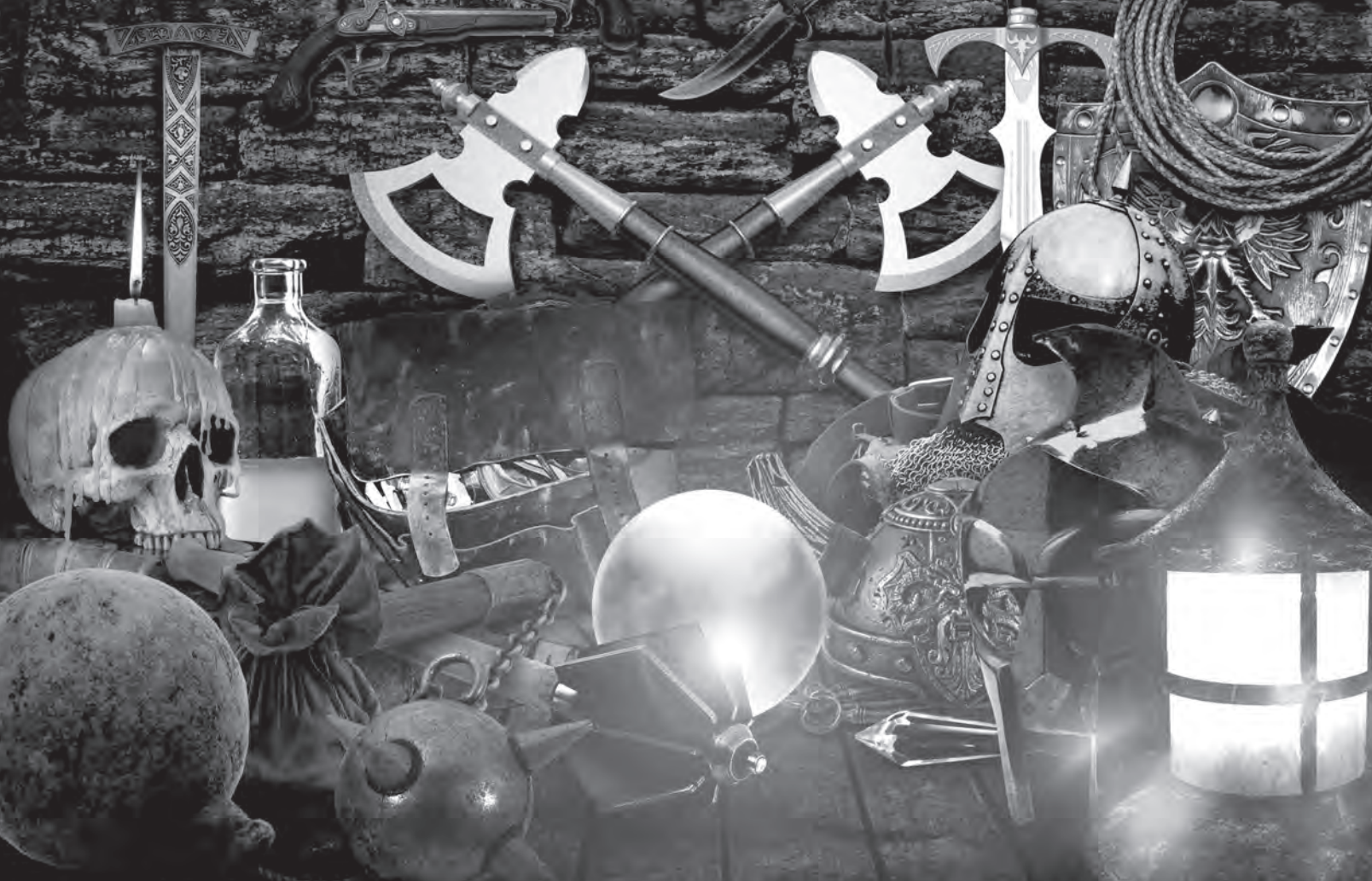
Kobold Slinger (S)	Level 1 Artillery
Small natural humanoid (reptile)	XP 100
HP 24; Bloodied 12	Initiative +3
AC 13, Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 12	Perception +1
Speed 6	Darkvision
STANDARD ACTIONS	
⬇ Dagger (weapon) ♦ At-Will	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d4 + 3 damage.	
⌘ Sling (weapon) ♦ At-Will	
Attack: Ranged 20 (one creature); +8 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d6 + 5 damage.	
⌘ Special Shot (weapon) ♦ At-Will (3/encounter)	
Attack: Ranged 20 (one creature); +8 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d6 + 5 damage plus one of the following effects (roll a d6):	
1 2 Stinkpot : The target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends).	
3 4 Firepot (fire) : The target takes ongoing 2 fire damage (save ends).	
5 6 Gluepot : The target is immobilized (save ends).	
MINOR ACTION	
Shifty ♦ At-Will	
Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.	
Skills Stealth +8	
Str 9 (-1)	Dex 17 (+3) Wis 12 (+1)
Con 12 (+1)	Int 9 (-1) Cha 10 (+0)
Alignment evil Languages Common, Draconic	
Equipment leather armor, dagger, sling, 20 sling bullets, 3 rounds of special shot	

2 Kobold Quickblades (Q)	Level 1 Skirmisher
Small natural humanoid (reptile)	XP 100 each
HP 29; Bloodied 14	Initiative +5
AC 15, Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 12	Perception +1
Speed 6	Darkvision
STANDARD ACTIONS	
⬇ Short Sword (weapon) ♦ At-Will	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d6 + 3 damage. The attack deals 2 extra damage per square the kobold has shifted since the start of its turn.	
MOVE ACTIONS	
Fleet Feet ♦ At-Will	
Effect: The kobold shifts up to 3 squares.	
MINOR ACTIONS	
Shifty ♦ At-Will	
Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.	
Skills Athletics +4, Stealth +8, Thievery +8	
Str 8 (-1)	Dex 17 (+3) Wis 13 (+1)
Con 13 (+1)	Int 9 (-1) Cha 10 (+0)
Alignment evil Languages Common, Draconic	
Equipment leather armor, light shield, short sword	

5 Kobold Tunnelers (T)	Level 1 Minion Skirmisher
Small natural humanoid (reptile)	XP 25 each
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	Initiative +5
AC 15, Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 12	Perception +1
Speed 6	Darkvision
STANDARD ACTIONS	
⬇ Javelin (weapon) ♦ At-Will	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC	
Hit: 4 damage.	
⌘ Javelin (weapon) ♦ At-Will	
Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +6 vs. AC	
Hit: 4 damage.	
MINOR ACTIONS	
Shifty ♦ At-Will	
Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.	
TRIGGERED ACTIONS	
Narrow Escape ♦ Encounter	
Trigger: A close or an area attack hits or misses the kobold.	
Effect (Immediate Interrupt): The kobold shifts up to 3 squares.	
Str 8 (-1)	Dex 16 (+3) Wis 12 (+1)
Con 12 (+1)	Int 9 (-1) Cha 10 (+0)
Alignment evil Languages Common, Draconic	
Equipment leather armor, 3 javelins	

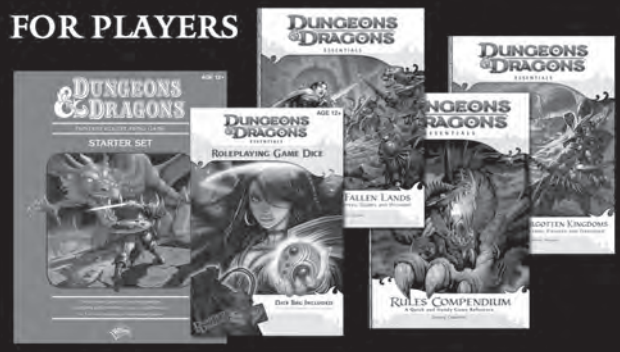
Conclusion

Any captured kobold is easy to intimidate. Otherwise, one takes to bragging before it expires. The creature tells the characters that Ronnik is the cult's patron, which it believes to be true. It also mocks the characters for coming to the false hideout instead of Dragontooth Hill. The characters can now tie Ronnik to Tiamat and complete a minor quest (20 XP each).



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FOR DMs



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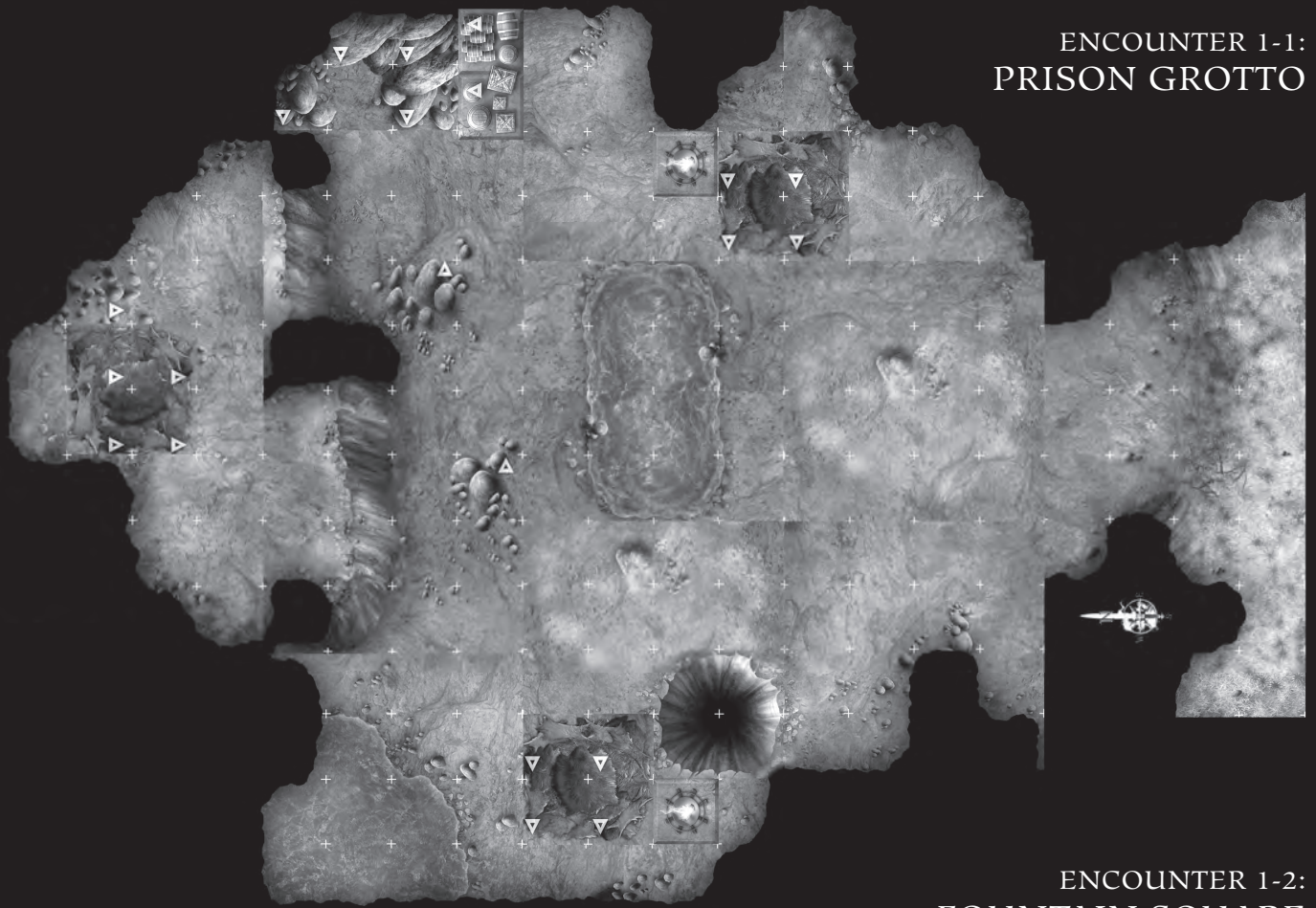
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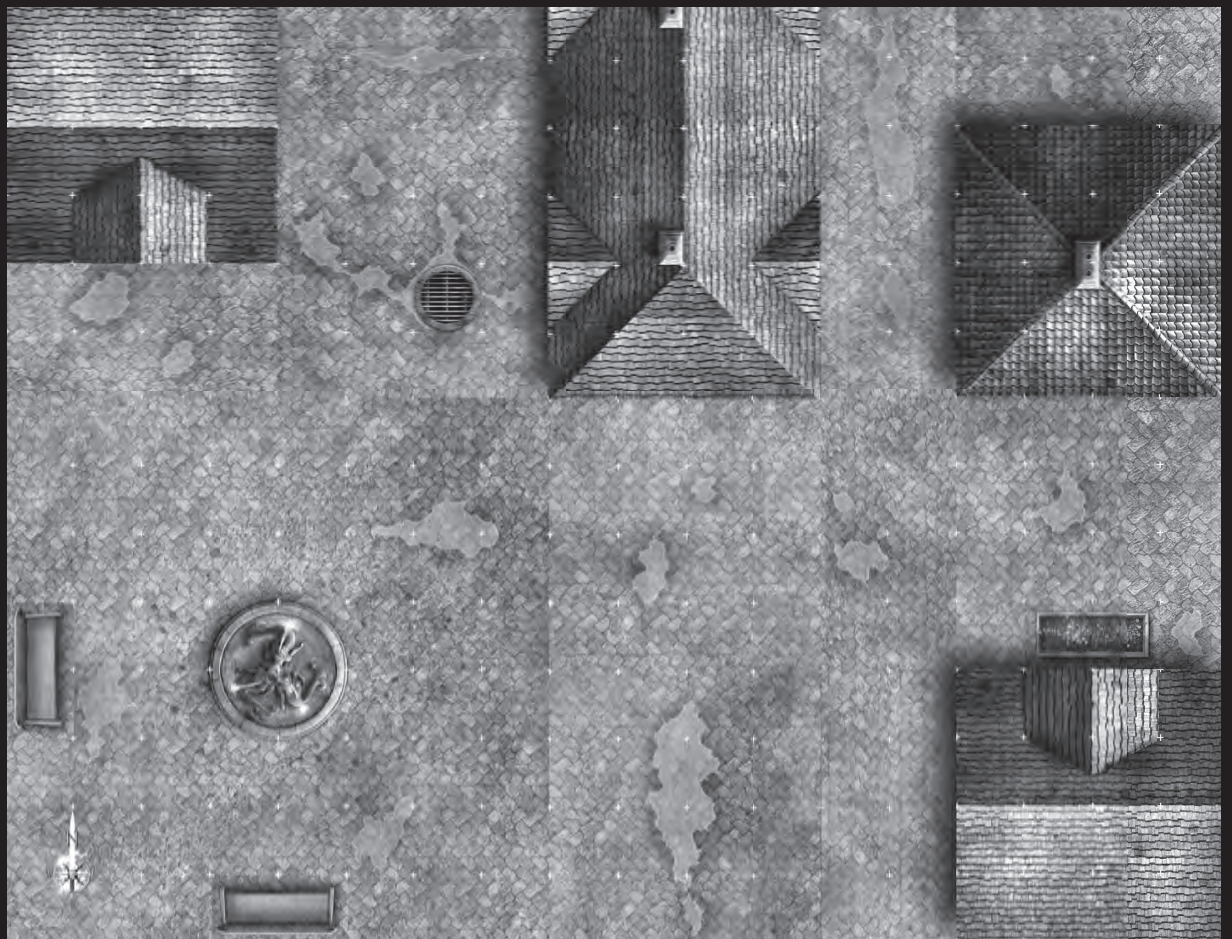
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ENCOUNTER 1-1:
PRISON GROTTO



ENCOUNTER 1-2:
FOUNTAIN SQUARE



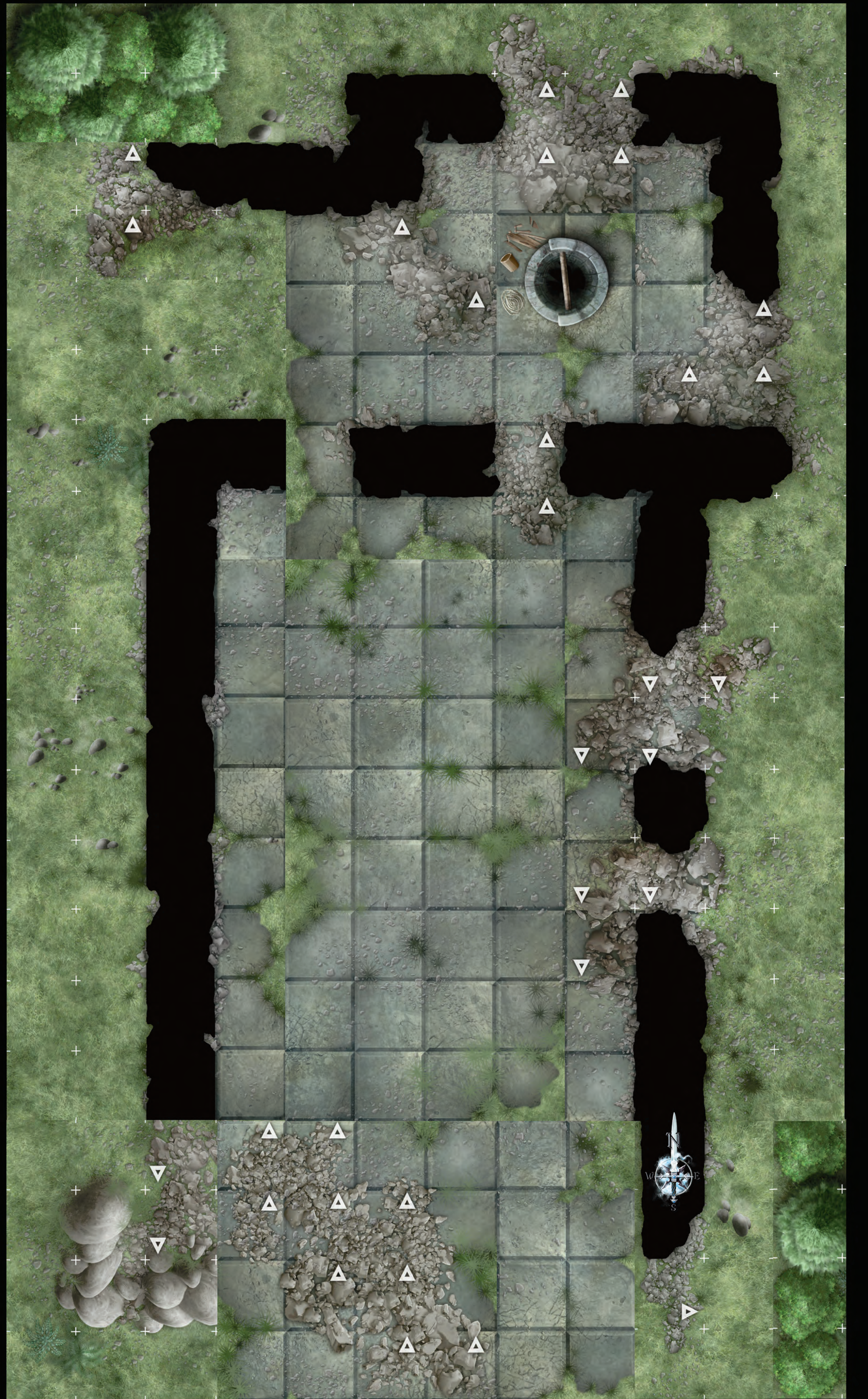
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ENCOUNTERS



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ENCOUNTERS



SOMETHING ROTTEN IN RESTWELL KEEP

At Restwell Keep, you've heard that fortune and glory await those bold enough to brave the dangers of the Chaos Scar, a valley carved ages ago by a fallen star. The same tales warn that this Chaos Scar draws wickedness to it. Perhaps you can help stem this tide . . . and gain some treasure along the way.

Keep on the Borderlands: A Season of Serpents™ (Chapter 1) is an adventure designed for five characters of 1st level for the fall and winter 2010-11 season of the D&D Encounters™ official play program. This DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® adventure includes a full-color battle map, ready-to-play encounters, and DM information on the D&D Encounters official play program.



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A HEROIC TIER ADVENTURE

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KEEP ON THE BORDERLANDS

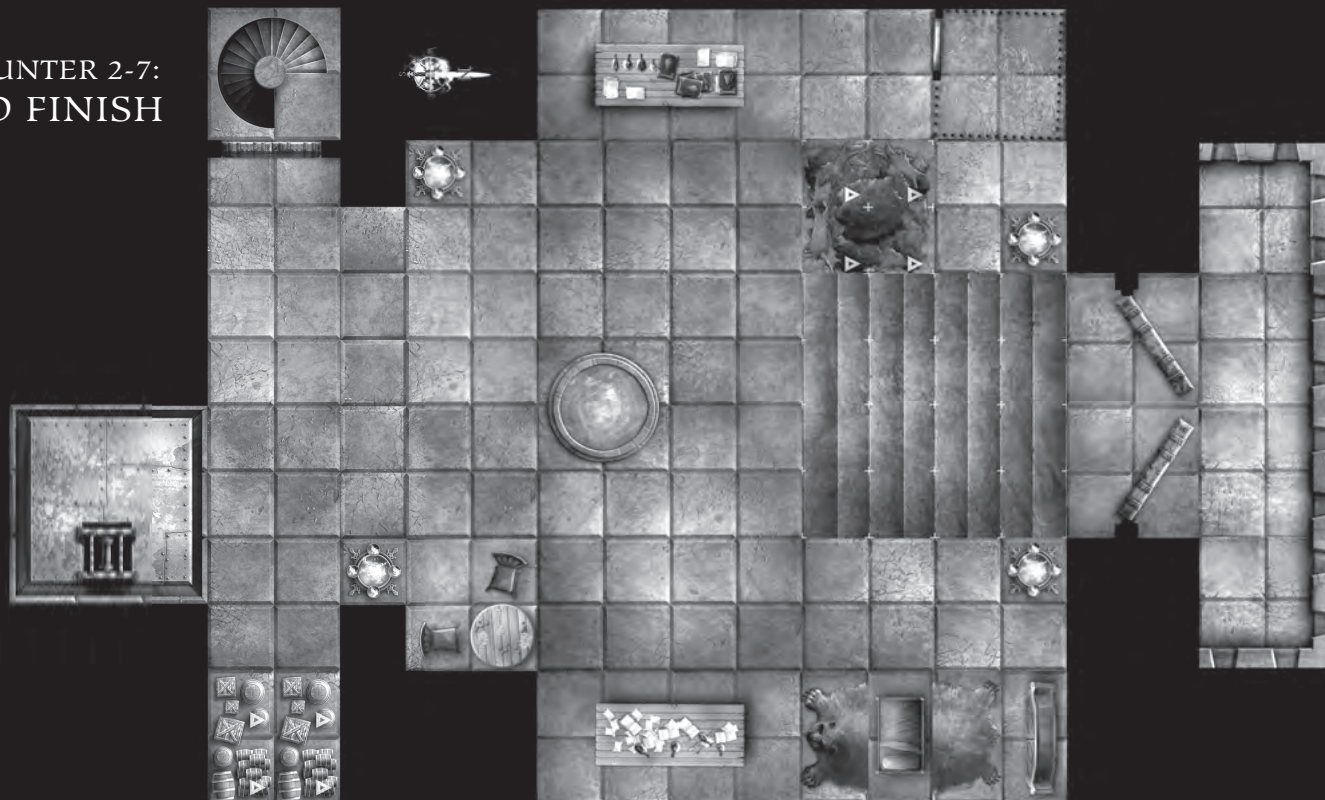
Chapter 2 of 5: A Season of Serpents™



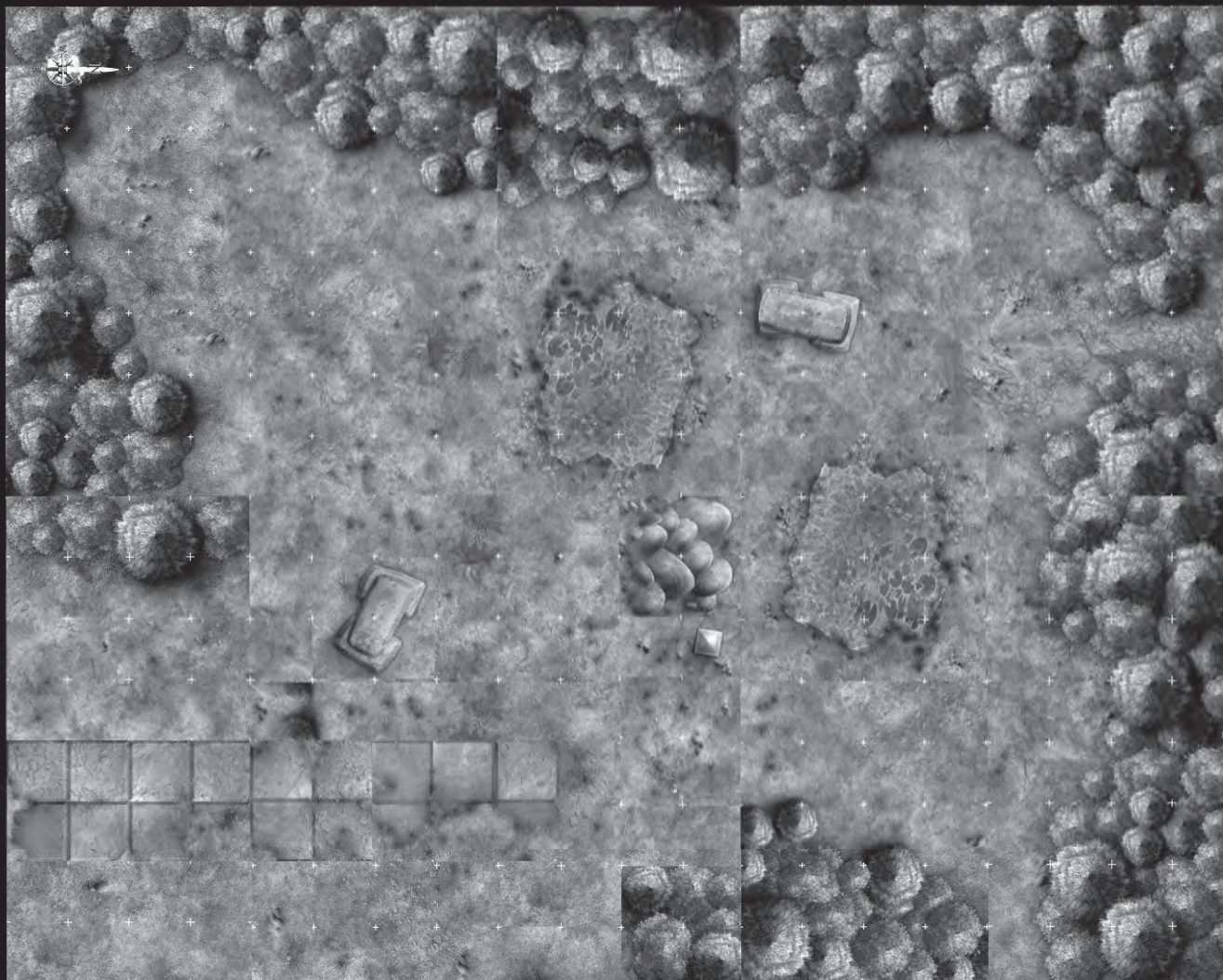
AN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTERS OF 1ST LEVEL

Chris Sims

ENCOUNTER 2-7:
COLD FINISH



ENCOUNTER 2-8:
SWAMP STONES



INTRODUCTION

A DUNGEON & DRAGONS Encounters™ adventure for four to six 1st-level characters

Welcome to DUNGEON & DRAGONS Encounters, an exciting official D&D program. This adventure is a mini-campaign season designed to be played in one-encounter sessions once per week at your local Wizards Play Network location. Each week, players can earn in-game rewards for their characters and Renown Points toward special program-exclusive D&D Encounters Cards that can be used in this and future seasons of D&D Encounters.

Preparing for Play

The D&D Encounters play kit provides all you need to DM this adventure, including poster maps of encounter areas and a sheet of tokens for monsters, adventurers, and battlefield effects. Follow the steps below to prepare for play.

Before you DM your first session:

- ◆ Read the Introduction, Adventure Synopsis, Adventure Summary, and Resting sections.
- ◆ Read Session 5: Entrance Cave and Encounter 2-5: Foul Flow. If you are starting at another point, read the appropriate sections and what has come before.

At the table of your first session:

- ◆ Ensure each player has a character to play. Players may use one of the characters provided in the kit, or may create their own using the guidelines provided.
- ◆ Give each player has a D&D Encounters Play Tracker. This sheet is found in the play kit, and it allows the players to track treasure, experience, and Renown Points earned for each play session.
- ◆ Get a session tracking sheet from the organizer. Record all the players' DCI/RPGA numbers on it, along with your DCI/RPGA number. If you or any of the players don't have a DCI/RPGA number, ask the organizer for a membership card.

During the session:

- ◆ Each session is one encounter in length. Just DM the encounter assigned for that week's session. Typical play-time for one encounter is about 90 minutes to 2 hours.
- ◆ Make decisions and adjudications that enhance the fun of the game. As the DM, you can make some adjustments to the adventure (see the sidebar) to facilitate the fun for players.

At the end of your first session:

- ◆ Have the adventurers take a short rest if they want, but remind them to track their daily abilities. Healing surges used, daily powers expended, and other daily resources do not refresh in-between each session; only at the end of each chapter. Make sure your players track this information on their D&D Encounters Play Tracker.
- ◆ Turn in your session tracking sheet to the organizer. Make sure you've recorded all the DCI/RPGA numbers on it, along with names and the play date.
- ◆ Report Renown Point totals earned for each player to the organizer. The organizer fills out the Renown Point Tracker for the location and tells you if any players have earned D&D Encounters Cards.
- ◆ Give out treasure. Make sure the players write down rewards on the D&D Encounters Play Tracker.
- ◆ Collect your special reward for providing your time as a DM to make the event happen. Your organizer has more details on this reward.

At the end of the final session of a chapter:

- ◆ The adventurers take an extended rest, regaining all of their healing surges, hit points, and daily powers. In addition, their action point totals reset to 1.

Once you've been the DM for a session, it's easy to prepare for your next session. Simply read over the session's material, and you're ready to go.

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CREATING A CHARACTER

Players are responsible for bringing their own characters to each play session. A first-time player should bring a new 1st-level D&D character created using only the rules found in the *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Fantasy Roleplaying Game* boxed set or *Heroes of the Fallen Lands*.

If a player doesn't have a character or doesn't want to create one from scratch, several pre-generated characters are provided in the play kit. Get these from the organizer and offer a choice of one to each player that wants one.

At the end of each session, you award experience points, treasure, and Renown Points to each player. They'll track that information on their D&D Encounters Play Tracker and you'll report the Renown Points each player earned with the organizer.

CHARACTER DEATH

If a character dies during a session, the player has two choices. He or she can bring the same character back at the beginning of the next session with a death penalty of -1 to attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks until they've hit a milestone (two encounters), or he or she can start a new character of the appropriate level.

Advancement

At the end of each session, you award experience points when the characters complete encounters. Use this table below to award experience points for each session. Don't modify the amount of experience based on the number of characters.

EXPERIENCE POINT AWARDS

XP Description	XP/Character
Session 5	125 XP
Session 6	110 XP
Session 7	135 XP
Minor Quest: Find the Serpent's Eye	20 XP
Session 8	135 XP

If the characters succeed at all the encounters and complete all quests, each should earn 525 XP by the end of Chapter 2.

Leveling Up: By the end of Chapter 2, the characters have earned enough experience to make it to 2nd level. Players should level up their characters in-between sessions when they've reached 1,000 XP earned. All characters will be level 2 at the beginning of Chapter 3 (covered in the next adventure packet).

Milestones: For every two encounters a character completes without taking an extended rest, the character reaches a milestone, gaining an action point.

A CHANGING GROUP

Since you can never tell who's going to show up to a D&D Encounters session from week to week, you might wind up with a different group of players. Some players might be starting in "mid-stream," some could have missed a session or two, and others might have played all the sessions with a different DM. That's fine. Update new players with a brief summary of what has come before, and make sure that returning players have marked off resources they spent (healing surges, daily powers, etc.) since their last extended rest.

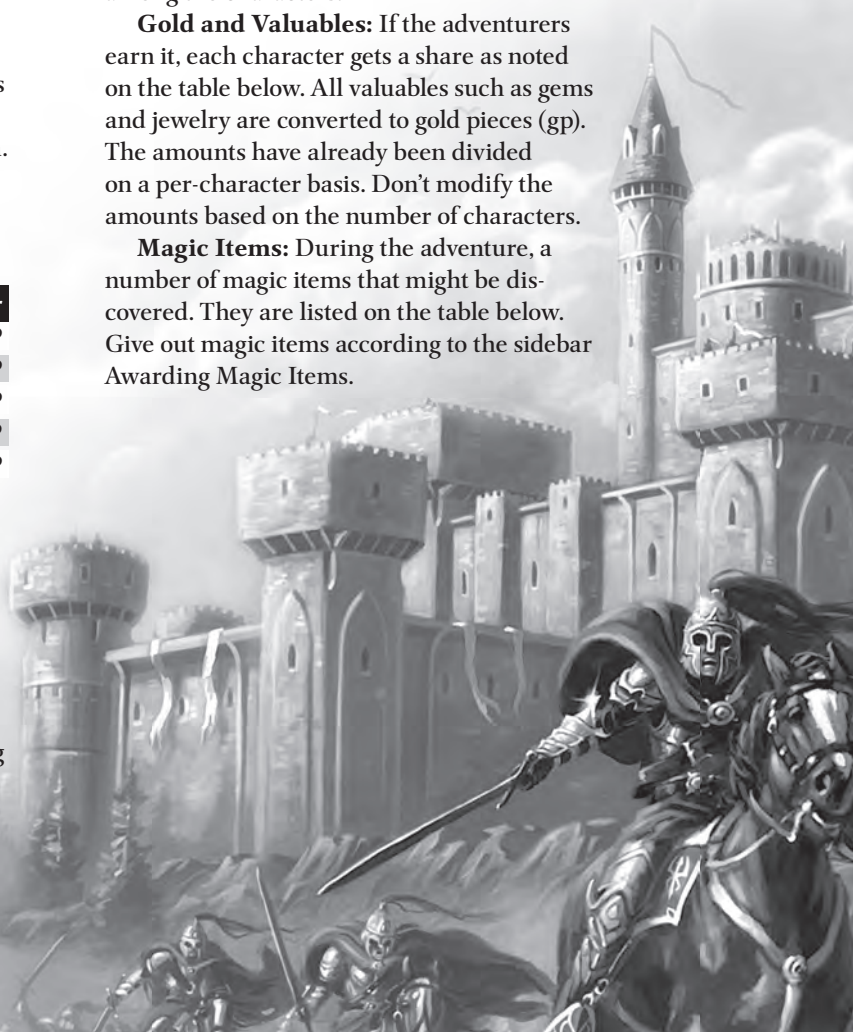
Majority Rules: If some element of the adventure plot hinges on the adventurers making a decision in a previous session, and the group is different during the current session, simply find out how the decision went down for that group. Go with the majority, and if it's an even split, side with the most positive result. For example, if three of five players' characters at your table rescued Gordi in a previous encounter and two didn't, Gordi is considered to be rescued for your session this week.

Treasure

As the characters progress through the mini-campaign, they have the opportunity to gain treasure in the form of gold pieces, valuables, and magic items. At the end of each session, determine if the players earned any treasure. Use the following rules to divide up treasure among the characters.

Gold and Valuables: If the adventurers earn it, each character gets a share as noted on the table below. All valuables such as gems and jewelry are converted to gold pieces (gp). The amounts have already been divided on a per-character basis. Don't modify the amounts based on the number of characters.

Magic Items: During the adventure, a number of magic items that might be discovered. They are listed on the table below. Give out magic items according to the sidebar Awarding Magic Items.



When to Gear Up: Characters can buy equipment before beginning play during Session 1. If a character gains a magic item that has only level and type described (for example, magic implement level 2), the player can select an item of that type and level after the session is complete, before starting the next one.

TREASURE FOUND

Treasure	Location
Crystals, gems, jewelry (24 gp each)	Encounter 2-5
Magic armor (level 5; player choice)	Encounter 2-5
Magic weapon (level 4; player choice)	Encounter 2-7
Magic neck item (level 3; player choice)	Encounter 2-7
Potion of healing*	Encounter 2-7
Silver and ruby eye (20 gp each)*	Encounter 2-7
40 gp each (or 75 gp each*)	Encounter 2-8

* These rewards exceed normal treasure intentionally. The characters have to discover them or receive them as a reward for specific behavior.

AWARDING MAGIC ITEMS

When the characters find a nonconsumable magic item, the players decide who receives what. If this is impossible or difficult, you assign the new item to the character who has no nonconsumable magic items. If all the characters have a nonconsumable magic item, the character with the lowest-level nonconsumable magic item receives the new item.

If more than one character has no nonconsumable magic item, or two characters tie for the lowest-level magic item, those the players decide who receives the new item. If they can't decide, have each roll a d20 until one rolls higher than the other. That player receives the new item.

You can distribute consumable items in the same way if the players can't decide who takes such items. Just remember not to count these items as nonconsumable magic items.

Renown Points

One of the great rewards for playing in a D&D Encounters season is the accumulation of Renown Points (RPs), which are given out for accomplishments made by players during, and sometimes in-between, sessions. These Renown Points are tracked at the Wizards Play Network location, and reaching certain thresholds garners the player a tangible reward—a D&D Encounters Card.

Players can use these cards during the current D&D Encounters season, as well as in subsequent seasons. Each card has all the information on how it works printed right on the card.

As the DM, it's your task to award Renown Points at the end of a session of play, just like you would award experience and treasure. Unlike experience and treasure though, Renown Point totals earned for each player must be reported to the organizer at the conclusion of the session when you turn in your session tracking sheet. The organizer can then tell you if any players have qualified for a card.

The Renown accomplishments, their frequency, and the point values of each are listed below.

RENOWN POINT AWARDS

Accomplishment	Frequency	RPs
Complete an encounter	Session	3
Hit a milestone	2/Chapter	2
Moment of greatness	1/Chapter	2
Create a D&D Essentials character	Season	5
Create a Character Builder character	Season	5
Revive a dying adventurer ally	Season	1
Hit for 15+ damage against 1 enemy	Season	1
Kill 3 minions in 1 attack	Season	1
Take 50 enemy damage in 1 session	Season	1
Survive 12+ sessions without dying	Season	2
Complete all quests	Season	5

Moment of Greatness: This is a discretionary award given out by the DM or through party vote to a player for doing something inventive, daring, or just plain cool during a session of play.

Renown Rewards

When a player earns 20 RPs, he or she earns the first D&D Encounters Card, called the Delver Reward. This is awarded to the player immediately following the session in which it is earned. The second award is called the Adventurer Reward, and a player qualifies for the reward by obtaining 100 Renown Points in the season.

The final award is given out at the conclusion of the season. At the end of the season, a number of D&D Encounters Cards are distributed among those who qualify for the reward. If more players qualify for the reward than the number of cards available, the organizer will determine how they will be distributed.

Keep on the Borderlands: A Season of Serpents™ pits a group of inexperienced adventurers against the unknown and dangerous borderlands near the Chaos Scar. These introductory pages provide background information for Dungeon Masters running the storyline.

Keep on the Borderlands

Legends claim that dwarven-built Restwell Keep has been the fortress of a hobgoblin king, the home of an infamous bandit lord, a linchpin garrison of fallen Nerath, and the lair of a dragon. Indeed, the keep has been all this and more. At present, it is a faint but steady light struggling against a growing darkness. Its intrepid folk are in constant danger from within and without.

Government: Not long ago, the Keep on the Borderlands was a freewheeling place with lax law enforcement. Lord Peridin Drysdale, paladin of Erathis, recently took command. More than a few residents, accustomed to the old regime, resent the paladin's uncompromising push toward order and morality. As a result, Drysdale's authority is weak in the outer bailey.

Defense: Mercenary guards watch the barracks, as well as the towers and gate of the outer bailey. Kendon Longstrider, a 60-year-old human veteran, is in charge.

Drysdale's soldiers patrol the keep proper and the inner bailey. The lord has mandated that capable individuals serve as militia if the need arises.

Room and Board: The gruff and greedy Nerrin Silverhand runs the seamy Travelers Inn on Fountain Square. A private room (suitable for four occupants) runs 1 gp per night; a spot in the common room costs 1 sp. Nerrin doesn't serve food or drink.

Victuals can be purchased from jolly Mother Aran of The Stumbling Giant, a fine tavern also on Fountain Square.

Temple: The local chapel (along the inner bailey wall) is open for worship of all accepted deities, but Avandra is esteemed above others. Chendera, the striking half-elf caretaker and priestess, is a devotee of the luck goddess. She spends much of her time mingling with folks in The Stumbling Giant. She counts among her friends the itinerant priest, Benwick.

Other Services: Local farmers and traveling merchants set up stands from time to time in the keep's Fountain Square. Regular establishments include a general store, a bank, a smithy, a jeweler, and a mage's guildhouse.

For those interested, more information on Restwell Keep can be found in *Dungeon* 176.

Serpent in the Fold

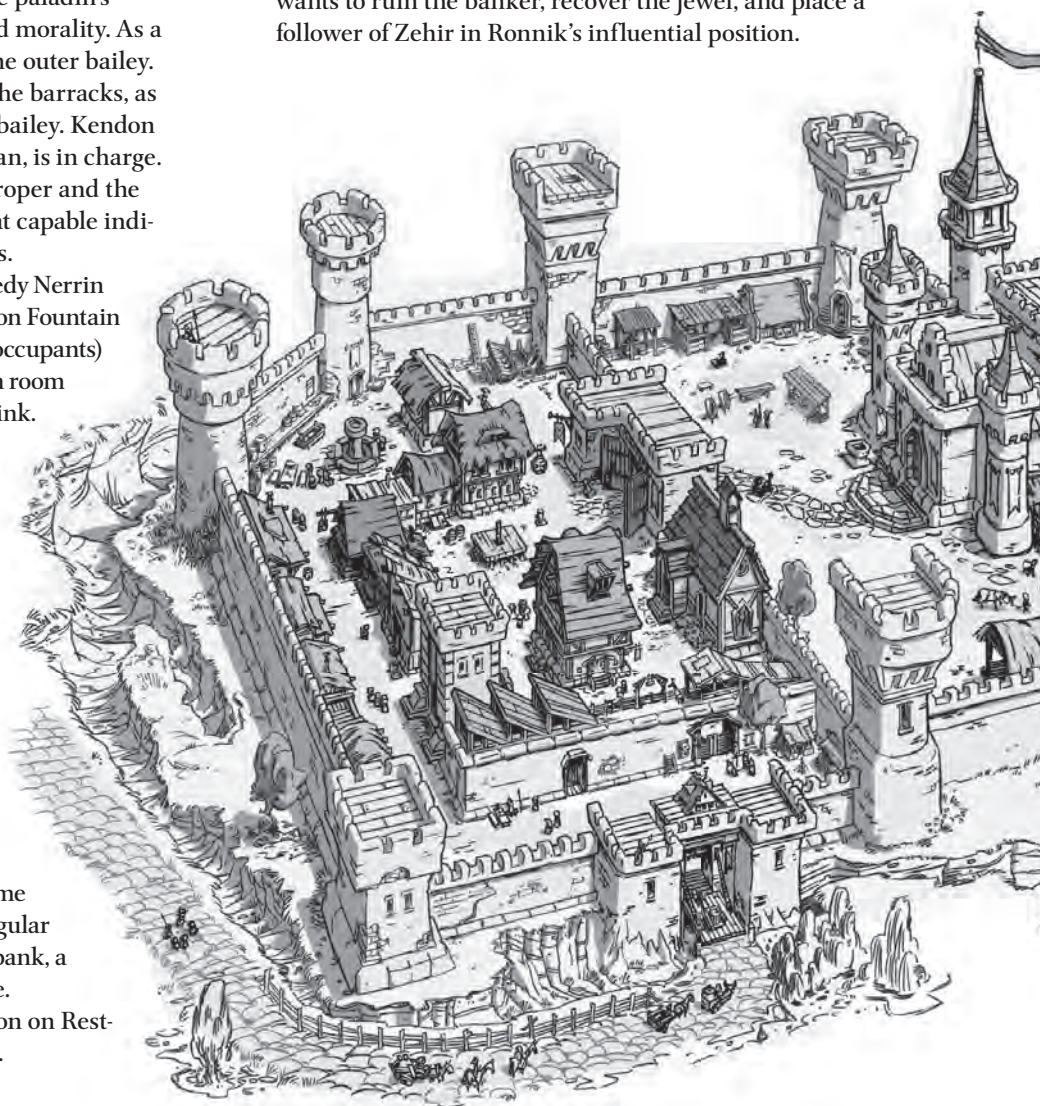
Benwick plays the part of a jolly, fat friar who worships Avandra, Ioun, and Sehanine. In truth, he and his acolytes are servants of the evil god, Zehir. Benwick has grand plans of turning the keep into a citadel for the snake god's faithful. He's courting the local lizardfolk for his plot.

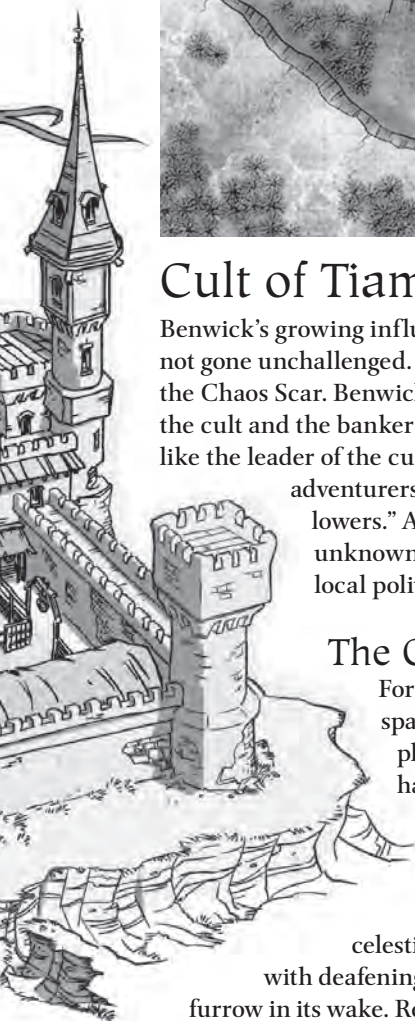
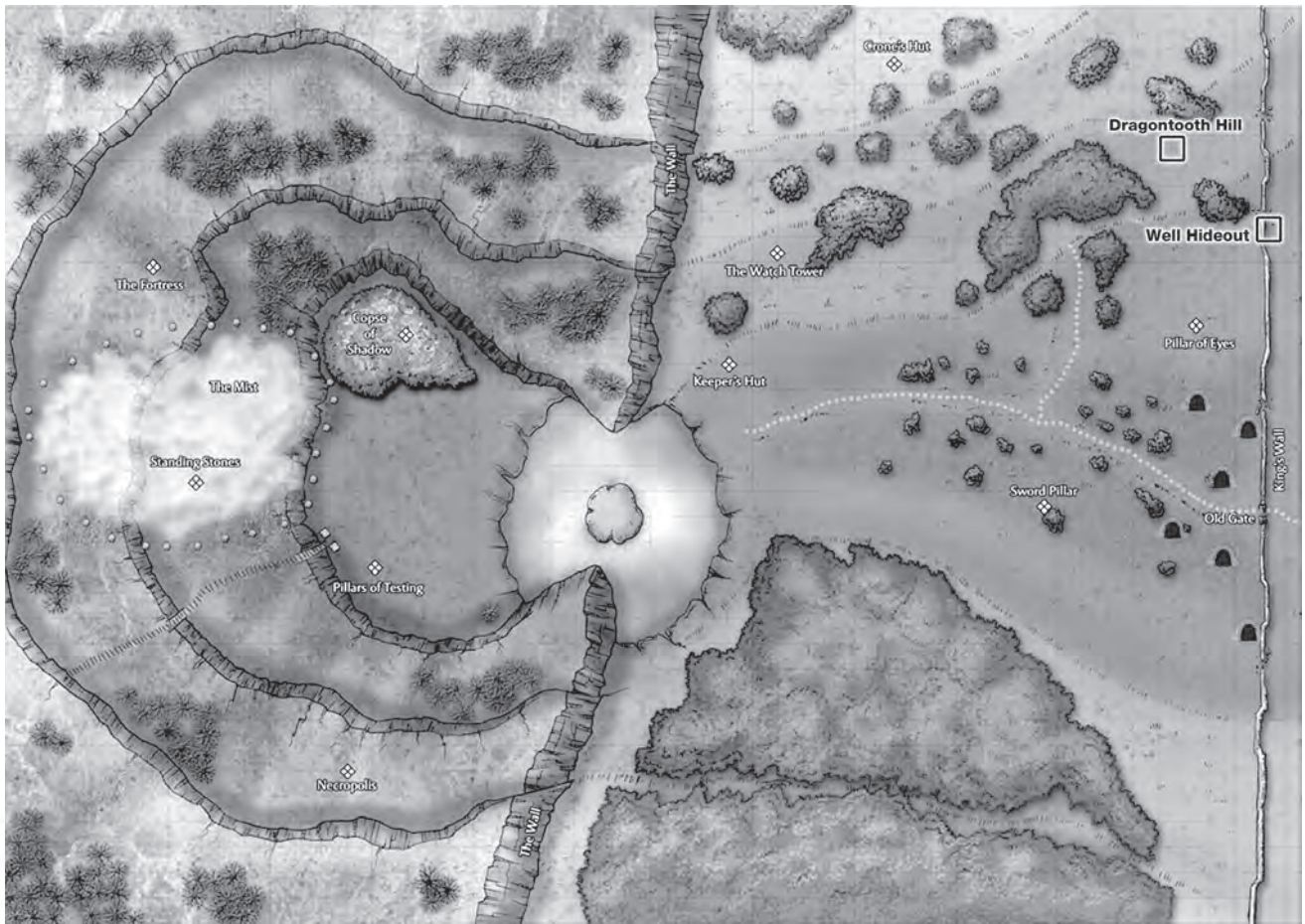
Most of the folks in the outer bailey are fond of Benwick, who is a subtle, entertaining critic of Drysdale's rule. He cheerfully feeds rumors that the paladin intends to impose Keep-wide worship of Erathis and to launch expeditions that might rile up the evil in the Chaos Scar. Benwick's allies include Kendon Longstrider and Chendera.

The Banker

A rogue-turned-banker, Ferdinand Ronnik is an athletic human with nice clothes, close-cropped dark hair, and a mustache. His latest and greatest heist involved a temple of Zehir in the town of Fallcrest, during which he scored a wondrous jewel known as the Serpent's Eye.

Ronnik is high on Benwick's hit list. The Zehirite wants to ruin the banker, recover the jewel, and place a follower of Zehir in Ronnik's influential position.





Cult of Tiamat

Benwick's growing influence with the lizardfolk has not gone unchallenged. A cult of Tiamat has arisen near the Chaos Scar. Benwick plans to rid himself of both the cult and the banker at once by making Ronnik look like the leader of the cult and setting some capable adventurers against him and his "followers." All he needs are some suckers unknown in the keep and unaware of local politics. Enter the characters.

The Chaos Scar

For eons, an evil star roamed the space between worlds, seeking a place to touch down and wreak havoc. It found this world.

As the falling star passed through the sky, milk curdled, livestock fell dead, and ill fortune flourished. The

celestial body crashed into the earth with deafening force, carving a valley-sized furrow in its wake. Red radiance lit the sky for a week. Thus, the Chaos Scar was born.

Over a mile long and several hundred feet deep, the Scar is an angry, blighted gash in the world. As the star carved its path through the earth, shards and fragments

tore away until only its heart remained, embedded in an escarpment at the far end of its new home.

Patient beyond mortal comprehension, the malevolent remains began to sow seeds of wickedness, to reach out to those of a perverse and corruptible bent. Over the centuries, creatures of evil spirit have been drawn to this beacon.

The dark sentience spurs competition among the malefactors who carve out dominions within the valley's many caves. The weakest ones settle near the mouth of the valley and the plain beyond. The strongest villains lair closer to the valley's terminus and in the fortress.

Rulers have tried to contain the threat of the Chaos Scar in the past, with little to no success. A long-forgotten king erected a wall across the valley's mouth. It still stands, partly in ruins, its gates open and unguarded.

The Chaos Scar is filled with malice, promising death to those who enter. It is riddled with caves natural and tunneled by generations of monstrous denizens. The deeper one travels into the valley, the deadlier the foes lurking in its hollows.

Many adventurers have entered the Chaos Scar seeking wealth and glory. Few have returned. Those heroes that survive its depths weave dark stories of cults, inhuman tribes, and monsters working in blasphemous concert. Other explorers tell of monstrous creatures engaging in vicious, unrelenting warfare. All agree that fatality is far more prevalent than fortune.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Keep on the Borderlands: A Season of Serpents is an adventure for the third D&D Encounters season. This adventure comes in chapters, each of which contains four sessions. Every session is one encounter in length and designed to be run once per week. The following section gives you an overview of the storyline in Chapter 2.

ROLEPLAYING

Some of the adventure's sections call for roleplaying, and all of the encounters allow for it. A portion of the information in this book exists to help you roleplay with the players. You might prepare a list of names to use if players want to talk to creatures unexpectedly. As long as all the players are having fun, and it's not going to make the session too long, play it up and enjoy. Just make sure to include everyone.

Further, allow for cinematic maneuvers and clever strategies. Try to reward bold play and clever play. Let players use their characters' skills and powers. Encourage this sort of gaming by being prepared and by using the monsters, NPCs, and scenarios with equal boldness and cleverness.

Chapter 2: Into the Dragontooth

Finally, Ronnik's hunters have chased their quarry to ground and played right into Benwick's nefarious plan. Luckily for the characters, Benwick has it out for a newly formed cult of Tiamat that's trying to muscle influence in with the local lizardfolk.

Kobolds and other cultists, such as a young dragon, have recently taken up residence in the old fortress of Dragontooth Hill. All believe Ronnik to be their leader and financier. None know that they, like their soon-to-be attackers, are Benwick's dupes.

Session 5: Entrance Cave

Benwick's troubleshooters approach Dragontooth Hill from the south, where a stream flows out of the old place's only obvious entrance. They quickly learn how resourceful kobolds are with magic and allied creatures. Can the invaders be as resourceful in this challenging environment? **Session 5: Entrance Cave** starts on page 8, and **Encounter 2-5: Foul Flow** is found on page 12.

Session 6: Old Shrine

The kobolds are setting up shop in the hill's old lab area. A sigil on the floor grants fiery power, but control of it is uncertain. Quick thinking and esoteric skill might allow the characters can turn the tables on the kobolds and one of their leaders **Session 6: Old Shrine** starts on page 8, and **Encounter 2-6: Strong Fire** is found on page 14.

Session 7: Dragon Aerie

The new cult's secret waits at the upper reaches of Dragontooth Hill's inner structure to greet the invaders coolly. A copper dragon wyrmling and its guardians put up tough resistance. If the characters prevail, they recover the Serpent's Eye. They also learn that their patron, Benwick, is about to be murdered while trading for herbs with local lizardfolk. **Session 7: Dragon Aerie** starts on page 8, and **Encounter 2-7: Cold Finish** is found on page 16.

Session 8: Saving Benwick

The party has to rush to a place where Benwick usually meets lizardfolk traders to prevent Benwick's demise at the hands of the "villain," Ronnik. A confused Ronnik refuses to go down easily, and he has the help of allies who believe him to be the leader of the cult of Tiamat. **Session 8: Saving Benwick** starts on page 9, and **Encounter 2-8: Swamp Stones** is found on page 18.

Resting

Although the characters can take short rests between sessions, they cannot take an extended rest inside the dungeon. When they find out about the plot to kill Benwick, they have only a few hours to rescue the friar, and an extended rest is sure to doom him.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTERS

Chapter 2 assumes you have a normal party of five 1st-level characters and players familiar with the D&D game at your table. Compare the party at your table to this assumption, using the following guidelines.

Weak Party: You have a weak party at your table if it consists of only four characters, or if most or all the players are new to the D&D game. If you have a weak party, remove one of the lowest level or least important non-minion monsters from the encounter. For instance, in Encounter 2-6 (level 1 encounter), you might subtract a kobold quickblade.

Strong Party: You have a strong party at your table if it consists of six characters, or if most or all the players are veteran 4th-Edition D&D players who want an extra challenge. If you have a strong party, add one of the simplest non-minion monsters among those in the encounter whose level most closely matches the encounter level. For instance, in Encounter 2-6, you might add another kobold quickblade.



The adventure included here is the second of 5 chapters for this D&D Encounters season. The subsequent adventures will be available separately as the season progresses. Check with your organizer upon completion of this adventure to receive the next adventure.

Chapter 2: Into Dragontooth

On Ronnik's trail, the heroes are ready to beard the "villain" in his lair, engaging in a traditional Dungeons & Dragons dungeon crawl. Still, Ronnik seems one step ahead. In the end, Benwick's troubleshooters are forced to rush to their patron's rescue.

Session 5: Entrance Cave

At the start of the session, make sure each adventurer has had the chance to take an extended rest. Then read the following text.

You awaken early to clear skies and head northwest, away from the King's Wall. The ominous wall of the Chaos Scar looms to the west, but you have another destination. Soon enough, a crooked, rocky hill comes into view. Your path leads against the current of a brisk stream, which you discover flows from a waterfall. The water spills out of the mouth of a dark, elevated cave in Dragontooth Hill. A short climb is required to get into the cave.

The cliff is 20 feet high. Climbing to the top requires 6 squares of movement and a DC 15 Athletics check. At the top, on the eastern side of the waterfall, a coiled of knotted rope is nailed into the rock. The rope is long enough to reach the bottom of the cliff and requires 6 squares of movement and a DC 5 Athletics check to climb to the top.

Stealth: Due to the roar of the water, if the characters attempt to be stealthy, they gain a +5 bonus to Stealth checks until they enter the cave. Even if the characters fail to be quiet, the monsters wait. Once the characters reach the top, go to **Encounter 2-5: Foul Flow** (page 12).

Session 6: Old Shrine

After a short rest in the entrance chamber of Dragontooth Hill, the adventurers must scale the inner waterfall to continue. Like the outer cliff, the ledge is 20 feet high (DC 15 Athletics check to climb). At the top, on the eastern side of the waterfall, one end of a coiled rope is nailed into the rock. The hemp (DC 5 Athletics check to climb) looks new and long enough to reach the bottom of the cliff.

When the characters reach the top ledge, read the following text.

Flickering orange light illuminates the ledge from a carved archway to the east. Fires must illuminate the room there. Squeaking voices chatter beyond the doorway.

Over the sound of the waterfalls, the characters can barely make out a few mundane phrases in Draconic. The voices sound like kobolds. Once the characters enter the area, you can have the players place their miniatures in the starting area and then go to **Encounter 2-6: Strong Fire** (page 14).

Session 7: Dragon Aerie

After a short rest, the characters can use the lift (if available) or the spiral stairway to ascend to the next area.

Lift: No chance of stealth exists if the lift is used. Characters that use the noisy lift hear the creatures above preparing for battle (scraping furniture, drawn weapons, growls) only on a successful DC 19 Perception check. On a failure, the kobolds gain surprise when the heroes reach the upper floor.

Spiral Stairway: The adventurers can try to sneak up the dark spiral staircase. If a sneaking character's Stealth check is 23 or lower, though, a magic warding ritual detects them and shouts out, "Greetings, unknown creatures!" A character can notice the ward with a DC 19 Perception check and can disable it with a DC 19 Thievery check. Failure by 5 or more causes the alarm to go off. If the warning goes off, the characters and the monsters are not surprised at the start of combat.

When the characters arrive upstairs, go to **Encounter 2-7: Cold Finish** (page 16).

Wrapping Up Dragontooth Hill

Through either conversation or investigation, the party learns Ronnik “insidious plans.”

Captives: Mox or the humanoids can confirm Ronnik was at Dragontooth Hill this morning, but he left a while ago. They divulge that the banker used a magical ritual to contact his lizardfolk allies, planning to ambush and murder Benwick this very day. The friar trades for herbs with local lizardfolk on a predictable schedule at a usual place—the end of an old road near the swamp, where older dolmens stand. The captives can indicate the meeting place on the characters’ map, since they are supposed to join Ronnik there later.

Documents: One of the tables on the upper floor of Dragontooth Hill holds maps and plans. These documents reveal the same plot that the captives (if any) do, as well as the old road/dolmen meeting location. The papers also sketch out Ronnik’s plan to finance the refitting of Dragontooth Hill as a small fortress for Tiamat. One letter indicates that he has established relations with a small kobold tribe, the Burning Scales. The adventurers just defeated several of these kobolds at Dragontooth Hill.

Serpent’s Eye: The characters have recovered a large, polished tiger-eye jewel with the symbol of Avandra on one side and the symbol of Zehir on the other. They each receive 20 XP for completing a minor quest, but must wait until they give or refuse to give Benwick the jewel to receive any treasure for the accomplishment.

Moving On: Once the characters decide to leave Dragontooth Hill—either using the zip line or by backtracking—the session is over. They’re ready to rescue Benwick in the chapter finale.

Session 8: Saving Benwick

Benwick’s plan is coming together. With the help of the heroes, he has set up Ferdinand Ronnik perfectly. A doppelganger posing as Ronnik performs a ritual to instruct the cult’s lizardfolk allies to meet in a clearing near the swamp. There, Benwick will stage a specially prepared scene.

Final Race

The characters rush from Dragontooth Hill to save their patron, Benwick. At the start of the session, read the following text.

Armed with your map, you rush across the countryside, out of the Chaos Scar, and beyond the King’s Wall. You quickly find the old road you’re looking for and follow it north toward the swamp. The trees close in as the land descends and becomes marshier.

Your haste pays off. Approaching the location, you hear furious yelling and Benwick’s cries for help.

The adventurers have no time for stealth, for as soon as they near the clearing, they hear Benwick’s cries for help.

When the adventurers enter the area, go to **Encounter 2-8: Swamp Stones** (page 18).

Concluding the Adventure

Once the final battle is over, a few loose ends remain.

Benwick, Gordi, and Sal

Benwick survives, of course, and he’s extremely grateful, continuing to play the part of the jolly friar. In truth, he has come to value the adventurers and prefers to remain an ally, for now. Keep potential enemies close, and all that.

Gordi and Sal survive, too. “Regaining consciousness” shortly after the battle ends. They pretend to be grateful survivors. Gordi volunteers to carry packs and perform similar menial tasks for the heroes.

Ferdinand Ronnik

If Ronnik dies, Benwick expresses grief that it had to come to that, but relief that it’s over. If Ronnik survives, he remains crazed for the duration of the trip back to Restwell Keep. Benwick volunteers to take him to the authorities to recount the adventurer’s heroic exploits and ensure that Ronnik ends up in Drysdale’s dungeons for what he’s done. Of course, he denies everything right up until he’s hanged in the public square a few days later.

Citizens of the outer bailey treat the characters like saviors for ridding the keep of “that snake, Ronnik.” The heroes might enjoy occasional discounts in the shops (never the inn) and a few free drinks at The Stumbling Giant.

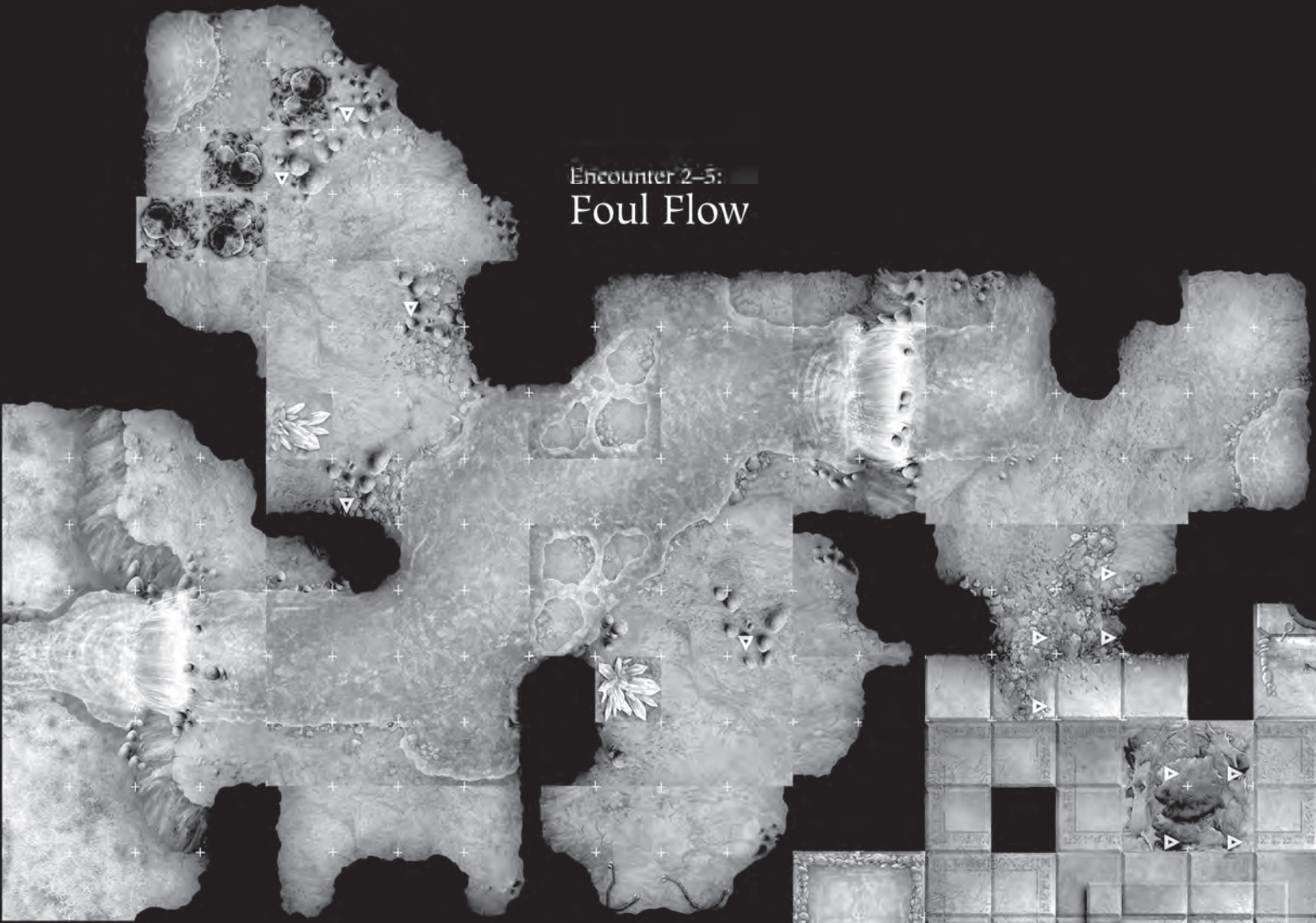
The Serpent’s Eye

Benwick offers each character a 75 gp reward for recovering the jewel. He says that for now, the gem should remain with Chendera at the temple of Avandra for safekeeping. If the characters ask about the symbol of Zehir on the jewel, he tells them that a cult of Zehir stole the gem from the temple of Avandra in Fallcrest and placed the symbol on it. Much later, Ronnik stole the gem from the cult and “selfishly refused to return it.”

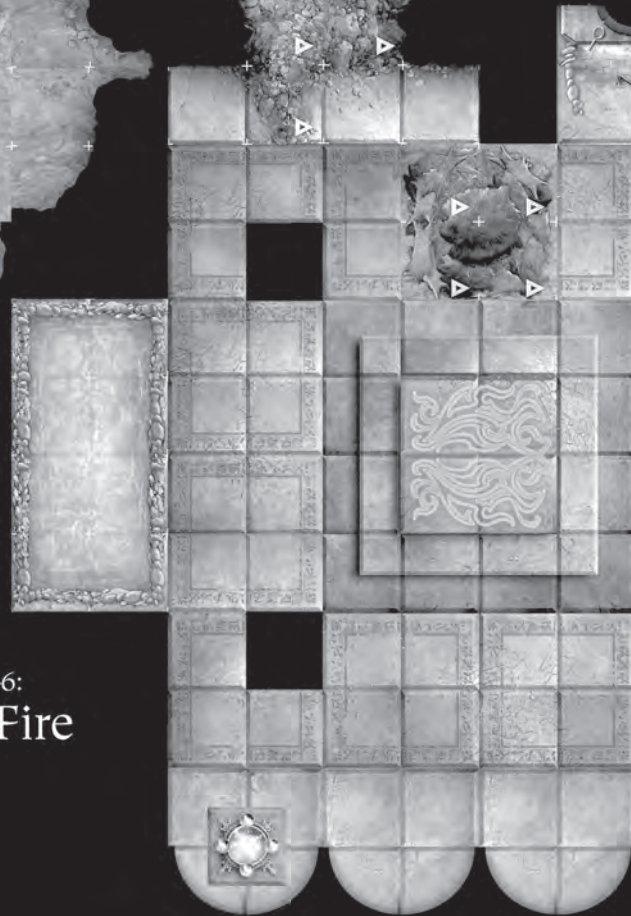
The friar requests that the characters, after a well-earned rest, speak to Gorn Hammerfell, captain of the watch. Benwick believes that Gorn has a problem that the Serpent’s Eye and the adventurers can help solve. Benwick says he’d like to see the Serpent’s Eye do some good before it’s returned to Fallcrest.

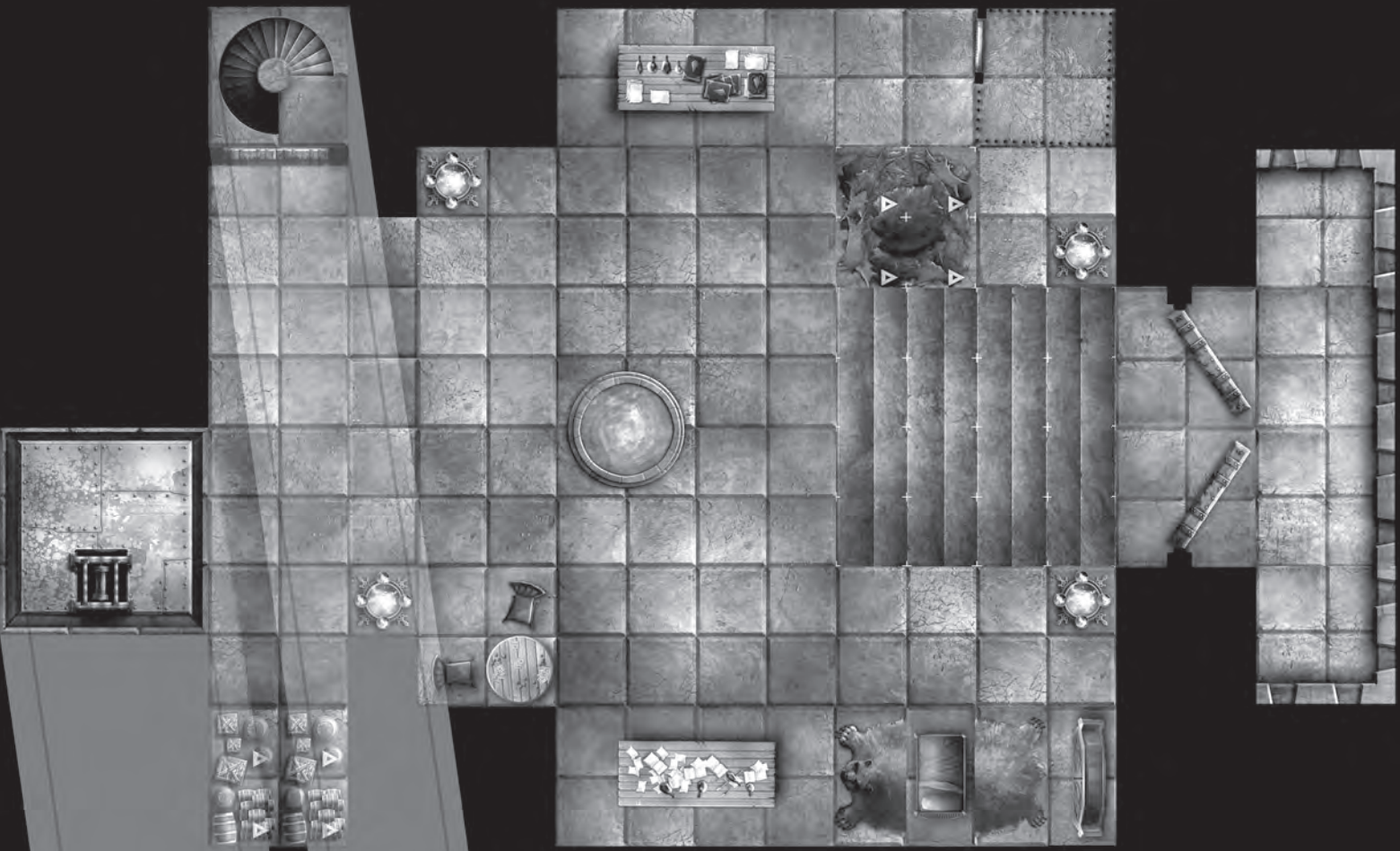
If the party refuses to give up the gem, they do not receive Benwick’s reward and quickly discover that no one wants the gem because of the symbol of Zehir on it. Chendera eventually comes to the party and asks for it on behalf of Avandra, offering 40 gp to each character for turning it over.

Encounter 2-5:
Foul Flow



Encounter 2-6:
Strong Fire





Encounter 2-7:
Cold Finish

ENCOUNTER 2–5: FOUL FLOW

Encounter Level 2 (625 XP)

Setup

Kobold ooze talker (K)
3 squelching oozes (O)
4 acid cap mushrooms hazards

The monsters start the encounter out of line of sight. Don't reveal them.

When the party enters the area, read:

Though the cave seemed dark from outside, a dim blue light pervades, issuing from an unknown source. A rope lies coiled to the east at the top of the cliff.

A second waterfall roars to the rear of the cavern. Water flows through the cave's center where a few flat rocks protrude from it. Mixed with the scent of fresh water and earth is a slight odor of decay.

A short distance from the entrance, illuminated by the light from outside, a rope dangles from the ceiling. A piton holds it fast. The cavern's denizens appear to use the rope to traverse the stream.

Spotting Danger: A character with line of sight to an ooze can spot the creature by succeeding on a DC 22 Perception check.

Rope Swings: Secure ropes hang down from the ceiling in the places marked "X" on the map. A character in one of these squares gains a +5 bonus to Athletics checks to jump and is considered to have a running start. The characters, depending on position, light, and line of sight, might be able to see the other ropes hanging within the cavern.

Tactics

Squelching oozes instinctively conceal themselves when inactive; they begin the encounter hidden. The oozes react when the first character enters their line of sight (blindsight), remaining still until then. Once they sense prey, they attack until slain.

The kobold starts off lounging behind the mushrooms, out of line of sight until she acts. She waits until the oozes enter combat before attacking and prefers cover to moving out into the open. The kobold might flee out of the cave.

12

Features of the Area

Illumination: The cavern is illuminated with bright light due to the outside light, the braziers, and the crystals.

Armor Square: A character that moves adjacent to this square can see deeper water here (5 feet). Shiny objects and apparently undamaged armor are mixed with bones and corroded items under the swirling current.

Boulders/Rubble: Rocky squares marked with triangles are difficult terrain.

Ceiling: 15 feet above ground level.

Crystals: Squares containing these glowing rocks are difficult terrain. Characters can harvest the crystals, which provide 10 squares of bright light for 4 hours after they're collected.

Ledges: These rises are 20 feet high. Climbing up or down requires a DC 15 Athletics check and 5 squares of movement. Falling from them into water counts as a 10-foot fall instead of a 20-foot fall. Both cliffs have ropes coiled at the top on the eastern side of the stream.

Pools: The pools are shallow, forming difficult terrain. The water is acrid.

Prisoner Chains: New chains with manacles are fastened to the cave wall here. Signs of acid damage and blood mar them.

Stream: The stream is shallow and difficult terrain. A creature without a swim speed that ends its turn in the water must succeed on a DC 8 Athletics check or be pushed 2 square toward the entrance. The water is fresh.

Stream Rocks: These flat surfaces are slippery but safe.

Treasure: The Armor Square contains a level 5 suit of magic armor and gems and jewelry worth 70 gp.

4 Acid Cap Mushrooms Level 1 Minion Hazard Terrain XP 25 each

Detect Dungeoneering DC 12

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

AC 15, **Fortitude** 13, **Reflex** 10, **Will** –

Immune acid, poison, psychic, forced movement, all conditions, ongoing damage

TRAITS

Oversized Fungi

Squares with acid cap mushrooms are difficult terrain.

TRIGGERED ACTIONS

⬇ Caustic Spores (acid) ♦ At-Will

Trigger: A creature enters the mushroom's square while on the ground.

Attack (Free Action): Melee 0 (triggering creature); +4 vs. Fortitude.

Hit: 5 acid damage.

Miss: 2 acid damage.

Kobold Ooze Talker (K)		Level 3 Artillery
Small natural humanoid (reptile)		XP 150
HP 36; Bloodied 18		Initiative +3
AC 13, Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 12		Perception +2
Speed 6		Darkvision
Resist 5 acid		
STANDARD ACTIONS		
⬇ Caustic Dagger (acid, weapon) ♦ At-Will		
<i>Attack:</i> Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC		
<i>Hit:</i> 1d4 + 2 damage plus 1d4 + 3 acid damage.		
⚡ Ooze Orb (acid) ♦ At-Will		
<i>Attack:</i> Ranged 15 (one creature); +7 vs. Fortitude		
<i>Hit:</i> 2d6 + 4 acid damage.		
✱ Ooze Whisper ♦ Encounter		
<i>Attack:</i> Area burst 1 within 10 (enemies in the burst); +7 vs. Reflex.		
<i>Hit:</i> Ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends).		
<i>Effect:</i> One ally in the burst can make a basic attack as a free action.		
MINOR ACTIONS		
Shifty ♦ At-Will		
<i>Effect:</i> The kobold shifts 1 square.		
TRIGGERED ACTIONS		
Scathing Maneuver ♦ At-Will		
<i>Trigger:</i> An attack that deals acid damage hits the kobold.		
<i>Effect (Immediate Interrupt):</i> The kobold shifts up to 3 squares.		
Skills Stealth +8		
Str 9 (+0)	Dex 15 (+3)	Wis 12 (+2)
Con 12 (+2)	Int 9 (+0)	Cha 17 (+4)
Alignment evil		Languages Common, Draconic
Equipment bone breastplate, dagger, bone mask		

3 Squelching Oozes (O)		Level 2 Skirmisher
Small natural beast (blind, ooze)		XP 125 each
HP 41; Bloodied 20		Initiative +5
AC 16, Fortitude 15, Reflex 14, Will 13		Perception +2
Speed 5, climb 3, swim 3		Blind, blindsight 10
Immune blinded, gaze effects; Resist 5 acid		
TRAITS		
Ooze		
While squeezing, the ooze moves at full speed rather than half speed, it doesn't take the -5 penalty to attack rolls, and it doesn't grant combat advantage for squeezing.		
STANDARD ACTIONS		
⬇ Slam (acid) ♦ At-Will		
<i>Attack:</i> Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC		
<i>Hit:</i> 2d6 + 3 acid damage.		
MINOR ACTIONS		
Slippery ♦ At-Will		
<i>Effect:</i> The ooze shifts up to 2 squares, or 1 square while swimming.		
TRIGGERED ACTIONS		
⚡ Squelching Stench F Encounter		
<i>Trigger:</i> The ooze takes damage during its turn.		
<i>Attack (Immediate Reaction):</i> Close burst 1 (creatures in the burst); +5 vs. Fortitude		
<i>Hit:</i> The ooze pushes the target up to 2 squares.		
Skills Stealth +12		
Str 11 (+1)	Dex 15 (+3)	Wis 12 (+2)
Con 17 (+4)	Int 1 (-4)	Cha 1 (-4)
Alignment unaligned		Languages –

ENCOUNTER 2–6: STRONG FIRE

Encounter Level 1 (550 XP)

Setup

Kobold wyrmpriest (W)
3 kobold quickblades (Q)
4 kobold tunnelers (T)

The kobolds can see the entrance to their chamber clearly, so it is impossible for the characters to surprise them.

When the party enters the area, read:

This cavern is walled and paved in cut stone. Draconic runes are carved in the floor.

Four pillars surround a raised stone dais upon which a red runic symbol is carved. Small motes of fire dance on its arcane lines.

Past the symbol and pillars are two doorways; orange, flickering light shows through them. In between the doors, a huge platform for a lift bears a hand-operated crank. The far side of the lift opens to another area beyond it.

A few kobolds move about, involving themselves in various tasks. At your approach, their eyes go wide and they begin chattering in Draconic.

Tactics

The quickblades and tunnelers keep enemies away from the wyrmpriest. As soon as the wyrmpriest enters the main chamber, he cries, “Ixenstrix!” and displays a clay symbol of Tiamat. The wyrmpriest has control of the fire rune during its first turn. After that, refer to the “Ixenstrix!” section below.

If the fight goes badly, the wyrmpriest or another kobold orders one of their kin to escape up the lift or the stairs to warn “Moxulhar and the others” about the intruders.

Ixenstrix!

When the wyrmpriest yells this phrase, which means “strong fire” in Draconic, all the kobolds begin to chant the word. As they do, the runic symbol and the fires glow brighter.

A character trained in Arcana can tell the wyrmpriest and his followers are controlling the rune. He or she also knows that control can be wrested from them through skilled use of Arcana and a similar chant.

At the start of each round, the wyrmpriest and one adventurer make an opposed Arcana check (mark this event on the initiative chart). The kobold wyrmpriest gains a +1 bonus to the check per living kobold in the room. The adventurer performing the check gains a +1 bonus to the check for each other adventurer chanting “ixenstrix.”

Whoever succeeds on the Arcana check gains control of the runic symbol until the start of the next round. The creature that controls the symbol can make the Fire Rune attack (see below).

Fire Rune

At Will Terrain

The flame burns cheerily and safely in its brazier, fireplace, or other container . . . until it lashes out abruptly.

Minor Action (1/round)

Target: One creature within 5 squares of a source of fire, such as the fireplace or a brazier.

Attack: +4 vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d4 fire damage.

Features of the Area

Illumination: Fires brightly light the area.

Architecture: A character that succeeds on a DC 12 History check can discern that the architecture is aged but clearly dragonborn in style.

Braziers: These furnishings are visibly bolted to the floor and cannot be knocked over. A creature that is forced to move into a square containing a brazier takes 1d6 fire damage.

Cells: The iron bars on these small rooms are latched, but not locked.

Crates: These casks and crates of supplies are difficult terrain. They contain food that looks to have been stolen.

Fireplace: A creature that is forced to move into a square containing the fireplace takes 1d6 fire damage.

Fur Pile: Loosely stacked to form bedding, these cured hides are difficult terrain.

Lift: The platform is on this level. Using the crank is a standard action. It causes the lift to noisily ascend into the area of the next encounter. The

Pool: The pool is shallow, forming difficult terrain. The water is warm.

Rune: The squares containing the rune are harmless.

Spiral Stair: These stairs lead up to the area of **Encounter 2-7: Cold Finish** (page 16).

Conclusion

A captured kobold can identify Ronnik as its patron. If a character succeeds on a DC 12 Intimidate check against a captured kobold, it describes the creatures and the contents of the area above.

Any kobold that escapes up the lift joins **Encounter 2-7: Cold Finish** (page 16).

3 Kobold Quickblades (Q) Level 1 Skirmisher

Small natural humanoid (reptile) XP 100 each

HP 29; **Bloodied** 14 Initiative +5
 AC 15, Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 12 Perception +1
 Speed 6 Darkvision

STANDARD ACTIONS⬇️ **Short Sword** (weapon) ⬆️ **At-Will**

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC

Hit: 1d6 + 3 damage. The attack deals 2 extra damage per square the kobold has shifted since the start of its turn.

MOVE ACTIONS**Fleet Feet** ⬆️ **At-Will**

Effect: The kobold shifts up to 3 squares.

Shifty ⬆️ **At-Will**

Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.

Skills Athletics +4, Stealth +8, Thievery +8

Str 8 (-1) Dex 17 (+3) Wis 13 (+1)

Con 13 (+1) Int 9 (-1) Cha 10 (+0)

Alignment evil Languages Common, Draconic

Equipment leather armor, light shield, short sword

Kobold Wyrmpriest (W) Level 3 Artillery (Leader)

Small natural humanoid (reptile) XP 150

HP 36; **Bloodied** 18 Initiative +3
 AC 15, Fortitude 14, Reflex 15, Will 16 Perception +4
 Speed 6 Darkvision

STANDARD ACTIONS⬇️ **Chilling Spear** (cold, weapon) ⬆️ **At-Will**

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC

Hit: 1d8 damage plus 1d6 + 4 cold damage.

⌚ **Ice Orb** (cold) ⬆️ **At-Will**

Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +8 vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d6 + 4 cold damage.

Incite Faith ⬆️ **Recharge** [☒], [☒]

Effect: Close burst 5 (one kobold ally in the burst). The target can shift 1 square and use a basic attack. If it hits, it gains 5 temporary hit points and all other kobold allies within the area can shift 1 square.

MINOR ACTIONS**Shifty** ⬆️ **At-Will**

Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.

TRIGGERED ACTIONS⬅️ **Explosive Breath** (cold) ⬆️ **Encounter**

Trigger: The kobold is bloodied by a melee attack or is bloodied and takes damage from a melee attack.

Attack (Immediate Reaction): Close blast 3 (creatures in the blast); +8 vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d6 + 2 cold damage, and the target is pushed up to 2 squares.

Miss: Half damage.

Skills Arcana +7, Stealth +8

Str 9 (+0) Dex 15 (+3) Wis 17 (+4)

Con 12 (+2) Int 12 (+2) Cha 12 (+2)

Alignment evil Languages Common, Draconic

Equipment robes, spear, bone mask

4 Kobold Tunnelers (T) Level 1 Minion Skirmisher

Small natural humanoid (reptile) XP 25 each

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. Initiative +5
 AC 15, Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 12 Perception +1
 Speed 6 Darkvision

STANDARD ACTIONS⬇️ **Javelin** (weapon) ⬆️ **At-Will**

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC

Hit: 4 damage.

⌚ **Javelin** (weapon) ⬆️ **At-Will**

Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +6 vs. AC

Hit: 4 damage.

MINOR ACTIONS**Shifty** ⬆️ **At-Will**

Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.

TRIGGERED ACTIONS**Narrow Escape** ⬆️ **Encounter**

Trigger: A close or an area attack hits or misses the kobold.

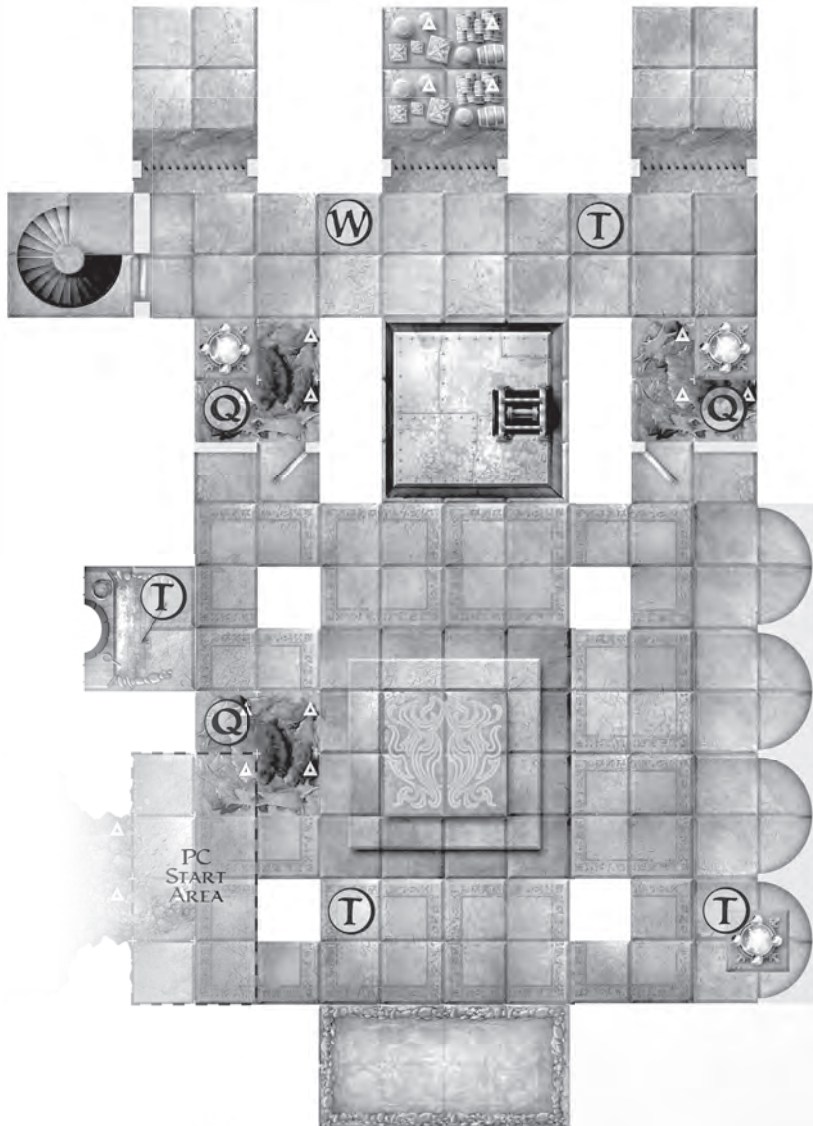
Effect (Immediate Interrupt): The kobold shifts up to 3 squares.

Str 8 (-1) Dex 16 (+3) Wis 12 (+1)

Con 12 (+1) Int 9 (-1) Cha 10 (+0)

Alignment evil Languages Common, Draconic

Equipment leather armor, 3 javelins



ENCOUNTER 2–7: COLD FINISH

Encounter Level 2 (675 XP)

Setup

Moxulhar, copper dragon wyrmling (C)
1 dragonborn mercenary (D)
2 kobold dragonshields (K)

If the characters come up the stairs, have the players place their miniatures in the starting area. Otherwise, have them start on the lift.

When the party enters the area, read:

Other than the fire braziers that light this large room, daylight pours in through large double doors that are open to an outdoor balcony at the top of a broad staircase. The room contains new and out-of-place furnishings—such as a cage and a card table—and lots of unopened supplies. The inhabitants clearly arrived recently.

Two armored, shield-bearing kobolds and a leather-clad, axe-wielding dragonborn look ready for a fight.

The wyrmling crouches in the shadows of its area when it hears approaching creatures, so it has a chance to start out hidden.

If a character has a passive Perception of 17 or higher, also read:

You also notice a copper dragon the size of a hunting hound crouching in the corner, trying to escape notice.

Tactics

The kobolds engage the characters to allow the dragon and dragonborn freer movement. All monsters are aggressive and bold in battle.

The dragon is a chatty combatant (see “Roleplaying the Dragon” below), and once bloodied, she can be made to surrender with a successful DC 12 Intimidate check. Alternatively, a character that succeeds on a DC 19 Diplomacy check can persuade her to aid the characters against the dragonborn and the kobolds.

When an attack reduces her to 24 hit points or fewer, she admits defeat and asks for mercy. She offers to disclose “much that is hidden.”

None of the humanoids surrender, claiming to fight for Tiamat and to protect their patron, Ronnik. The dragonborn might attack the dragon for surrendering, but use this response for drama only. The characters should decide Moxulhar’s fate.

Roleplaying the Dragon

Moxulhar, the copper dragon, sees the fight as fun. The dragon is precocious, so feel free to play up her personality. She comments on the damage dealt, complains when hurt, and makes various observations, such as:

“I wonder if that would make Tiamat proud?”

“Ferdinand won’t be happy with you at all.”

“I’m a ferocious dragon.”

“I wonder what you taste like under that metal?”

She banters with willing enemies. Once defeated, the dragon is appeasing and respectful of the adventurer’s skill. She doesn’t want to die.

If given a chance to converse, Moxulhar seems an okay sort. She tells the characters that they can call her “Mox.” Mox is a young dragon, eager to prove her strength. The cult attracted her with offerings of service, shelter, and treasure, including the Serpent’s Eye. Mox is willing to promise not to fall in with evil again if set free. She might even decide to turn to heroics if properly influenced.

Conclusion

After the battle concludes, refer back to “Wrapping Up Dragontooth Hill” on page 9 for how to set things up for the final encounter of the chapter.

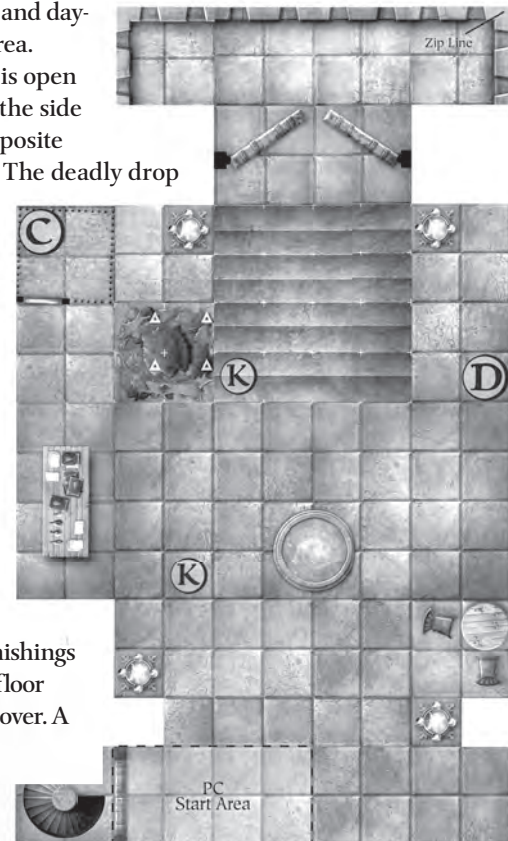
Features of the Area

Illumination: Fires and daylight brightly light the area.

Balcony: This area is open to a sheer rock face on the side of Dragontooth Hill opposite the waterfall entrance. The deadly drop is 100 feet into woods. The high, crenellated guard wall grants a +7 bonus to any saving throw made to avoid going over the edge. A zip line attached on the eastern corner allows quick descent (see below).

Bed or Tables: Squares containing these furnishings are difficult terrain.

Braziers: These furnishings are visibly bolted to the floor and cannot be knocked over. A creature that is forced



to move into a square containing a brazier takes 1d6 fire damage.

Cage: This unlocked cage was obviously brought from outside.

Goods: The containers for food, ale, and other supplies are difficult terrain.

Fur Pile: Loosely stacked to form bedding, these cured hides are difficult terrain.

Furniture: Squares containing furniture are difficult terrain.

Lift Pit: If the lift isn't on this level, its shaft is a 20-foot drop.

Pool: The pool is difficult terrain. The water is cold.

Spiral Staircase: The spiral stairs ascend 20 feet from the previous level.

Stairs: The staircase rising up to the balcony is gradual, rising 10 feet in total.

Treasure: The cage holds a small hoard: the Serpent's Eye (see page 9), a level 4 magic weapon, and a level 3 magic neck item. Hidden under one of the cage's floor cobbles (DC 19 Perception check to find) is a *potion of healing* (*Heroes of the Fallen Lands*) and a silver and ruby eye (100 gp). If the characters are running low on healing surges at this point in the adventure, you can modify the potion to instead restore one healing surge when consumed.

Zip Line: The line from the balcony is safe. One character at a time can slide down a pulley, over the trees, to a meadow at the base of the hill. The pulley can be winched back up to allow further descents.

Moxulhar, Copper Dragon Wyrmling (C)		Level 3 Elite Controller	
Medium natural magical beast (dragon)		XP 300	
HP 96; Bloodied 48		Initiative +2	
AC 17, Fortitude 16, Reflex 14, Will 15		Perception +7	
Speed 6 (ice walk), fly 6		Darkvision	
Resist 5 acid			
Saving Throws +2; Action Points 1			
STANDARD ACTIONS			
⬇ Bite (acid) ♦ At-Will			
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC			
Hit: 2d8 + 4 acid damage, and the target is slowed until the end of the dragon's next turn. If the target is already slowed, it is instead immobilized until the end of its next turn.			
⬇ Claw ♦ At-Will			
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC			
Hit: 2d6 + 2 damage, and the dragon can slide the target 1 square.			
⬇ Wyrmling Rampage ♦ At-Will			
Effect: The dragon uses bite against one target, shifts up to 2 squares, and uses claw against a different target.			
⬅ Breath Weapon (acid) ♦ Recharge when first bloodied			
Attack: Close blast 4 (creatures in the blast); +6 vs. Fortitude			
Hit: 2d8 + 7 acid damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).			
Miss: Half damage.			
Skills Stealth +7, Intimidate +8			
Str 17 (+4)	Dex 12 (+2)	Wis 12 (+2)	
Con 16 (+4)	Int 10 (+1)	Cha 14 (+3)	
Alignment unaligned		Languages Common, Draconic	

Dragonborn Mercenary (D)		Level 2 Skirmisher	
Medium natural humanoid		XP 125	
HP 38; Bloodied 19		Initiative +6	
AC 16, Fortitude 13, Reflex 14, Will 14		Perception +2	
Speed 6			
TRAITS			
Skirmish			
If the dragonborn ends a move on its turn at least 4 squares from where it started the move, it deals 1d6 extra damage with melee attacks until the start of its next turn.			
STANDARD ACTIONS			
⬇ Battleaxe (weapon) ♦ At-Will			
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC, or +8 vs. AC while the dragonborn is bloodied.			
Hit: 1d10 + 4 damage, and the dragonborn shifts up to 2 squares.			
⬇ Overwhelming Strike (weapon) ♦ Encounter			
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC			
Hit: 2d10 + 4 damage, and the target grants combat advantage (save ends).			
Miss: Half damage.			
MINOR ACTIONS			
⬅ Dragon Breath (lightning) ♦ Encounter			
Attack: Close blast 3 (creatures in the blast); +5 vs. Reflex			
Hit: 1d6 + 2 lightning damage.			
TRIGGERED ACTIONS			
Tactical Withdrawal ♦ Encounter			
Trigger: The dragonborn is bloodied.			
Effect (Immediate Reaction): The dragonborn shifts up to 3 squares.			
Str 18 (+5)	Dex 16 (+4)	Wis 13 (+2)	
Con 14 (+3)	Int 8 (+0)	Cha 10 (+1)	
Alignment unaligned		Languages Common, Draconic	
Equipment hide armor, battleaxe			

2 Kobold Dragonshields (K)		Level 2 Soldier	
Small natural humanoid (reptile)		XP 125 each	
HP 36; Bloodied 18		Initiative +4	
AC 18, Fortitude 14, Reflex 13, Will 13		Perception +2	
Speed 5		Darkvision	
STANDARD ACTIONS			
⬇ Short Sword (weapon) ♦ At-Will			
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC			
Hit: 1d6 + 6 damage.			
Effect: The kobold marks the target until the end of the kobold's next turn.			
⬇ Dirty Tactics (weapon) ♦ Encounter			
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +5 vs. Reflex			
Hit: 2d6 + 7 damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of the kobold's next turn.			
Miss: Half damage, and the target is slowed until the end of the kobold's next turn.			
MINOR ACTIONS			
Shifty ♦ At-Will			
Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.			
TRIGGERED ACTIONS			
Dragonshield Tactics ♦ At-Will			
Trigger: An enemy adjacent to the kobold shifts or an enemy moves to a square adjacent to the kobold.			
Effect (Immediate Reaction): The kobold shifts 1 square.			
Skills Athletics +8, Stealth +7, Thievery +7			
Str 14 (+3)	Dex 13 (+2)	Wis 12 (+2)	
Con 12 (+2)	Int 9 (+0)	Cha 10 (+1)	
Alignment evil		Languages Common, Draconic	
Equipment scale armor, light shield, short sword			

ENCOUNTER 2–8: SWAMP STONES

Encounter Level 2 (675 XP)

Setup

Ferdinand Ronnik (R)
Dragonborn mercenary (D)
3 poisonscale savages (P)

When the adventurers arrive in the area, place Benwick (B), Gordi (G), and Sal (S) along with all the other monsters. Then read the following text.

Benwick kneels on one side of the clearing, his hands raised defensively. A dragonborn has its weapon raised, menacing him. Nearby, Benwick's companions, Gordi and Sal, lie motionless on the ground. Above them stands Ronnik, looking around wildly.

Three lizardfolk stand near Ronnik. At your approach, they look expectantly at Ronnik and hiss words at him in Draconic. Ronnik looks around, and before he can answer, the dragonborn glares at the lizardfolk and in Common says "We shall seal our agreement with blood. Come, Ronnik, we shall kill them together and welcome our reptilian brethren into Tiamat's fold."

With that, all four reptilian humanoids turn and attack.

If one of the heroes speaks Draconic, then he or she understands the lizardfolk's words. The lizardfolk asks Ronnik what they should do about the intruders. These lizardfolk have already sworn allegiance to Tiamat's cult through the fake Ronnik. They were expecting to meet with Ronnik in the clearing to seal their agreement.

In reality, the whole scene is carefully crafted by Benwick to have the characters' do his dirty work. Gordi and Sal are feigning unconsciousness, and Ronnik, addled from the drugs administered by Benwick, has just stumbled into the clearing to find Gordi and Sal unconscious. The lizardfolk and dragonborn arrived moments later, expecting a meeting with Ronnik. When they find the bewildered banker standing over Sal and Gordi, the reptilian humanoids assumed that Benwick and the others were enemies of Ronnik and that Ronnik wanted them killed.

The characters' arrival throws the scene into chaos.

Roleplaying Ferdinand Ronnik

Ronnik doesn't know Benwick is his enemy. Also, he has been drugged with a poison that confuses and enrages him. Play the banker a little crazy. He's severely bewildered, scared, and quick to anger. When attacked, he fights back erratically but with deadly intent.

If accused of the crimes in this adventure, he denies everything, but does so badly, saying something such as,

"I don't know you, and I don't know what you're talking about! You attacked me, dog!" A threat of punishment might illicit a statement such as, "Who are you to accuse me? I'll see you left for the crows!" Accusations of Tiamat worship might garner a response such as, "I'm a banker, not a priest, you fool!"

Ronnik, being somewhat vain, does admit to being a thief and stealing the Serpent's Eye in his day, which might not help the situation. "What are you then? Lackeys of Zehir come to steal my jewel? It's quite safe right where it is." Ronnik believes the jewel is in his strongbox and doesn't realize that Sal (disguised as Ronnik) brought it to Dragontooth Hill. Revelations to the contrary enrage Ronnik, who attacks anyone he thinks might have the Serpent's Eye. A character that has a passive Insight of 19 or higher or that makes a DC 19 Insight check or Heal check can discern that the banker is under some fell influence that is either magical or alchemical.

Tactics

The lizardfolk and dragonborn clash with the heroes toe to toe, although only the dragonborn tries to defend Ronnik.

If Ronnik doesn't have cause to attack the adventurers during the first round, then the dragonborn calls out to him during the second round: "What are you waiting for—slay them! They are here to kill us." When then dragonborn says this, it spurs Ronnik to act, even though he remains bewildered by the situation. He can charge one of the adventurers or make a melee basic attack as an immediate reaction.

Benwick

Benwick stumbles over to "help" Gordi and Sal. Then he cowers, playing the part of the frightened friar. If the adventurers are having a hard time in the battle, have Benwick spend his turns moving (speed 6) adjacent to an adventurer and allowing that character to use his or her second wind if the character has not yet used it.

Features of the Area

Illumination: Bright light.

Boulders: These 5-foot high rocks are blocking terrain and require a DC 8 Athletics check to climb.

Dolmens: These squares are difficult terrain.

Obelisk: This square is difficult terrain.

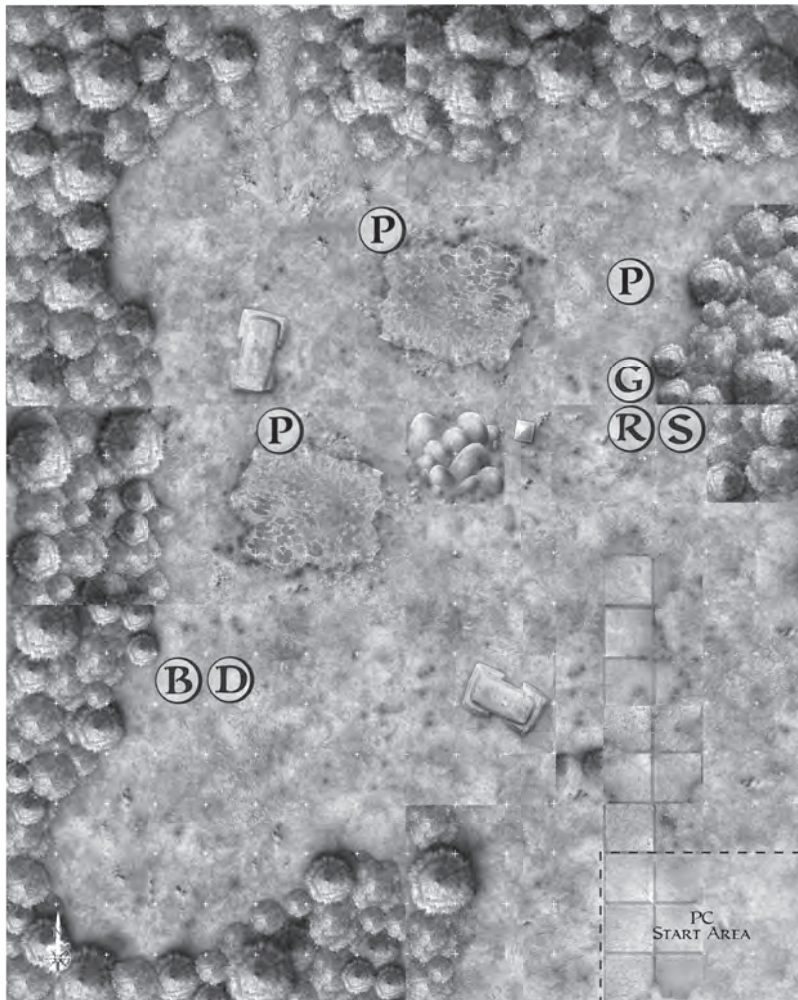
Ponds: These squares are difficult terrain.

Trees: These squares are difficult terrain.

Ferdinand Ronnik (R)		Level 4 Skirmisher	
Medium natural humanoid, human		XP 175	
HP 54; Bloodied 27		Initiative +6	
AC 18, Fortitude 15, Reflex 17, Will 16		Perception +1	
Speed 6			
STANDARD ACTIONS			
⬇ Short Sword (weapon) ⬆ At-Will			
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +9 vs. AC			
Hit: 2d6 + 4 damage, or 3d6 + 4 with combat advantage.			
⬇ Sly Switch (weapon) ⬆ At-Will			
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +9 vs. AC			
Hit: 2d6 + 4 damage, or 3d6 + 4 with combat advantage.			
Effect: Ronnik shifts up to 2 squares, and an ally can shift up to 2 squares to occupy the square Ronnik vacated.			
TRIGGERED ACTIONS			
⬇ Counter Step (weapon) ⬆ Recharge when first bloodied			
Trigger: An enemy hits Ronnik with a melee attack power.			
Attack (Immediate Reaction): Melee 1 (triggering enemy); +9 vs. AC			
Hit: 2d6 + 4 damage.			
Effect: Ronnik shifts up to 3 squares.			
Skills Athletics +7, Stealth +11, Thievery +11			
Str 11 (+2)	Dex 18 (+6)	Wis 9 (+1)	
Con 14 (+4)	Int 12 (+3)	Cha 16 (+5)	
Alignment unaligned		Languages Common	
Equipment leather armor, short sword			

Dragonborn Mercenary (D)		Level 2 Skirmisher	
Medium natural humanoid		XP 125	
HP 38; Bloodied 19		Initiative +6	
AC 16, Fortitude 13, Reflex 14, Will 14		Perception +2	
Speed 6			
TRAITS			
Skirmish			
If the dragonborn ends a move on its turn at least 4 squares from where it started the move, it deals 1d6 extra damage with melee attacks until the start of its next turn.			
STANDARD ACTIONS			
⬇ Battleaxe (weapon) ⬆ At-Will			
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC, or +8 vs. AC while the dragonborn is bloodied.			
Hit: 1d10 + 4 damage, and the dragonborn shifts up to 2 squares.			
⬇ Overwhelming Strike (weapon) ⬆ Encounter			
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC			
Hit: 2d10 + 4 damage, and the target grants combat advantage (save ends).			
Miss: Half damage.			
MINOR ACTIONS			
⬅ Dragon Breath (lightning) ⬆ Encounter			
Attack: Close blast 3 (creatures in the blast); +5 vs. Reflex			
Hit: 1d6 + 2 lightning damage.			
TRIGGERED ACTIONS			
Tactical Withdrawal ⬆ Encounter			
Trigger: The dragonborn is bloodied.			
Effect (Immediate Reaction): The dragonborn shifts up to 3 squares.			
Str 18 (+5)	Dex 16 (+4)	Wis 13 (+2)	
Con 14 (+3)	Int 8 (+0)	Cha 10 (+1)	
Alignment unaligned		Languages Common, Draconic	
Equipment hide armor, battleaxe			

3 Poisonscale Savages (P)		Level 2 Brute	
Medium natural humanoid (reptile), lizardfolk		XP 125 each	
HP 45; Bloodied 22		Initiative +3	
AC 14, Fortitude 15, Reflex 13, Will 12		Perception +2	
Speed 6 (swamp walk)			
STANDARD ACTIONS			
⬇ Greatclub (weapon) ⬆ At-Will			
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC			
Hit: 2d4 + 4 damage, and the target is knocked prone.			
⌘ Javelin (poison, weapon) ⬆ At-Will			
Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +7 vs. AC			
Hit: 1d6 + 4 damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).			
MINOR ACTIONS			
⬇ Poison Tail (poison) ⬆ At-Will (1/round)			
Attack: Melee 1 (one prone creature); +7 vs. AC			
Hit: Ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).			
Skills Athletics +9, Stealth +8			
Str 17 (+4)	Dex 14 (+3)	Wis 12 (+2)	
Con 15 (+3)	Int 8 (+0)	Cha 8 (+0)	
Alignment unaligned		Languages Draconic	
Equipment greatclub, 2 javelins			





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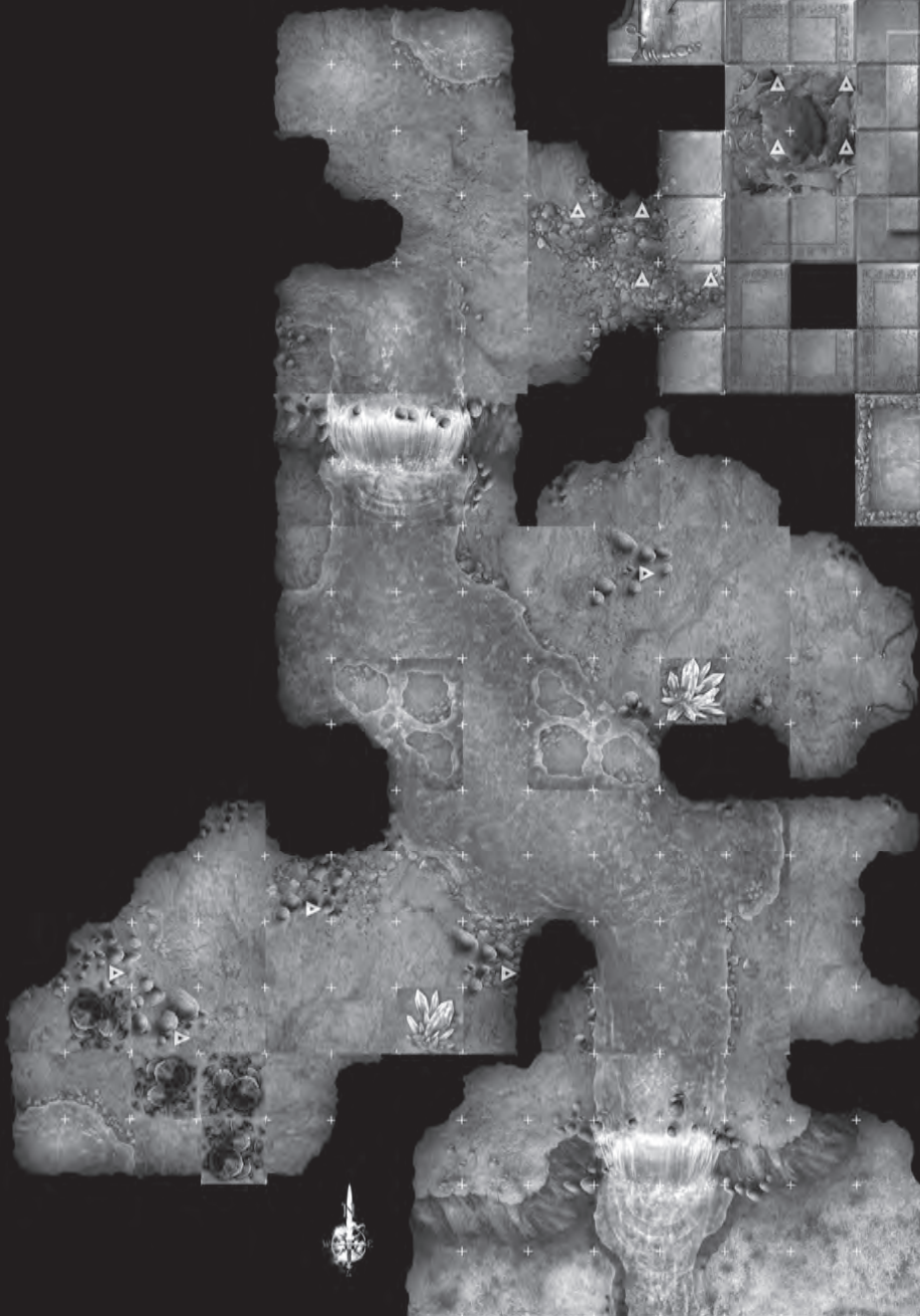
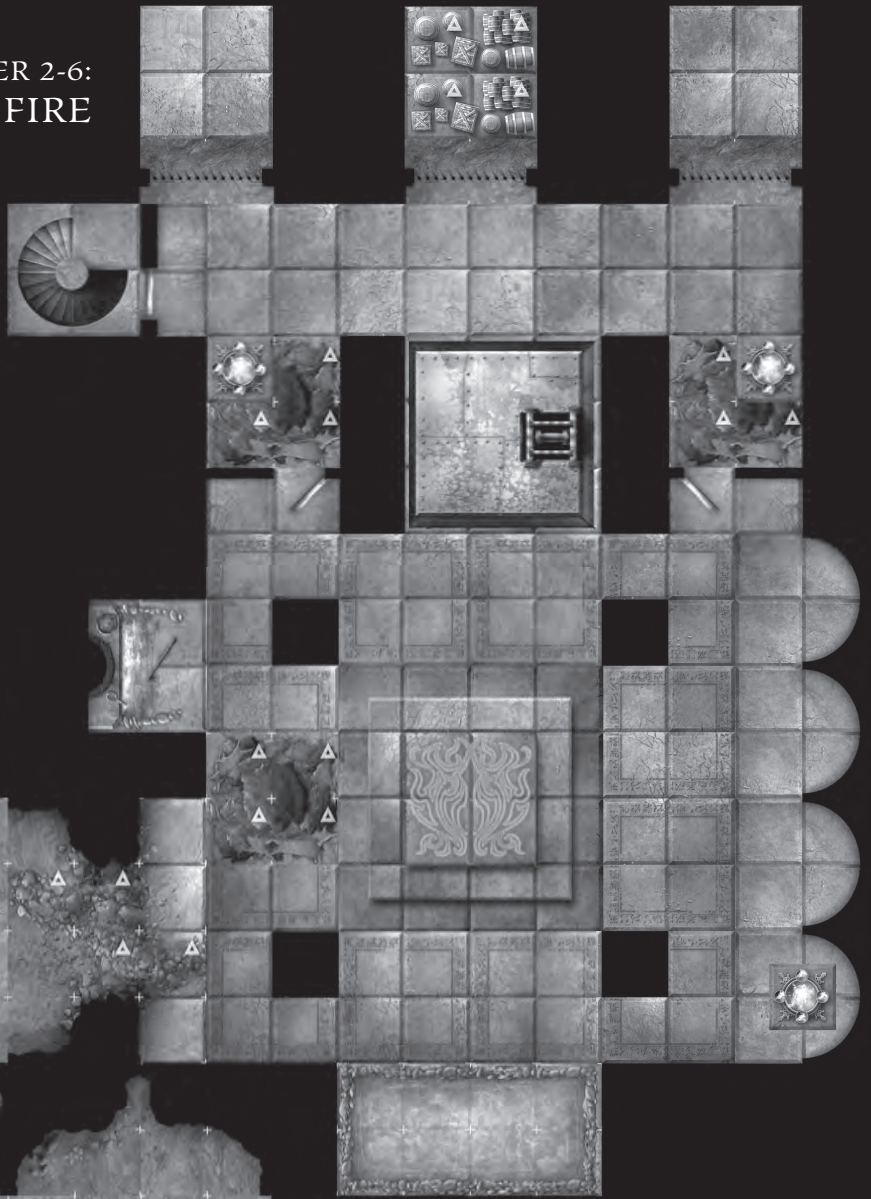


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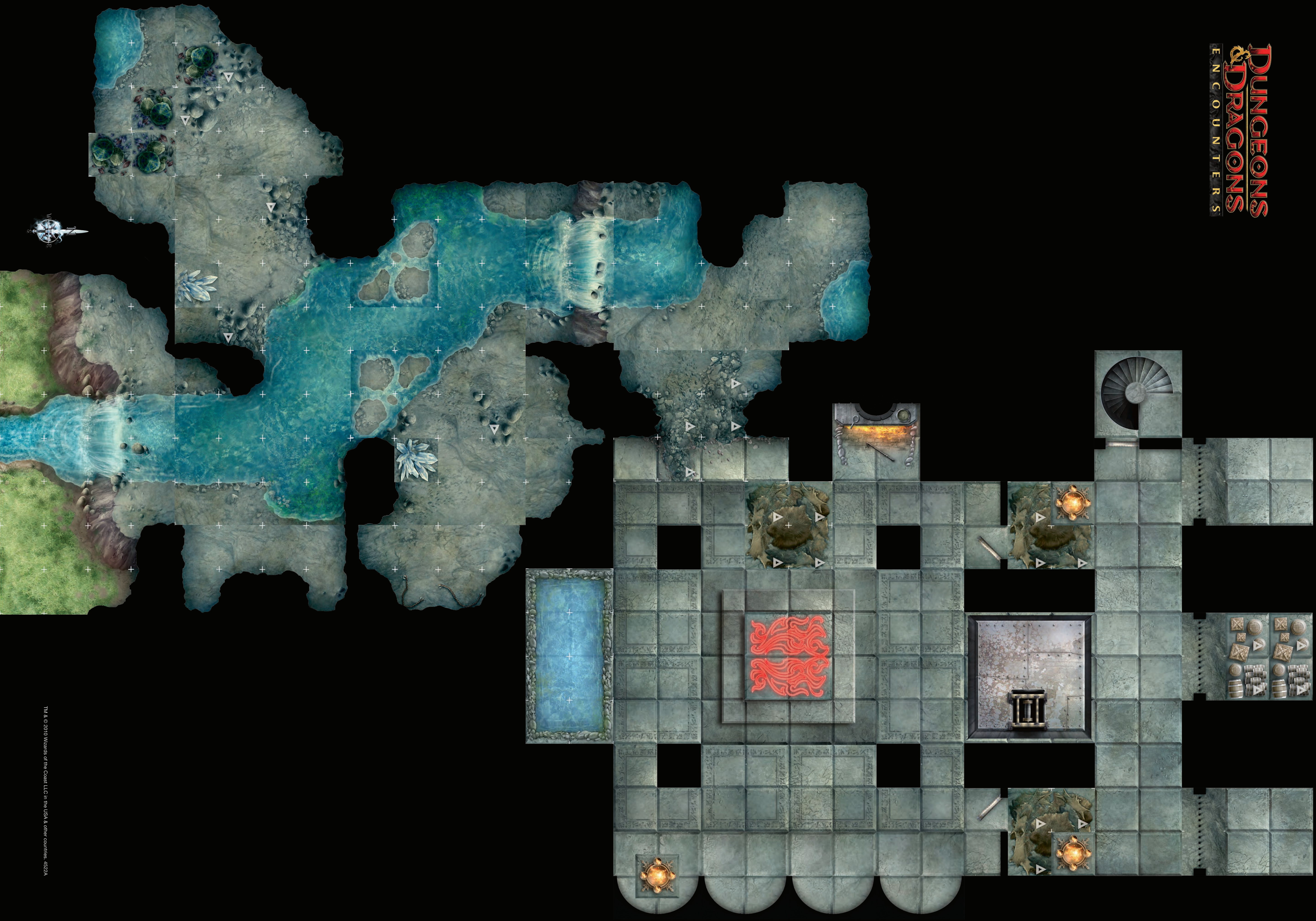
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NEVER SPLIT THE PARTY

ENCOUNTER 2-6:
STRONG FIRE



ENCOUNTER 2-5:
FOUL FLOW





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ENCOUNTERS





DUNGEONS & DRAGONS
ENCOUNTERS™

DANGER LURKS AT DRAGONTOOTH HILL

Ronnik, the object of your pursuit, has made his way to an old fortress atop Dragontooth Hill, where he no doubt has allies and formidable defenses. Can your group defeat him and his scaly allies and accomplish your task for your new patron Benwick?

Keep on the Borderlands: A Season of Serpents™ (Chapter 2) is an adventure designed for five characters of 1st level for the fall and winter 2010-11 season of the D&D Encounters™ official play program. This DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® adventure includes a full-color battle map, ready-to-play encounters, and DM information on the D&D Encounters official play program.

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Heroes of the Fallen Lands™

Rules Compendium™

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A HEROIC TIER ADVENTURE

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

ENCOUNTERS™

KEEP ON THE BORDERLANDS

Chapter 3 of 5: A Season of Serpents



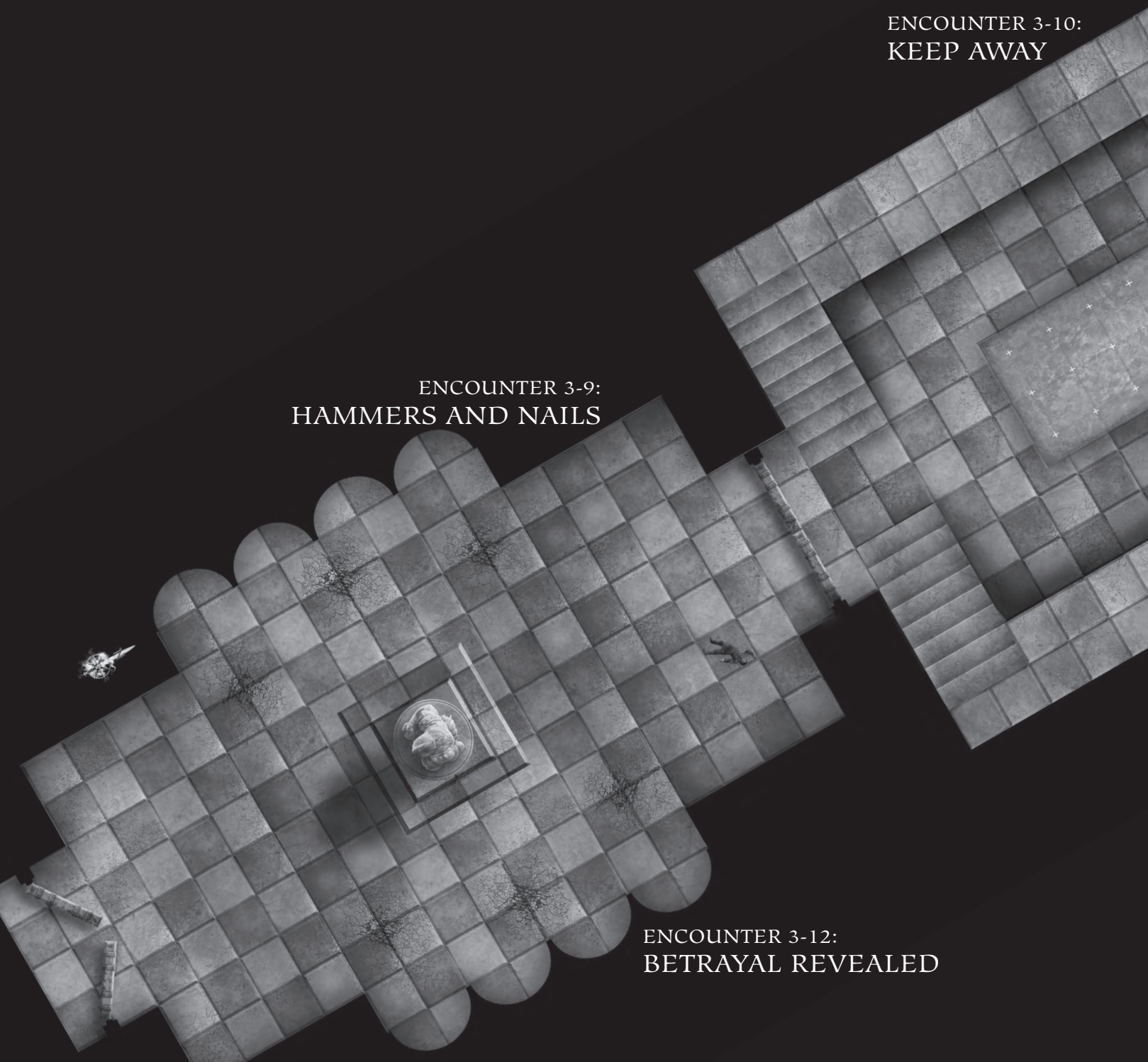
AN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTERS OF 2ND LEVEL

Chris Sims

ENCOUNTER 3-10:
KEEP AWAY

ENCOUNTER 3-9:
HAMMERS AND NAILS

ENCOUNTER 3-12:
BETRAYAL REVEALED



INTRODUCTION

A DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Encounters™ adventure for four to six 2nd-level characters

Welcome to DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Encounters, an exciting official DUNGEONS & DRAGONS program. This adventure is a mini-campaign season designed to be played in one-encounter sessions once per week at your local Wizards Play Network location. Each week, players can earn in-game rewards for their characters and Renown Points toward special program-exclusive D&D® Encounters Cards that can be used in this and future seasons of DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Encounters.

Preparing for Play

The DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Encounters play kit provides all you need to DM this adventure, including poster maps of encounter areas and a sheet of tokens for monsters, adventurers, and battlefield effects. Follow the steps below to prepare for play.

Before you DM your first session:

- ◆ Read the Introduction, Adventure Background, and Adventure Synopsis sections.
- ◆ Read **Session 9: The First Gauntlet** and **Encounter 3-9: Hammer and Nails**. If you are starting at another point, read the appropriate sections and what has come before.

At the table of your first session:

- ◆ Ensure each player has a character to play. Players may use one of the characters provided in the kit, or may create their own using the guidelines provided.
- ◆ Give each player a D&D Encounters Play Tracker. This sheet is found in the play kit, and it allows the players to track treasure, experience, and Renown Points earned for each play session.
- ◆ Get a session tracking sheet from the organizer. Record all the players' DCI/RPGA numbers on it, along with your DCI/RPGA number. If you or any of the players don't have a DCI/RPGA number, ask the organizer for a membership card.

During the session:

- ◆ Each session is one encounter. Just DM the encounter assigned for that week's session. Typical playtime for one encounter is about 90 minutes to 2 hours.
- ◆ Make decisions and adjudications that enhance the fun of the game. As the DM, you can make some adjustments to the adventure (see the sidebar on page 2) to facilitate player fun.

At the end of your first session:

- ◆ Have the adventurers take a short rest if they want, but remind them to track their daily abilities. Healing surges used, daily powers expended, and other daily resources do not refresh in-between each session; only at the end of each chapter. Make sure your players track this information on their D&D Encounters Play Tracker.
- ◆ Turn in your session tracking sheet to the organizer. Make sure you've recorded all the DCI/RPGA numbers on it, along with names and the play date.
- ◆ Report Renown Point totals earned for each player to the organizer. The organizer fills out the Renown Point Tracker for the location and tells you if any players have earned D&D Encounters Cards.
- ◆ Give out treasure. Make sure the players write down rewards on the D&D Encounters Play Tracker.
- ◆ Collect your special reward for providing your time as a DM to make the event happen. Your organizer has more details on this reward.

At the end of the final session of a chapter:

- ◆ The adventurers take an extended rest, regaining all of their healing surges, hit points, and daily powers. In addition, their action point total resets to 1.
- ◆ Once you've been the DM for a session, it's easy to prepare for your next session. Simply read over the session's material, and you're ready to go.

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CREATING A CHARACTER

Players are responsible for bringing their own characters to each play session. A player should bring a new 2nd-level character created using the rules found in the *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Fantasy Roleplaying Game* boxed set, the *Heroes of the Fallen Lands*™ supplement, or the *Heroes of the Forgotten Kingdoms*™ supplement.

If a player doesn't have a character or doesn't want to create one from scratch, several pre-generated characters are provided in the play kit. Get these from the organizer and offer a choice of one to each player that wants one.

At the end of each session, you award experience points, treasure, and Renown Points to each player. They'll track that information on their D&D Encounters Play Tracker and you'll report the Renown Points each player earned with the organizer.

Character Death: If a character dies during a session, the player has two choices. He or she can bring the same character back at the beginning of the next session with four fewer healing surges, or he or she can start a new 2nd-level character. If a character dies and has fewer than four healing surges remaining, that character loses all his or her remaining healing surges and can return next session but has hit points equaling only his or her bloodied value.

There is no other penalty for death except for the potential loss of renown for not surviving 12+ sessions without dying.

Advancement

At the end of each session, you award experience points when the characters complete encounters. Use this table below to award experience points for each session. Don't modify the amount of experience based on the number of characters.

EXPERIENCE POINT AWARDS

XP Description	XP/Character
Session 9	135 XP
Minor Quest: Recover Ralv's corpse	25 XP
Session 10	135 XP
Session 11	140 XP
Session 12	140 XP
Major Quest: Recover Ramthane's Treasure	125 XP

If the characters succeed at all the encounters and complete all quests, each should earn 700 XP by the end of Chapter 3.

Milestones: For every two encounters a character completes without taking an extended rest, the character reaches a milestone, gaining an action point.

A CHANGING GROUP

Since you can never tell who's going to show up to a *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Encounters* session from week to week, you might wind up with a different group of players. Some players might be starting in "mid-stream," some could have missed a session or two, and others might have played all the sessions with a different DM. That's fine. Catch up new players with a brief summary of what has come before, and make sure that returning players have marked off resources they spent (healing surges, daily powers, etc.) since their last extended rest.

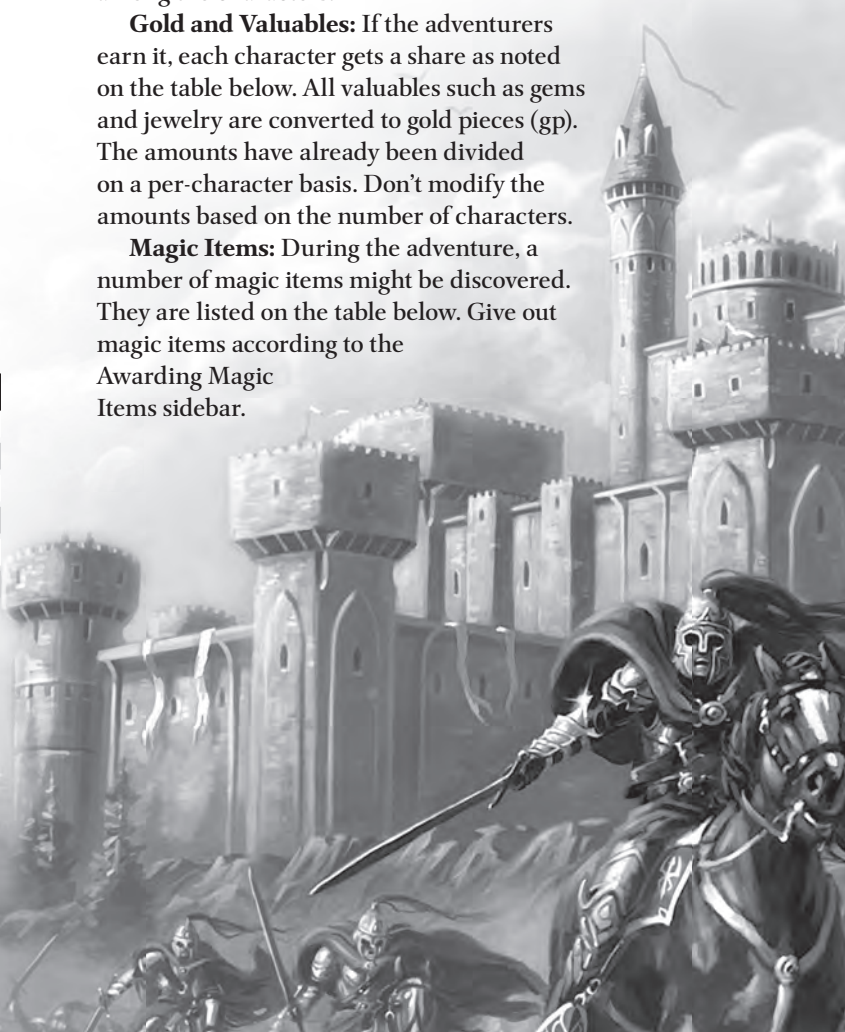
Majority Rules: If some element of the adventure plot hinges on the adventurers making a decision in a previous session, and the group is different during the current session, simply find out how the decision went down from the players. Go with the majority, and if it's an even split, side with the most positive result. For example, if three of five players' characters at your table rescued an NPC in a previous encounter and two didn't, the NPC is considered to be rescued for your session this week.

Treasure

As the characters progress through the mini-campaign, they have the opportunity to gain treasure in the form of gold pieces, valuables, and magic items. At the end of each session, determine if the players earned any treasure. Use the following rules to divide up treasure among the characters.

Gold and Valuables: If the adventurers earn it, each character gets a share as noted on the table below. All valuables such as gems and jewelry are converted to gold pieces (gp). The amounts have already been divided on a per-character basis. Don't modify the amounts based on the number of characters.

Magic Items: During the adventure, a number of magic items might be discovered. They are listed on the table below. Give out magic items according to the Awarding Magic Items sidebar.



TREASURE FOUND

Treasure	Location
1 herbal poultice each	Encounter 3-9
Potion of healing	Encounter 3-9
2 gp each	Encounter 3-9
5 gp each	Encounter 3-10
Common arm-slot magic item (level 2 or lower)	Encounter 3-11
Common magic weapon or implement (level 2 or lower)	Encounter 3-11
80 gp each	Encounter 3-12

When to Gear Up: Characters can buy equipment at the start of each chapter. If a character gains a magic item that has only level, rarity, and type described (for example, a common level 2 magic weapon), the player can select a magic item up to that level of the same type and rarity after the session is complete, before starting the next one.

Awarding Magic Items: When the characters find a nonconsumable magic item, the players decide who receives what. If this is impossible or difficult, you assign the new item to a character who has no nonconsumable magic items. If all the characters have a nonconsumable magic item, the character with the lowest-level nonconsumable magic item receives the new item.

If more than one character has no nonconsumable magic item, or two characters tie for the lowest-level magic item, those the players decide who receives the new item. If they can't decide, have each roll a d20 until one rolls higher than the other. That player receives the new item.

You can distribute consumable items in the same way if the players can't decide who takes such items. Just remember not to count these items as nonconsumable magic items.

Renown Points

One of the great rewards for playing in a DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Encounters season is the accumulation of Renown Points (RPs), which are given out for accomplishments made by players during, and sometimes in-between, sessions. These Renown Points are tracked at the Wizards Play Network location, and reaching certain thresholds garners the player a tangible reward—a D&D Encounters Card.

Players can use these cards during the current DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Encounters season, subsequent seasons, or possibly both. Each card has all the information on how it works printed right on the card itself.

As the DM, it's your task to award Renown Points at the end of a session of play, just like you would award experience and treasure. Unlike experience and treasure though, Renown Point totals earned for each player must be reported to the organizer at the conclusion of the session when you turn in your session tracking sheet. The organizer can then tell you if any players have qualified for a card.

The Renown accomplishments, their frequency, and the point values of each are listed below.

RENOWN POINT AWARDS

Accomplishment	Frequency	RPs
Complete an encounter	Session	3
Hit a milestone	2/chapter	2
Moment of greatness	1/chapter	2
Create a D&D Essentials character	Season	5
Create a D&D Character Builder character	Season	5
Revive a dying adventurer ally	Season	1
Hit for 15+ damage against 1 enemy	Season	1
Kill 3 minions in 1 attack	Season	1
Take 50 enemy damage in 1 session	Season	1
Survive 12+ sessions without dying	Season	2
Complete all quests	Season	5

Moment of Greatness: This is a discretionary award given out by the DM or through party vote to a player for doing something inventive, daring, or just plain cool during a session of play.

Renown Rewards

When a player earns 20 RPs, he or she earns the first D&D Encounters Card, called the Delver Reward. This is awarded to the player immediately following the session in which it is earned. The second award is called the Adventurer Reward, and a player qualifies for the reward by obtaining 100 Renown Points in the season.

The final award is given out at the conclusion of the season. At the end of the season, a number of D&D Encounters Cards are distributed among those who qualify for the reward. If more players qualify for the reward than the number of cards available, the organizer will determine how they will be distributed.

This adventure is the third of five chapters for *Keep on the Borderlands: A Season of Serpents*. The later adventures will be available separately as the season progresses. Check with your organizer upon completion of this adventure to receive the next adventure. These introductory pages provide background information to aid you in running the storyline.

Keep on the Borderlands

Legends claim that dwarf-built Restwell Keep has been the fortress of a hobgoblin king, the home of an infamous bandit lord, a linchpin garrison of fallen Nerath, and the lair of a dragon. Indeed, the keep has been all these and more. At present, it is a faint but steady light struggling against a growing darkness. Its intrepid inhabitants are in constant danger from within and without.

Government: Not long ago, the keep was a freewheeling place with lax law enforcement. Lord Peridin Drysdale, paladin of Erathis, recently took command. More than a few residents, accustomed to the old regime, resent the paladin's adamant push toward order and morality. As a result, Drysdale's authority is weak in the outer bailey.

Defense: Mercenary guards watch the barracks, as well as the towers and gate of the outer bailey. Kendon Longstrider, a 60-year-old human veteran, is in charge. Drysdale's soldiers patrol the keep proper and the inner bailey. The lord has mandated that capable individuals serve as militia if the need arises.

Room and Board: The gruff, greedy Nerrin Silverhand runs the seamy Travelers Inn on Fountain Square. A private room (four occupants) runs 1 gp per night; a spot in the common room costs 1 sp. Nerrin serves neither food nor drink. Such provisions can be purchased from cheerful Mother Aran of The Stumbling Giant, a fine tavern also on Fountain Square.

Temple: The local chapel (along the inner bailey wall) is open for worship of all accepted deities, but Avandra is esteemed above others. Chendera, the striking half-elf caretaker and priestess, is a devotee of the luck goddess. She spends much of her time mingling with folks in The Stumbling Giant.

Other Services: Local farmers and traveling merchants set up stands from time to time in the keep's Fountain Square. Regular establishments include a trader, a bank, a smithy, a jeweler, and a mage's guildhouse.

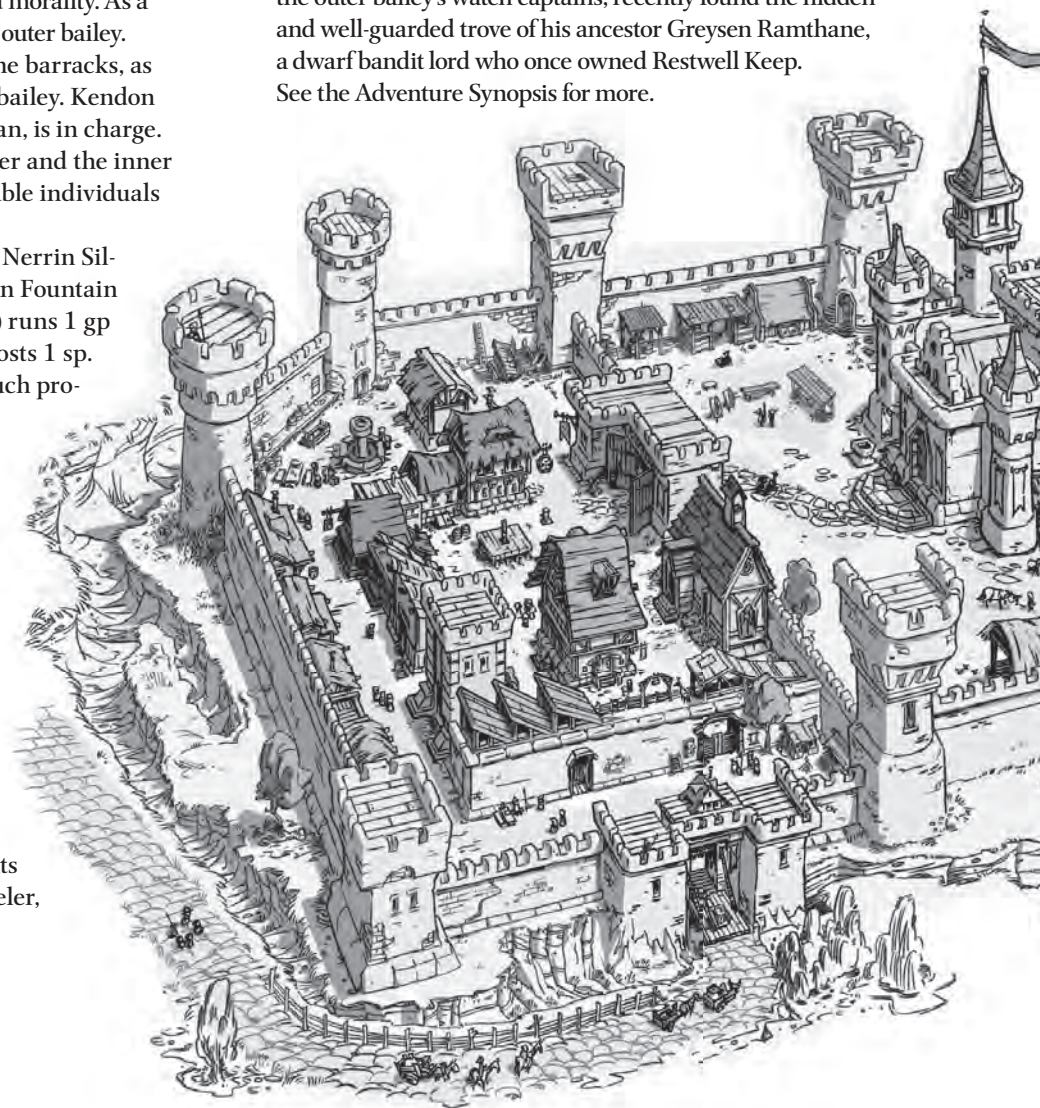
Serpent in the Fold

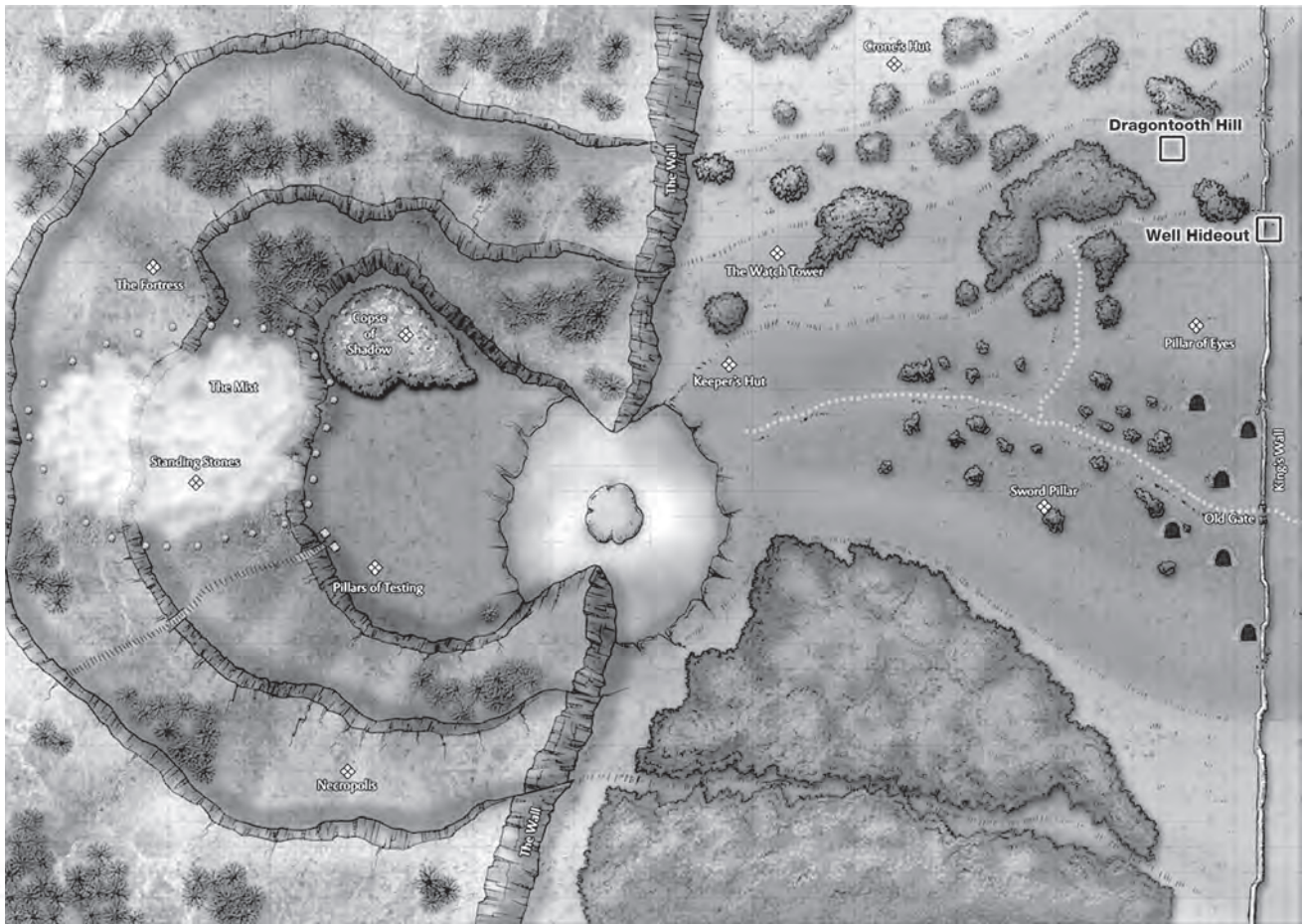
Benwick plays the part of a jolly, friar who worships Avandra, Ioun, and Sehanine. In truth, he and his acolytes are servants of the evil deity of poison, Zehir. Benwick has grand plans of turning the keep into a citadel for the snake god's faithful. He's courting the local lizardfolk for his plot.

Most of the folks in the outer bailey speak well of Benwick, a subtle, entertaining critic of Drysdale's rule. He cheerfully feeds rumors that the paladin intends to impose Erathis worship and launch forays that might rile denizens of the nearby Chaos Scar, a valley infested with evil monsters.

Recent Events: Benwick used the adventurers to ruin Ferdinand Ronnik, the banker in the keep, by linking Ronnik to a Tiamat cult that threatened Benwick's hold over a local tribe of lizardfolk. This chapter assumes that Benwick, through the adventurers, was successful in removing Ferdinand Ronnik as an obstacle. The characters also recovered a jewel—the *Serpent's Eye*—from Ronnik and gave it to Benwick.

Benwick now has more room to sway the lizardfolk against the keep and into the service of Zehir, whom he secretly reveres. But first, the friar needs to wrap up another matter concerning his ally Gorn Hammerfall. Gorn, one of the outer bailey's watch captains, recently found the hidden and well-guarded trove of his ancestor Greysen Ramthane, a dwarf bandit lord who once owned Restwell Keep. See the Adventure Synopsis for more.





The Chaos Scar

Although the Chaos Scar does not figure prominently in this chapter, the following information is included for your benefit.

For eons, an evil comet roamed the space between worlds, seeking a place to touch down and wreak havoc. It settled on this world.

As the falling comet passed through the sky, milk curdled, livestock fell dead, and ill fortune flourished. The celestial body crashed into the Nentir Vale with deafening force, carving a valley-sized furrow in its wake. Red radiance lit the sky for a week. Thus, the Chaos Scar was born.

Over a mile long and several hundred feet deep, the Chaos Scar is an angry, blighted gash in the world. As the star carved its path through the earth, shards and fragments tore away until only its heart remained, embedded in an escarpment at the far end of its new home.

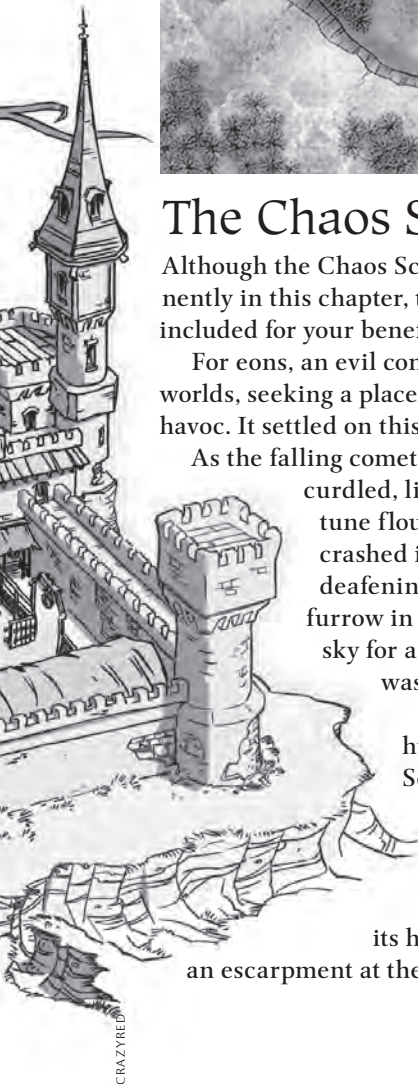
Patient beyond mortal comprehension, the malevolent remains began to sow seeds of wickedness, reaching out to those of a perverse and corruptible bent. Over the centuries, creatures of evil spirit have been drawn to this beacon.

The dark sentience spurs competition among the malefactors who carve out dominions within the valley's many caves. The weakest ones settle near the mouth of the valley and the plain beyond. The strongest villains lair closer to the comet's heart and in the fortress that now encloses the upper wall.

Rulers have tried to contain the threat of the Chaos Scar in the past, with little to no success. A long-forgotten king erected a wall across the valley's mouth. It still stands, partly in ruins, its gates open and unguarded.

The Chaos Scar is filled with malice, promising death to those who enter. It is riddled with caves both natural and tunneled by generations of monstrous denizens. The deeper one travels into the valley, the deadlier the foes lurking in its hollows.

Many adventurers have entered the Chaos Scar seeking wealth and glory. Few have returned. Those heroes that survive its depths weave dark stories of cults, inhuman tribes, and monsters working in blasphemous concert. Other explorers tell of monstrous creatures engaging in vicious, unrelenting warfare. All seekers agree that fatality is far more prevalent than fortune.



ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

With Benwick as their patron, the adventurers explore a dungeon complex under Restwell Keep rumored to contain the lost hoard of Greysen Ramthane, the dwarf bandit lord.

After their success in taking out Ferdinand Ronnik and recovering the *Serpent's Eye*, the characters can enjoy a little rest. Benwick has a use for them and the newly recovered jewel as soon as the characters are willing and able. The wicked friar has one more task for them before he plans to eliminate them and continue his evil plot to take over Restwell Keep.

Once again, the characters gather at Benwick's abode. He trusts them with another secret: A captain of the outer bailey's watch, Gorn Hammerfall, is a descendant of the notorious bandit lord Greysen Ramthane. Gorn took a soldiering job at Restwell Keep so he could spend his off hours searching for Ramthane's fabled treasure hidden under the keep. It turns out Gorn has been successful.

Benwick and Gorn fear that Lord Drysdale will confiscate any treasure recovered under the keep. They hatched a plan to claim it for Avandra and the Ramthane descendants. Gorn and Benwick proved too weak to confront the defenses of Greysen Ramthane's vault. Benwick, however, thinks he can use the *Serpent's Eye* to help the characters accomplish the task.

In this chapter, the characters descend into Ramthane's vault to defeat the defenses and recover the bandit lord's hidden trove. Greysen Ramthane was no slouch when it came to defending his wealth. After conquering the vault, the characters learn that Friar Benwick is not their friend.

Session 9: After meeting with Benwick and Gorn Hammerfall, the characters descend below the keep and explore Ramthane Delve during Gorn's watch. The door to the first gauntlet is already breached, but the threats within are as strong as ever. Greysen's constructs aim to pummel anyone who tries to approach, much less breach, the locked door leading to the second gauntlet. See Session 9: The First Gauntlet on page 8.

Session 10: The characters must pass through another guarded chamber and recover a crystal key needed to unlock Ramthane's vault. The constructs try to keep the key out of enemy hands and punish those who dare intrude here. See Session 10: The Second Gauntlet on page 10.

Session 11: Success in the second gauntlet allows the characters into Greysen Ramthane's treasure vault. When Nerath's forces killed the bandit lord and all his warriors, Greysen's greed brought him here, where he has endured the passing decades in a darkness as cold as that of his own heart and soul. Decades of hatred wait to be unleashed. See Session 11: The Vault on page 10.

Session 12: After claiming the treasures of the bandit lord, the adventurers encounter Benwick and Gorn at the entrance to Ramthane Delve. Once they split the treasure and the groups begin to part ways, Benwick betrays the party. Gorn, with the help of Benwick's cronies, aims to take all the rest of the treasure and kill the characters as Benwick flees with his share of the loot. After overcoming the betrayers, the characters interrogate one of Benwick's treacherous underlings to learn more about Benwick's master plan. This revelation sets up Chapter 4. See Session 12: Back to the Beginning on page 10.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTERS

Chapter 3 assumes you have a normal party of five 2nd-level characters and players familiar with the *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* game at your table. Compare the party at your table to this assumption, using the following guidelines.

Weak Party: You have a weak party at your table if it consists of only four characters, or most or all of the players are new to the *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* game. If you have a weak party, remove one of the lowest level or least important non-minion monsters from the encounter. For instance, in Encounter 3-9 (level 2 encounter), you might subtract one iron hammerer.

Strong Party: You have a strong party at your table if it consists of six characters, or most or all of the players are veteran 4th-Edition *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* players who like added challenge. If you have a strong party, add one of the simplest non-minion monsters among those in the encounter whose level most closely matches the encounter level. For instance, in Encounter 3-9, you might add another iron hammerer.



The encounters of this chapter have the characters delving under the keep to recover the lost treasure of the dwarf bandit lord Greysen Ramthane.

ROLEPLAYING

Some of the adventure's sections call for roleplaying, and all of the encounters allow for it. A portion of the information in this book exists to help you roleplay with the players. You might prepare a list of names to use if players want to talk to creatures unexpectedly. As long as all the players are having fun, and it's not going to make the session too long, play it up and enjoy. Just make sure to include everyone.

Further, allow for cinematic maneuvers and clever strategies. Try to reward bold play and clever play. Let players use their characters' skills and powers. Encourage this sort of gaming by being prepared, and by using the monsters, NPCs, and scenarios boldly and cleverly yourself.

Session 9: First Gauntlet

The characters already trust Benwick from an alliance in earlier chapters. You should ask:

- ◆ **Who has played the earlier chapters?** If no one has, then you need ask no further questions. Tell the players a little about Benwick's positive, fake persona. Anyone who has played Chapters 1 and 2 should be asked the next question.
- ◆ **What happened to the *Serpent's Eye*?** If the majority gave the jewel to Benwick in Chapter 2, the friar has it. If the majority kept the gemstone, Benwick needs to ask them for it so he can work some magic on it for their benefit.

When everyone is set to play, read the following text.

*After some rest from your earlier heroics, you find yourself again at the comfortable apartment of your patron, Benwick. The friar summoned you here, suggesting he had another task for you and the *Serpent's Eye*, a jewel you helped recover. Benwick's acolytes, Venn and Jarell, serve you dinner. A red-haired dwarf who has an air of authority is also in attendance. Benwick introduces the dwarf as Gorn Hammerfall, a captain of the watch.*

Roleplaying the Scene

Give the players time to introduce their characters. They can roleplay as they like.

- ◆ Benwick is jolly and bright-eyed, given to smiling and laughing. His acolytes grin and react briefly if addressed, but they say little. They pose as wandering priests who revere Avandra, Ioun, and Sehanine.
- ◆ The friar doesn't like Lord Drysdale or the lord's seeming intent to make the keep a military bastion.
- ◆ Benwick considers most in the outer bailey friends or allies, especially Chendera.
- ◆ Gorn—dressed in fine, thick leather and armed with two hammers—is stern. He smiles little and speaks forthrightly. One noticeable quirk is his habit of raising one eyebrow while narrowing the opposite eye when he finds a subject questionable or disagreeable.

Quest for Ramthane's Treasure

Benwick gets to the point of the gathering whenever the players are ready. You can read the following text or roleplay the section.

"Friends, I am ashamed to burden you with another difficult task, but I believe you can succeed where others would fail.

"The esteemed captain here is the descendant of a dwarf who once occupied this keep. This ancestor was the bandit lord Greysen Ramthane.

"When Nerath's warriors overthrew Greysen, they found little of his ill-gotten loot. Tales say that Greysen hid his wealth somewhere in this keep."

Gorn interrupts, *"Enough history, Benwick. You'll put us all to sleep. Anyway, turns out the stories are true. Took me years, but I found the bandit's cache.*

"Thing is, it's too well guarded. Almost got myself skinned when I went in with a buddy of mine. Poor Ralv didn't even make it out."

"Benwick says you're made of stout stuff, and the rumor mill says the same. Benwick thinks we might make a deal."

Benwick takes up the conversation. *"Yes. Gorn and I are concerned that Lord Drysdale might confiscate the treasure. Gorn deserves any dwarven relics as the rightful heir. As adventurers, you have more use for magic items than Gorn or me, so you can keep those. We were hoping you'd consider a friendly three-way split of any monetary wealth."*

Gorn adds, *"I'd also be much obliged if you could recover Ralv's body for me."*

Benwick looks gravely at Gorn and lays a hand on the dwarf's shoulder. He looks at you and says, *"I can also lend you the *Serpent's Eye*. I've activated some of its latent power, so it should aid your quest.*

"So, will you accept?"

Here is some further information for discussion.

- ◆ Ralv was a human soldier. The attackers in the first room got him.
- ◆ Gorn describes the attackers in the first area as “metal constructs with hammers and pincers, and a trapped statue that swings a great flail. The hammers come out of the walls.”
- ◆ Discretion is required. No one else can know of Ramthane’s hidden vault yet.
- ◆ Benwick again gives each character one *herbal poultice* (see below) to aid in the job. For ease of porting the treasure, Benwick also offers a couple large backpacks for use carrying the treasure.
- ◆ Neither Gorn nor Benwick can offer any more pay for the job, and neither honestly knows whether any treasure is to be had in the delve. Gorn is sure that the underground vault is Ramthane’s, however, and he “smells gold” within.
- ◆ Gorn and Benwick meet the characters an hour before dawn, just outside The Stumbling Giant. Benwick plans to give the characters a magically active *Serpent’s Eye* (see below). He and Gorn can then escort the characters to the secret delve.

Quests: By the end of this scene, the characters gain two quests. It is a minor quest to deliver Ralv’s body to Gorn. Recovering Ramthane’s treasure and escaping the dungeon is a major quest.

Herbal Poultice

Level 3 (Common)

This pungent bundle of specially prepared medicinal herbs aids the body’s natural recuperative ability.

Alchemical Item 30 gp

Power (Consumable ◆ Healing): Standard Action.

Use this power during a short rest. Choose a target for the herbal poultice, either you or an ally adjacent to you. At the end of the short rest, if the target spends a healing surge, he or she regains 2 extra hit points. The target can benefit from only one *herbal poultice* at a time.

Serpent’s Eye

Level 1 (Rare)

This spherical tiger’s-eye gem has Avandra’s symbol etched on one side and Zehir’s symbol etched on the other. It glows softly in its bronze holder, which is suspended from a bronze chain.

Wondrous Item 360 gp

Property: You and your allies within 5 squares of you gain a +2 item bonus to saving throws against poison effects.

Power (Daily): Minor Action. You or one ally adjacent to you can make a saving throw against an effect that a save can end.

Power (Daily): Standard Action. You send a short message of no more than 25 words to Benwick, as long as he is within 1 mile of you. He can then respond with a message of up to 25 words.

Preparation

Shops are closed for the night by the time the characters take on the task. Gorn can provide some simple equipment (no more than 10 gp total) if the characters discover they must have something. They do have time to learn more about the task at hand.

Arcana DC 14: The creatures Gorn described sound like homunculi, guardian constructs that come in numerous forms and are very good at defending the objects, creatures, or areas they were designed to protect. The statue sounds more like a contraption than a creature.

Diplomacy DC 13: A character can talk with folks at The Stumbling Giant to learn that Gorn has a solid reputation but few friends. He keeps mostly his own company and is rarely seen when off duty. Some believe he has a personal project. Gorn’s current watch is nighttime.

DC 15: Mother Aran, the alehouse’s owner, reveals that Benwick’s suspicions of Lord Drysdale are misguided if well-intentioned. The lord is a follower of Erathis, but Mother Aran doesn’t believe he’s going to enforce Erathis worship or a military takeover of the keep.

History or Streetwise DC 13: Greysen Ramthane, a bandit lord, ran a gang out of the keep during the time of Nerath, the last great empire that fell about a century ago. A small army laid siege to the keep and killed all the bandits, but little treasure was recovered.

DC 16: The commander of the attacking force, a half-orc named Bertak, searched Restwell Keep for the bandits’ hoard but couldn’t find it. Many believe Ramthane hid the hoard under the keep.

Heal or Nature DC 12: The *herbal poultices* attest to Benwick’s herbalist skills.

History DC 12: The *Serpent’s Eye* was once stored in the Moonsong Temple of Fallcrest.

DC 15: The jewel was stolen from the temple nearly a century ago. Rumor has it that disciples of Zehir were responsible for the theft, since some of the priests were poisoned.

DC 19: The *Serpent’s Eye* was seen in Fallcrest a few years ago in the hands of a thief who claimed to have “recovered” it from a hidden temple.



Departure

Benwick and Gorn arrive on time. The friar gives the characters the magical *Serpent's Eye* and the backpacks as they travel. Describe the functions of the items to the players, and then describe the trip.

The keep is quiet at this early hour, the rain keeping most folks indoors. Benwick and Gorn lead the way to a tower on the south side of the castle, near the keep's Fountain Square. They descend into a dark basement. Gorn opens a secret staircase into a tunnel below the fortress's foundations. It opens into a small antechamber before great stone doors that are slightly open. A soft blue glow issues from between them, as does the slight smell of something dead.

"This is it, mates," says Gorn, "Go carefully. Last time, almost as soon as we entered the room, everything went crazy.

"I got to finish up my shift. If you recover Ralv's body, leave it near these outer doors, will you?"

*Benwick adds, "I have a few brief errands to attend. Gorn and I will be close at hand when you return, so we can divide the treasure away from Drysdale's greedy eyes. Remember, you can use the *Serpent's Eye* to call me when you finish. Gods' speed, friends."*

Set out the map and begin **Encounter 3-9: Hammers and Nails**, page 12.

Session 10: Second Gauntlet

Once the characters unlock and open the northern doors in Encounter 3-9, they can proceed through the doors into this area. This encounter is a straightforward battle against the chamber's guardians to acquire the crystal key needed to open the vault.

Set out the map and begin **Encounter 3-10: Keep Away**, page 14.

Session 11: The Vault

Using the iron key recovered from Encounter 3-9 and the crystal key recovered from Encounter 3-10, the characters unlock and open the final set of doors leading to the bandit lord's vault. Before they can claim Greysen Ramthane's treasure, they must defeat the specter of the bandit lord as well as several other undead guardians.

Set out the map and begin **Encounter 3-11: Frozen in the Past**, page 16.

Session 12: Back to the Beginning

Refresh the players' memories by recapping the end of the last session. The adventurers need to contact Benwick (if they wish) and return to the delve entrance. If the characters call Benwick using the *Serpent's Eye*, the friar responds as follows:

ENCOUNTER 3-10:
KEEP AWAY

ENCOUNTER 3-9:
HAMMERS AND NAILS

ENCOUNTER 3-12:
BETRAYAL REVEALED



ENCOUNTER 3-11: FROZEN IN THE PAST

“We shall await you in the first chamber. As I said before, it’s best to divide the treasure there, where no one can watch us and wonder where all the goods came from. See you soon, friends.”

Whether the adventurers contact Benwick or not, the friar, his assistants Gordi and Sal, and Gorn Hammerfall await them in the room where Encounter 3-9 played out. Even if the players did not disable the flailer in the first encounter, it is deactivated. The panel containing its control mechanism is open and appears to have been disabled. Ralv’s body has been moved near the entrance to the antechamber.

Gordi and Sal have empty sacks and lanterns. If the characters are suspicious of this group, Benwick apologizes for having forgotten to mention that he was bringing help. One way or another, he sets everyone at ease by moving to the business at hand.

Quickly play out the division of goods. Each of the three groups receives about 200 gp, and each character receives 40 gp. Once Benwick has his share, he asks for the *Serpent’s Eye* so he can return it to Chendera, the city’s priestess of Avandra. If the characters refuse to surrender it, he uses magic to seize it, instantly triggering Encounter 3-12: *Betrayal Revealed* (page 18).

If the characters willingly hand over the *Serpent’s Eye*, read the following text.

Benwick smiles and gives you all a polite nod. “I must once again thank you for your hard work and bravery. We are in your debt.”

As he finishes, you hear the sound of booted feet hastening down the stairs.

“Drysdale’s men!” cries Benwick.

Gordi and Sal draw short swords and prepare themselves.

Benwick looks at them and says, “Stay your weapons. Let’s hope it doesn’t come to that.”

Set out the map for **Encounter 3-12: *Betrayal Revealed***, page 18. Have the players place their characters in the starting area. Place the other NPCs, as well. Find out whether the adventurers draw their weapons or not. Then go to the encounter.

Extended Rest

If the characters still draw breath after the betrayal, they probably need an extended rest. They also have the information they need to pursue Benwick. Perhaps they have a reason and the means to save Ferdinand Ronnik. The story continues and the extended rest occurs in Chapter 4 of *Keep on the Borderlands: A Season of Serpents*.

ENCOUNTER 3–9: HAMMERS AND NAILS

Encounter Level 2 (675 XP)

Setup

- 1 stone harrier (S)
- 3 iron hammerers (H)
- Flailer statue (trap)

None of the monsters are apparent when the characters enter the room.

When the adventurers enter the area, read:

Centered in the chamber is a large stone statue of a dwarf wielding a flail in one hand. In the statue's other hand is an open loop that has a oversized iron key. Around the statue, the floor is cracked as if hit by a massive crushing force.

Dim blue light from glowing Dwarven runes along the walls also reveals a set of four alcoves carved in the east and west sides of the room. The walls adjacent to the alcoves look dangerous, for they bear intricate spiked carvings of stylized weapons and armor.

Passive Perception

DC 13: A crumpled form lies a few paces from the northern doors.

DC 20: The form is the body of an armored man, crushed and twisted in death.

Arcana

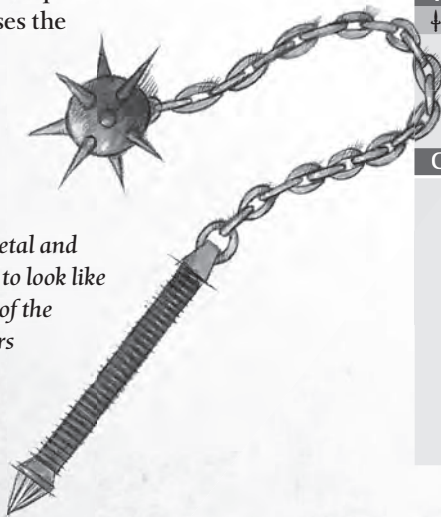
DC 13 (Detect Magic): The statue is strongly magical and seems capable of attacking.

DC 20: The runes and walls within the alcoves are weakly magical. Disturbing the statue or its area probably triggers something within the room.

Attempting to take the key, attempting to harm any part of the room, or entering a square within 3 squares of the flailer causes the room to activate.

When the room activates, read:

With a grinding sound, the central statue starts to rotate and swing its flail. Metal and stone humanoids fashioned to look like dwarves emerge from some of the alcoves. Three have hammers and pincers for hands, and one is a shorter figure with spears for hands.



- ◆ **The flailer statue** drives foes back toward the southern entry point and against the wall spikes. It favors attacking a creature possessing the key, and it does its best to keep intruders from reaching the north end of the room. The flailer statue cannot make opportunity attacks.
- ◆ **The iron hammerers** attempt to grab and immobilize enemies and keep them within striking distance of the flailer statue.
- ◆ **The stone harrier** keeps enemies near the flailer, but it also tries to prevent anyone from taking the iron key, the harrier's guarded object, and using it to unlock the northern set of doors.

The central statue is blocking terrain that can be climbed (Athletics DC 13) and a mechanical trap that has a magical power source. Closer inspection (Perception DC 13) allows one to detect the stone access panel to its inner workings. Access to the internal magical and mechanical elements is necessary to disable the device. Otherwise, the statue must be smashed to disable it.

Stealing the Iron Key: A character adjacent to the statue can make a DC 20 Acrobatics, Athletics, or Thievery check to snatch the key from the statue.

Flailer Statue	Level 2 Trap
Object	XP 125
Detect Perception DC 13 (access panel)	Initiative +5
HP 40	
AC 16, Fortitude 14, Reflex 12, Will –	
Immune necrotic, poison, psychic, forced movement, all conditions;	
Resist 5 to all damage	
STANDARD ACTIONS	
↓ Flail ◆ At-Will	
Attack: Melee 3 (one creature); +8 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d10 + 4 damage, and the flailer slides the target up to 3 squares.	
TRIGGERED ACTIONS	
↓ No Escape ◆ At-Will	
Attack: An enemy within 3 squares of the flailer attacks one of the flailer's allies.	
Effect (Immediate Reaction): The flailer uses <i>flail</i> against the triggering enemy.	
COUNTERMEASURES (after the access panel has been detected)	
◆ Disable: Thievery DC 13 (standard action). <i>Requirement:</i> The character must be adjacent to the flailer. <i>Success:</i> The character achieves one of three successes necessary to disable the statue. <i>Failure (DC 7 or less):</i> The flailer attacks the character as a free action.	
◆ Disable: Arcana DC 13 (standard action). <i>Requirement:</i> The character must be within 5 squares of the flailer. <i>Success:</i> The character achieves one of three successes necessary to disable the statue. <i>Failure (DC 7 or less):</i> The flailer uses a free action to attack a random adventurer within 3 squares of it.	

Features of the Area

Illumination: Dim light.

Ceiling Height: 15 feet.

Corpse: Near the northern doors lie the remains of Ralv, a brawny human soldier who was hammered to death. He has ruined armor, a broken shield, a mace, a *potion of healing*, and 2 gp per character. Securing his body for Gorn Hammerfall completes a minor quest.

Cracked Flooring: These squares are difficult terrain.

Northern Doors: These iron-banded stone doors are locked (Thievery DC 23 to pick the lock, Athletics DC 25 to force them open). The iron key unlocks them.

Wall Spikes: The spikes attack anyone and anything forced against any wall in the room.

Wall Spikes

Terrain

Trigger: A creature is pushed or slid into a square adjacent to the wall.

Attack: Melee 1 (triggering creature); +7 vs. AC

Hit: The target takes 5 damage and stops moving.

Stone Harrier (S)

Level 4 Controller

Small natural animate (construct, homunculus)

XP 175

HP 46; **Bloodied** 23

Initiative +4

AC 18, **Fortitude** 17, **Reflex** 16, **Will** 15

Perception +8

Speed 6

Darkvision

Immune disease, poison

TRAITS

Guard Object

The stone harrier deals 1d8 extra damage to any creature carrying the key (see "Stealing the Iron Key").

STANDARD ACTIONS

⊕ Stab ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +9 vs. AC

Hit: 2d6 + 5 damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).

✱ Harrying Stone ♦ Recharge when first bloodied

Attack: Area burst 1 within 5 (enemies in the burst); +7 vs. Reflex

Hit: 1d6 + 4 damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).

Skills Acrobatics +9

Str 16 (+5)

Dex 15 (+4)

Wis 12 (+3)

Con 16 (+5)

Int 5 (-1)

Cha 8 (+1)

Alignment unaligned

Languages –

3 Iron Hammerers (H)

Level 2 Soldier

Medium natural animate (construct, homunculus)

XP 125 each

HP 39; **Bloodied** 19

Initiative +5

AC 18, **Fortitude** 15, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 13

Perception +2

Speed 6

Darkvision

Immune disease, poison

STANDARD ACTIONS

⊕ Hammer ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC

Hit: 1d10 + 4 damage, or 1d10 + 7 against a creature the hammerer is grabbing.

Effect: The target is slowed until the end of the iron hammerer's next turn.

⊕ Pincer ♦ At-Will

Requirement: The hammerer must have no target grabbed.

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +5 vs. Reflex

Hit: 1d8 + 4 damage, and the target is grabbed (escape DC 13).

MOVE ACTIONS

⊕ Containment ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature grabbed by the hammerer); +4 vs. Fortitude

Hit: The hammerer shifts up to 3 squares, pulling the target with it to a square adjacent to it.

Str 16 (+4)

Dex 15 (+3)

Wis 12 (+2)

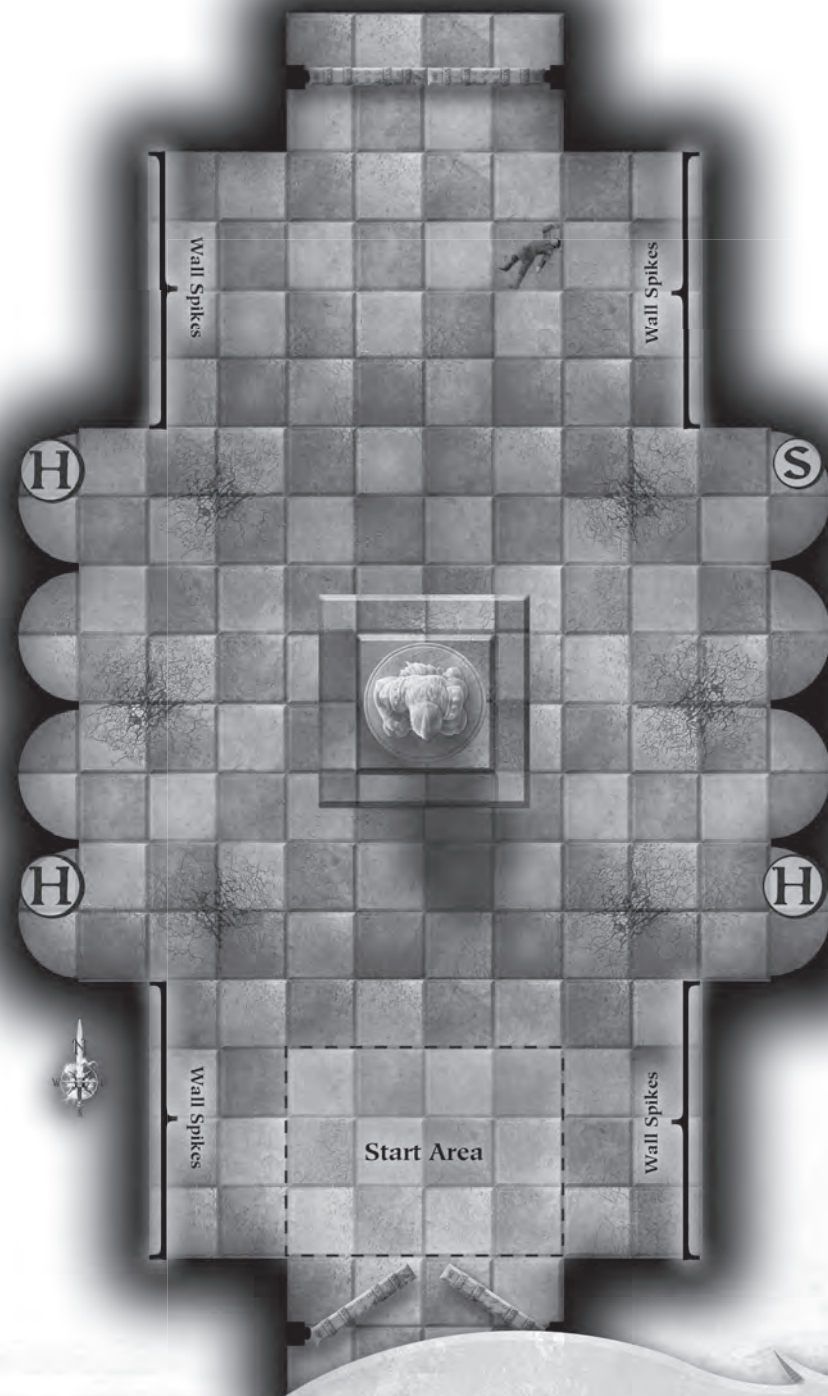
Con 15 (+3)

Int 5 (-2)

Cha 8 (+0)

Alignment unaligned

Languages –



ENCOUNTER 3–10: KEEP AWAY

Encounter Level 2 (675 XP)

Setup

- 1 clay scout (C)
- 3 stonefist defenders (S)
- 1 arbalester (A)

None of the monsters are apparent when the characters enter the room.

When the party enters the area, read:

This chamber contains a shallow pool in its center. A blue glow issues from the water, shedding dim light over the room. Something sparkles in the pool's far end.

Dwarven runes, similar to those in the last room, line the wall around the ledge. Two staircases ascend to the ledge.

At the far side of the room, you can see the top of another pair of stone doors.

Perception (from the entry)

DC 13: *The sparkling shape is an object in the pool.*

DC 20: *The object is a crystal key.*

Arcana

DC 20 (Detect Magic): *The pool exudes a faint magical aura. Disturbing the pool might trigger a magical effect. The runes on the ledge are also faintly magical, although their sole function is to provide light.*

Disturbing the pool or attempting to harm any part of the room or disable the doors' lock causes the room to activate. The clay scout starts out hidden unless someone spots it.

When the room activates, read:

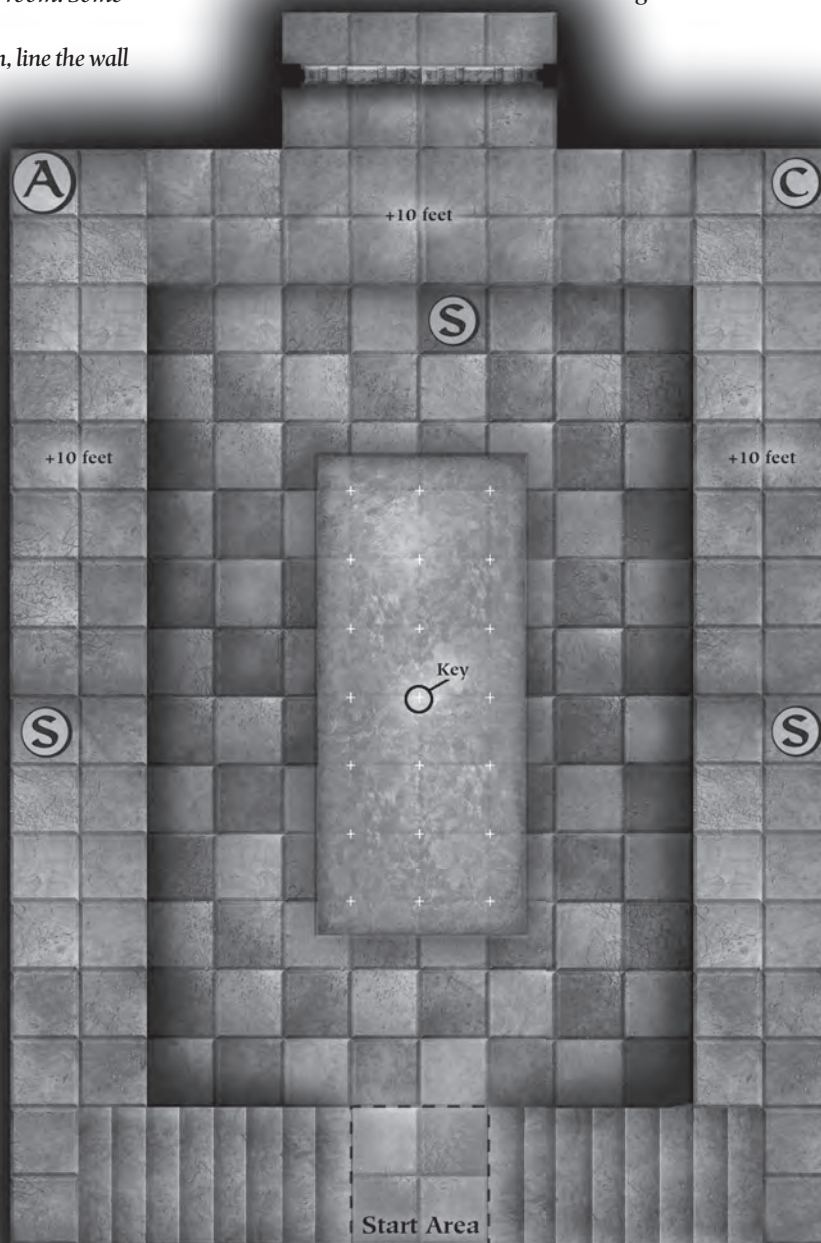
Figures emerge from the walls. Three are stone humanoids fashioned to look like dwarf warriors with spiked fists. Another, upon the far ledge, looks like an oversized crossbow with legs.

Passive Perception

DC 20: *A small winged creature, like a tiny devil, crawls out of a small hole in the wall.*

Tactics

- ◆ **The clay scout** attacks the one who has the key and takes the key if that character falls unconscious. It prefers to fly over the pool, forcing characters to chase it through the difficult terrain (and potentially recharge the arbalester's attack).
- ◆ **Stonefist defenders** use their great speed and *tumble* to move where they need to be. They pursue the person who has the crystal key if doing so isn't too challenging or punishing.
- ◆ **The arbalester** stays on the ledge, targeting those in the pool, which is its guarded area.



Clay Scout (C)	Level 2 Lurker	
Small natural animate (construct, homunculus)	XP 125	
HP 31; Bloodied 15	Initiative +7	
AC 16, Fortitude 13, Reflex 14, Will 15	Perception +6	
Speed 6, fly 3	Darkvision	
Immune disease, poison		
TRAITS		
Guard Object		
The clay scout gains a +4 bonus to attack rolls against creatures adjacent to or carrying the crystal key.		
STANDARD ACTIONS		
Ⓣ Bite (poison) ♦ At-Will		
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC		
Hit: 1d10 + 3 damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).		
↗ Mind Touch (psionic) ♦ At-Will		
Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +5 vs. Will		
Hit: 1d10 + 4 psychic damage, and the target cannot see the clay scout (save ends).		
TRIGGERED ACTIONS		
⬅ Redirect ♦ At-Will		
Trigger: An enemy makes a melee or a ranged attack against the scout.		
Attack (Immediate Interrupt): Close burst 10 (triggering enemy); +4 vs. Will		
Hit: The target instead attacks a creature adjacent to the scout of the scout's choice.		
Skills Stealth +8		
Str 10 (+1)	Dex 15 (+3)	Wis 10 (+1)
Con 12 (+2)	Int 10 (+1)	Cha 16 (+4)
Alignment unaligned Languages –		

3 Stonefist Defenders (S)	Level 2 Skirmisher	
Small natural animate (construct, homunculus)	XP 125 each	
HP 38; Bloodied 19	Initiative +6	
AC 16, Fortitude 13, Reflex 14, Will 15	Perception +4	
Speed 8	Darkvision	
Immune disease, poison		
STANDARD ACTIONS		
Ⓣ Spiked Fist ♦ At-Will		
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC		
Hit: 1d12 + 4 damage plus 1d6 extra damage if the target has the crystal key.		
MOVE ACTIONS		
Ⓣ Tumble ♦ At-Will		
Effect: The stonefist defender shifts 3 squares.		
Skills Acrobatics +9		
Str 12 (+2)	Dex 17 (+4)	Wis 17 (+4)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 11 (+1)	Cha 7 (-1)
Alignment unaligned Languages –		

Arbalester (A)	Level 4 Artillery	
Medium natural animate (construct, homunculus)	XP 175	
HP 43; Bloodied 21	Initiative +6	
AC 18, Fortitude 15, Reflex 17, Will 16	Perception +4	
Speed 6	Darkvision	
Immune disease, poison		
STANDARD ACTIONS		
Ⓣ Slam ♦ At-Will		
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +9 vs. AC		
Hit: 2d6 + 4 damage.		
↗ Bolt ♦ At-Will		
Attack: Ranged 20 (one creature); +11 vs. AC		
Hit: 2d6 + 6 damage.		
↗ Double Shot ♦ Recharge ☒ ☒ (or automatically if an enemy is in the pool)		
Attack: Ranged 20 (one or two creatures); +11 vs. AC		
Hit: 2d6 + 6 damage.		
Str 15 (+4)	Dex 18 (+6)	Wis 17 (+4)
Con 13 (+3)	Int 5 (-1)	Cha 8 (+1)
Alignment unaligned Languages –		

Features of the Area

Illumination: Dim light.

Ceiling Height: 20 feet (10 feet above the ledge).

Crystal Key: This key along with the iron key from the previous encounter unlocks the northern doors. The key is worth 5 gp per character.

Ledge Walls: These walls are 10 feet high.

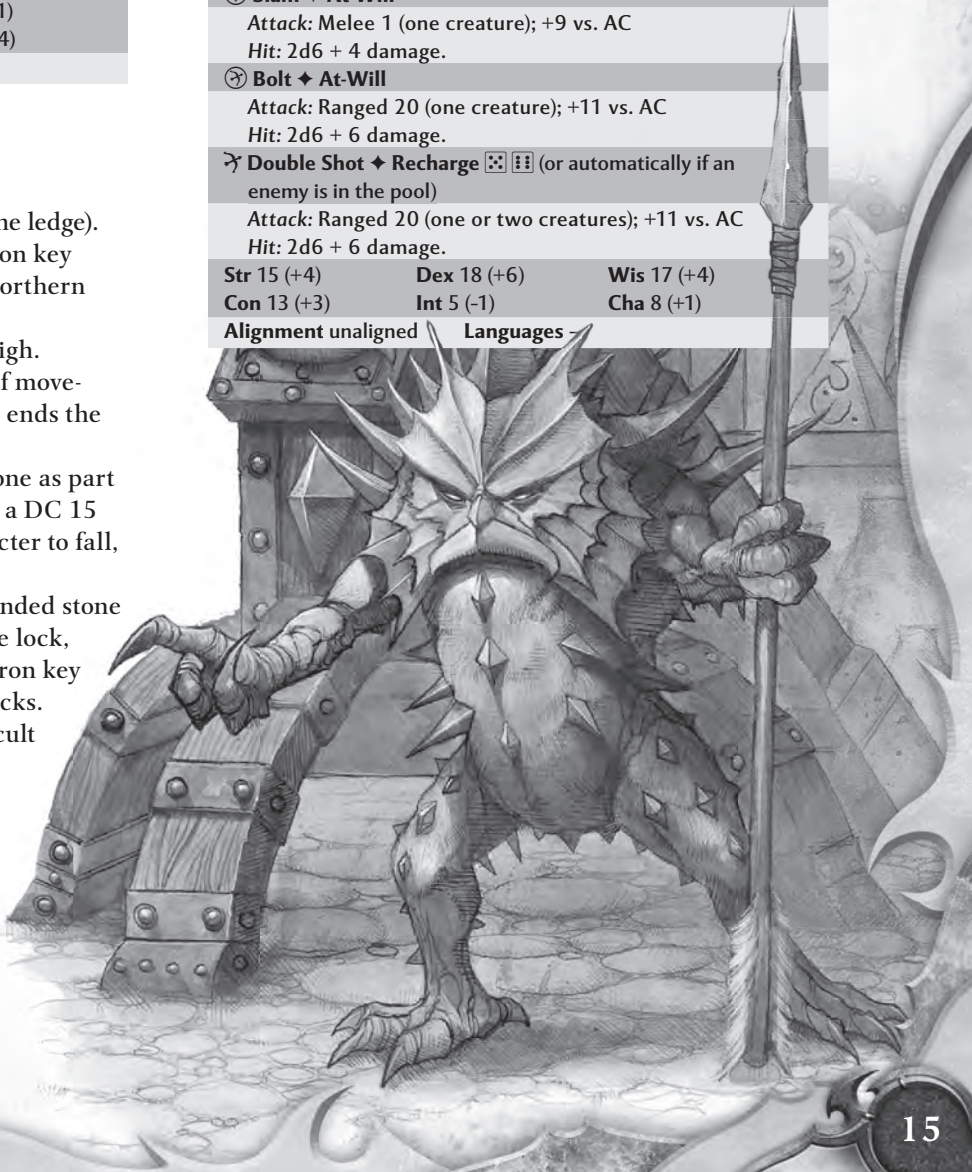
Climbing the walls requires 2 squares of movement and a DC 13 Athletics check. Failure ends the character's movement.

Hopping down from the ledge can be done as part of a move action if a character succeeds on a DC 15 Acrobatics check. Failure causes the character to fall, take 1d10 damage, and fall prone.

Northern Doors: Each of these iron-banded stone doors is locked (Thievery DC 23 to pick the lock, Athletics DC 25 to force them open). The iron key and the crystal key each open one of the locks.

Pool: The pool is 3 feet deep and is difficult terrain.

Stairs: The stairs are difficult terrain when ascending them.



ENCOUNTER 3–11: FROZEN IN THE PAST

Encounter Level 2 (702 XP)

Setup

Greysen Ramthane's specter
2 botched witherlings (W)
4+ witherling motes (M)

None of the monsters are apparent when the characters enter the room.

When the party enters the area, read:

Luminous blue runes adorn the floor and walls of this large chamber. They surround four thick pillars and a wide, shallow pit. At the base of each pillar is what looks like a shattered statue. Dried bones fill most of the pit.

Alcoves line the east and west walls of this chamber. Deeper in the room are two large stone boxes, coffins perhaps. Another pit of bones sits between them. Beyond the bones is a pile of scattered rubble.

Arcana

DC 20 (Detect Magic): *The runes have weak, residual magic but no longer function.*

Have the player place their characters on the battlemat and allow them to explore the room. When a character comes within 2 squares of the southern treasure box, Greysen Ramthane's specter appears.

When Greysen appears, read:

A gust of cold wind blows through the chamber, stirring dust and chilling the air. Just beyond the farthest stone box, dim light coalesces into the spectral form of a dwarf dressed in scale armor.

"So, you've taken me life and me home, Bertak, and now you've come for me treasure?" he says.

Blood starts to pour from spots in his armor, and his face contorts in rage.

"Ye'll never take me treasure! Never!"

If the characters try to talk, see "Roleplaying Greysen." Otherwise, battle starts. The witherlings are hidden and have combat advantage against any character that has a passive Perception below 16.

When the witherlings emerge, read:

Bones from the pit clatter together, forming skeletal creatures with oversized arms that end in vicious clawed hands.

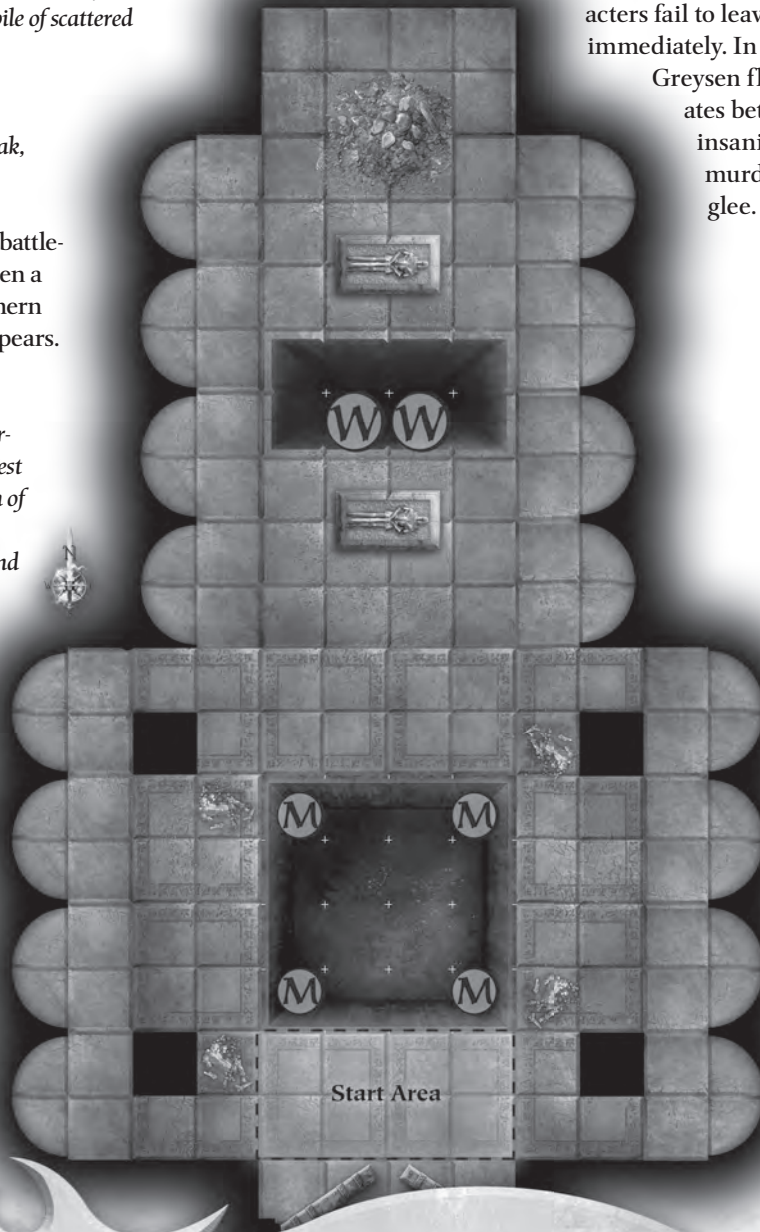
Roleplaying Greysen

The characters have a chance to speak to Greysen. Questions about Bertak's identity or statements about not having killed Greysen give the insane specter pause. He's willing to talk, identifying Bertak (see page 9), himself, and the bones of his victims, as long as the characters come no closer to the "treasure boxes."

The characters can keep Greysen talking with a DC 20 Diplomacy check. If they do, Greysen begins rambling about his most treasured possession, claiming "Bertak will never find it hidden in the column." With this piece of information, the characters can search the room's columns and recover *gauntlets of blood* (level 4). See *Heroes of the Fallen Lands*, page 350.

Eventually, he demands the characters leave him

to his "private hell." He attacks if the characters fail to leave immediately. In battle, Greysen fluctuates between insanity and murderous glee.



4 Witherling Motes (M)		Level 3 Minion Brute	
Small natural animate (undead)		XP 38 each	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.		Initiative +5	
AC 15, Fortitude 14, Reflex 16, Will 12		Perception -1	
Speed 8, climb 6		Low-light vision	
TRAITS			
Pack Attack			
The witherling's melee attacks deal 2 extra damage against any enemy that has two or more of the witherling's allies adjacent to it.			
STANDARD ACTIONS			
⊕ Claw ♦ At-Will			
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC			
Hit: 6 damage.			
Str 7 (-1)	Dex 17 (+4)	Wis 7 (-1)	
Con 13 (+2)	Int 2 (-3)	Cha 9 (+0)	
Alignment evil		Languages –	

Tactics

- ♦ **Greysen** turns invisible so he can safely move to a position where he can use *bone barrage* to hurl multiple foes into the bone pits. He then alternates between going invisible and using *double attack*.

Features of the Area

Illumination: Dim light.

Ceiling Height: 10 feet.

Bone Pits: The pits are difficult terrain. A creature pushed, pulled, or slid into a pit falls prone.

Debris: These squares are difficult terrain.

Destroyed Statue: The northern rubble was once a statue of Greysen. It's now difficult terrain.

Pillars: These squares are blocking terrain.

Runes: The runes on the floor chronicle Greysen Ramthane's dastardly exploits. Older runes written in Goblin recount similarly despicable deeds perpetrated by a hobgoblin named Grim Eye. A character who succeeds on a DC 20 History check knows that Grim Eye was the original ruler of Restwell Keep.

Treasure Boxes: These coffinlike boxes have fierce hobgoblin warriors carved on them. They store Ramthane's loot. The squares are difficult terrain.

The treasure boxes contain monetary wealth totaling about 600 gp. The characters must wait until they reach Gorn and Benwick to split it.

The characters can also recover a common level 2 arm-slot magic item (player's choice) and a common level 2 magic weapon or implement (player's choice). Neither item is a dwarven heirloom.



Greysen Ramthane's Specter		Level 3 Elite Lurker	
Medium shadow humanoid, specter (undead)		XP 350	
HP 54; Bloodied 27		Initiative +8	
AC 16, Fortitude 14, Reflex 16, Will 16		Perception +5	
Speed fly 6 (hover); phasing		Darkvision	
Resist 10 cold, 5 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant			
Saving Throws +2; Action Points 1			
TRAITS			
Insubstantial			
Greysen takes half damage from any damage source, except those that deal force or radiant damage. Whenever Greysen takes radiant damage, he loses this trait until the start of his next turn.			
STANDARD ACTIONS			
⊕ Bonechilling Touch (cold, necrotic) ♦ At-Will			
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. Reflex			
Hit: 1d6 + 4 cold damage, or 2d6 + 4 cold damage if the target couldn't see Greysen when he attacked. In addition, the target takes ongoing 5 necrotic damage (save ends).			
⊕ Double Attack ♦ At-Will			
Effect: Greysen uses <i>bonechilling touch</i> twice, making each attack against a different target.			
Invisibility ♦ At-Will			
Effect: Greysen becomes invisible until he attacks or until the end of his next turn.			
⊕ Bone Barrage ♦ Recharge [1]			
Attack: Close burst 2 (enemies in the burst); +6 vs. Reflex			
Hit: 2d6 + 4 damage, or 3d6 + 4 if the target couldn't see Greysen when he attacked. In addition, Greysen slides the target up to 2 squares.			
TRIGGERED ACTIONS			
Howl for the Dead ♦ Encounter			
Trigger: Greysen is first bloodied.			
Effect (No Action): Four witherling motes appear, each in an unoccupied square within 5 squares of Greysen. These witherlings act on an initiative count of 10.			
Skills Stealth +9			
Str 12 (+2)	Dex 17 (+4)	Wis 8 (+0)	
Con 15 (+3)	Int 8 (+0)	Cha 17 (+4)	
Alignment chaotic evil		Languages Common, Dwarven	

2 Botched Witherlings (W)		Level 1 Skirmisher	
Medium natural animate (undead)		XP 100 each	
HP 30; Bloodied 15		Initiative +5	
AC 15, Fortitude 13, Reflex 14, Will 12		Perception +1	
Speed 8, climb 6		Low-light vision	
TRAITS			
Pack Attack			
The witherling's melee attacks deal 2 extra damage against any enemy that has two or more of the witherling's allies adjacent to it.			
STANDARD ACTIONS			
⊕ Claw ♦ At-Will			
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC			
Hit: 2d6 + 2 damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).			
⊕ Double Attack ♦ At-Will			
Requirement: The witherling must be bloodied.			
Effect: The witherling uses <i>claw</i> twice.			
MINOR ACTIONS			
Blood Dance ♦ At-Will			
Requirement: The witherling must be bloodied.			
Effect: The witherling shifts 2 squares.			
Str 9 (-1)	Dex 17 (+3)	Wis 9 (-1)	
Con 14 (+2)	Int 5 (-3)	Cha 10 (+0)	
Alignment evil		Languages –	

ENCOUNTER 3–12: BETRAYAL REVEALED

Encounter Level 3 (700 XP)

Setup

Benwick (B)

Gorn Hammerfall (G)

Gordi and Sal, doppelganger sneaks (D)

Venn and Jarell, snaketongue initiates (S)

2 spitting cobras (see Tactics)

Remind the players of the room's description.

Then, when the characters are set up, read:

Benwick turns to you and gives a serpentine smile. "I've enjoyed our time together, but now it's time for you to die." He looks at Gorn. "As agreed, help kill them and you can have their share."

As Benwick finishes, he raises the *Serpent's Eye* and disappears in a flash of sickly green light.

Sal, Gordi, and Gorn turn on you and attack.

The characters grant combat advantage during the first round. If any adventurer made a DC 20 Insight check before Benwick's betrayal, that character does not grant combat advantage.

Tactics

The group tries to finish off the characters so Benwick can proceed with his plans. When an adventurer delivers the killing blow to one of the bad guys, that bad guy offers to reveal Benwick's plan. The character can choose to knock that person unconscious rather than killing him or her.

- ◆ **The snaketongue initiates** emerge at the chamber's entrance on an initiative count of 10. Each one then uses a standard action to throw a dark pellet up to 5 squares to a square that is not adjacent to an enemy. A spitting cobra appears where each pellet lands. The cobras act immediately after the initiates, using *blinding spittle*.
- ◆ **Gorn** lays into the toughest character, using *double attack* to knock someone prone. Once Gorn is bloodied, a character that uses a standard action to make an Intimidate check (DC 20) can force him into surrendering. He cannot be persuaded to help the characters fight against the cultists.
- ◆ **The doppelgangers**, Gordi and Sal, separate to tangle up at least one enemy each. If they cannot acquire combat advantage with *shapeshifter feint*, they maneuver to do so.

Features of the Area

Illumination: Dim light.

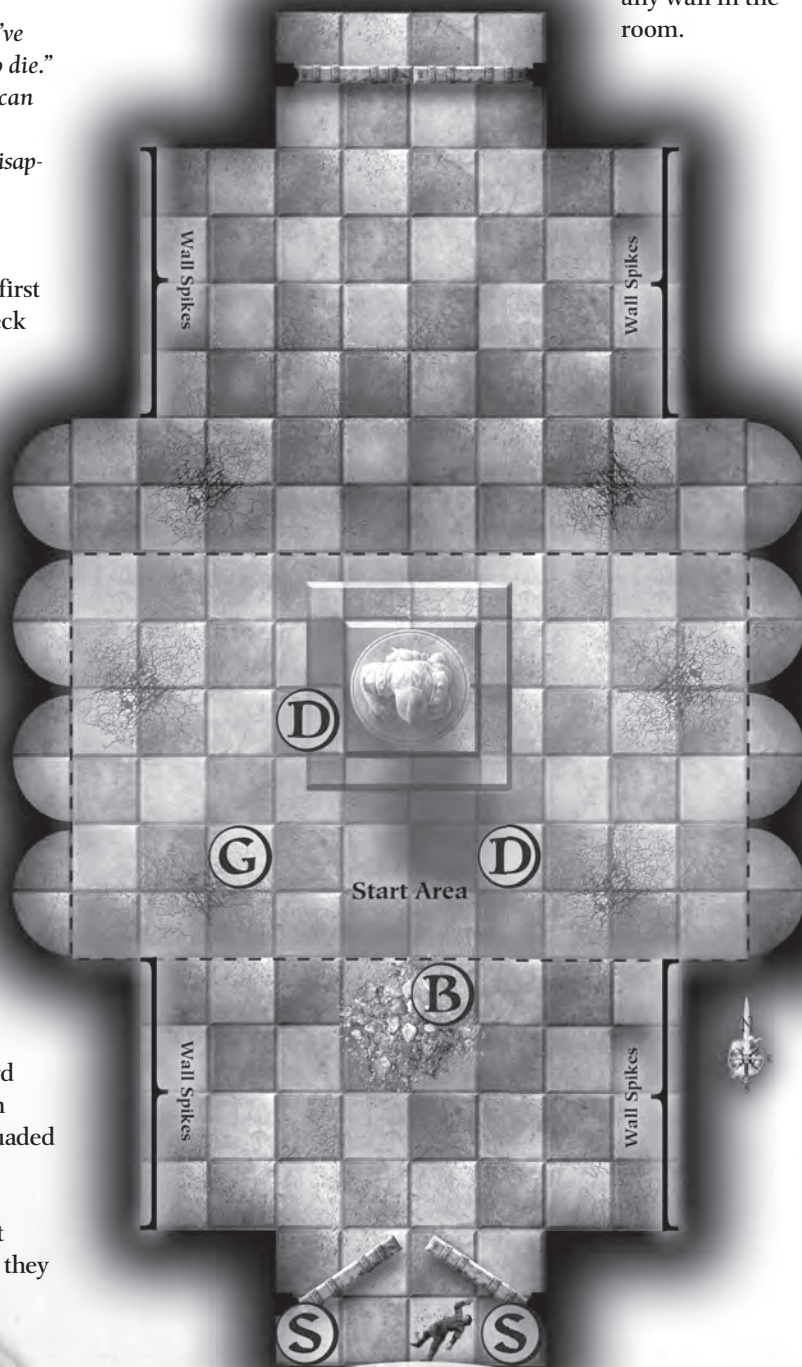
Ceiling Height: 15 feet.

Cracked Flooring: Squares of smashed cobbles are difficult terrain.

Debris: These remains of destroyed homunculi are difficult terrain.

Flailer Statue: This 12-foot statue is blocking terrain that can be climbed (Athletics DC 13).

Wall Spikes: The spikes attack anyone and anything forced against any wall in the room.



Wall Spikes

Terrain

Trigger: A creature is pushed or slid into a square adjacent to the wall.

Attack: Melee 1 (triggering creature); +7 vs. AC

Hit: The target takes 5 damage and stops moving.

Conclusion

Treasure: After defeating Gorn, the characters can take his portion of the treasure, meaning each receives an additional 40 gp, for a total of 80 gp this session.

Prisoners: If the adventurers capture one of Benwick's goons, he or she will reveal Benwick's plan if the characters promise to spare him or her.

The captured doppelgangers can expose Benwick's plot to frame Ferdinand Ronnik and eliminate the cult of Tiamat. If Ronnik is still alive, the characters have an opportunity to save him from Drysdale's justice and the noose.

Any one of the bad guys can reveal that Benwick is using the treasure and the *Serpent's Eye* to bribe a pair of black dragon siblings named Vermastyx and Yulbraxis. The dragons rule a tribe of lizardfolk in the swamps to the southwest, on the edge of the Chaos Scar. A prisoner can describe standing stones lining the old path to the location and tell the characters that it is near a river.

Finally, the prisoner reveals that Benwick and his allies intend to attack the keep.

Lord Drysdale must be warned!

Gorn Hammerfall (G)

Level 5 Brute

Medium natural humanoid, dwarf

XP 200

HP 77; Bloodied 38

Initiative +2

AC 17, Fortitude 18, Reflex 16, Will 17

Perception +3

Speed 5

Low-light vision

TRAITS

Stand the Ground

Gorn can move 1 square less than the effect specifies when subjected to a pull, a push, or a slide.

Steady-Footed

Gorn can make a saving throw to avoid falling prone when an attack would knock him prone.

STANDARD ACTIONS

⊕ Warhammer (weapon) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +10 vs. AC

Hit: 1d10 + 8 damage.

⊖ Double Attack ♦ Recharge ☹ ☹

Effect: Gorn uses warhammer twice. If he hits the same target twice, the target falls prone.

TRIGGERED ACTIONS

Brutal Parry ♦ Recharge when first bloodied

Trigger: An enemy misses Gorn with a melee attack.

Attack (Immediate Reaction): Melee 1 (one creature); +12 vs. AC

Hit: 1d10 + 3 damage, Gorn slides the target 1 square to a square adjacent to him, and the target falls prone.

Str 17 (+4) Dex 12 (+2) Wis 12 (+3)

Con 17 (+4) Int 10 (+1) Cha 12 (+2)

Alignment evil Languages Common, Dwarven

Equipment hide armor, 2 warhammers

2 Doppelganger Sneaks (D)

Level 3 Skirmisher

Medium natural humanoid (shapechanger)

XP 150 each

HP 45; Bloodied 22

Initiative +6

AC 17, Fortitude 14, Reflex 16, Will 15

Perception +2

Speed 6

STANDARD ACTION

⊕ Short Sword (weapon) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC

Hit: 1d6 + 6 damage, or 2d6 + 6 if the doppelganger has combat advantage against the target.

MINOR ACTIONS

Change Shape (polymorph) ♦ At-Will

Effect: The doppelganger alters its physical form to appear as a Medium humanoid until it uses *change shape* again or until it drops to 0 hit points. To assume a specific individual's form, the doppelganger must have seen that individual. Other creatures can make a DC 30 Insight check to discern that the form is a disguise.

⊖ Shapeshifter Feint ♦ At-Will (1/round)

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. Reflex

Hit: The target grants combat advantage to the doppelganger until the end of the doppelganger's next turn.

Skills Bluff +8, Insight +7, Stealth +9

Str 11 (+1) Dex 16 (+4) Wis 12 (+2)

Con 13 (+2) Int 10 (+1) Cha 15 (+3)

Alignment unaligned Languages Common

Equipment short sword

2 Snaketongue Initiates (S)

Level 5 Minion Brute

Medium natural humanoid, human

XP 50 each

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

Initiative +5

AC 17, Fortitude 17, Reflex 16, Will 16

Perception +4

Speed 6

Low-light vision

STANDARD ACTIONS

⊕ Poisoned Dagger ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +10 vs. AC

Hit: 5 damage, and the initiate makes a secondary attack against the target.

Secondary Attack: +8 vs. Fortitude

Hit: Ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).

Str 16 (+6) Dex 14 (+5) Wis 12 (+4)

Con 13 (+4) Int 12 (+4) Cha 14 (+5)

Alignment chaotic evil Languages Common, Draconic

Equipment leather armor, dagger

2 Spitting Cobras

Level 5 Minion Soldier

Small natural beast (reptile)

XP 50 each

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

Initiative +8

AC 21, Fortitude 17, Reflex 18, Will 17

Perception +4

Speed 6, climb 6

Low-light vision

STANDARD ACTIONS

⊕ Bite (poison) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +10 vs. AC

Hit: 6 poison damage, and the cobra marks the target until the end of the cobra's next turn.

☹ Blinding Spittle (poison) ♦ Recharge ☹ ☹ ☹

Attack: Ranged 5 (one creature); +8 vs. Reflex

Hit: 6 poison damage, and the target is blinded (save ends).

Str 7 (+0) Dex 18 (+6) Wis 15 (+4)

Con 15 (+4) Int 1 (-3) Cha 10 (+2)

Alignment unaligned Languages –



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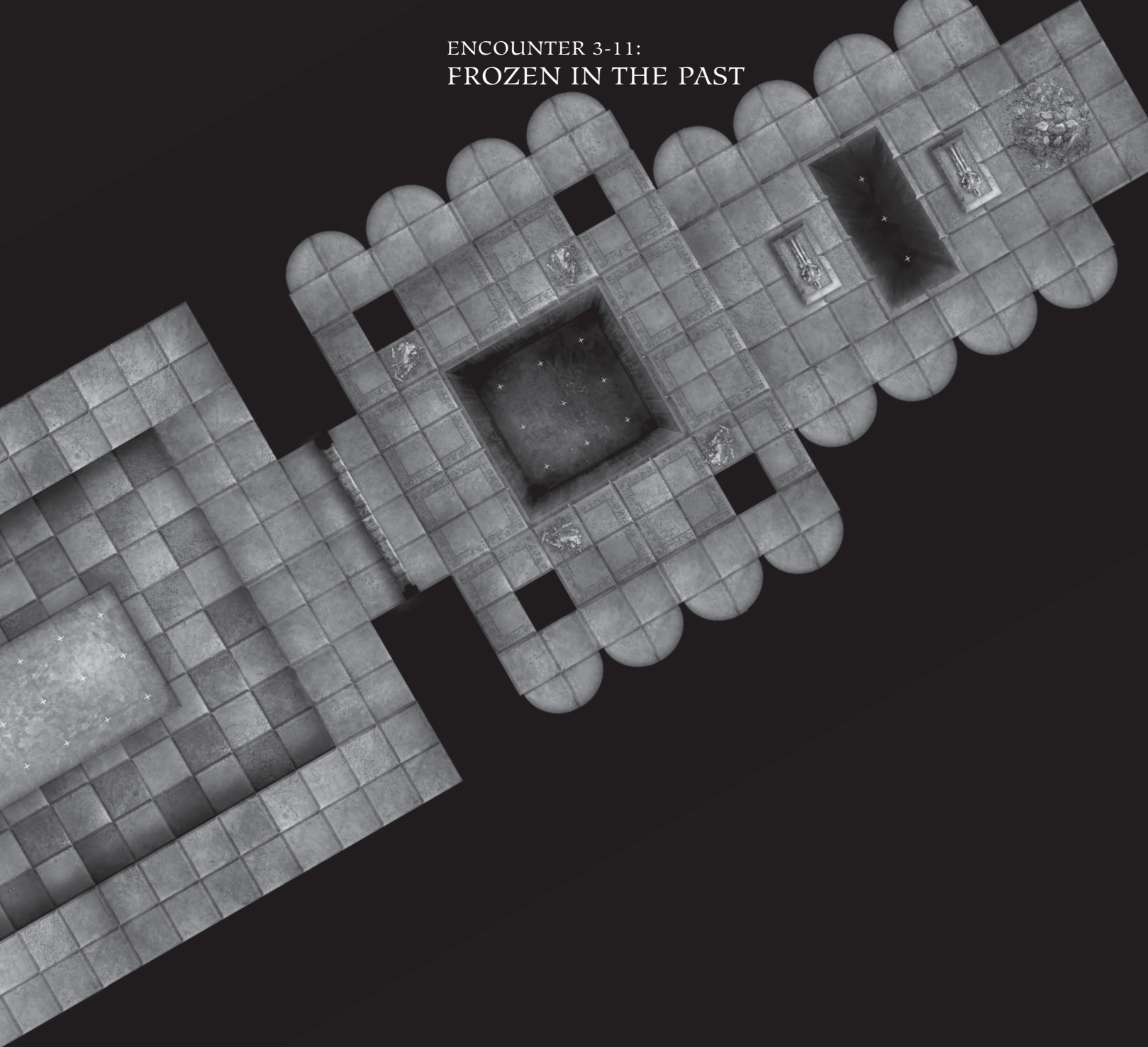
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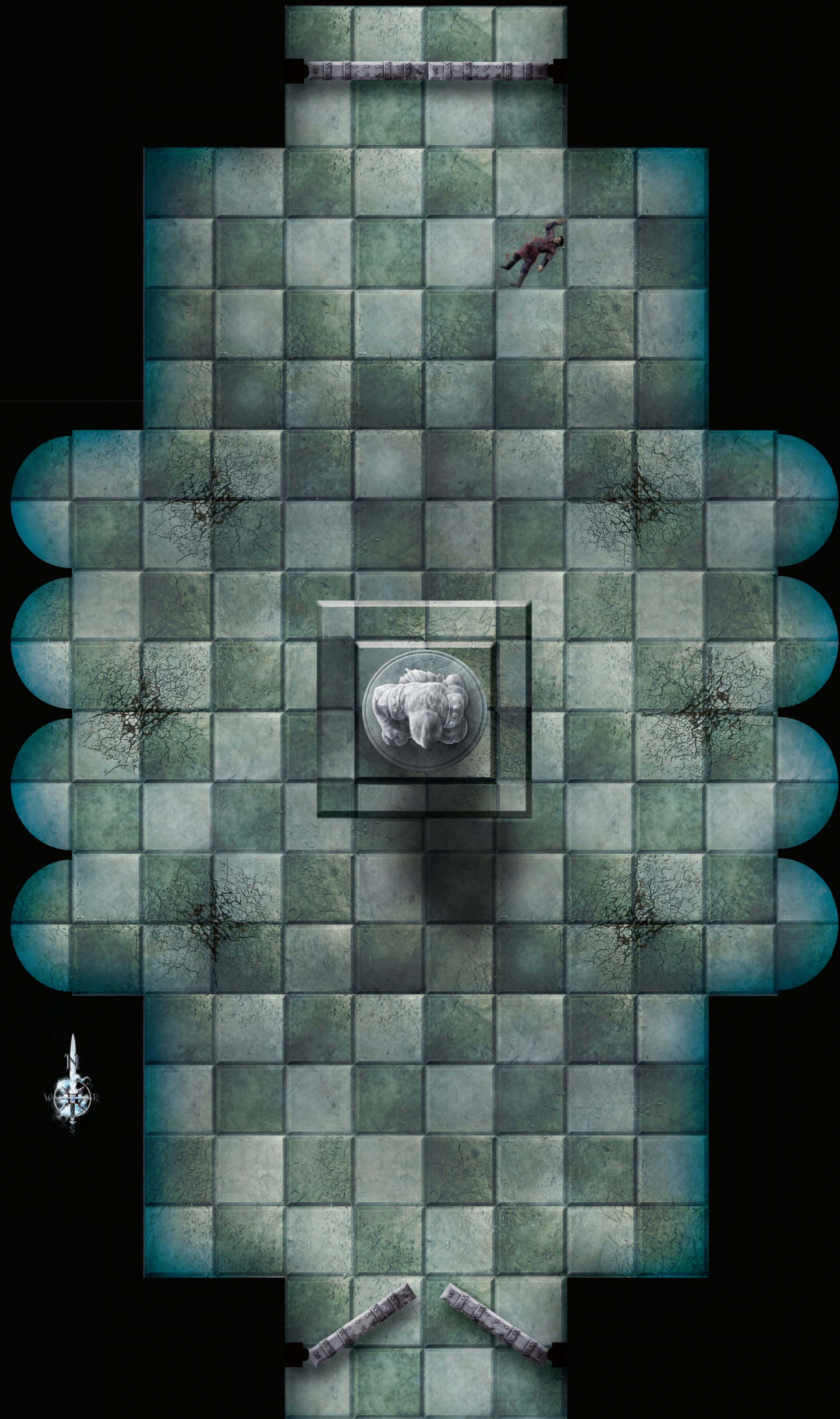


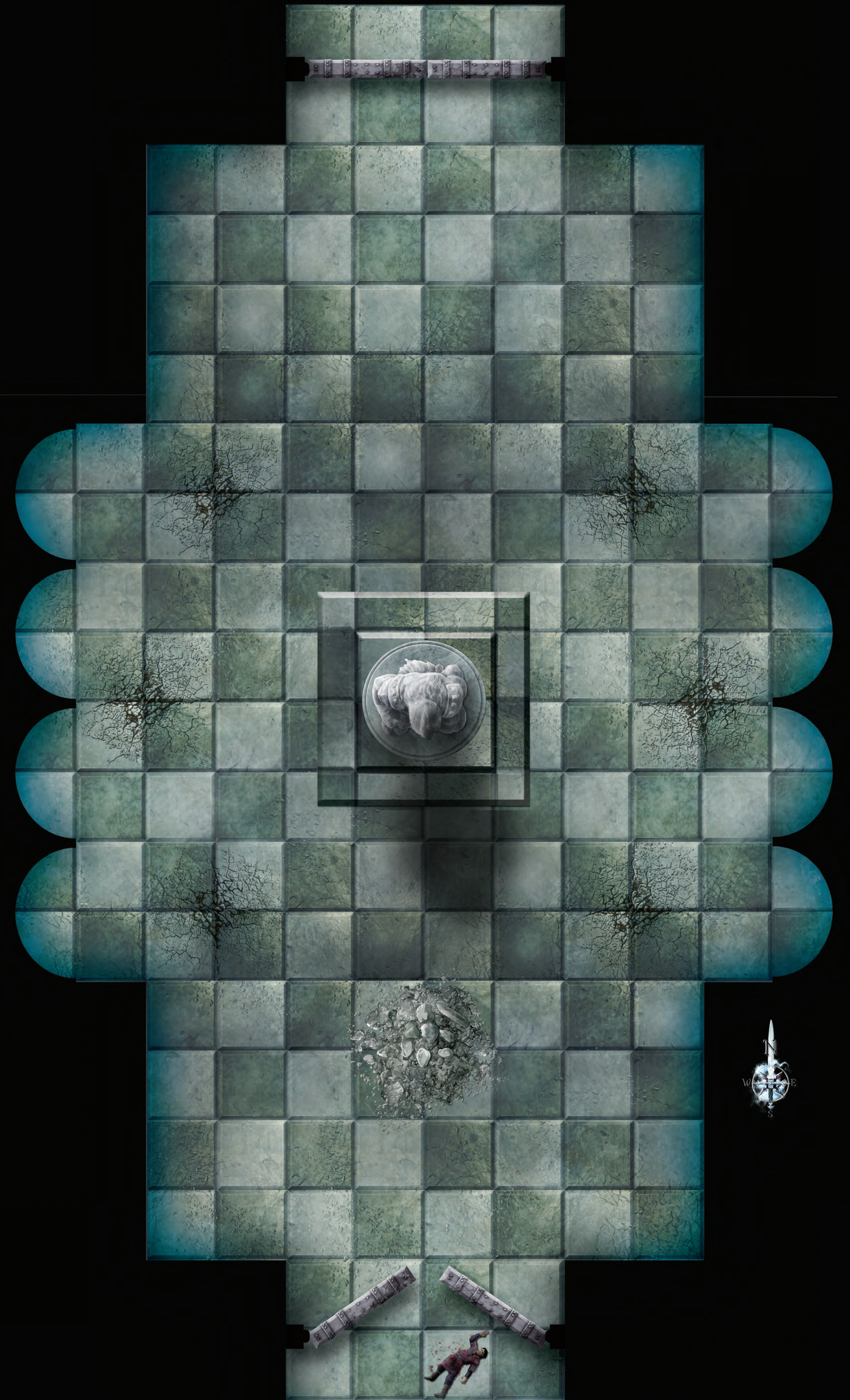
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ENCOUNTER 3-11:
FROZEN IN THE PAST







RECOVER THE BANDIT LORD'S LOOT

A secret vault beneath the keep is rumored to contain a bandit lord's lost hoard. Gorn Hammerfall, the descendant of the bandit, along with your patron Benwick, have tasked you to recover this wealth before it is discovered by others, promising you a fair share of the take. Can you delve into the hold and recover the treasure before other forces learn of its existence?

Keep on the Borderlands: A Season of Serpents (Chapter 3) is designed for five characters of 2nd level and is the fall and winter 2010-11 season of the D&D Encounters™ official play program. This DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® adventure includes a full-color battle map, ready-to-play encounters, and DM information on the D&D Encounters official play program.



For use with these DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Essentials™ products:

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Fantasy Roleplaying Game

Heroes of the Fallen Lands™

Heroes of the Forgotten Kingdoms™

Rules Compendium™

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A HEROIC TIER ADVENTURE

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

ENCOUNTERS™

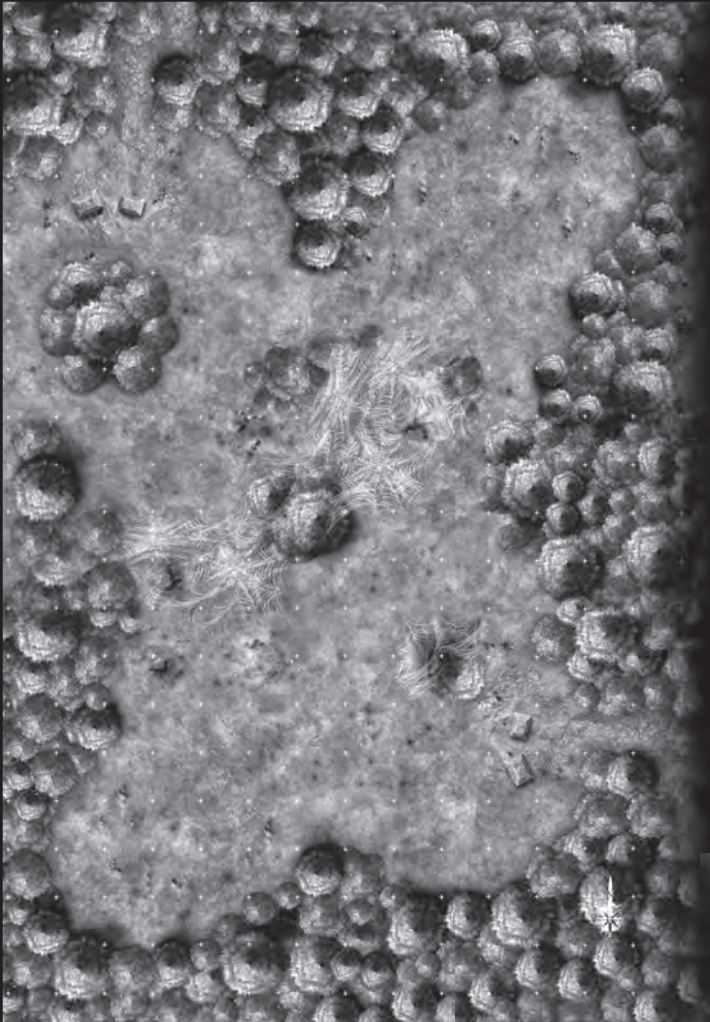
KEEP ON THE BORDERLANDS

Chapter 4 of 5: A Season of Serpents



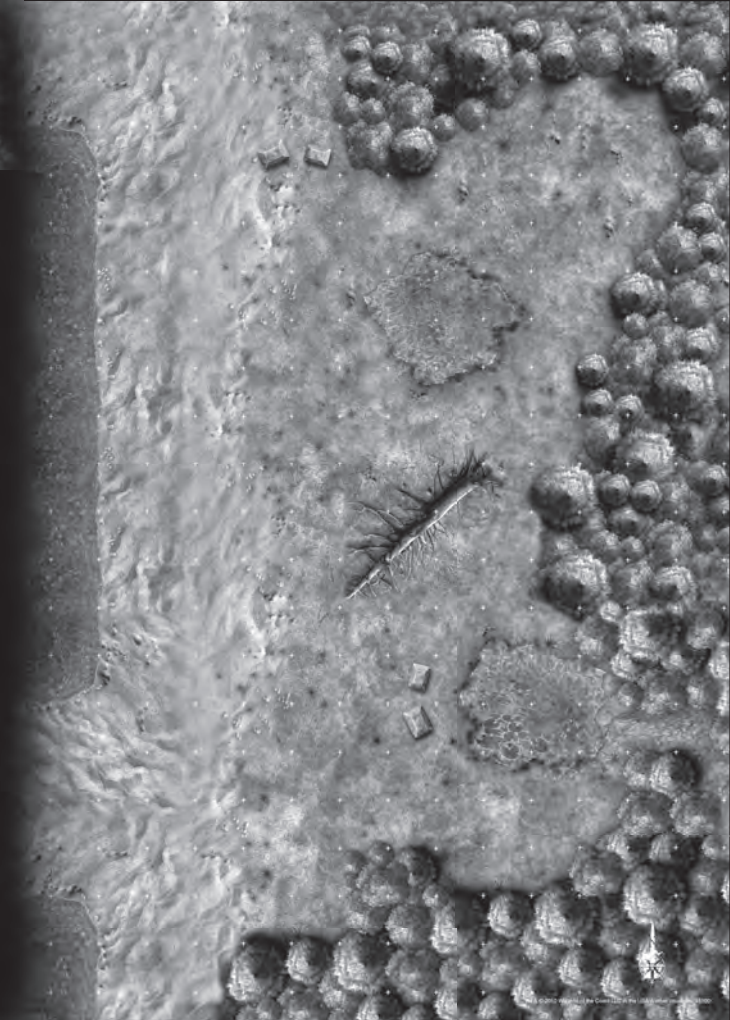
AN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTERS OF 2ND LEVEL

Chris Sims



ENCOUNTER 4-13:
A STICKY SITUATION

ENCOUNTER 4-14:
LIZARDFOLK LOOKOUTS



INTRODUCTION

A DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Encounters™ adventure for four to six 2nd-level characters

Welcome to DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Encounters, an exciting official DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® program. This adventure is a mini-campaign season designed to be played in one-encounter sessions once per week at your local Wizards Play Network location. Each week, players can earn in-game rewards for their characters and Renown Points toward special program-exclusive D&D Encounters™ Cards that can be used in this and future seasons of DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Encounters.

Preparing for Play

The DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Encounters play kit provides all you need to DM this adventure, including poster maps of encounter areas and a sheet of tokens for monsters, adventurers, and battlefield effects. Follow the steps below to prepare for play.

Before you DM your first session:

- ◆ Read the Introduction, Adventure Background, and Adventure Synopsis sections.
- ◆ Read **Session 13: Chasing the Serpent** and **encounter 4-13: A Sticky Situation**. If you are starting at another point, read the appropriate sections and what has come before.

At the table of your first session:

- ◆ Ensure each player has a character to play. Players may use one of the characters provided in the kit, or may create their own using the guidelines provided.
- ◆ Give each player a D&D Encounters Play Tracker. This sheet is found in the play kit, and it allows the players to track treasure, experience, and Renown Points earned for each play session.
- ◆ Get a session tracking sheet from the organizer. Record all the players' DCI/RPGA numbers on it, along with your DCI/RPGA number. If you or any of the players don't have a DCI/RPGA number, ask the organizer for a membership card.

During the session:

- ◆ Each session is one encounter. Just DM the encounter assigned for that week's session. Typical playtime for one encounter is about 90 minutes to 2 hours.
- ◆ Make decisions and adjudications that enhance the fun of the game. As the DM, you can make some adjustments to the adventure (see the sidebar on page 2) to facilitate player fun.

At the end of your first session:

- ◆ Have the adventurers take a short rest if they want, but remind them to track their daily abilities. Healing surges used, daily powers expended, and other daily resources do not refresh in-between each session; only at the end of each chapter. Make sure your players track this information on their D&D Encounters Play Tracker.
- ◆ Turn in your session tracking sheet to the organizer. Make sure you've recorded all the DCI/RPGA numbers on it, along with names and the play date.
- ◆ Report Renown Point totals earned for each player to the organizer. The organizer fills out the Renown Point Tracker for the location and tells you if any players have earned D&D Encounters Cards.
- ◆ Give out treasure. Make sure the players write down rewards on the D&D Encounters Play Tracker.
- ◆ Collect your special reward for providing your time as a DM to make the event happen. Your organizer has more details on this reward.

At the end of the final session of a chapter:

- ◆ The adventurers take an extended rest, regaining all of their healing surges, hit points, and daily powers. In addition, their action point total resets to 1.
- ◆ Once you've been the DM for a session, it's easy to prepare for your next session. Simply read over the session's material, and you're ready to go.

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CREATING A CHARACTER

Players are responsible for bringing their own characters to each play session. A player should bring a new 2nd-level D&D character created using the rules found in the *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Fantasy Roleplaying Game* boxed set, the *Heroes of the Fallen Lands™* supplement, or the *Heroes of the Forgotten Kingdoms™* supplement.

If a player doesn't have a character or doesn't want to create one from scratch, several pre-generated characters are provided in the play kit. Get these from the organizer and offer a choice of one to each player that wants one.

At the end of each session, you award experience points, treasure, and Renown Points to each player. They'll track that information on their D&D Encounters Play Tracker and you'll report the Renown Points each player earned with the organizer.

Character Death: If a character dies during a session, the player has two choices. He or she can bring the same character back at the beginning of the next session with four fewer healing surges, or he or she can start a new 2nd-level character. If a character dies and has fewer than four healing surges remaining, that character loses all his or her remaining healing surges and can return next session but has hit points equaling only his or her bloodied value.

There is no other penalty for death except for the potential loss of renown for not surviving 12+ sessions without dying.

Advancement

At the end of each session, you award experience points when the characters complete encounters. Use this table below to award experience points for each session. Don't modify the amount of experience based on the number of characters.

EXPERIENCE POINT AWARDS

XP Description	XP/Character
Session 13	180 XP
Skill Challenge: Finding the Path	75 XP
Minor Quest (Optional): Free Ferdinand Ronnik	25 XP
Session 14	130 XP
Session 15	170 XP
Session 16	160 XP
Major Quest: Gather intelligence on the enemy	125 XP

If the characters succeed at all the encounters and complete all quests, each should earn 865 XP by the end of Chapter 4.

Leveling Up: Near the end of Chapter 4, the characters will have earned enough experience to make it to 3rd level. However, the players must wait until the end of the chapter, when their characters take an extended rest, to level up. All characters will be level 3 at the beginning of Chapter 5 (covered in the next adventure packet).

Milestones: For every two encounters a character completes without taking an extended rest, the character reaches a milestone, gaining an action point.

A CHANGING GROUP

Since you can never tell who's going to show up to a *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Encounters* session from week to week, you might wind up with a different group of players. Some players might be starting in "mid-stream," some could have missed a session or two, and others might have played all the sessions with a different DM. That's fine. Catch up new players with a brief summary of what has come before, and make sure that returning players have marked off resources they spent (healing surges, daily powers, etc.) since their last extended rest.

Majority Rules: If some element of the adventure plot hinges on the adventurers making a decision in a previous session, and the group is different during the current session, simply find out how the decision went down from the players. Go with the majority, and if it's an even split, side with the most positive result. For example, if three of five players' characters at your table captured Ferdinand Ronnik in a previous encounter and two didn't, Ronnik is considered to be captured for your session this week.

Treasure

As the characters progress through the mini-campaign, they have the opportunity to gain treasure in the form of gold pieces, valuables, and magic items. At the end of each session, determine if the players earned any treasure. Use the following rules to divide up treasure among the characters.

Gold and Valuables: If the adventurers earn it, each character gets a share as noted on the table below. All valuables such as gems and jewelry are converted to gold pieces (gp). The amounts have already been divided on a per-character basis. Don't modify the amounts based on the number of characters.

Magic Items: During the adventure, a number of magic items might be discovered. They are listed on the table below. Give out magic items according to the Awarding Magic Items sidebar.

When to Gear Up: Characters can buy equipment at the start of each chapter. If a character gains a magic item that has only level, rarity, and type described (for example, a common level 5 magic weapon), the player can select a magic item up to that level of the same type and rarity after the session is complete, before starting the next one.

Awarding Magic Items: When the characters find a nonconsumable magic item, the players decide who receives what. If this is impossible or difficult, you assign the new item to a character who has no nonconsumable magic items. If all the characters have a nonconsumable magic item, the character with the lowest-level nonconsumable magic item receives the new item.

If more than one character has no nonconsumable magic item, or two characters tie for the lowest-level magic item, those the players decide who receives the new item. If they can't decide, have each roll a d20 until one rolls higher than the other. That player receives the new item.

You can distribute consumable items in the same way if the players can't decide who takes such items. Just remember not to count these items as nonconsumable magic items.

TREASURE FOUND

Treasure	Location
Common arms-slot magic item (level 4 or lower)	Encounter 4-13
6 gp each	Encounter 4-15
103 gp each	Encounter 4-16
One potion of healing per character	Encounter 4-16
Common magic armor (level 6 or lower)	Encounter 4-16
Uncommon magic weapon or implement (level 5 or lower)	Encounter 4-16

Renown Points

One of the great rewards for playing in a DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Encounters season is the accumulation of Renown Points (RPs), which are given out for accomplishments made by players during, and sometimes in-between, sessions. These Renown Points are tracked at the Wizards Play Network location, and reaching certain thresholds garners the player a tangible reward—a D&D Encounters Card.

Players can use these cards during the current DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Encounters season, subsequent seasons, or possibly both. Each card has all the information on how it works printed right on the card itself.

As the DM, it's your task to award Renown Points at the end of a session of play, just like you would award experience and treasure. Unlike experience and treasure though, Renown Point totals earned for each player must be reported to the organizer at the conclusion of the session when you turn in your session tracking sheet. The organizer can then tell you if any players have qualified for a card.

The Renown accomplishments, their frequency, and the point values of each are listed below.

RENOWN POINT AWARDS

Accomplishment	Frequency	RPs
Complete an encounter	Session	3
Hit a milestone	2/chapter	2
Moment of greatness	1/chapter	2
Create a D&D Essentials character	Season	5
Create a D&D Character Builder character	Season	5
Revive a dying adventurer ally	Season	1
Hit for 15+ damage against 1 enemy	Season	1
Kill 3 minions in 1 attack	Season	1
Take 50 enemy damage in 1 session	Season	1
Survive 12+ sessions without dying	Season	2
Complete all quests	Season	5

Moment of Greatness: This is a discretionary award given out by the DM or through party vote to a player for doing something inventive, daring, or just plain cool during a session of play.

Renown Rewards

When a player earns 20 RPs, he or she earns the first D&D Encounters Card, called the Delver Reward. This is awarded to the player immediately following the session in which it is earned. The second award is called the Adventurer Reward, and a player qualifies for the reward by obtaining 100 Renown Points in the season.

The final award is given out at the conclusion of the season. At the end of the season, a number of D&D Encounters Cards are distributed among those who qualify for the reward. If more players qualify for the reward than the number of cards available, the organizer will determine how they will be distributed.

The Serpent Strikes

This adventure is the third of five chapters for *Keep on the Borderlands: A Season of Serpents*. The later adventures will be available separately as the season progresses. Check with your organizer upon completion of this adventure to receive the next adventure. These introductory pages provide background information to aid you in running the storyline.

Keep on the Borderlands

Legends claim that dwarf-built Restwell Keep has been the fortress of a hobgoblin king, the home of an infamous bandit lord, a linchpin garrison of fallen Nerath, and the lair of a dragon. Indeed, the keep has been all these and more. At present, it is a faint but steady light struggling against a growing darkness. Its intrepid inhabitants are in constant danger from within and without.

Government: Not long ago, the keep was a free-wheeling place with lax law enforcement. Lord Peridin Drysdale, paladin of Erathis, recently took command. More than a few residents, accustomed to the old regime, resent the paladin's adamant push toward order and morality. As a result, Drysdale's authority is weak in the outer bailey.

Defense: Mercenary guards watch the barracks, as well as the towers and gate of the outer bailey. Kendon Longstrider, a 60-year-old human veteran, is in charge. Drysdale's soldiers patrol the keep proper and the inner bailey. The lord has mandated that capable individuals serve as militia if the need arises.

Room and Board: The gruff, greedy Nerrin Silverhand runs the seamy Travelers Inn on Fountain Square. A private room (four occupants) runs 1 gp per night; a spot in the common room costs 1 sp. Nerrin serves neither food nor drink. Such provisions can be purchased from cheerful Mother Aran of The Stumbling Giant, a fine tavern also on Fountain Square.

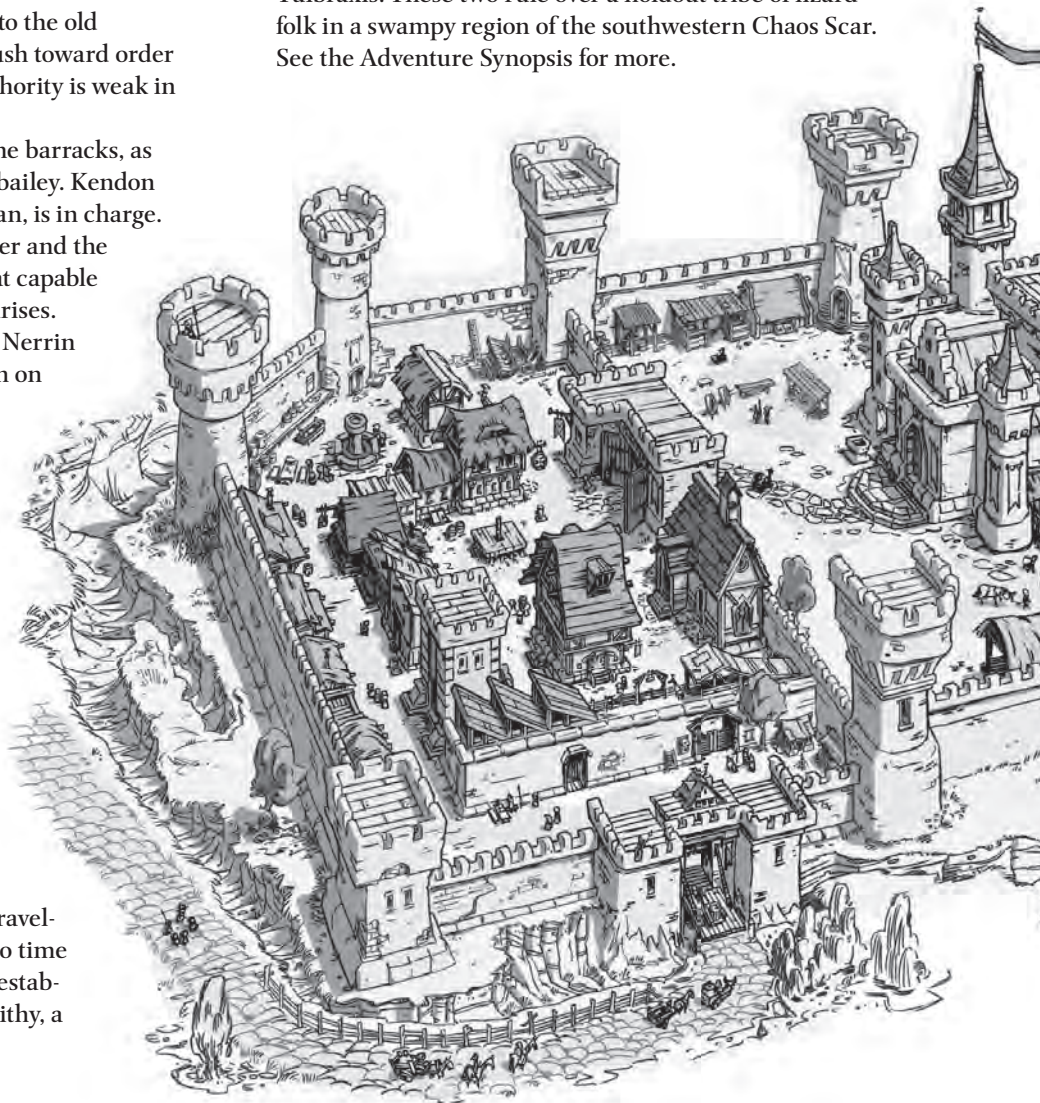
Temple: The local chapel (along the inner bailey wall) is open for worship of all accepted deities, but Avandra is esteemed above others. Chendera, the striking half-elf caretaker and priestess, is a devotee of the luck goddess. She spends much of her time mingling with folks in The Stumbling Giant.

Other Services: Local farmers and traveling merchants set up stands from time to time in the keep's Fountain Square. Regular establishments include a trader, a bank, a smithy, a jeweler, and a mage's guildhouse.

Benwick played the part of a jolly friar who worships Avandra, Ioun, and Sehanine. He's actually a follower of Zehir, the god of serpents. Benwick revealed his true colors in the last chapter by betraying the characters. Now, most likely, he has fled to the Chaos Scar to further his plot.

The friar's actions up until this point have been aimed at turning the keep into a stronghold for worshipers of the snake god. He has been courting the local lizardfolk for his plot. Benwick used the characters to help frame and eliminate Ferdinand Ronnik, the banker in the keep, by using doppelgangers to link him to a Tiamat cult that threatened Benwick's hold over a local tribe of lizardfolk. Benwick also got his hands on the *Serpent's Eye*, a jewel sacred to Zehir's faithful. Most recently, he acquired a small fortune when the characters aided him in recovering the trove of Greysen Ramthane, a dwarf bandit lord that once ruled the keep.

Now Benwick is cementing his alliance with the lizardfolk. With the *Serpent's Eye* and treasure, he plans to bribe two young black dragon siblings, Vermastyx and Yulbraxis. These two rule over a holdout tribe of lizardfolk in a swampy region of the southwestern Chaos Scar. See the Adventure Synopsis for more.





The Chaos Scar

For eons, an evil comet roamed the space between worlds, seeking a place to touch down and wreak havoc. It settled on this world.

As the falling star passed through the sky, milk curdled, livestock fell dead, and ill fortune flourished. The celestial body crashed into the Nentir Vale with deafening force, carving a valley-sized furrow in its wake. Red radiance lit the sky for a week. Thus, the Chaos Scar was born.

Over a mile long and several hundred feet deep, the Chaos Scar is an angry, blighted gash in the world. As the star carved its path through the earth, shards and fragments tore away until only its heart remained, embedded in an escarpment at the far end of its new home.

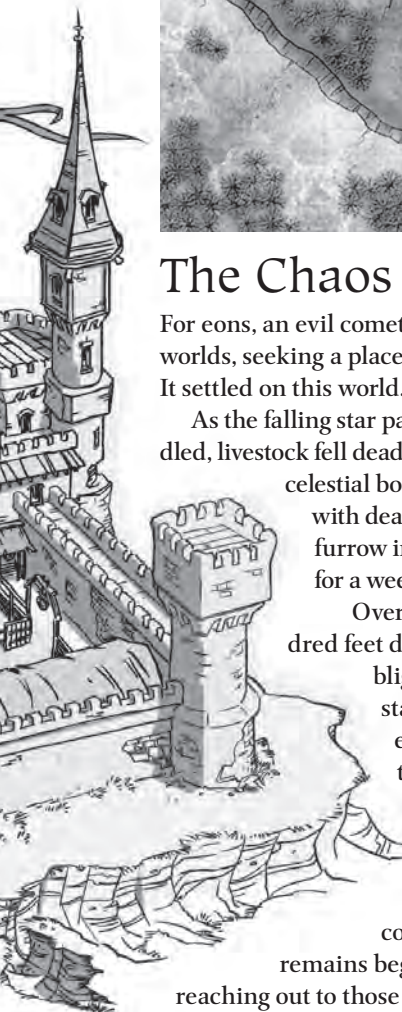
Patient beyond mortal comprehension, the malevolent remains began to sow seeds of wickedness, reaching out to those of a perverse and corruptible bent. Over the centuries, creatures of evil spirit have been drawn to this beacon.

The dark sentience spurs competition among the malefactors who carve out dominions within the valley's many caves. The weakest ones settle near the mouth of the valley and the plain beyond. The strongest villains lair closer to the comet's heart and in the fortress that now encloses the upper wall.

Rulers have tried to contain the threat of the Chaos Scar in the past, with little to no success. A long-forgotten king erected a wall across the valley's mouth. It still stands, partly in ruins, its gates open and unguarded.

The Chaos Scar is filled with malice, promising death to those who enter. It is riddled with caves both natural and tunneled by generations of monstrous denizens. The deeper one travels into the valley, the deadlier the foes lurking in its hollows.

Many adventurers have entered the Chaos Scar seeking wealth and glory. Few have returned. Those heroes that survive its depths weave dark stories of cults, inhuman tribes, and monsters working in blasphemous concert. Other explorers tell of monstrous creatures engaging in vicious, unrelenting warfare. All seekers agree that fatality is far more prevalent than fortune.



ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The characters have been very successful up to this point, helping Benwick frame Ferdinand Ronnik, destroying a cult of Tiamat, and recovering Greysen Ramthane's treasure. At the end of the last chapter, they also defended themselves against Benwick's betrayal.

One or more of the betrayers in the last chapter surrendered and spilled the details of Benwick's plot against Ferdinand Ronnik and his flight to the Chaos Scar. There, he plans to bribe two black dragon siblings that command a tribe of lizardfolk. With a reptilian army backing him, Benwick plans to seize the keep for Zehir. The characters must warn Lord Drysdale and perhaps save Ferdinand Ronnik from the gallows.

Despite setbacks, everything is going according to Benwick's plan. With Yulbraxis in tow, the evil friar plans to enslave more lizardfolk while Vermastyx greets the adventurers in her lair. If the characters perish, Benwick wins. If the characters slay or subdue Vermastyx, he also wins. Vermastyx's defeat is just the leverage Benwick needs to ensure Yulbraxis attacks the keep.

Session 13: Lord Drysdale tasks the characters with pursuing Benwick while he prepares the keep's inhabitants for a battle he hopes never comes. The adventurers head southwest toward the Chaos Scar. They know to look for an unnamed waterway and a trail lined with ancient standing stones. After fighting bands of lizardfolk, the adventurers find their way into the black dragons' lair, where Vermastyx awaits them.

After talking to Lord Drysdale, the characters must hasten southwest to catch their quarry, Benwick. They enter lizardfolk territory and follow a trackless path. A skill challenge determines whether they stumble into danger on the journey or proceed with a survivalist's savvy. See **Session 13: Chasing the Snake**, page 8.

Session 14: The characters head deeper into lizardfolk territory. They come upon a tiny part of a dispersed lizardfolk settlement and receive a hostile welcome. Hostilities cease when the lizardfolk realize the adventurers are too strong. Defeated, the lizardfolk are all too happy to direct the adventurers toward the dragons' lair, where they expect the heroes will meet their doom. See **Session 14: Watchers in the Water**, page 10.

Session 15: The characters come to an old ruin in the wilderness. Dragonborn statues and carvings on ruined walls suggest the site has long been home to draconic and reptilian creatures. Local lizardfolk see the dragons as leaders, if not more. The strongest warriors of the tribe guard the lair entrance, and defeating these monsters gains the characters a level. See **Session 15: Sacred Ground**, page 10.

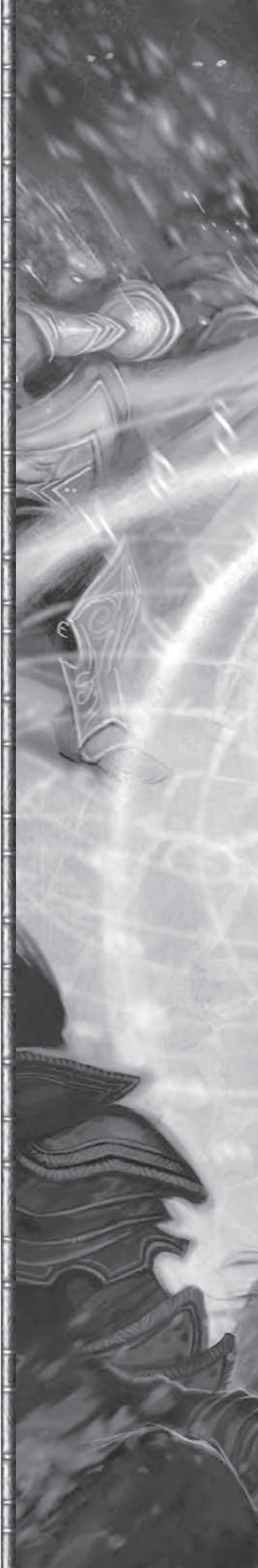
Session 16: The heroes face the black dragon Vermastyx in her partially flooded home. Vermastyx is a tough opponent within her own lair. However, there is no sign of Benwick, forcing the characters to conclude that he must be elsewhere. Vermastyx is the only one who knows where to find the evil friar and what he's up to. Subduing the dragon might be necessary to learn this information. Vermastyx's defeat spurs Yulbraxis to seek revenge in the final chapter of the adventure. See **Session 16: Into the Dragon Lair**, page 11.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTERS

Chapter 4 assumes you have a normal party of five 2nd-level characters and players familiar with the *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* game at your table. Compare the party at your table to this assumption, using the following guidelines.

Weak Party: You have a weak party at your table if it consists of only four characters, or most or all of the players are new to the *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* game. If you have a weak party, remove one of the lowest level or least important non-minion monsters from the encounter. For instance, in Encounter 4-13 (level 2 encounter), you might subtract one ambush spider.

Strong Party: You have a strong party at your table if it consists of six characters, or most or all of the players are veteran 4th-Edition *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* players who like added challenge. If you have a strong party, add one of the simplest non-minion monsters among those in the encounter whose level most closely matches the encounter level. For instance, in Encounter 4-13, you might add another ambush spider.





CHAPTER 4: HERE BE DRAGONS

After talking with Lord Drysdale of Restwell Keep, the characters pursue Benwick into the Chaos Scar and clash with the reptilian creatures therein.

ROLEPLAYING

Some of the adventure's sections call for roleplaying, and all of the encounters allow for it. A portion of the information in this book exists to help you roleplay with the players. You might prepare a list of names to use if players want to talk to creatures unexpectedly. As long as all the players are having fun, and it's not going to make the session too long, play it up and enjoy. Just make sure to include everyone.

Further, allow for cinematic maneuvers and clever strategies. Try to reward bold play and clever play. Let players use their characters' skills and powers. Encourage this sort of gaming by being prepared, and by using the monsters, NPCs, and scenarios boldly and cleverly yourself.

Session 13: Chasing the Serpent

The players need a recap of the story thus far. Begin by asking them a few questions.

- ◆ **Who has played Chapters 1 and/or 2 of this season?** If no one has, then you need ask no further questions. Anyone who has played Chapters 1 and/or 2 should be asked the next question.
- ◆ **What happened to Ferdinand Ronnik?** If the majority of players killed Ronnik in Chapter 2, he's dead for this session. If the majority subdued Ronnik, he's in the keep's dungeon, under Lord Drysdale's authority, waiting to be hanged.
- ◆ **Which of the enemies survived Chapter 3?** Go with the prisoners the majority of players at the table took. If no one has played Chapter 3, assume the doppelgangers, Gordi and Sal, survived and told the characters of the plot.

If the players need a refresher, read the following text describing the story so far:

Shortly after you arrived at Restwell Keep, the Keep on the Borderlands, you began to work with a jolly friar named Benwick. Claiming to worship Avandra, Sehanine, and Ioun, he led you to believe Lord Drysdale, the keep's lord, was a rigid and warlike disciple of Erathis. He also led you to believe that the keep's banker, Ferdinand Ronnik, was the leader of a Tiamat cult in the area. With Benwick's guidance, you defeated Ronnik and the cult, and you recovered a jewel known as the Serpent's Eye.

Benwick then had you use the Serpent's Eye to complete a task for the benefit of a captain of the watch, a dwarf named Gorn Hammerfall. Away from the watch of Lord Drysdale, you delved into the old trove of Gorn's ancestor, Greysen Ramthane, a bandit lord of Restwell Keep more than a hundred years ago.

That's when Benwick and Gorn turned on you. You prevailed, but Benwick escaped with much treasure and the Serpent's Eye.

You have now learned the full extent of Benwick's treachery. Benwick framed Ronnik. And now he's taken the treasure to bribe a pair of black dragons named Vermastyx and Yulbraxis. These dragons reside in the swamp on the edge of the Chaos Scar. With these draconic allies and the lizardfolk tribe under their command, Benwick plans on driving Drysdale and all good folk out of the keep.

You know Benwick is heading southwest to the dragons' lair. Standing stones line an old path to the location, which is in the center of a lizardfolk tribe's territory along a large stream. You have a good idea what those stones look like.

It turns out you have unwittingly helped a servant of Zehir. Now it's time to make things right by telling Lord Drysdale of the imminent dangers.

The adventurers might be eager to chase after Benwick, but technically, they've just finished the Ramthane Delve and need an extended rest. This should give them enough time to tie up loose ends at the keep before setting out. In any case, the characters probably have prisoners to turn over to Lord Drysdale.

Quests: If Ferdinand Ronnik is still alive, the characters gain a minor quest to see him freed.

Preparation

When the characters approach the gate to the inner bailey, Drysdale's personal guards stop the party. The guards take little convincing to let the adventurers pass. You can gloss over this scene or allow players to roleplay briefly with the guards. The guards escort the characters to Lord Drysdale.

When the adventurers are taken to see Lord Drysdale, read:

Guards escort you through a courtyard and up the steps to the main fortress. After passing through a set of enormous doors, you arrive in the great hall.

A silver-haired human with weathered skin and sharp eyes greets you. His hair is cut in a close-cropped military fashion, and he sports a long mustache.

"I am Lord Peridin Drysdale. I heard of your heroics regarding Ferdinand Ronnik. Well done. Now, what news do you have that my guards saw fit to bring you here so urgently?"

Roleplaying the Scene

Allow the players to describe how their characters relate the situation to Lord Drysdale. They don't need to recite the whole tale, but you should know what they tell the lord about Benwick, Ferdinand Ronnik, and any prisoners in their custody.

Drysdale is grave and bluntly honest, but tries to be friendly. However, he is a practical military man. He tolerates little flowery speech or beating around the bush.

When the characters reveal all that has occurred, Drysdale is visibly upset. He first orders any prisoners taken to the dungeons. Then he orders Ronnik, if he lives, removed from his cell and cared for. Then he comes back to the issue of Benwick and the plot against the keep:

"This is a fine mess and explains why Benwick has been spreading rumors that I wanted to stir up trouble in the Chaos Scar. I thank you for acting with honor and coming to me immediately.

"I have to prepare the keep for an attack, so I must put some responsibility on your shoulders. Someone needs to pursue that snake Benwick.

"You clearly have the mettle for the task. Hunt down the friar. Strike at his allies if you can. And bring me the heads of those dragons if you have the power to do so.

"Most important, gather information and return here to tell me what you've learned. I need to know what we're up against.

"Take the morning to rest. You look like you need it. Then, after lunch, pick up the chase."

The issue is not up for negotiation. Drysdale expects the characters to undertake the task. He offers no reward, expecting them to do what duty and hard times demand. He has little patience for "mercenary thinking" in a crisis.

Quests: The characters gain a major quest to gather information on the keep's would-be attackers.

If Ferdinand Ronnik is set free, the characters complete a minor quest.

Departure

When the characters leave the keep in pursuit of Benwick, set the scene:

The sun is high in the sky when you depart. Already, the keep shows signs of preparing for battle. Heading southwest, you pass the King's Wall and cross into the Chaos Scar. Soon you are trudging through wet woodlands, looking for the standing stones that mark the path to the dragons' lair.

Skill Challenge: Finding the Path

As the characters make their way toward the lizardfolk tribe's territory, they traverse rough terrain. Navigating the wilderness to find the standing stones marking the trail is a skill challenge.

Level: 2 (XP 375).

Complexity: 2 (requires 6 successes before 3 failures).

Primary Skills: Athletics, Endurance, History, Nature, Perception.

Athletics (DC 13): The character leads the way through the tough terrain, clearing paths and climbing over obstacles in order to help his or her companions.

Endurance (DC 13): The character helps make the journey easier for others by carrying some of his or her companions' gear or by blazing a trail through dense brush.

History (DC 20): A character recalls the historic lay of this land from old sources, making the course to the ancient site more sure. Pieces of ancient structures might be found indicating the right path.

Nature (DC 13): The lay of the terrain tells the character where a larger stream might flow, as well as what might make good living space for the water-loving lizardfolk.

Perception (DC 16): The character spots potential hazards while the group can still avoid them, saving time and effort.

Success: The characters make good, comfortable time through the forest. By mid-afternoon, they find an intact set of standing stones along what looks like a game trail leading southward. Go to Encounter 4-13, page 12.

Failure: The characters find the going rough, having to chop through brambles, cross gullies, and generally making poor time. Each character loses a healing surge. In the late afternoon, they stumble on an intact set of standing stones along what looks like a game trail leading southward. Go to Encounter 4-13, page 12.



Lizardfolk
Territory

Session 14: Watchers in the Water

The characters rest up then proceed along the standing stones trail. They soon emerge on the banks of a stream. The banks are home to several hostile lizardfolk. Set out the map and go to **Encounter 4-14: Lizardfolk Lookouts**, page 14.

ROLEPLAYING LIZARDFOLK

Lizardfolk are fierce and primitive, and they take an aggressive stance toward intruders. If the characters wish to speak to the lizardfolk, you can use the fact that a character speaks Draconic or assume one or more lizardfolk in the encounter speak broken Common. If you have both options, do whichever seems most fun or suits your DMing style and the situation.

Lizardfolk Names: Arak, Buvash, Cresh, Deeld, Esst, Gur, Heem, Iyess, Jeed, Leelt, Mossl, Neeg, Ootoor, Reeld, Sleest, Tak, Tash, Ukeem.

Session 15: Sacred Ground

The adventurers follow a swampy path lined with ancient standing stones. As the characters near the dragon's lair, they can see crumbling ruins poking up above the treetops.

Read the following text and then go to Encounter 4-15: Honor Guard, page 16.

Ahead, the forest thins and opens up. Crumbling walls are evident through gaps between the trees. A hulking form, indistinct at this distance, stands among the ruins.



Session 16: Into the Dragon Lair

Having defeated the lizardfolk guarding the crumbling ruin, the adventurers descend into the dragons' lair by way of a pit that's covered by a net.

The distance to the cave floor below is 30 feet. A rope ladder extends down to the bottom.

Before beginning the encounter, remind the players that their characters have a major quest to gather information on the keep's attackers. They might need to talk to the dragon.

When the adventurers climb down the pit that leads to the dragons' lair, read:

The ladder leads to a large cavern. The sound of flowing water fills the chamber. With the descent, daylight from above gives way to a green glow below. An odor of death and blood mixes with the smell of fresh water.

When the characters reach the bottom of the entry pit, lay down the map and proceed with **Encounter 4-16: Vermastyx**, page 18.

Subduing the Dragon

Vermastyx is sarcastic, cruel, hateful, and proud. However, if she is reduced to 44 hit points or fewer, the dragon realizes she might have bitten off more than she can chew and asks what the characters want. A non-bloodied adventurer can convince the battered dragon to surrender with a DC 20 Bluff or Intimidate check (standard action). If the check succeeds, Vermastyx ends her assault and shares what she knows. If the check fails, Vermastyx continues to fight.

Once subdued, Vermastyx admits that she and her brother plan to join Benwick in assaulting Restwell Keep. Her brother, Yulbraxis, took Benwick north to meet with other lizardfolk tribes. The attacking force is quite large, but Vermastyx doesn't know how big or where they are marshaling. Vermastyx was to meet the army tomorrow morning when the attack was to begin.

Vermastyx promises to stay out of the fight if the adventurers spare her. Her word is worthless, though. If allowed to live, she shows up as part of the forces attacking the keep in Chapter 5. She's also a poor liar (Insight DC 13 to detect her lie).

Concluding the Adventure

The characters recover about 200 gp in coin, which they can recognize as the rest of Greysen Ramthane's treasure. There's an additional mix of gems and primitive art. Each player receives a total of 103 gp in wealth. They also find a common level 6 suit of magic armor (player's choice), an uncommon level 5 magic implement or magic weapon (player's choice), and the *Serpent's Eye*.

Serpent's Eye

Level 1 (Rare)

This spherical tiger's-eye gem has Avandra's symbol etched on one side and Zehir's symbol etched on the other. It glows softly in its bronze holder, which is suspended from a bronze chain.

Wondrous Item 360 gp

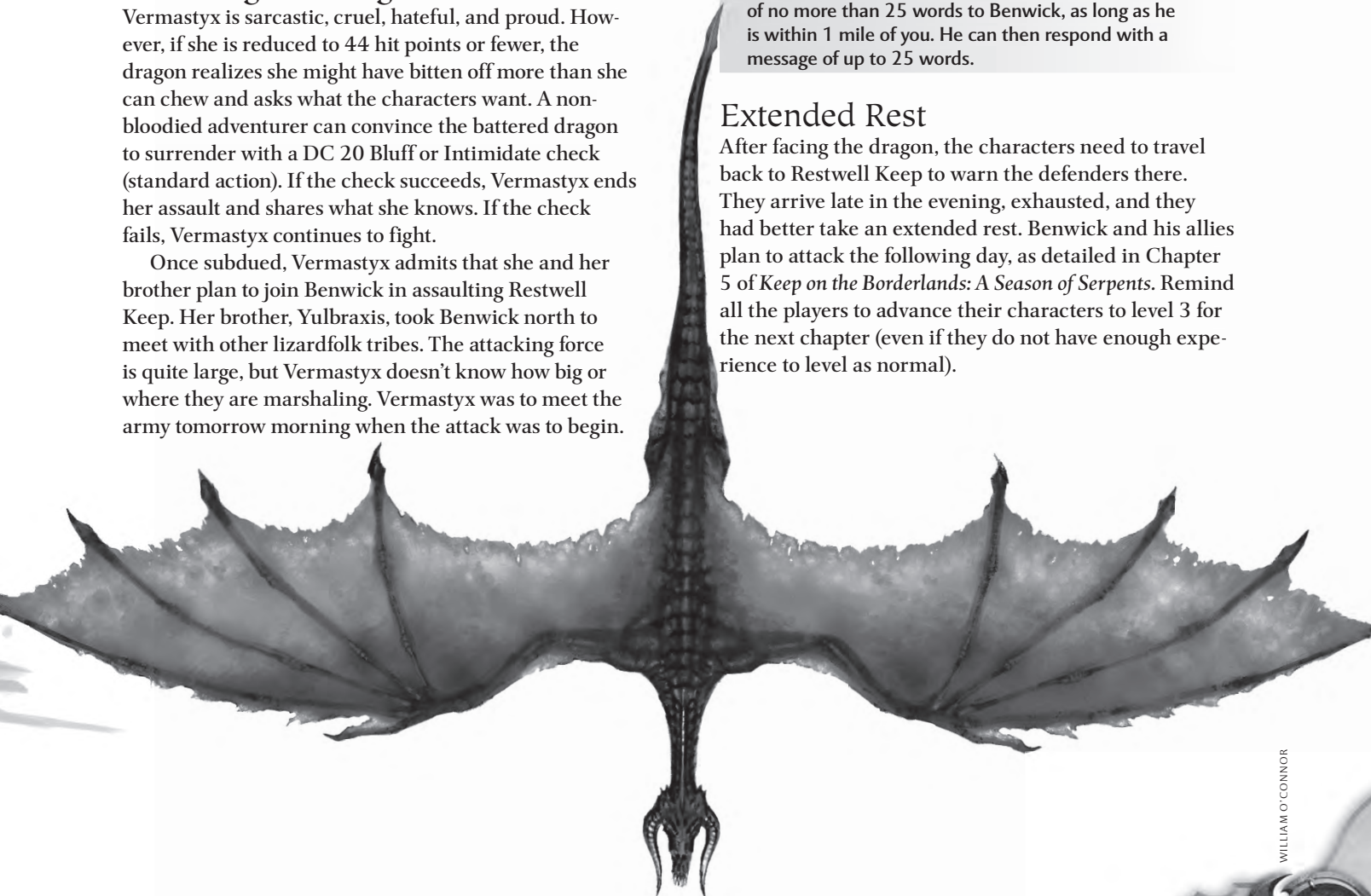
Property: You and your allies within 5 squares of you gain a +2 item bonus to saving throws against poison effects.

Power (Daily): Minor Action. You or one ally adjacent to you can make a saving throw against an effect that a save can end.

Power (Daily): Standard Action. You send a short message of no more than 25 words to Benwick, as long as he is within 1 mile of you. He can then respond with a message of up to 25 words.

Extended Rest

After facing the dragon, the characters need to travel back to Restwell Keep to warn the defenders there. They arrive late in the evening, exhausted, and they had better take an extended rest. Benwick and his allies plan to attack the following day, as detailed in Chapter 5 of *Keep on the Borderlands: A Season of Serpents*. Remind all the players to advance their characters to level 3 for the next chapter (even if they do not have enough experience to level as normal).



ENCOUNTER 4–13: A STICKY SITUATION

Encounter Level 4 (902 XP)

Setup

- 2 greenscale raiders (G)
- 4 poisonscale needlers (P)
- 2 ambush spiders (S)
- 6 unseen web sheets (traps)

The lizardfolk spotted the character crossing into their territory and have set up an ambush, using the presence of the spiders to their advantage. Have the players place their characters in the Start Area.

After the players place their characters, read:

A clearing opens up in the woods ahead, the trail disappearing into it. Standing stones mark the trail here, but none are visible elsewhere. In the center of the meadow is a stand of trees draped with spider webs.

On the other side of the webs stands a group of lizardfolk, poised to attack.

Perception check

DC 21: *Lurking in the central trees, among the webs, are spiders the size of wolves.*

Tactics

- ◆ **The ambush spiders** wait in their nest until prey is trapped in a web, comes within 5 squares, or attacks. Initially, they delay or ready actions to attack those who meet these preferences. The spiders consider both the adventurers and the lizardfolk their enemies. If a spider has a choice of targets that include both adventurers and lizardfolk, roll a d6: On a result of 5 or 6, it attacks a lizardfolk.
- ◆ **The greenscale raiders** move out and throw javelins at the characters. When the adventurers manage to bypass the webs and get close to the raiders, the raiders use *sidestep attack* to attack and then use a move action to dash away.
- ◆ **The poisonscale needlers** stay in the tree line and attack from a distance. They consider the adventurers a more serious threat than the spiders.

Features of the Area

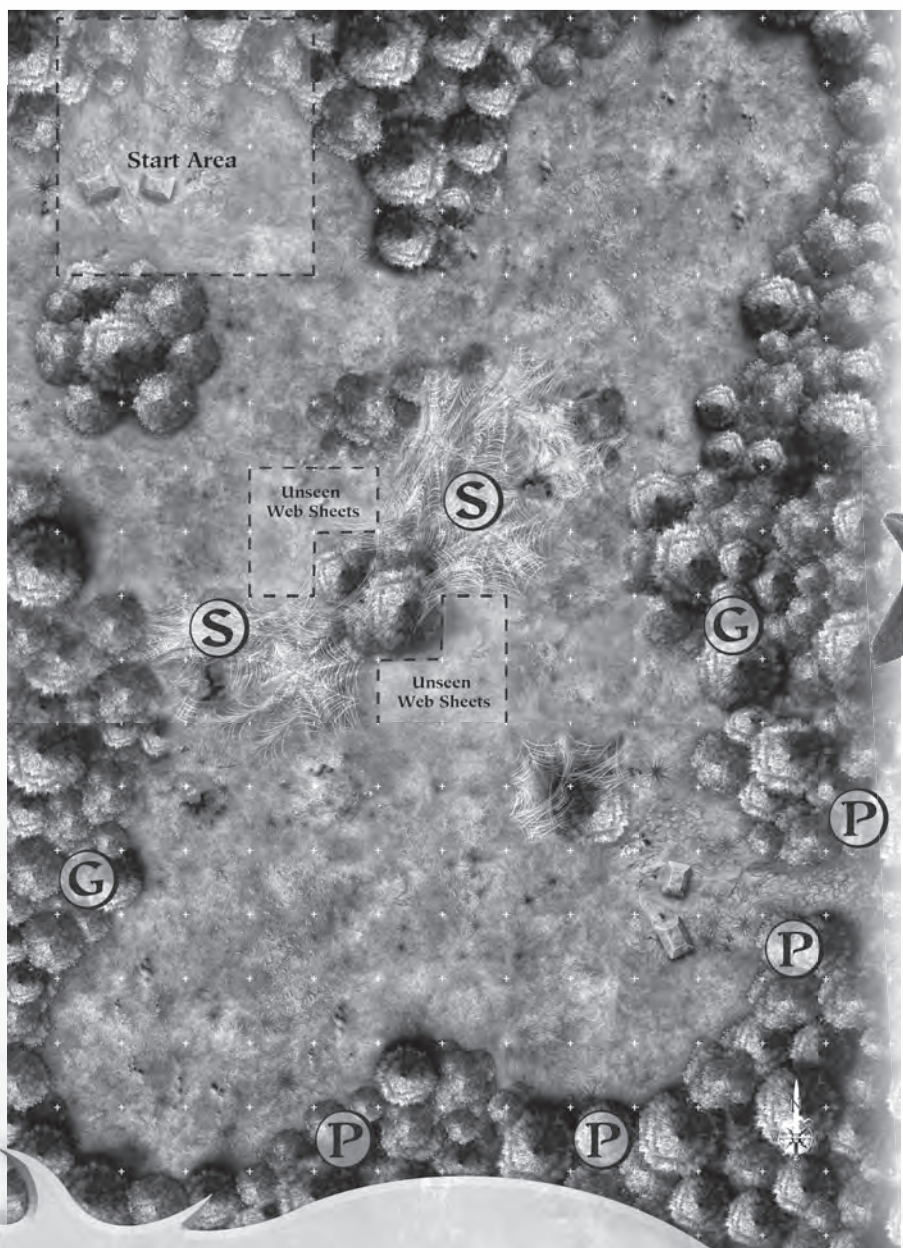
Illumination: Bright light.

Standing Stones: These markers indicate the northern and southern parts of the trail. They are difficult terrain.

Treasure: Among the webs is a dangling corpse on which the adventurers find a level 4 or lower common arms-slot magic item (player's choice).

Trees: Forested squares are difficult terrain and provide partial cover against ranged attacks. Stumps are difficult terrain. The trees are 15 to 20 feet tall (Athletics DC 8 to climb).

Unseen Web Sheets: Squares marked on the map contain fresh web sheets that are nearly invisible. A creature that starts its turn or moves adjacent to a web sheet can detect it with an active or passive Perception of 20 or higher. The lizardfolk and spiders know of these sheets already.



Visible Webs: These dirty and tangled masses are difficult terrain and provide partial cover when attacking a creature on the opposite side. A successful attack against a defense of 10 clears a square of webs. Fire attacks gain a +2 bonus to the attack roll.

6 Unseen Web Sheets **Level 1 Minion Trap**
Object XP 25 each

Detect Perception DC 20
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a web sheet.
AC 10, Fortitude 10, Reflex 10
Immune necrotic, poison, psychic, forced movement, all conditions;
Resist 10 all except fire

TRIGGERED ACTIONS

⊕ **Entangle** ♦ **At-Will**

Trigger: A creature enters the web sheet's square.
Attack (Opportunity Action): Melee 0 (the triggering creature); +6 vs. Fortitude
Hit: The target is immobilized (save ends).

2 Greenscale Raiders (G) **Level 4 Skirmisher**
Medium natural humanoid (reptile), lizardfolk XP 175 each

HP 54; **Bloodied** 27 AC 18, **Fortitude** 17, **Reflex** 16, **Will** 15
Speed 6 (swamp walk) **Initiative** +6
Perception +8

STANDARD ACTIONS

⊕ **Spear** (weapon) ♦ **At-Will**

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +9 vs. AC
Hit: 1d8 + 6 damage.

⊗ **Javelin** (weapon) ♦ **At-Will**

Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +9 vs. AC
Hit: 1d8 + 6 damage.

⊥ **Sidestep Attack** (weapon) ♦ **At-Will**

Effect: The raider can shift 1 square and then use *spear* or *javelin*.

MINOR ACTIONS

⊥ **Feral Tail Lash** ♦ **At-Will**

Requirement: The raider must be bloodied.
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +9 vs. AC
Hit: 1d6 damage, and the raider can shift 1 square.

Skills Athletics +10, **Stealth** +9

Str 17 (+5) **Dex** 15 (+4) **Wis** 12 (+3)
Con 14 (+4) **Int** 8 (+1) **Cha** 8 (+1)

Alignment unaligned **Languages** Draconic
Equipment light shield, spear, 5 javelins

4 Poisonscale Needlers (P) **Level 3 Minion Artillery**
Medium natural humanoid (reptile), lizardfolk XP 38 each

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. **Initiative** +5
AC 17, **Fortitude** 13, **Reflex** 16, **Will** 14 **Perception** +3
Speed 6 (swamp walk)

STANDARD ACTIONS

⊕ **Claw** (weapon) ♦ **At-Will**

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC
Hit: 5 damage.

⊗ **Blowgun** (poison, weapon) ♦ **At-Will**

Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +10 vs. AC
Hit: 5 poison damage. On a critical hit, the target also falls unconscious (save ends).

Str 12 (+2) **Dex** 18 (+5) **Wis** 15 (+3)
Con 11 (+1) **Int** 7 (-1) **Cha** 9 (+0)

Alignment unaligned **Languages** Draconic
Equipment blowgun, 10 poisoned blowgun needles

2 Ambush Spiders (S) **Level 2 Lurker**
Medium natural beast (spider) XP 125 each

HP 28; **Bloodied** 14 **Initiative** +7
AC 16, **Fortitude** 12, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 13 **Perception** +8
Speed 8, climb 8 (spider climb) **Tremorsense** 5

TRAITS

Camouflage

The spider can make a **Stealth** check to become hidden when it has partial cover or partial concealment instead of needing superior cover or total concealment.

STANDARD ACTIONS

⊕ **Bite** ♦ **At-Will**

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC
Hit: 1d8 + 5 damage.

⊥ **Venomous Bite** (poison) ♦ **At-Will**

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC
Hit: 1d8 + 5 damage, and the target is slowed and takes ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends both).

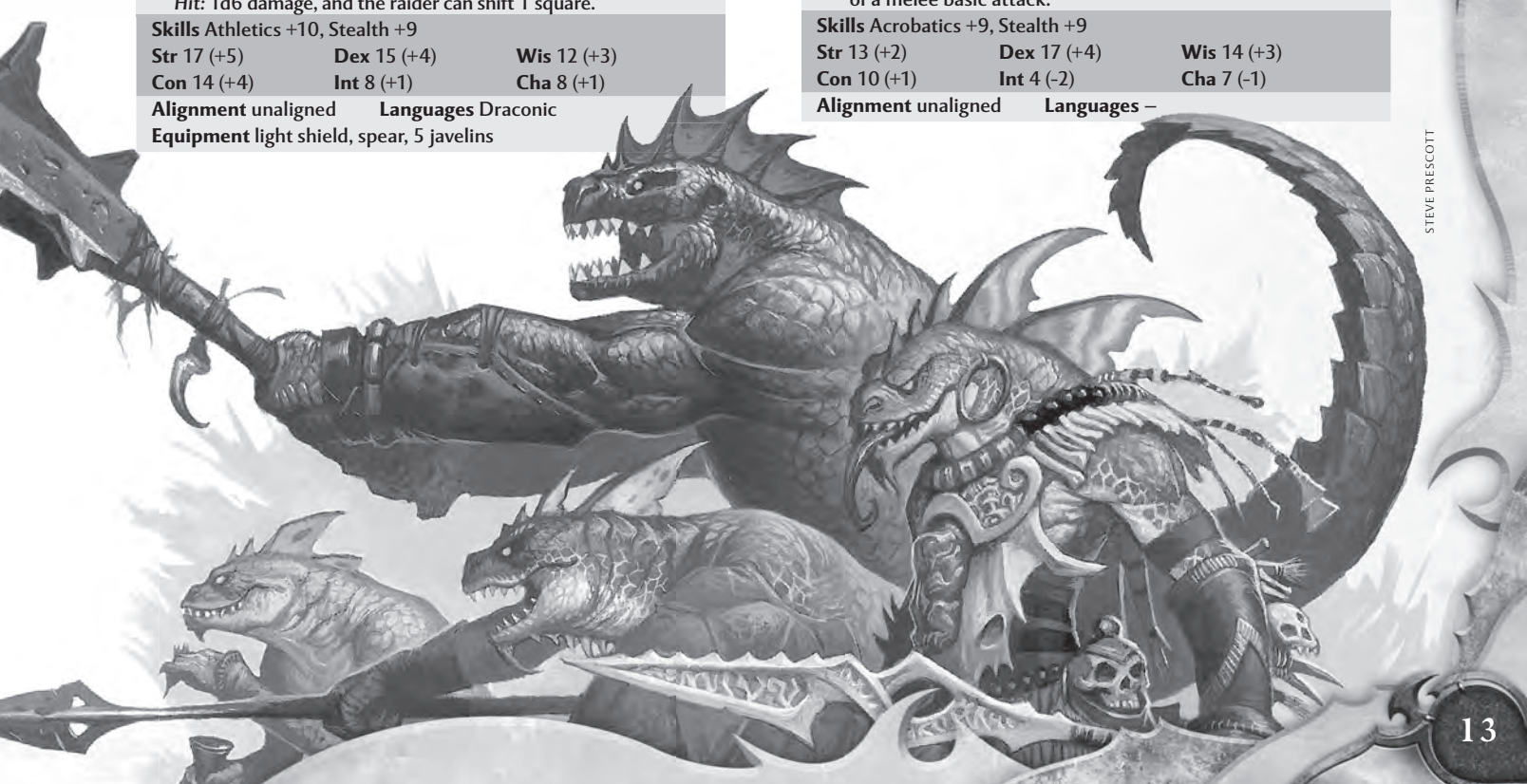
First Failed Saving Throw: The target is immobilized instead of slowed and takes ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends both).

Special: When charging, the spider can use this power in place of a melee basic attack.

Skills Acrobatics +9, **Stealth** +9

Str 13 (+2) **Dex** 17 (+4) **Wis** 14 (+3)
Con 10 (+1) **Int** 4 (-2) **Cha** 7 (-1)

Alignment unaligned **Languages** –



ENCOUNTER 4–14: LIZARDFOLK LOOKOUTS

Encounter Level 2 (652 XP)

Setup

4 poisonscale needlers (P)

2 poisonscale magi (see below)

2 poisonscale savages (see below)

None of the monsters are apparent when the characters enter the area. The lizardfolk shown on the map lurk among the trees (needlers) or are submerged (savages and magi).

When the party enters the area, read:

The sound of running water becomes clear, and you emerge on the banks of a wide stream that follows the trail. A heron squawks and takes flight as you come to a clearing. Woods line the clearing, which has two ponds in it, as well as a fallen tree and some standing stones. The trail continues southward beyond the clearing.

Perception check

DC 17: Lizardfolk armed with blowguns lurk among the trees at the clearing's edge.

DC 20: The pools seem shallow but have darker sections indicating openings at the bottoms.

Nature check

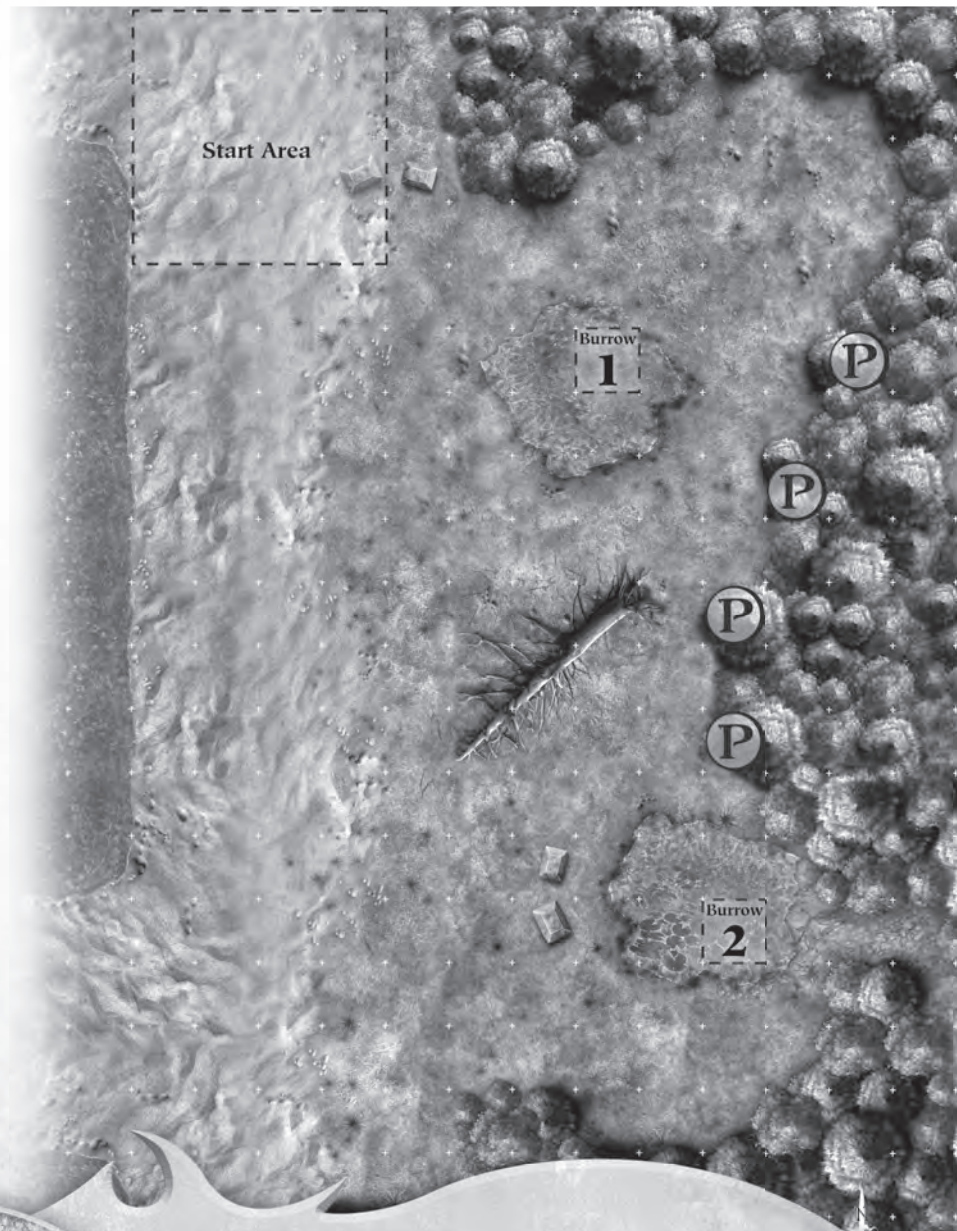
DC 16: Pools such as these often serve as the entrances to lizardfolk burrows.

The lizardfolk attack as soon as the adventurers arrive in the clearing. Any character that has a passive Perception of 16 or lower is surprised. The needlers attack during the surprise round. The only action the savages take during the surprise round is to emerge from the pond. The magi wait until the subsequent round of combat to emerge and attack.

Tactics

If only a needler is left, or if only one lizardfolk remains and it is bloodied, that lizardfolk surrenders. If the adventurers accept the surrender, see “Lizardfolk Surrender” (opposite page) and also “Roleplaying Lizardfolk” (page 10).

- ◆ **The poisonscale savages** emerge from burrow 1 on an initiative count of 15. They engage the nearest foes, trying to protect the magi and needlers.
- ◆ **The poisonscale magi** emerge from burrow 2 after the surprise round. They try to stay amid the trees while using ranged and area attacks.
- ◆ **The poisonscale needlers** hide behind trees, shooting darts at the adventurers. They act on an initiative count of 10. At the start of combat, they are hidden to any character that has a passive Perception of 16 or lower. Their *sniper* trait allows them to remain hidden if they miss.



Features of the Area

Illumination: Bright light fills the area.

Fallen Tree: This low obstacle is difficult terrain.

Ponds: Marshy ground gives way to shallow pools that form difficult terrain.

Stream: The shallow water is difficult terrain.

Standing Stones: These markers indicate the northern and southern parts of the trail. They are difficult terrain.

Trees: Forested squares are difficult terrain and provide partial cover against ranged attacks. Climbable parts of the trees are 15 to 20 feet tall (Athletics DC 8 to climb).

2 Poisonscale Savages		Level 2 Brute
Medium natural humanoid (reptile), lizardfolk		XP 125 each
HP 45; Bloodied 22		Initiative +3
AC 14, Fortitude 15, Reflex 13, Will 12		Perception +2
Speed 6 (swamp walk)		
STANDARD ACTIONS		
⚔ Greatclub (weapon) ♦ At-Will		
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC		
Hit: 2d4 + 4 damage, and the target falls prone.		
⚔ Javelin (poison, weapon) ♦ At-Will		
Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +7 vs. AC		
Hit: 1d6 + 4 damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).		
MINOR ACTIONS		
⚔ Poison Tail (poison) ♦ At-Will (1/round)		
Attack: Melee 1 (one prone creature); +7 vs. AC		
Hit: Ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).		
Skills Athletics +9, Stealth +8		
Str 17 (+4)	Dex 14 (+3)	Wis 12 (+2)
Con 15 (+3)	Int 8 (+0)	Cha 8 (+0)
Alignment unaligned Languages Draconic		
Equipment greatclub, 2 javelins		

2 Poisonscale Magi		Level 2 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid (reptile), lizardfolk		XP 125 each
HP 30; Bloodied 15		Initiative +2
AC 14, Fortitude 15, Reflex 13, Will 12		Perception +4
Speed 6 (swamp walk)		
TRAITS		
Repel Corrupt Blood		
If the lizardfolk deals ongoing poison damage to a target already taking ongoing poison damage, the lizardfolk can slide the target up to 3 squares.		
STANDARD ACTIONS		
⚔ Dagger (poison, weapon) ♦ At-Will		
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC		
Hit: 1d4 + 2 damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).		
⚔ Poison Blood (poison) ♦ At-Will		
Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +7 vs. Fortitude		
Hit: 1d6 + 4 poison damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).		
☠ Poison Rain (poison) ♦ Encounter		
Attack: Area burst 1 within 10 (enemies in the burst); +7 vs. Fortitude		
Hit: 1d10 + 5 poison damage.		
Effect: The target gains vulnerable 5 poison (save ends).		
Skills Athletics +7, Stealth +7		
Str 12 (+2)	Dex 15 (+3)	Wis 17 (+4)
Con 12 (+2)	Int 8 (+0)	Cha 8 (+0)
Alignment unaligned Languages Draconic		
Equipment dagger		

4 Poisonscale Needlers (P)		Level 3 Minion Artillery
Medium natural humanoid (reptile), lizardfolk		XP 38 each
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.		Initiative +5
AC 17, Fortitude 13, Reflex 16, Will 14		Perception +3
Speed 6 (swamp walk)		
TRAITS		
Sniper		
A hidden needler that misses with a ranged attack remains hidden.		
STANDARD ACTIONS		
⚔ Claw (weapon) ♦ At-Will		
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC		
Hit: 5 damage.		
⚔ Blowgun (poison, weapon) ♦ At-Will		
Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +10 vs. AC		
Hit: 5 poison damage. On a critical hit, the target also falls unconscious (save ends).		
Str 12 (+2)	Dex 18 (+5)	Wis 15 (+3)
Con 11 (+1)	Int 7 (-1)	Cha 9 (+0)
Alignment unaligned		Languages Draconic
Equipment blowgun, 10 poisoned blowgun needles		

Lizardfolk Surrender

If the lizardfolk surrender, the characters can question them and make a Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check to coerce the lizardfolk into sharing what they know.

DC 8: The lizardfolk confirm that the path leads to an old ruin beneath which is the lair of the black dragons Vermastyx and Yulbraxis.

At this DC, the adventurers can also verify that Benwick passed through here this morning on his way to the dragons' lair. He intended to speak with the dragons. The lizardfolk haven't seen him since, but they consider him to be an ally.

DC 13: Powerful lizardfolk guardians watch over the ruin. They include a blackscale bruiser, two very strong warriors, and acid-spitting drakes.

Below the ruin is a subterranean cave where the dragons lair and accept offerings of meat and treasure. ("Meat" includes people the lizardfolk capture.)

DC 20: Only one dragon remains in the lair—the female Vermastyx. The lizardfolk were told that the other dragon, a male named Yulbraxis, left with Benwick to speak with other tribes of lizardfolk about an upcoming war on the "fortress beyond the old wall."

These lizardfolk aren't partaking in the assault on the keep, but some among the tribe are already on the march. Vermastyx, they say, knows the whole plan and the whole truth.



ENCOUNTER 4–15: HONOR GUARD

Encounter Level 3 (850 XP)

Setup

- 1 blackscale bruiser (B)
- 2 poisonscale brawlers (P)
- 2 spitting drakes (S)

If the characters approach the ruins cautiously, each character can attempt a DC 14 Stealth check. A group that accumulates more successful results than failing ones reaches the edge of the ruins and gain combat advantage against its guardians during the first round of combat.

When the characters reach the clearing, read:

The path ends at two standing stones like those you've been following. Within this clearing are the remains of a roofless stone building with deteriorating walls engraved with vague reptilian or draconic images. A 10-foot-tall stone dais set in the center of the area supports six worn statues of what could be dragonborn warriors.

A crude stone dolmen, like an altar, stands before a short stairway that ascends to the platform. At the top of steps is a massive lizardfolk that has glistening black scales and a large club.

Another muscular lizardfolk, this one with green scales, stands atop a mass of tumbled building stones farther to the east.

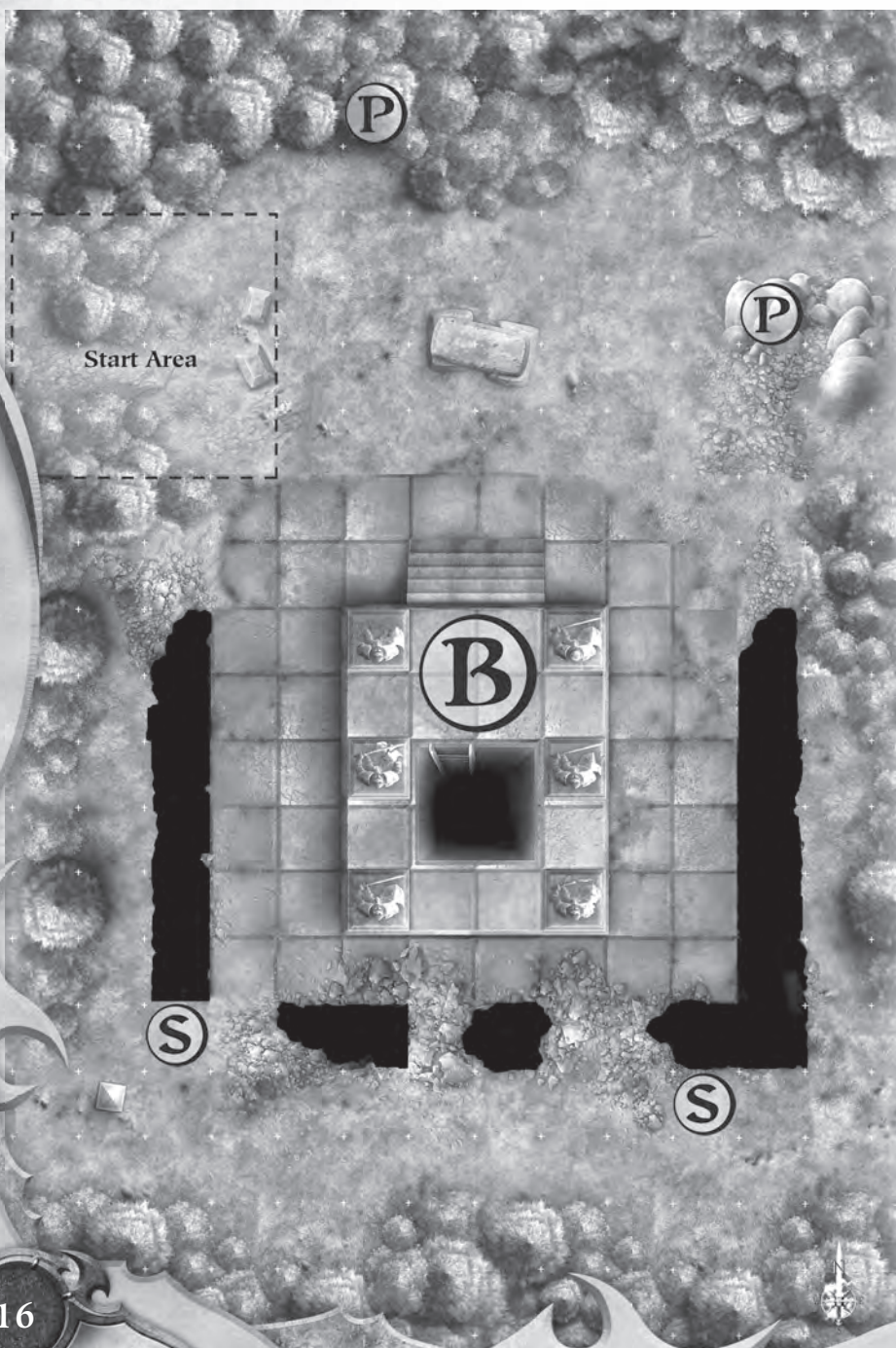
Seeing you, the lizardfolk call out a warning and attack.

Perception check

DC 20: Another bulky green-scaled lizardfolk warrior crouches among the trees to the north.

Tactics

- ◆ **The blackscale bruiser** guards the entrance to the dragons' lair. At the beginning of combat, it whistles to call the drakes into the combat. It prefers to occupy any area that prevents enemies from climbing the stairs to the top of the platform. The bruiser never surrenders.
- ◆ **The poisonscale brawlers** attack in ways that give the blackscale bruiser combat advantage. They grab not only to crush their enemies but also to keep enemies within the bruiser's reach. They neither surrender nor flee while the bruiser lives. After the bruiser dies, each brawler can be compelled to run away (Intimidate DC 20; standard action) but not to surrender.
- ◆ **The spitting drakes** keep their distance and spit at targets. The drakes flee if bloodied or if no lizardfolk remains to command them. A drake also flees if it is the last enemy standing.



2 Spitting Drakes (S)		Level 3 Artillery
Medium natural beast (reptile)		XP 150 each
HP 38; Bloodied 19		Initiative +5
AC 17, Fortitude 14, Reflex 16, Will 14		Perception +3
Speed 7		
Resist 10 acid		
STANDARD ACTIONS		
⊕ Bite ♦ At-Will		
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC		
Hit: 1d6 + 4 damage.		
✂ Caustic Spit (acid) ♦ At-Will		
Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +8 vs. Reflex		
Hit: 2d6 + 4 acid damage.		
Str 14 (+3)	Dex 18 (+5)	Wis 14 (+3)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 3 (-3)	Cha 12 (+2)
Alignment unaligned		Languages –

Features of the Area

Illumination: Bright light.

Boulders: These rocks are 5 feet high and treated as blocking terrain. Climbing them requires 1 square of movement and a DC 13 Athletics check. A failure ends the climber's movement.

Dais: The top is 10 feet high. Climbing them requires 2 squares of movement and a DC 13 Athletics check. A failure ends the climber's movement.

Dolmen Altar: These squares are difficult terrain.

Pit: This square hole in the top of the dais drops 15 feet before opening into the ceiling of a 15-foot-high cave. A sickly green light and the sound of trickling water issue from below.

A net is fastened over the pit. A creature that falls in drops only 5 feet, taking no damage. The net's surface is difficult terrain. Climbing out is a move action (no check required).

It takes four standard actions to unfasten and remove the net. A rope ladder extends down to the bottom of the pit.

Rubble: Stone debris is difficult terrain.

Stairs: The staircase is treated as difficult terrain while ascending it, or normal terrain otherwise.

Standing Stones: The squares containing these markers are difficult terrain.

Statues: These worn statues of dragonborn warriors are blocking terrain.

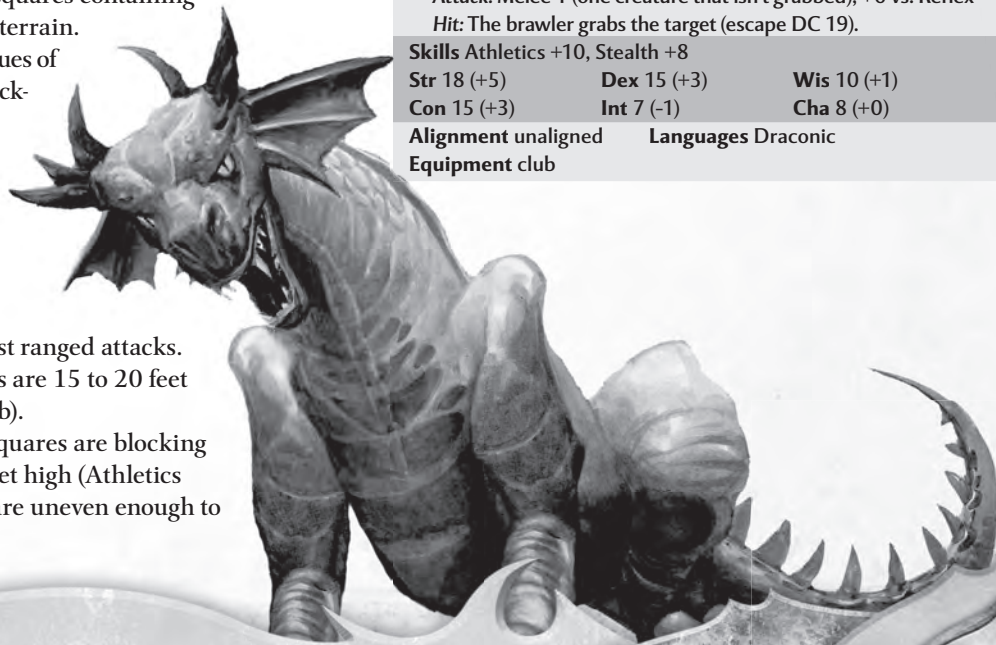
Treasure: The bruiser has an elaborate copper and ivory necklace (6 gp per character).

Trees: Forested squares are difficult terrain and provide partial cover against ranged attacks. Climbable parts of the trees are 15 to 20 feet tall (Athletics DC 8 to climb).

Ruined Walls: These squares are blocking terrain. The walls are 15 feet high (Athletics DC 15 to climb). The tops are uneven enough to be difficult terrain.

Blackscale Bruiser (B)		Level 6 Brute
Large natural humanoid (reptile), lizardfolk		XP 250
HP 86; Bloodied 43		Initiative +6
AC 18, Fortitude 19, Reflex 16, Will 16		Perception +4
Speed 8 (swamp walk)		
STANDARD ACTIONS		
⊕ Greatclub (weapon) ♦ At-Will		
Attack: Melee 2 (one creature); +11 vs. AC		
Hit: 2d10 + 6 damage, and the bruiser can push the target 1 square.		
MINOR ACTIONS		
⊕ Feral Bite ♦ At-Will		
Requirement: The bruiser must be bloodied.		
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +11 vs. AC		
Hit: 1d6 + 4 damage.		
TRIGGERED ACTIONS		
↩ Tail Swipe ♦ Recharge when first bloodied		
Trigger: The bruiser takes damage from an enemy within 2 squares of it.		
Attack (Immediate Reaction): Close blast 2 (creatures in the blast); +7 vs. Reflex		
Hit: 2d8 + 6 damage, and the target falls prone.		
Str 22 (+9)	Dex 16 (+6)	Wis 12 (+4)
Con 16 (+6)	Int 5 (+0)	Cha 6 (+1)
Alignment unaligned		Languages Draconic
Equipment greatclub		

2 Poisonscale Brawlers (P)		Level 3 Brute
Medium natural humanoid (reptile), lizardfolk		XP 150 each
HP 55; Bloodied 27		Initiative +3
AC 15, Fortitude 15, Reflex 13, Will 12		Perception +1
Speed 6 (swamp walk)		
STANDARD ACTIONS		
⊕ Club (weapon) ♦ At-Will		
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC		
Hit: 2d6 + 7 damage.		
⊕ Crushing Grasp ♦ At-Will		
Requirement: The brawler must be grabbing a creature.		
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature grabbed by the brawler); +6 vs. Fortitude		
Hit: 3d6 + 7 damage.		
Miss: Half damage.		
MINOR ACTIONS		
⊕ Feral Grab ♦ At-Will (1/round)		
Requirement: The brawler must not be grabbing a creature.		
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature that isn't grabbed); +6 vs. Reflex		
Hit: The brawler grabs the target (escape DC 19).		
Skills Athletics +10, Stealth +8		
Str 18 (+5)	Dex 15 (+3)	Wis 10 (+1)
Con 15 (+3)	Int 7 (-1)	Cha 8 (+0)
Alignment unaligned		Languages Draconic
Equipment club		



ENCOUNTER 4–16: VERMASTYX

Encounter Level 4 (801 XP)

Setup

Vermastyx, young black dragon (see below)
4 acid breath echoes (see below)

Characters arrive in or adjacent to the start area. The dragon is hiding in waters that flow below the chamber and shouldn't be placed on the map right away. The breath echoes don't yet exist.

When the party enters the lair, read:

You arrive on a central ledge between the cavern's upper and lower areas. A dim green light issues from crystals that sprout from the cavern floor.

Water flows from openings in several of the walls. It collects in a stream flowing into the room's lower reaches.

Strewn around the immediate area are the grisly, partly consumed corpses of at least ten humanoids.

Arcana check

DC 13 (Detect Magic): The crystals give off a magical aura that suggests elemental resonance. They are likely to amplify or echo elemental effects.

Heal or Nature check

DC 13: In addition to being partially devoured, the corpses have been partially dissolved by acid.

Arcana or Nature check

DC 20: The character intuits the crystals' effects (see Features of the Area).

Let the characters spread out and explore the cavern. Vermastyx waits until a character is adjacent to a bolt hole before emerging.

When Vermastyx appears, read:

A black dragon, its body the size of a large horse, emerges from the water, its dusky scales glistening with moisture. Its eyes glow green, and acidic spittle drips from its fanged maw as it hisses.

"Benwick told me a few tasty morsels might deliver themselves to me. Time to dine!"

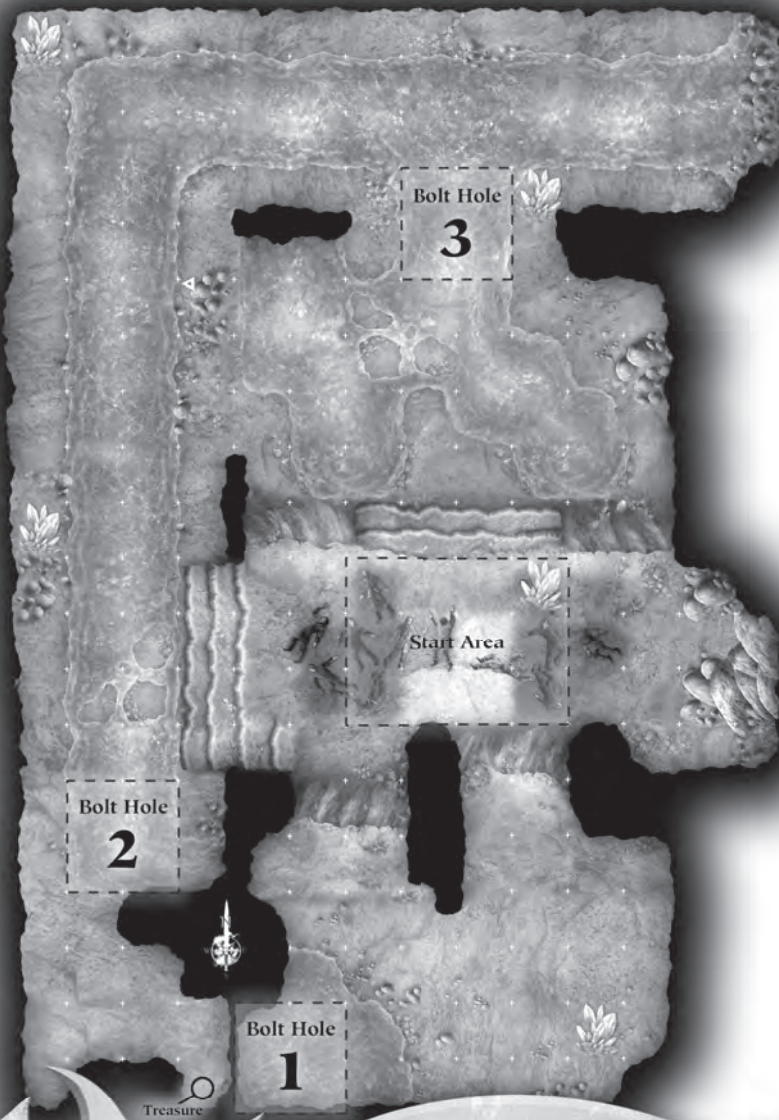
Tactics

- ◆ **Vermastyx** opens with *instinctive devouring*, using the attack against the nearby adventurer. Once several characters surround her, she uses *shroud of gloom* and spends an action point to use *breath weapon*. She then retreats down the bolt hole.

It takes Vermastyx a turn to travel between bolt holes using the network of submerged passages. After spending a turn moving between the holes, she emerges from a bolt hole of her choice. She avoids becoming pinned down, taking wing or using the bolt holes when necessary. Until she's bloodied, she worries little about opportunity attacks.

Once Vermastyx is reduced to 36 hit points or fewer, she is inclined to talk; see "Subduing the Dragon," page 11.

- ◆ **The acid breath echoes**, once formed, move toward the nearest enemy and attack.



Features of the Area

Illumination: Dim light.

Ceiling Height: 15 feet above each tier of the cavern.

Bolt Holes: Dug into the cavern floor are three bolt holes connected to one another by underwater passages. The water above a bolt hole is deep enough to require swimming (Athletics DC 8). A character that fails the Athletics check is swept away by the current, emerging from a random hole at the start of his or her next turn.

Crystals: The cavern contains five crystal outcroppings. In addition to shedding dim green light, these crystals react to elemental attacks.

The first time Vermastyx's *breath weapon* includes one of these crystals in its blast, four acid breath echoes (barely sentient clouds of acidic vapor) appear in the squares occupied by the other four crystals. Roll initiative for the group of minions.

Entry Pit: A ladder descends from the hole in the cavern ceiling to the floor.

Ledges: Each ledge is a steep incline, requiring 3 squares of movement to ascend. No Athletics check is required.

Rocks: These squares are difficult terrain.

Stairs: The rough-hewn steps count as difficult terrain to ascend and normal terrain otherwise.

Stepping Stones: These appear slippery but are actually safe.

Water: The pool on the upper ledge and the stream are difficult terrain, except over the bolt holes (see above).

4 Acid Breath Echoes

Small elemental animate

Level 4 Minion Brute

XP 44 each

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

Initiative +5

AC 16, Fortitude 15, Reflex 17, Will 15

Perception +3

Speed 3; fly 5 (hover, maximum altitude 1)

STANDARD ACTIONS

⊕ Breath Echo (acid) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. Fortitude

Hit: 7 acid damage.

Str 4 (-1)

Dex 18 (+5)

Wis 13 (+3)

Con 12 (+3)

Int 2 (-2)

Cha 2 (-2)

Alignment unaligned

Languages –

Vermastyx, Young Black Dragon Level 2 Solo Lurker

Large natural magical beast (aquatic, dragon)

XP 625

HP 144; Bloodied 72

Initiative +10

AC 16, Fortitude 14, Reflex 16, Will 13

Perception +8

Speed 7 (swamp walk), fly 7, swim 7

Darkvision

Resist 10 acid

Saving Throws +5; Action Points 2

TRAITS

Acidic Blood (acid)

Whenever the dragon takes damage while it is bloodied, each creature adjacent to it takes 5 acid damage.

Aquatic

The dragon can breathe underwater. In aquatic combat, it gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls against nonaquatic creatures.

Instinctive Devouring

On an initiative of 10 + its initiative check, the dragon can use a free action to charge or to use *bite*. If the dragon cannot use a free action to make this attack due to a dominating or stunning effect, then that effect ends instead of the dragon making the attack.

Action Recovery

Whenever the dragon ends its turn, any dazing, stunning, or dominating effect on it ends.

STANDARD ACTIONS

⊕ Bite (acid) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 2 (one creature); +7 vs. AC

Hit: 2d6 + 3 damage, and ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends).

Miss: 4 acid damage.

⊕ Claw ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 2 (one or two creatures); +7 vs. AC. If the dragon targets only one creature, it can make this attack twice against that creature.

Hit: 2d6 + 3 damage.

⊕ Breath Weapon (acid) ♦ Recharge ☹ ☹

Attack: Close blast 5 (enemies in the blast); +5 vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d6 + 2 acid damage, and ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends).

Miss: Half damage.

Shroud of Gloom ♦ Encounter

Effect: Close burst 5 (enemies in the burst). The target gains vulnerable 5 acid and takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls until the end of the encounter. A character can use a standard action to attempt a DC 10 Heal check to end this effect on himself or herself or an adjacent ally.

TRIGGERED ACTIONS

⊕ Tail Sweep ♦ At-Will

Trigger: An enemy misses the dragon with a melee attack.

Attack (Opportunity Action): Melee 3 (triggering enemy); +5 vs. Reflex

Hit: 1d6 + 2 damage, and the target falls prone. In addition, each of the target's allies adjacent to the target takes 2 damage.

⊕ Bloodied Breath ♦ Encounter

Trigger: The dragon is first bloodied.

Effect (Free Action): *Breath weapon* recharges, and the dragon uses it.

Skills Stealth +11

Str 16 (+4)

Dex 20 (+6)

Wis 15 (+3)

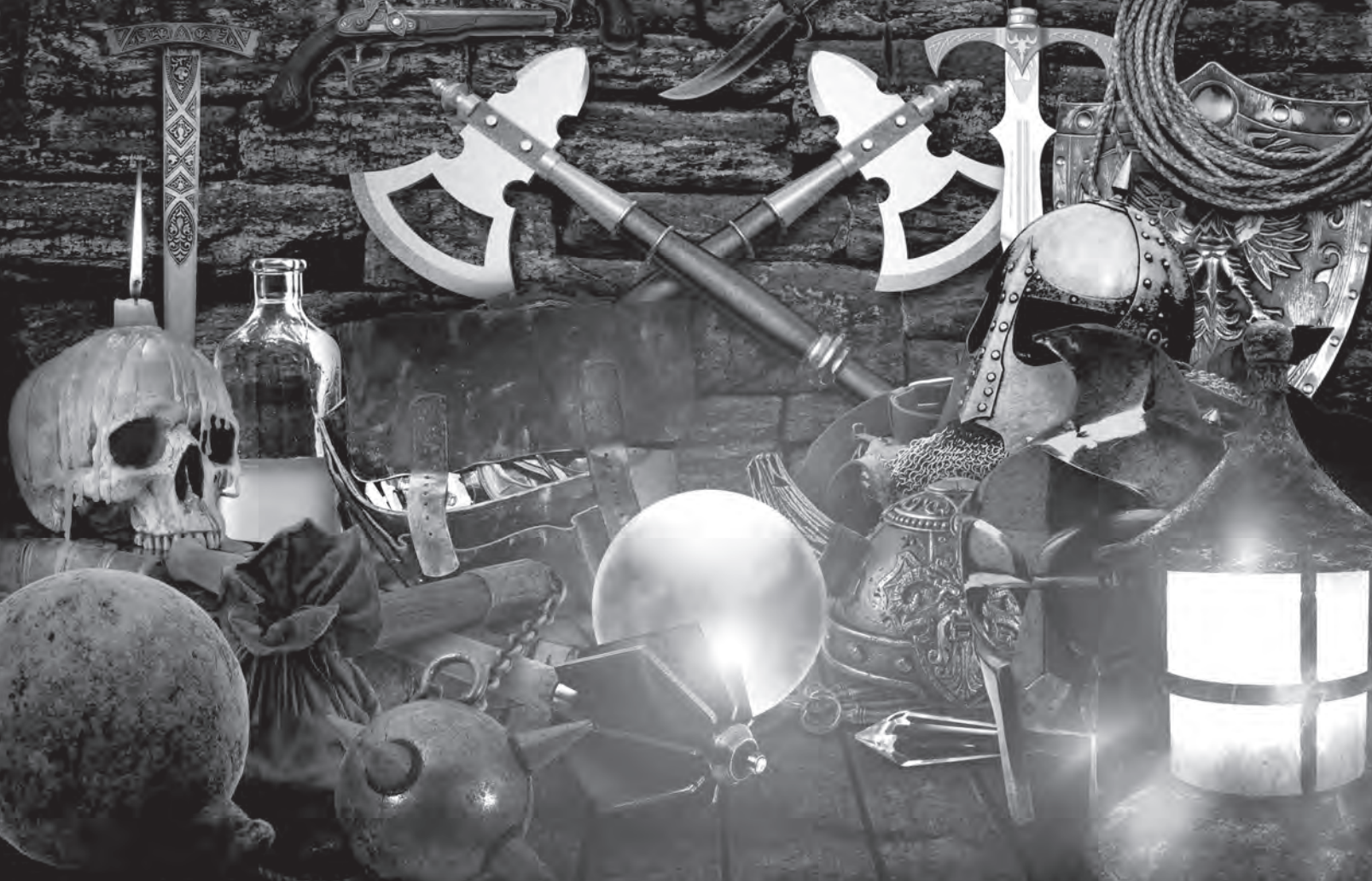
Con 12 (+2)

Int 12 (+2)

Cha 14 (+3)

Alignment evil

Languages Common, Draconic



EVERY ADVENTURER SHOULD BE EQUIPPED WITH THE ESSENTIALS

FOR PLAYERS



FOR DMs



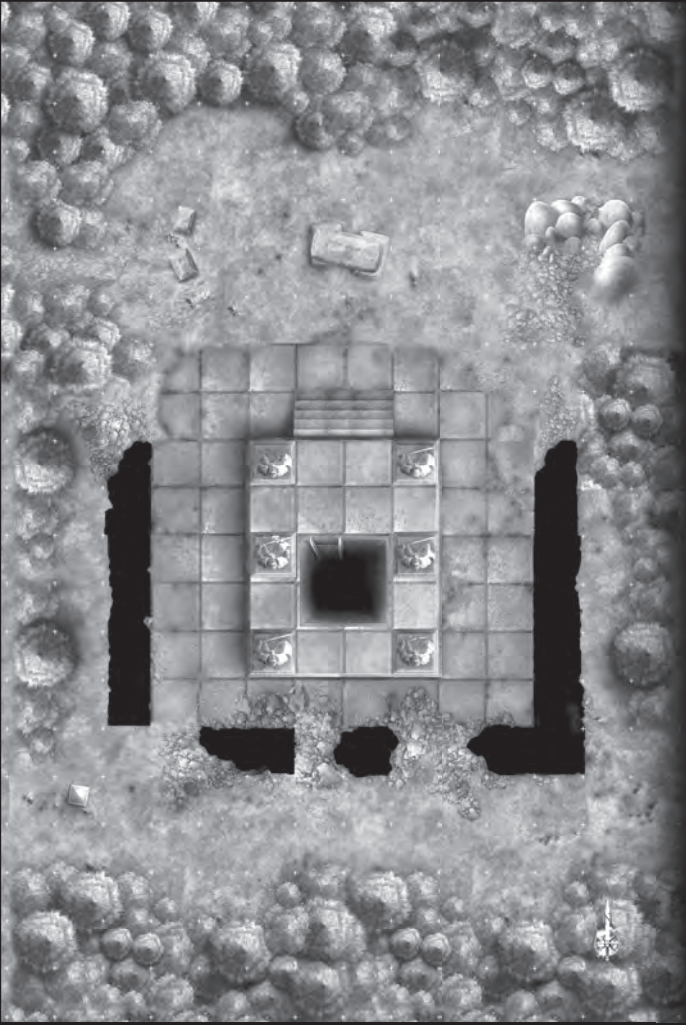
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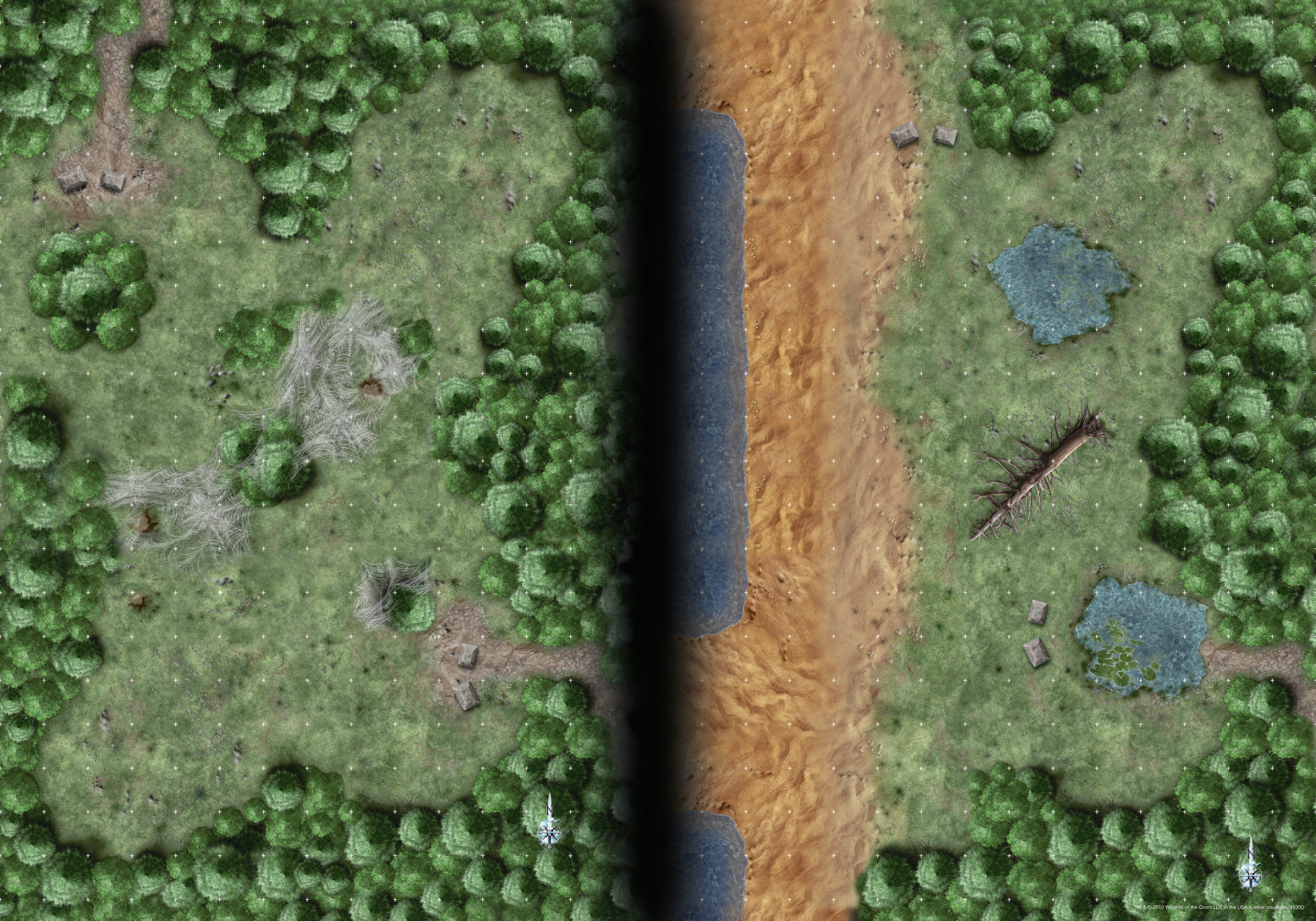


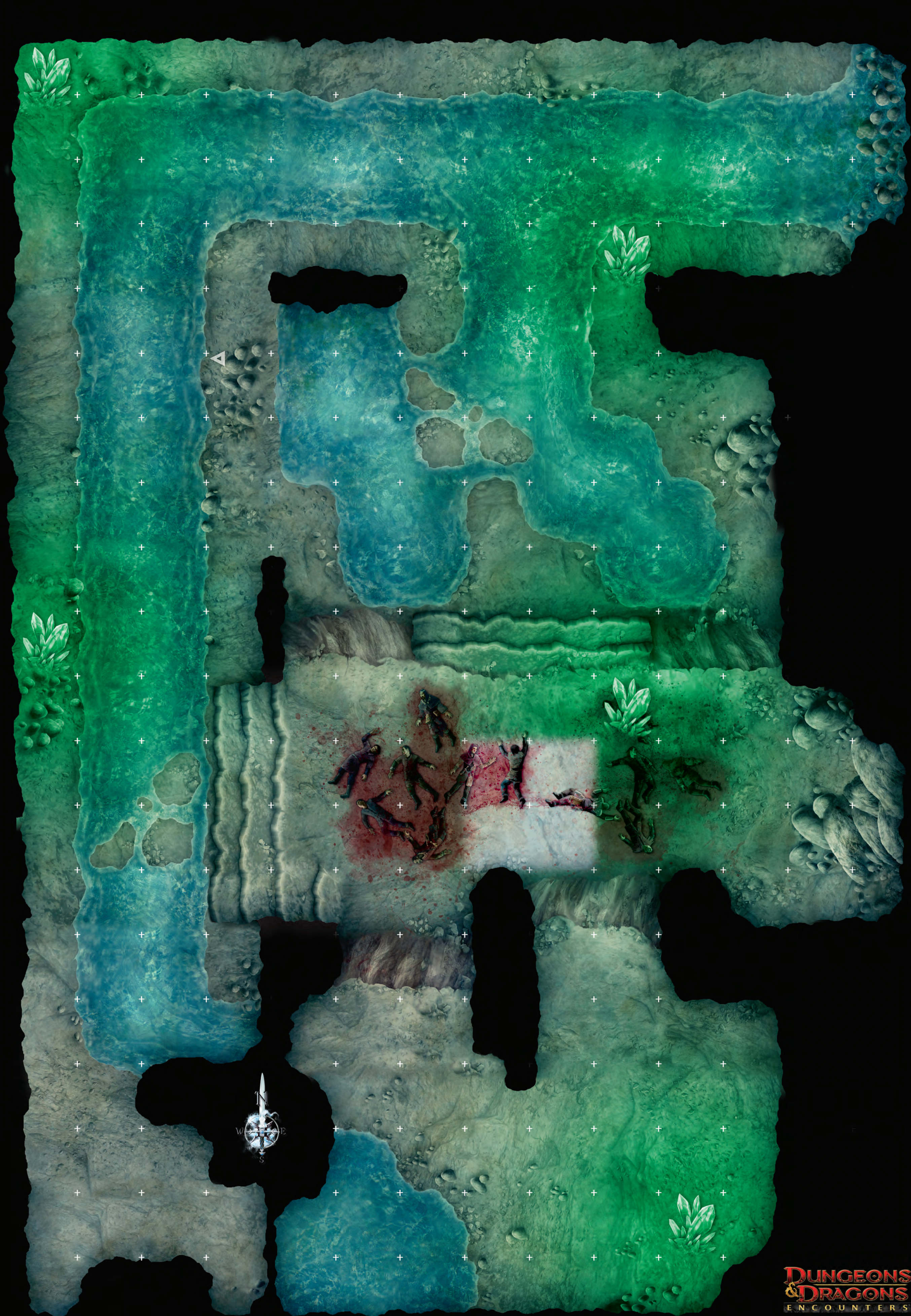
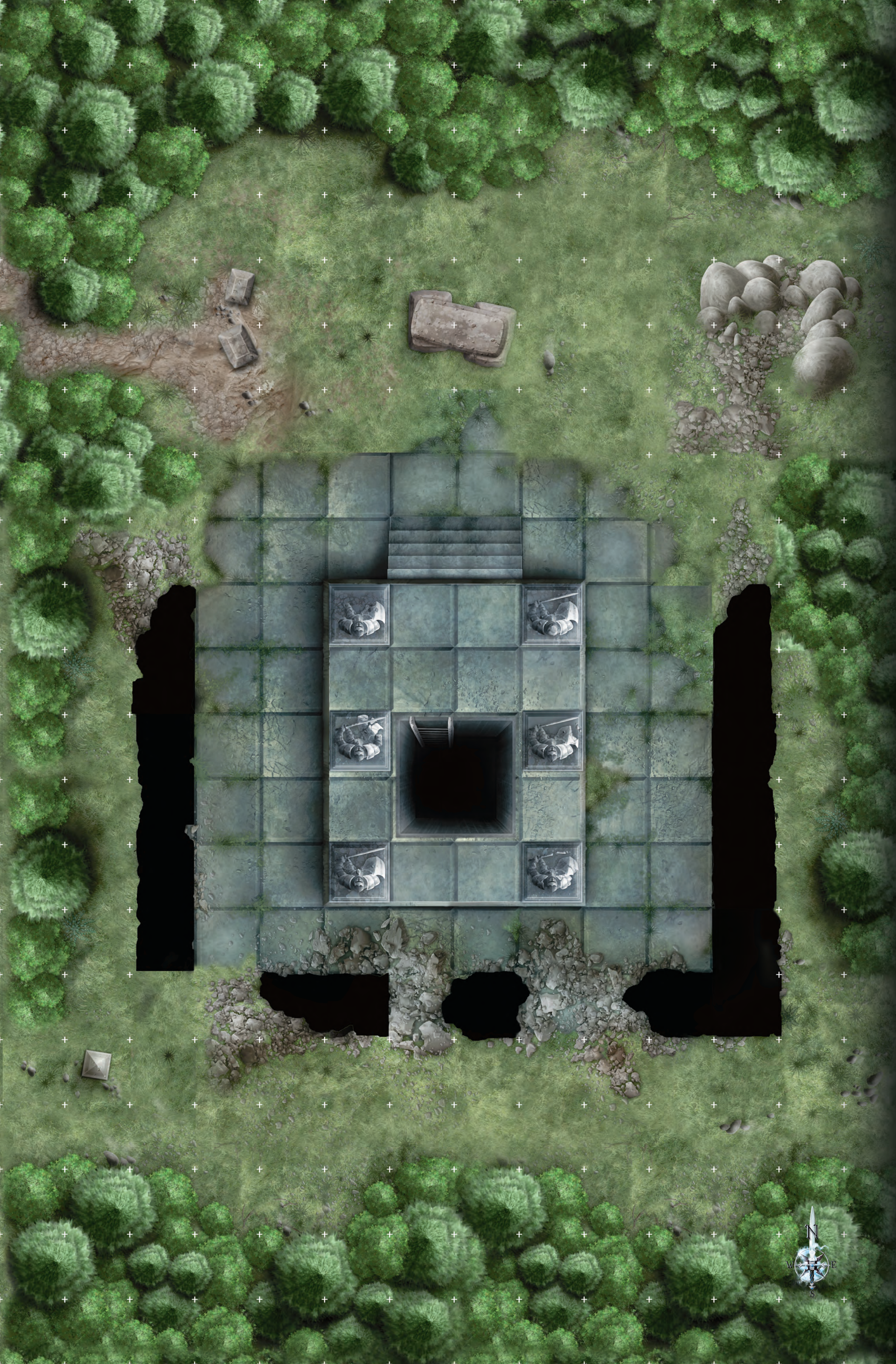


ENCOUNTER 4-15:
HONOR GUARD

ENCOUNTER 4-16:
VERMASTYX







THWART A DRACONIC THREAT

Benwick's betrayal still stings, but you learn that he has more nefarious plans afoot - he means to take the Keep on the Borderlands by allying with the nearby lizardfolk tribe and a pair of black dragons. Can you save the keep, restore your honor, and bring Benwick to justice before his forces are brought to bear?

Keep on the Borderlands: A Season of Serpents (Chapter 4) is designed for five characters of 2nd level and is the fall and winter 2010-11 season of the D&D Encounters™ official play program. This DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® adventure includes a full-color battle map, ready-to-play encounters, and DM information on the D&D Encounters official play program.



For use with these DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Essentials™ products:

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Fantasy Roleplaying Game

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Rules Compendium™

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A HEROIC TIER ADVENTURE

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

ENCOUNTERS™

KEEP ON THE BORDERLANDS

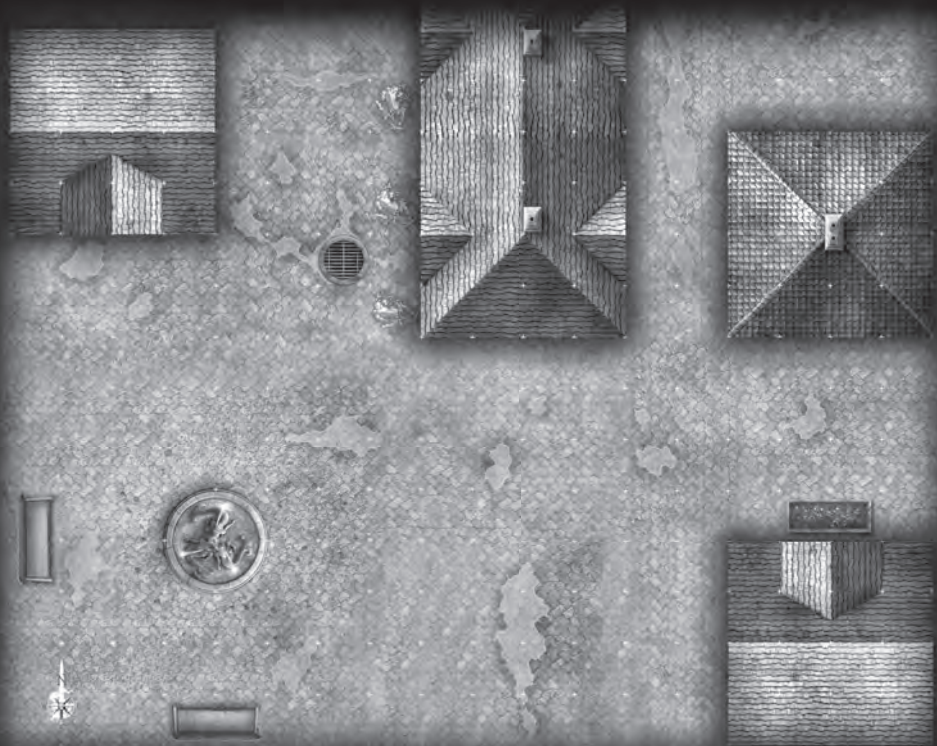
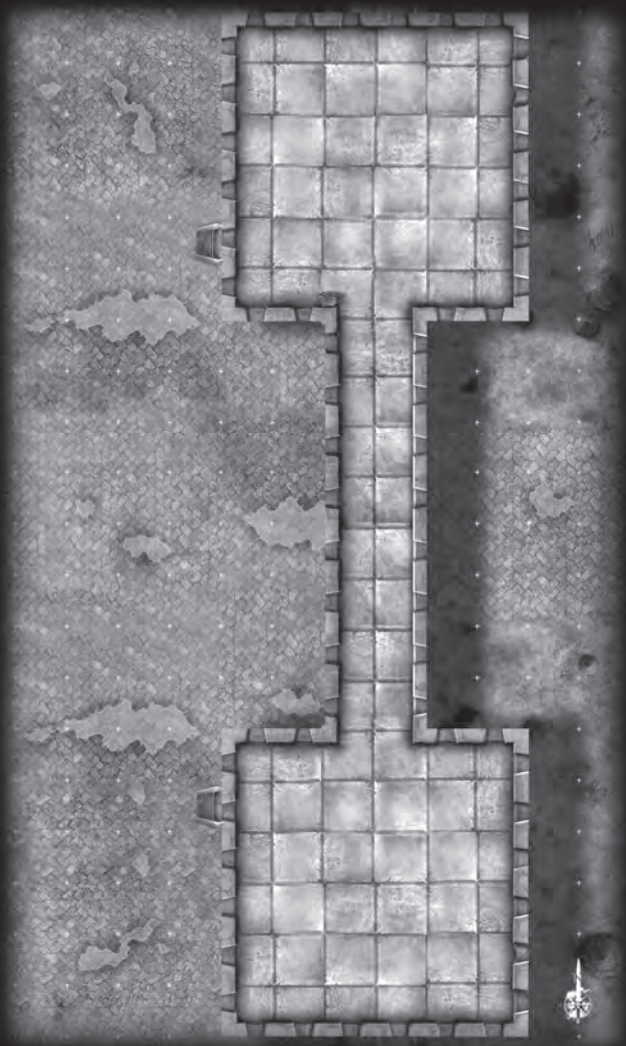
Chapter 5 of 5: A Season of Serpents



AN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTERS OF 3RD LEVEL

Chris Sims

ENCOUNTER 5-17:
HOLD THE GATE



ENCOUNTER 5-18:
RISING THREAT

INTRODUCTION

A DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Encounters™ adventure for four to six 3rd-level characters

Welcome to DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Encounters, an exciting official DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® program. This adventure is a mini-campaign season designed to be played in one-encounter sessions once per week at your local Wizards Play Network location. Each week, players can earn in-game rewards for their characters and Renown Points toward special program-exclusive D&D Encounters™ Cards that can be used in this and future seasons of DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Encounters.

Preparing for Play

The DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Encounters play kit provides all you need to DM this adventure, including poster maps of encounter areas and a sheet of tokens for monsters, adventurers, and battlefield effects. Follow the steps below to prepare for play.

Before you DM your first session:

- ◆ Read the Introduction, Adventure Background, and Adventure Synopsis.
- ◆ Read **Session 17: Monsters at the Door** and **Encounter 5-17: Hold the Gate**. If you are starting at another point, read the appropriate sections and what has come before.

At the table of your first session:

- ◆ Ensure each player has a character to play. Players may use one of the characters provided in the kit, or may create their own using the guidelines provided.
- ◆ Give each player a D&D Encounters Play Tracker. This sheet is found in the play kit, and it allows the players to track treasure, experience, and Renown Points earned for each play session.
- ◆ Get a session tracking sheet from the organizer. Record all the players' DCI/RPGA numbers on it, along with your DCI/RPGA number. If you or any of the players don't have a DCI/RPGA number, ask the organizer for a membership card.

During the session:

- ◆ Each session is one encounter. Just DM the encounter assigned for that week's session. Typical playtime for one encounter is about 90 minutes to 2 hours.
- ◆ Make decisions and adjudications that enhance the fun of the game. As the DM, you can make some adjustments to the adventure (see the sidebar on page 2) to facilitate player fun.

At the end of your first session:

- ◆ Have the adventurers take a short rest if they want, but remind them to track their daily abilities. Healing surges used, daily powers expended, and other daily resources do not refresh in-between each session; only at the end of each chapter. Make sure your players track this information on their D&D Encounters Play Tracker.
- ◆ Turn in your session tracking sheet to the organizer. Make sure you've recorded all the DCI/RPGA numbers on it, along with names and the play date.
- ◆ Report Renown Point totals earned for each player to the organizer. The organizer fills out the Renown Point Tracker for the location and tells you if any players have earned D&D Encounters Cards.
- ◆ Give out treasure. Make sure the players write down rewards on the D&D Encounters Play Tracker.
- ◆ Collect your special reward for providing your time as a DM to make the event happen. Your organizer has more details on this reward.

At the end of the final session of a chapter:

- ◆ The adventurers take an extended rest, regaining all of their healing surges, hit points, and daily powers. In addition, their action point total resets to 1.
- ◆ Once you've been the DM for a session, it's easy to prepare for your next session. Simply read over the session's material, and you're ready to go.

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CREATING A CHARACTER

Players are responsible for bringing their own characters to each play session. A player should bring a new 3rd-level character created using the rules found in the *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Fantasy Roleplaying Game* boxed set or the *Heroes of the Fallen Lands™* supplement, or the *Heroes of the Forgotten Kingdoms™* supplement.

If a player doesn't have a character or doesn't want to create one from scratch, several pre-generated characters are provided in the play kit. Get these from the organizer and offer a choice of one to each player that wants one. The provided characters include options for level 3.

At the end of each session, you award experience points, treasure, and Renown Points to each player. They'll track that information on their D&D Encounters Play Tracker and you'll report the Renown Points each player earned with the organizer.

Character Death: If a character dies during a session, the player has two choices. He or she can bring the same character back at the beginning of the next session with four fewer healing surges, or he or she can start a new 3rd-level character. If a character dies and has fewer than four healing surges remaining, that character loses all his or her remaining healing surges and can return next session but has hit points equaling only his or her bloodied value.

There is no other penalty for death except for the potential loss of renown for not surviving 12+ sessions without dying.

Advancement

At the end of each session, you award experience points when the characters complete encounters. Use this table below to award experience points for each session. Don't modify the amount of experience based on the number of characters.

EXPERIENCE POINT AWARDS

XP Description	XP/Character
Session 17	239 XP
Minor Quest: Hold the Gate	30 XP
Session 18	189 XP
Session 19	160 XP
Minor Quest: Keep Chendera Alive	30 XP
Session 20	260 XP
Minor Quest: Rescue Lord Drysdale	30 XP
Major Quest: Hold the Keep	150 XP

If the characters succeed at all the encounters and complete all quests, each should earn 1,005 XP by the end of Chapter 5.

Milestones: For every two encounters a character completes without taking an extended rest, the character reaches a milestone, gaining an action point.

A CHANGING GROUP

Since you can never tell who's going to show up to a DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Encounters session from week to week, you might wind up with a different group of players. Some players might be starting in "mid-stream," some could have missed a session or two, and others might have played all the sessions with a different DM. That's fine. Catch up new players with a brief summary of what has come before, and make sure that returning players have marked off resources they spent (healing surges, daily powers, etc.) since their last extended rest.

Majority Rules: If some element of the adventure plot hinges on the adventurers making a decision in a previous session, and the group is different during the current session, simply find out how the decision went down from the players. Go with the majority, and if it's an even split, side with the most positive result. For example, if three of five players' characters at your table slew the black dragon Vermastyx in a previous encounter and two didn't, the dragon is considered to be slain for your session this week.

Treasure

As the characters progress through the mini-campaign, they have the opportunity to gain treasure in the form of gold pieces, valuables, and magic items. At the end of each session, determine if the players earned any treasure. Use the following rules to divide up treasure among the characters.

Gold and Valuables: If the adventurers earn it, each character gets a share as noted on the table below. All valuables such as gems and jewelry are converted to gold pieces (gp). The amounts have already been divided on a per-character basis. Don't modify the amounts based on the number of characters.

Magic Items: During the adventure, a number of magic items might be discovered. They are listed on the table below. Give out magic items according to the Awarding Magic Items sidebar.

When to Gear Up: Characters can buy equipment at the start of each chapter. If a character gains a magic item that has only level, rarity, and type described (for example, a common level 5 magic weapon), the player can select a magic item up to that level of the same type and rarity after the session is complete, before starting the next one.

Awarding Magic Items: When the characters find a nonconsumable magic item, the players decide who receives what. If this is impossible or difficult, you assign the new item to a character who has no nonconsumable magic items. If all the characters have a nonconsumable magic item, the character with the lowest-level nonconsumable magic item receives the new item.

If more than one character has no nonconsumable magic item, or two characters tie for the lowest-level magic item, those the players decide who receives the new item. If they can't decide, have each roll a d20 until one rolls higher than the other. That player receives the new item.

You can distribute consumable items in the same way if the players can't decide who takes such items. Just remember not to count these items as nonconsumable magic items.

TREASURE FOUND

Treasure	Location
Common magic item (level 5 or lower)	Encounter 5-17
Two potions of healing	Encounter 5-18
One antivenom per character	Encounter 5-19
110 gp per character	Encounter 5-20
Common neck-slot magic item (level 6 or lower)	Encounter 5-20
Uncommon magic weapon or implement (level 7 or lower)	Encounter 5-20

Renown Points

One of the great rewards for playing in a DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Encounters season is the accumulation of Renown Points (RPs), which are given out for accomplishments made by players during, and sometimes in-between, sessions. These Renown Points are tracked at the Wizards Play Network location, and reaching certain thresholds garners the player a tangible reward—a D&D Encounters Card.

Players can use these cards during the current DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Encounters season, subsequent seasons, or possibly both. Each card has all the information on how it works printed right on the card itself.

As the DM, it's your task to award Renown Points at the end of a session of play, just like you would award experience and treasure. Unlike experience and treasure though, Renown Point totals earned for each player must be reported to the organizer at the conclusion of the session when you turn in your session tracking sheet. The organizer can then tell you if any players have qualified for a card.

The Renown accomplishments, their frequency, and the point values of each are listed below.

RENOWN POINT AWARDS

Accomplishment	Frequency	RPs
Complete an encounter	Session	3
Hit a milestone	2/chapter	2
Moment of greatness	1/chapter	2
Create a D&D Essentials character	Season	5
Create a D&D Character Builder character	Season	5
Revive a dying adventurer ally	Season	1
Hit for 15+ damage against 1 enemy	Season	1
Kill 3 minions in 1 attack	Season	1
Take 50 enemy damage in 1 session	Season	1
Survive 12+ sessions without dying	Season	2
Complete all quests	Season	5

Moment of Greatness: This is a discretionary award given out by the DM or through party vote to a player for doing something inventive, daring, or just plain cool during a session of play.

Renown Rewards

When a player earns 20 RPs, he or she earns the first D&D Encounters Card, called the Delver Reward. This is awarded to the player immediately following the session in which it is earned. The second award is called the Adventurer Reward, and a player qualifies for the reward by obtaining 100 Renown Points in the season.

The final award is given out at the conclusion of the season. At the end of the season, a number of D&D Encounters Cards are distributed among those who qualify for the reward. If more players qualify for the reward than the number of cards available, the organizer will determine how they will be distributed.

This adventure is the fifth of five chapters for *Keep on the Borderlands: A Season of Serpents*. These pages provide background information to aid you in running this climactic series of encounters.

Keep on the Borderlands

Legends claim that dwarf-built Restwell Keep has been the fortress of a hobgoblin king, the home of an infamous bandit lord, a linchpin garrison of fallen Nerath, and the lair of a dragon. Indeed, the keep has been all these and more. At present, it is a faint but steady light struggling against a growing darkness. Its intrepid inhabitants are in constant danger from within and without.

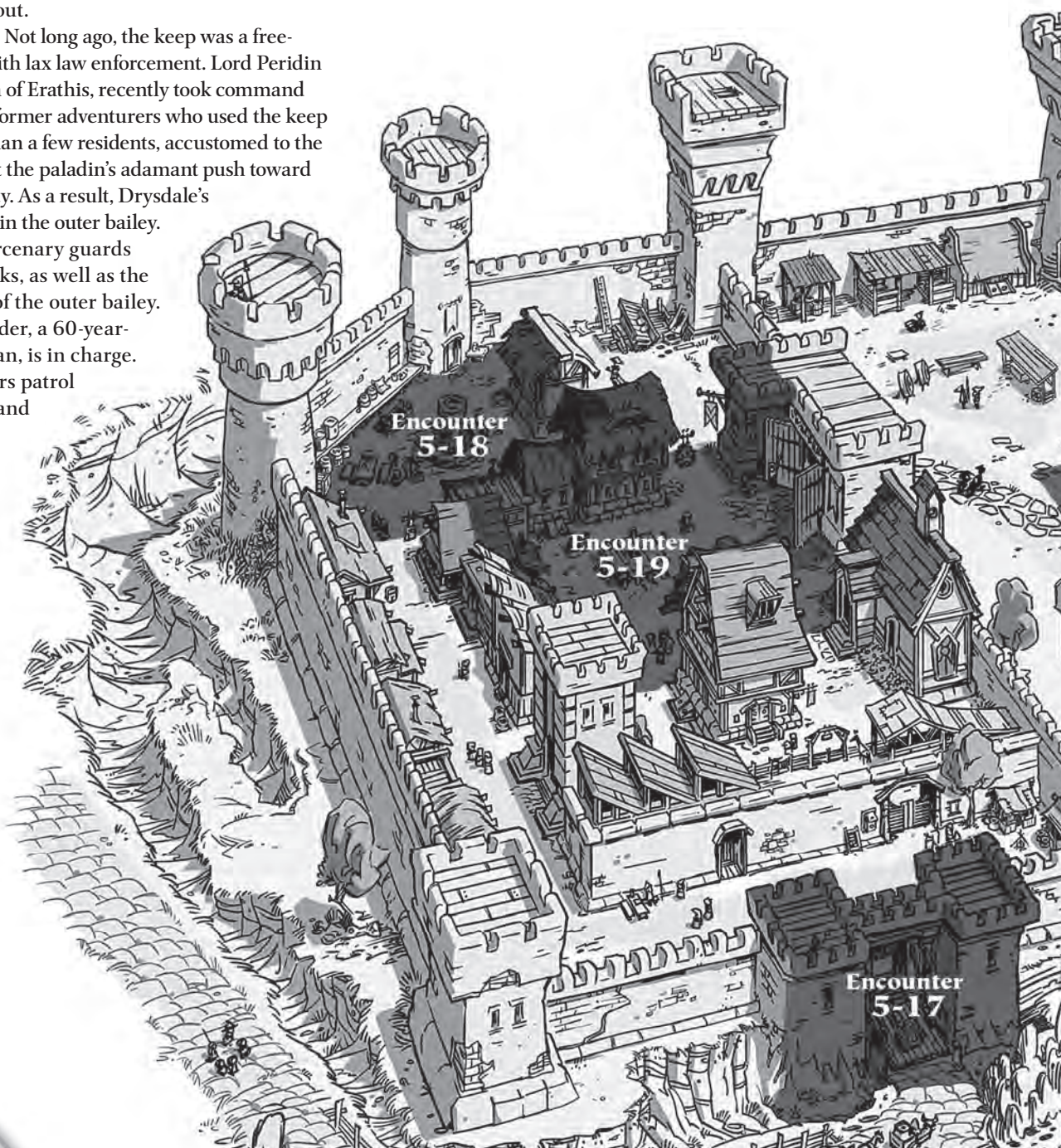
Government: Not long ago, the keep was a free-wheeling place with lax law enforcement. Lord Peridin Drysdale, paladin of Erathis, recently took command from the Blades, former adventurers who used the keep as a base. More than a few residents, accustomed to the old regime, resent the paladin's adamant push toward order and morality. As a result, Drysdale's authority is weak in the outer bailey.

Defense: Mercenary guards watch the barracks, as well as the towers and gate of the outer bailey. Kendon Longstrider, a 60-year-old human veteran, is in charge. Drysdale's soldiers patrol the keep proper and the inner bailey. The lord has mandated that capable individuals serve as militia if the need arises.

Room and Board: The gruff, greedy Nerrin Silverhand runs the seamy Travelers Inn on Fountain Square. A private room (four occupants) runs 1 gp per night; a spot in the common room costs 1 sp. Nerrin serves neither food nor drink. Such provisions can be purchased from cheerful Mother Aran of The Stumbling Giant, a fine tavern also on Fountain Square.

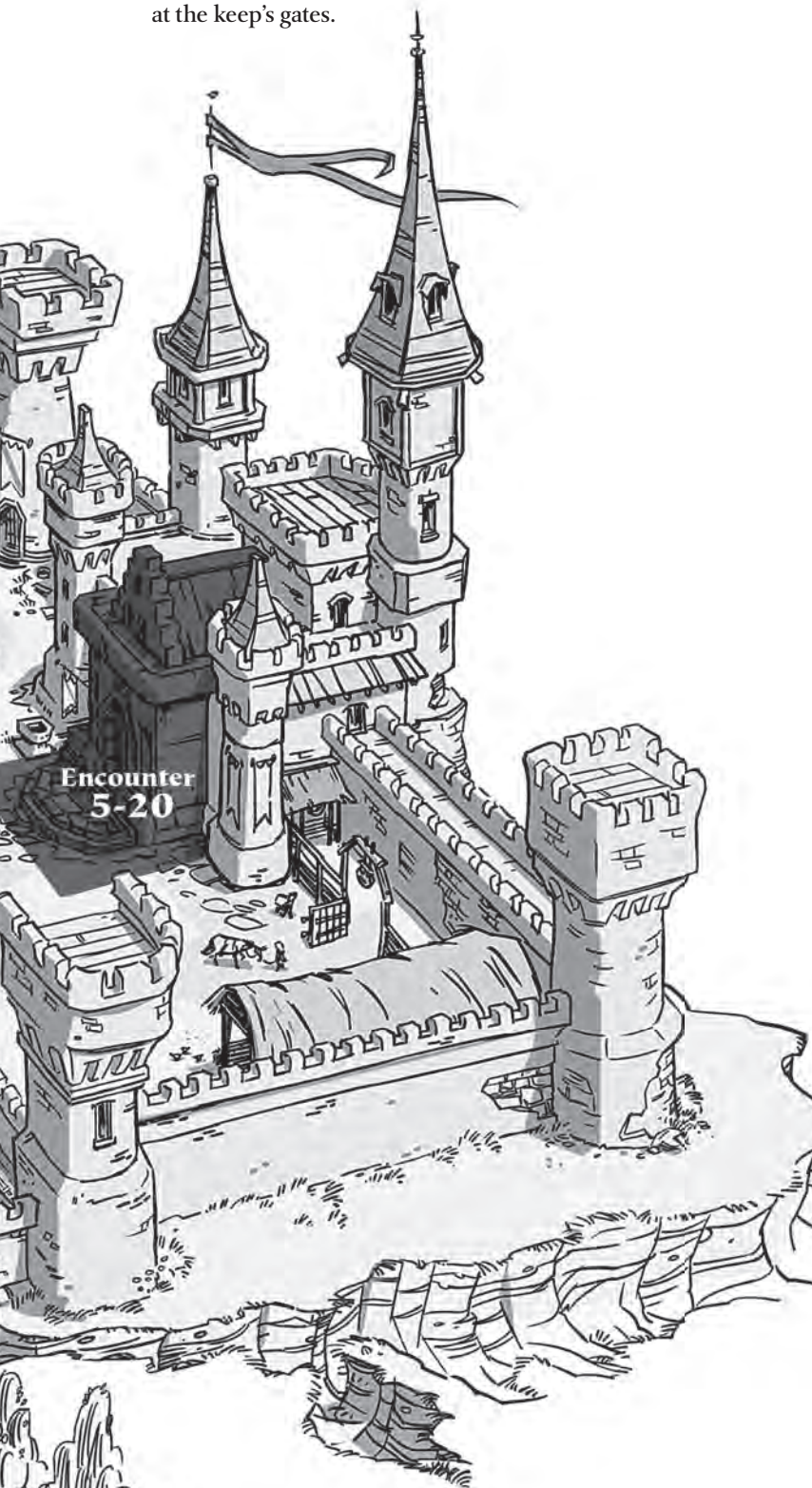
Temple: The local chapel (along the inner bailey wall) is open for worship of all accepted deities, but Avandra is esteemed above others. Chendera, the striking half-elf caretaker and priestess, is a devotee of the luck goddess. She spends much of her time mingling with folks in The Stumbling Giant.

Other Services: Local farmers and traveling merchants set up stands from time to time in the keep's Fountain Square. Regular establishments include a trader, a bank, a smithy, a jeweler, and a mage's guildhouse.



ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

In his role as a friar, Benwick befriended the adventurers and employed them to accomplish several of his goals. He then revealed his true allegiance to Zehir, the god of serpents, by betraying the characters and forming an army of reptilian creatures to attack Restwell Keep. Now this army, which includes the black dragon Yulbraxis, is at the keep's gates.



The characters have done much, from helping Benwick frame Ferdinand Ronnik and destroying a cult of Tiamat to recovering Greysen Ramthane's treasure and facing the black dragon Vermastyx (Yulbraxis's sister). Now they have returned to the keep to help in its defense.

The past might come back to help or hinder the characters, as choices they've made can become relevant in the unfolding of the siege. Allies within the keep also step up to help. Without a doubt, the characters' actions during the siege will determine the fate of Restwell Keep. Benwick must fall, or the keep surely will.

Session 17: The siege begins as lizardfolk loyal to Zehir wage an all-out assault on the gate with the aid of a spirehorn behemoth. The adventurers must win the battle without losing the gate to the rampaging beast. The keep cannot stand if the gate is breached. See **Session 17: Monsters at the Door**, page 6.

Session 18: Benwick was clever: During his stay at the keep, he dug a hidden tunnel to grant his allies a secret way under the walls. It worked. Now lizardfolk and drakes are pouring into Fountain Square. The adventurers must defeat the first wave and make sure no more come through. See **Session 18: Breach in the Square**, page 7.

Session 19: In the public square at the keep's heart, characters finally face the black dragon Yulbraxis. The dragon stands between the characters and Benwick, who has poisoned Lord Drysdale and dragged him to the inner fortress. Although Yulbraxis is as formidable as his sister ever was, his work during the siege has left him far from unscathed. He has a little help, although his allies might come to regret their loyalty. See **Session 19: The Battle's Turn**, page 7.

Session 20: After defeating the dragon and making their way into the inner bailey, the characters finally face Benwick near his moment of triumph. The fat friar is all menace and poison, and he still has a few tricks up his sleeves. See **Session 20: Snakes in the Hall**, page 8.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTERS

Chapter 5 assumes you have a normal party of five 3rd-level characters and players familiar with the *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* game at your table. Compare the party at your table to this assumption, using the following guidelines.

Weak Party: You have a weak party at your table if it consists of only four characters, or most or all of the players are new to the *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* game. If you have a weak party, remove one of the lowest level or least important non-minion monsters from the encounter.

Strong Party: You have a strong party at your table if it consists of six characters, or most or all of the players are veteran 4th-Edition *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* players who like added challenge. If you have a strong party, add one of the simplest non-minion monsters among those in the encounter whose level most closely matches the encounter level.

The characters have returned from the Chaos Scar to defend Restwell Keep from Benwick's amassed allies. Their contributions are instrumental in the keep's defense.

ROLEPLAYING

Some of the adventure's sections call for roleplaying, and all of the encounters allow for it. A portion of the information in this book exists to help you roleplay with the players. You might prepare a list of names to use if players want to talk to creatures unexpectedly. As long as all the players are having fun, and it's not going to make the session too long, play it up and enjoy. Just make sure to include everyone.

Further, allow for cinematic maneuvers and clever strategies. Try to reward bold play and clever play. Let players use their characters' skills and powers. Encourage this sort of gaming by being prepared, and by using the monsters, NPCs, and scenarios boldly and cleverly yourself.

Allies

Each encounter in this chapter includes one or more allies. These allies are controlled by the players and make the conflict within the keep more realistic. They also give players a taste of what it's like to be the Dungeon Master.

Statistics: This book and the Chapter 5 kit includes a sheet containing the statistics blocks for the allies. These pages can be photocopied and cut up for game use.

Initiative: An ally controlled by a player goes after that player's character in the initiative order. An ally cannot ready an action unless the player's character does so. Allies can delay only if the controlling player's character does so.

Keep Guards: Encounters 5-17, 5-18, 5-19, and possibly 5-20 include keep guards. At the start of an encounter, each player can choose to play one of these guards. If a player is uncomfortable playing a guard, he or she can let the DM play it. Place only as many guards as there are players. For example, if you have only four players, place only four guards (G1 - G4) on the map.

Calling Allies: Each encounter has a named ally, in addition to the keep guards, that one player can take control of. To call an optional named ally, a player's character must spend a standard action to use his or her battle horn. If more than one player wants to control the ally, have those players roll a d20 to determine who gets to control it. When the winning player's character spends the standard action, the ally then appears at the edge of the map at a location of the player's choosing.

After the Battle: If an ally survives an encounter, he or she usually leaves to help defend the keep elsewhere. He or she does not join the adventurers (except potentially in Encounter 5-20).

Experience Points: Allies do not affect the amount of XP the characters receive.

Session 5-17: Monsters at the Door

If you and your players wish for the continuity of the adventure to matter, you need to ask the players several questions. As this adventure unfolds, the characters' actions in previous chapters might come back to help or hinder them.

- ◆ **Who has played any other chapters?** If no one has, then you need ask no further questions. Anyone who has played earlier chapters should be asked the next questions.
- ◆ **What happened to the dragon Moxulhar in Chapter 2?** If the majority let Moxulhar go in Chapter 2, the copper wyrm can be called on as an ally (see page 10).
- ◆ **What happened to Ferdinand Ronnik in Chapter 2?** If the majority subdued Ronnik and then freed him later, he can be called on as an ally (see page 12).
- ◆ **What happened to the dragon Vermastyx in Chapter 4?** If the characters allowed this black dragon to survive, she intercepts Moxulhar before the copper wyrm can come to the adventurers' aid. In the event the characters were defeated by Vermastyx, assume she survived.

If the players need a refresher, read the following text describing the story so far:

Shortly after you arrived at Restwell Keep, the Keep on the Borderlands, you began to work with a jolly friar named Benwick. Claiming to worship Avandra, Sehanine, and Ioun, he led you to believe Lord Drysdale, the keep's lord, was a rigid and warlike disciple of Erathis. He also led you to believe that the keep's banker, Ferdinand Ronnik, was the leader of a Tiamat cult in the area. With Benwick's guidance, you defeated Ronnik and the cult, and you recovered a jewel known as the Serpent's Eye.

Before he betrayed you, Benwick even had you help a captain of the guard named Gorn Hammerfall recover family treasure under the keep.

Benwick escaped with his portion of the treasure, which he used to bribe two young black dragons and their lizardfolk followers into aiding him. With these allies and other lizardfolk loyal to him, Benwick plans on driving all good folk out of the keep.

At Lord Drysdale's request, you followed Benwick to the Chaos Scar. There, you faced one dragon. However, Benwick had already left to gather other forces. Knowing he had too much of a head start, you returned to Restwell Keep to aid its defenders against the inevitable siege that you learned should begin before the next nightfall.

When the players are ready to start the session, read:

You arrived back at the keep late in the night after your quest to gather information on Benwick's forces. After telling Lord Drysdale what you learned, you sought what rest you could.

As dawn breaks on the keep, you are awakened to the sound of battle horns. The attack has begun!

Hastening to the inner keep's great hall, you come upon Lord Drysdale dressed in battle regalia, standing on the steps outside.

He greets you and hands each of you a battle horn. "These horns mark you as people to be obeyed in the battle to come."

A page runs up to him and reports that the lizardfolk are using a massive behemoth to assault the front gate.

A moment later, a large black dragon flies overhead toward the southwestern section of the keep.

The lord turns to you, his jaw clenched. "We'll handle the dragon. Shore up the defenses at the gate. When you feel the gate is secure, meet me in Fountain Square. It's up to us to hold this keep!"

Drysdale takes no dithering from the characters. The defenses at the gate are important because the majority of Benwick's forces are land-based.

Quests: Drysdale gives the adventurers two quests. Keeping the gate secure is a minor quest. Protecting the keep by defeating Benwick and his ilk is a major quest.

When the characters reach the gate, set up the map for Encounter 5-17 and read:

You rush to the keep's outer gatehouse. Lizardfolk warriors are scaling the walls, emerging to battle soldiers atop the ramparts.

Inside the gatehouse is an enormous portcullis. A winch atop the walls looks as though it could be used to raise and lower the iron gate.

Beyond the portcullis is a set of wooden gates that is barred. The gate shudders as a pair of huge horns pierces some of the planks. A bestial roar echoes from the other side of the wall. It doesn't look like the gate can hold for much longer!

Nature check

DC 9: Given the size of the horns piercing the gate, the creature must be a spirehorn behemoth. It's a huge and deadly beast, more fearsome than most creatures you've faced.

DC 13: Spirehorn behemoths are difficult to train. If Benwick's forces have one, they might be controlling it magically.

History or Dungeoneering check

DC 9: The wooden gate can withstand only one more attack. The portcullis might hold against a couple attacks as well.

DC 13: Dropping the portcullis on the behemoth might pin the creature in the gatehouse and block the passage enough to restrict the numbers of invaders.

Go to **Encounter 5-17: Hold the Gate**, page 10.

COACHING THE PLAYERS

The better strategies in this encounter are to let the behemoth through the portcullis and kill it, or to drop the portcullis on the creature, restrain it, and then kill it. If the characters have the information they need to use the portcullis against the behemoth, the players might not know how to accomplish what's needed in game terms. If this is the case, it's okay to coach them along. After all, the characters know what to do. They need to raise the portcullis with the winches. Then, if their intent is to drop the portcullis on the beast, they need to ready actions to drop the portcullis when the behemoth passes underneath.

Another place to coach players is when you describe something they might not completely understand. For instance, the behemoth might decide to flee while the portcullis traps it in the courtyard. Make sure you're clear about the fact that it might be running across the open plains around the keep if the portcullis hadn't kept it from doing so.

Session 5-18: Breach in the Square

Remind the players that their characters have battle horns, granting them influence over their allies.

When the players are ready, read:

As the battle winds down at the front gate, you're reminded of Lord Drysdale's request to meet him in Fountain Square. Battle horns blare from that part of the keep. More guards arrive to hold the gate, allowing you to safely slip away.

When the adventurers reach Fountain Square, they discover enemies pouring out of a building that once served as Benwick's residence.

Go to **Encounter 5-18: Rising Threat**, page 12.

Session 5-19: The Battle's Turn

Remind the players that their characters have battle horns, granting them influence over their allies.

When the players are ready, read:

Combat slows in Fountain Square. Guards descend from walls and emerge from tower doors to mop up the area. Over the din of other skirmishes, you hear the dragon to the north, near the inner keep.

The main antagonist in this battle is the wounded black dragon Yulbraxis, who might be reeling from the death of his sister, Vermastyx. The dragon has a fatalistic view of this confrontation—it's kill or be killed, all or nothing, to him.

Session 5–20: Snakes in the Hall

In the final session, the adventurers confront Benwick holed up in the main fortress. Remind them that they have a quest to save Lord Drysdale.

One of the allies participating in the final battle is Kendon Longstrider, the keep's bailiff. A mercenary at heart, his loyalty to Lord Drysdale is tested in this encounter.

When the players are ready, read the following to kick off the final encounter:

The black dragon Yulbraxis is slain, and the keep's defenders manage to hold the outer bailey. However, Lord Drysdale has been taken prisoner by the villain Benwick. He is in the keep, and you have only moments to rescue him.

If Chendera is alive, she reminds the adventurers of the *antivenom* she gave them during the previous session. Go to **Encounter 5-20: Benwick's Stand**, page 16.

Ending the Adventure

When Encounter 5-20 concludes, the characters can attempt to revive Lord Drysdale if Benwick or Kendon did not kill him during the fight.

If Chendera survived the fight or was not present during the battles, she can administer an antidote that will help cure him. If she is dead, the characters must attempt to heal him on their own (Heal DC 21). On a failure, the lord dies.

If Lord Drysdale dies, the heroes fail in their quest to rescue him; each player should note the success or failure on his or her character tracking sheet.

If the adventurers all perish, read:

The battle is done, and foul Benwick is victorious. He has laid waste to Restwell Keep, and will doubtless convert it into a bastion of evil. One can only hope that new adventurers will take up the call to arms and bring down the villain before his reach can extend across the Nentir Vale.

If the characters prevail, how the story ends depends on how many minor quests the players completed in this chapter. Every player will have either succeeded or failed to complete one or more of the following quests:

Minor Quest	Encounter
Hold the Gate	5-17
Keep Chendera Alive	5-19
Rescue Lord Drysdale	5-20

Total up the number of failures and successes in the party. If the party has a number of successes equal to or greater than the number of failures, go to "Success" below. Otherwise, go to "Failure" below.

Treasure: The characters gain 110 gp each, as well as one common neck-slot magic item (level 6) and one uncommon magic armor, weapon, or implement (level 7). Lord Drysdale gives them the magic items, or if he is dead, the characters acquire this loot from Benwick's body.

Success!

The defense of the keep is over. Benwick's army is broken, and you are victorious. In the days that follow, the keep's inhabitants work to rebuild and recover. They hail you as true heroes, and they name you defenders of the borderlands. You'll be welcome in Restwell Keep for a long time to come, and you'll likely be remembered as long as hardy, civilized folk call the keep home.

If Lord Drysdale survived, add: Lord Drysdale rewards you for your valor and reinforces your hero status. The people learn to better accept him after his valiant defense of their home. He takes more of an interest in the workings of the whole keep, so he earns more trust. The keep prospers as much as a borderlands fortress can under his popular rule.

If Lord Drysdale perished, add: The void left by Drysdale's passing stays vacant for only a little while. A group of amoral adventurers who call themselves the Blades return to the inner bailey and assume lordship of the keep. Restwell Keep becomes a permissive place, barely controlled enough to be considered entirely civilized. Higher-minded folks retreat to places that are more refined. Nevertheless, the Keep on the Borderlands endures as a frontier town and launching point for adventure.

Failure

The defense of the keep is over, for all the good it did. The place is in ruins, with most of its inhabitants dead or too scared to stay on. No one seems willing to rebuild. The keep is bound to become a haven for evil in the coming months if no one does anything.

If Lord Drysdale survived, add: Lord Drysdale rewards you for your valor and hardens his regime. He sends forth a call for the faithful of Erathis to come to the outpost, which he plans to make a military stronghold against the dangers of the Chaos Scar. Although the fortress might see some trade and provide shelter for adventurers, its days as an open and tolerant settlement are over.

If Lord Drysdale died, add: Drysdale's death seems to have scared away the keep's remaining inhabitants. You hear rumors that the Blades, a band of amoral adventurers who once ran the keep, are contemplating return. The expenses for repairs should keep anyone but such rich fools and monsters away. For now, if it weren't for the dark memories, staying in the keep might be just a little better than camping in the wilderness.



ENCOUNTER 5-17: HOLD THE GATE

Encounter Level 5 (1,196 XP)

Setup

1 young spirehorn behemoth (B)
1 greenscale marsh mystic (M)
24 greenscale warriors (W; see below)

Do not place the monsters on the map until one or more adventurers are in a position to see them.

The greenscale warriors begin the encounter off the map. They attack in three waves. At the end of each round, place eight warriors along the edge of the map in the spots marked "W." At the end of the next round, those warriors spend their turns climbing to the top of the wall, and more warriors appear in their place. In the subsequent round, the warriors on the wall move and attack, the next wave moves to the top of the wall, and the last wave appears on the ground. If the gate and portcullis is open, the warriors move through it.

If your players are new to the game, or if they don't have a wizard, consider reducing the number of greenscale warriors by half, placing two on each side instead of four.

Arcana, Insight, or Nature check

DC 15: *The marsh mystic exerts influence over the behemoth. Eliminating the mystic could make the behemoth easier to drive off.*

Allies

Up to 6 keep guards (G1-G6)
Moxulhar (optional)

If the characters let Moxulhar survive in Chapter 2, read the following text a character ascends the wall. Not far off from the wall, you see the young copper dragon, Moxulhar, surveying the scene. Perhaps she would respond to the call of your battle horn.

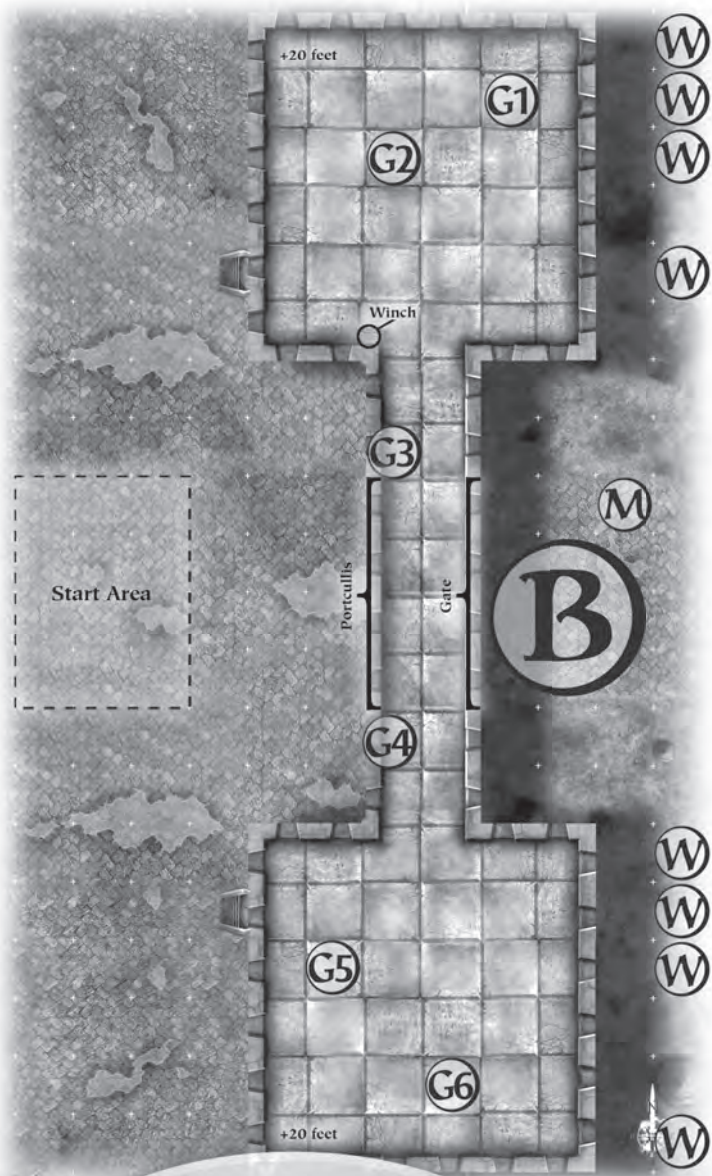
If the characters let Vermastyx survive in Chapter 4, read the following text when a character calls Moxulhar.

Moxulhar wings toward the area, intent on joining the fray. Suddenly, a larger form crashes into her. It's Vermastyx, the black dragon! The two dragons clash and spiral out of sight.

Moxulhar is taken out of the fight but ultimately slays Vermastyx due to the dragon's earlier injuries.

Tactics

- ◆ **The behemoth** automatically smashes the outer gate on its first turn. It then moves up to the portcullis. In subsequent turns, it uses *double attack*, targeting the portcullis or anyone within range that attacks the beast. If it breaks through the portcullis, it uses its action point to move into the courtyard and then use *trample*. If the marsh mystic is at 0 hit points or fewer and the behemoth is bloodied, it flees, provided it is not restrained or trapped in the courtyard by the portcullis.
- ◆ **The marsh mystic** uses its area powers through the portcullis bars. If the portcullis is open, it moves into the courtyard.
- ◆ **The greenscale warriors** climb up vines created by the marsh mystic and attack the wall's defenders. They might attempt to control the winch.



The Portcullis

The portcullis is 20 feet wide and 15 feet tall. Its area is marked on the map, as is the winch that raises and lowers it.

It is possible to make attacks through the portcullis. Melee and ranged attacks through the portcullis take a -2 penalty to attack rolls.

If the portcullis is restraining the behemoth, creatures can pass under it as through it were raised.

Portcullis

Object

HP 50

AC 12, Fortitude 10, Reflex 10, Will –

Immune necrotic, poison, psychic, forced movement, all conditions, ongoing damage; Resist 5 all

STANDARD ACTIONS

Drop Portcullis ♦ At-Will

Requirement: The portcullis must be in the raised position, and the creature dropping it must be adjacent to a winch.

Attack: 4 adjacent squares (creatures in the squares); +8 vs. Reflex
Hit: 3d10 + 5 damage, and the target is restrained (escape DC 19). Until it is no longer restrained, the target cannot attack the portcullis.

Miss: Half damage, and the target is pushed 1 square.

Effect: The portcullis is lowered and can be attacked until it is raised.

Raise Portcullis ♦ At-Will

Requirement: The portcullis must be in the lowered position, and the creature raising it must be adjacent to a winch.

Check (Athletics DC 13): The gate is raised.

Features of the Area

Illumination: Bright light.

Battlements: The crenels provide cover against ranged attacks from creatures on the ground.

Bushes: These bushes are difficult terrain.

Inner Wall: The walls are sheer stone and 20 feet high. It requires a DC 20 Athletics check to climb them.

Ladders: These ladders are bolted into the stone and require no Athletics check to climb. It requires 4 squares of movement to move to the top of a ladder.

Outer Wall: These walls are covered in vines created by the marsh mystic. It requires 8 squares of movement to move to the top of the wall.

Treasure: The marsh mystic carries a common magic item of level 5 or lower (player's choice).

Conclusion

If the portcullis is breached, the characters are unsuccessful in holding the gate and fail to gain the minor quest reward. Have them note the success or failure on their tracking sheets.



Young Spirehorn Behemoth (B) Level 7 Elite Brute

Huge natural beast (reptile)

XP 600

HP 192; Bloodied 96

Initiative +5

AC 19, Fortitude 20, Reflex 18, Will 19

Perception +6

Speed 6

Saving Throws +2; Action Points 1

STANDARD ACTIONS

⊕ Gore ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +11 vs. AC

Hit: 3d6 + 7 damage.

⊕ Double Attack ♦ At-Will

Effect: The spirehorn uses *gore* twice, making each attack against a different target.

⊕ Trample ♦ Encounter

Effect: The spirehorn shifts twice its speed and can enter enemies' spaces during the move. Each time the spirehorn enters an enemy's space for the first time during the move, it can use *gore* against that enemy.

Str 19 (+7)

Dex 14 (+5)

Wis 16 (+6)

Con 16 (+6)

Int 4 (+0)

Cha 9 (+2)

Alignment unaligned

Languages –

Greenscale Marsh Mystic (M) Level 6 Controller (Leader)

Medium natural humanoid (reptile), lizardfolk

XP 250

HP 70; Bloodied 35

Initiative +4

AC 20, Fortitude 17, Reflex 16, Will 19

Perception +7

Speed 6 (swamp walk)

STANDARD ACTIONS

⊕ Spear (weapon) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +11 vs. AC

Hit: 2d8 + 5 damage.

✱ Bog Cloud (poison) ♦ Encounter

Attack: Area burst 2 within 5 (creatures in the burst); +9 vs. Fortitude
Hit: 2d6 + 7 poison damage, and the target is dazed until the end of the mystic's next turn.

Miss: The target grants combat advantage until the end of the mystic's next turn.

✱ Swamp's Grasp (zone) ♦ Encounter

Attack: Area burst 2 within 5 (enemies in the burst); +9 vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d6 + 4 damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).

Miss: Half damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).

Effect: The burst creates a zone of difficult terrain until the end of the encounter. The zone does not affect creatures that have swamp walk.

Skills Athletics +10, Nature +12, Stealth +9

Str 15 (+5)

Dex 13 (+4)

Wis 19 (+7)

Con 14 (+5)

Int 10 (+3)

Cha 12 (+4)

Alignment unaligned

Languages Draconic

Equipment spear

24 Greenscale Warriors (W) Level 2 Minion Brute

Medium natural humanoid (reptile), lizardfolk

XP 31 each

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

Initiative +3

AC 14, Fortitude 15, Reflex 14, Will 13

Perception +2

Speed 6 (swamp walk)

STANDARD ACTIONS

⊕ Spear (weapon) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC

Hit: 6 damage.

⊕ Javelin (weapon) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +7 vs. AC

Hit: 6 damage.

Str 17 (+4)

Dex 14 (+3)

Wis 12 (+2)

Con 15 (+3)

Int 8 (+0)

Cha 8 (+0)

Alignment unaligned

Languages Draconic

Equipment spear, 3 javelins

ENCOUNTER 5–18: RISING THREAT

Encounter Level 3 (947 XP)

Setup

- 6+ greenscale warriors (W; see below)
- 2+ greenscale trappers (T; see below)
- 1 needlefang drake swarm (see below)

The monsters and allies on the map are already in combat.

At the start of each round:

Three more greenscale warriors emerge from Benwick's home (the red-roofed building) and appear in the "Monster Start Area" if there are any unoccupied spaces. The emerging warriors act on the same turn as the other greenscale warriors. The warriors continue to appear until Benwick's home is destroyed (see "Launch the Catapult") or ten rounds have gone by. No lizardfolk beyond those arriving in the first two waves are worth experience.

At the start of Round 2:

A third greenscale trapper emerges from Benwick's house and acts on the same turn as the other trappers. Also, a needlefang drake swarm boils out of the building at the same time. Roll initiative for it.

At the start of Round 3:

A fourth trapper appears and joins the fray.

When the party enters the area, read:

The square is full of guards battling lizardfolk. Fighting on the walls is light, however, and the nearby catapult is silent. A few soldiers on the walls seem to be looking around for instruction.

Standing over the corpses of some of Drysdale's personal guards is a pair of lizardfolk with nets. Drysdale is nowhere to be seen.

One of the guards yells to you, "They're coming from that building! They must have a tunnel within! We need a way to seal it!"

The building was once Benwick's home. The window shutters and doors are now shattered, and more reptilian figures are spilling out.

History or Dungeoneering check

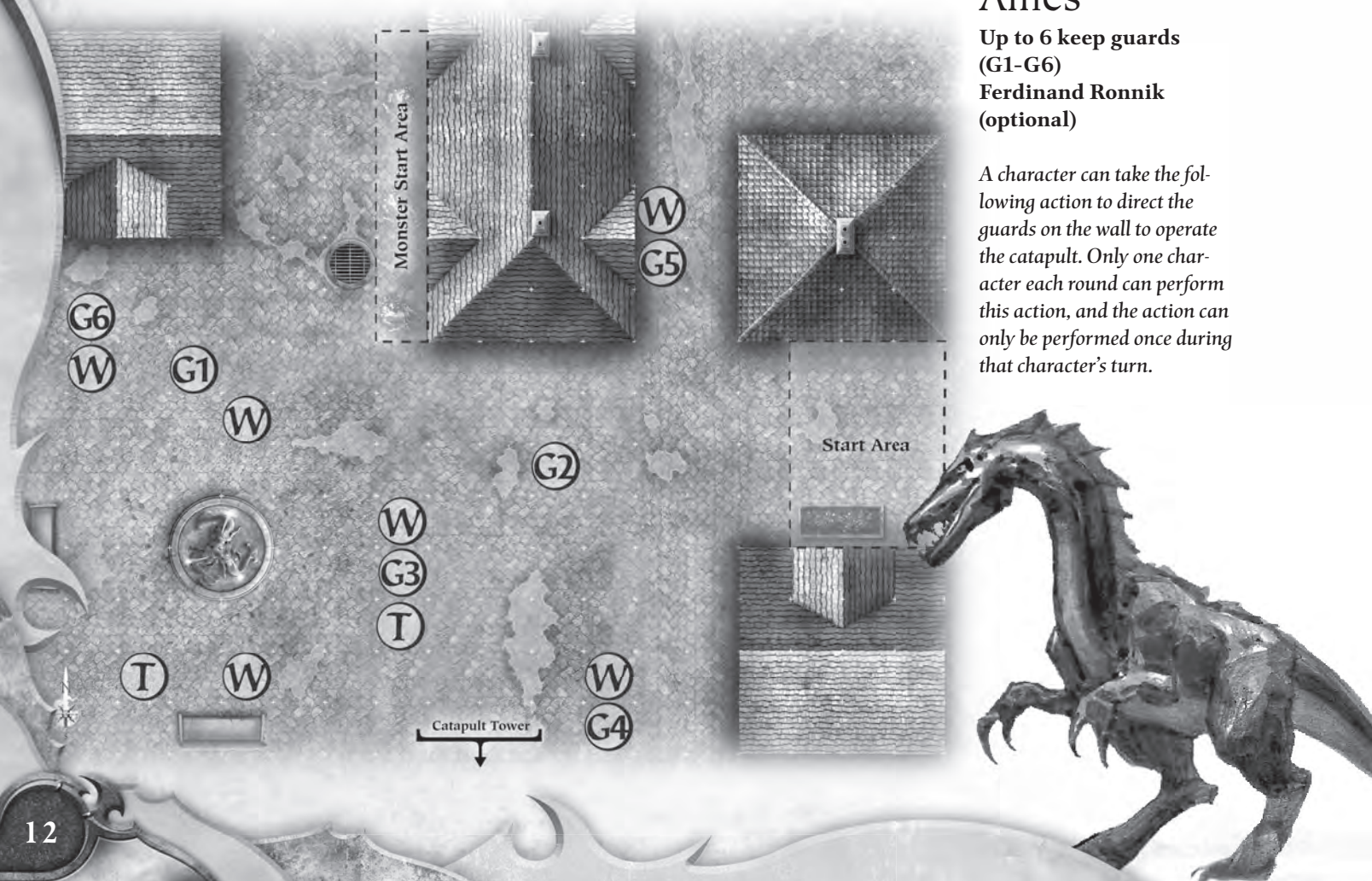
DC 13: Guarding the doors won't stop the flow of enemies. Destroying the building is the only solution. Fire will take too long. You need a force to crush the house.

DC 20: A couple solid blows from the catapult should bring down Benwick's home.

Allies

- Up to 6 keep guards (G1-G6)
- Ferdinand Ronnik (optional)

A character can take the following action to direct the guards on the wall to operate the catapult. Only one character each round can perform this action, and the action can only be performed once during that character's turn.



STANDARD ACTIONS

⬇ Launch the Catapult ♦ At-Will (1/round)

Attack: Area burst 1 anywhere on the map (creatures in the burst); +6 vs. Reflex

Hit: 7 damage, and the target falls prone.

Effect: If the center of the burst is on Benwick's home, it destroys half of it. When both halves are destroyed, no new enemies appear (see "Setup").

If the characters let Ronnik survive in Chapter 2, and he was freed in Chapter 4, read the following text.

The remains of Ronnik's house are across the square, and you see the banker hiding within. He looks anxious, but he wields a weapon and could probably be ordered to provide assistance.

A character can call Ferdinand Ronnik into battle. He knows firsthand the adventurers are powerful and isn't about to disobey.

Tactics

- ♦ **The greenscale warriors** focus on killing keep guards but don't shy away from attacking the adventurers.
- ♦ **The greenscale trappers** do their best to keep the Monster Start Area clear of enemies.
- ♦ **The needlefang drake swarm** attacks the nearest enemies unless a greenscale trapper directs it to do otherwise.

Features of the Area

Illumination: Bright light.

Benches/Planter/Rubble: Squares containing these obstacles are difficult terrain.

Fountain: The fountain is difficult terrain. A creature that is pushed, pulled, or slid into a fountain square must make a saving throw. On a failure, it falls prone. On a success, it stops moving.

Treasure: When the battle is over, the characters can recover two *potions of healing* from the bodies of Drysdale's guards.

6+ Greenscale Warriors (W) Level 2 Minion Brute

Medium natural humanoid (reptile), lizardfolk XP 31 each

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. Initiative +3

AC 14, Fortitude 15, Reflex 14, Will 13 Perception +2

Speed 6 (swamp walk)

STANDARD ACTIONS

⬇ Spear (weapon) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC

Hit: 6 damage.

⊗ Javelin (weapon) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +7 vs. AC

Hit: 6 damage.

Str 17 (+4) Dex 14 (+3) Wis 12 (+2)

Con 15 (+3) Int 8 (+0) Cha 8 (+0)

Alignment unaligned Languages Draconic

Equipment spear, 3 javelins

2+ Greenscale Trappers (T) Level 3 Controller

Medium natural humanoid (reptile), lizardfolk XP 150 each

HP 46; Bloodied 23

Initiative +5

AC 17, Fortitude 14, Reflex 16, Will 14

Perception +3

Speed 6 (swamp walk)

STANDARD ACTIONS

⬇ Spear (weapon) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC

Hit: 1d8 + 6 damage.

⬅ Net Toss (weapon) ♦ At-Will

Requirement: The trapper must be wielding a net.

Attack: Close blast 2 (enemies in the blast); +6 vs. Reflex

Hit: 1d4 + 3 damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).

Miss: The trapper can slide the target 1 square to a square not in the blast.

MOVE ACTIONS

Net Drag ♦ At-Will

Effect: The trapper moves up to its speed, pulling creatures immobilized by its net an equal number of squares. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks from creatures immobilized by the trapper's net.

MINOR ACTIONS

⬇ Feral Kick ♦ At-Will

Requirement: The trapper must be bloodied.

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. Reflex

Hit: The trapper can slide the target 1 square.

Skills Athletics +7, Stealth +10

Str 13 (+2)

Dex 18 (+5)

Wis 14 (+3)

Con 14 (+3)

Int 8 (+0)

Cha 8 (+0)

Alignment unaligned Languages Draconic

Equipment 3 nets, spear

Needlefang Drake Swarm Level 2 Soldier

Medium natural beast (reptile, swarm) XP 125

HP 38; Bloodied 19

Initiative +7

AC 18, Fortitude 14, Reflex 16, Will 13

Perception +7

Speed 7

Immune fear; Resist half damage from melee and ranged attacks;

Vulnerable 5 to close and area attacks

TRAITS

⚡ Swarm Attack ♦ Aura 1

Any enemy that starts its turn in the aura takes 4 damage and is slowed until the end of its turn.

Swarm

The swarm can occupy the same space as another creature, and an enemy can enter its space, which is difficult terrain. The swarm cannot be pulled, pushed, or slid by melee or ranged attacks. It can squeeze through any opening that is large enough for at least one of the creatures it comprises.

STANDARD ACTIONS

⬇ Swarm of Teeth ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC

Hit: 1d6 + 2 damage, or 2d6 + 2 against a prone target.

MINOR ACTIONS

Pull Prone ♦ At-Will (1/round)

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +3 vs. Fortitude

Hit: The target falls prone.

Str 15 (+3)

Dex 18 (+5)

Wis 12 (+2)

Con 14 (+3)

Int 2 (-3)

Cha 10 (+1)

Alignment unaligned Languages –

ENCOUNTER 5–19: YULBRAXIS

Encounter Level 4 (801 XP)

Setup

Yulbraxis, young black dragon (Y)
2 poisonscale magi (P)
4 greenscale warriors (W; see below)

Place the monsters on the map.

At the start of the second round and each round thereafter:

If the dragon is alive and there are only one or two greenscale warriors on the battlefield, a new greenscale warrior appears in each “Monster Start Area.” These warriors act on the same initiative count as the other warriors.

After the players place their characters in the start area, read:

You come to a square just in front of the inner keep. Mauled, stabbed, and acid-burned soldiers and lizardfolk are sprawled around, including some of Drysdale’s most highly trained soldiers.

A horse-sized black dragon snarls as it leaps between nearby rooftops. Lizardfolk lurk around the edges of the square, and keep guards crouch on high perches and duck behind cover.

Seeing you, the dragon roars. “Benwick warned me about you,” it hisses. “Anyway, you’re too late. If the little lordling isn’t dead yet, he soon will be.”

The characters gain a minor quest: Rescue Drysdale from Benwick’s clutches.

Allies

Up to 6 keep guards (G1–G6)
Chendera, priestess of Avandra (optional)

Down one of the lanes, the characters can see a woman who looks like a healer, talking to an acolyte. A character can call Chendera into battle using a battle horn.

When a character calls Chendera, read:

A female half-elf in robes hurries to the edge of the square. It’s Chendera, the priestess of Avandra. “One of my acolytes just informed me Lord Drysdale’s been poisoned and taken to the inner keep. I can help, but we must hurry!”

The characters gain a minor quest: Keep Chendera alive.

Tactics

- ◆ **Yulbraxis** starts this encounter bloodied (104 hit points). His breath weapon is charged, and he has one action point remaining. His *acidic blood* trait is in effect, and *shroud of gloom* is spent, so he must recharge it. The dragon acts recklessly, flying down to the square to face off with his foes. When using his *breath weapon*, Yulbraxis does not concern himself with allies caught in the blast.
- ◆ **The poisonscale magi** avoid melee combat and prefer to attack at range.
- ◆ **The greenscale warriors** make ranged attacks as often as possible to avoid getting caught in the dragon’s *breath weapon*.

Features of the Area

Illumination: Bright light.

Battlements: The battlement walls are 30 feet high and require a DC 20 Athletics check to climb. The crenels provide cover against ranged attacks from the ground.

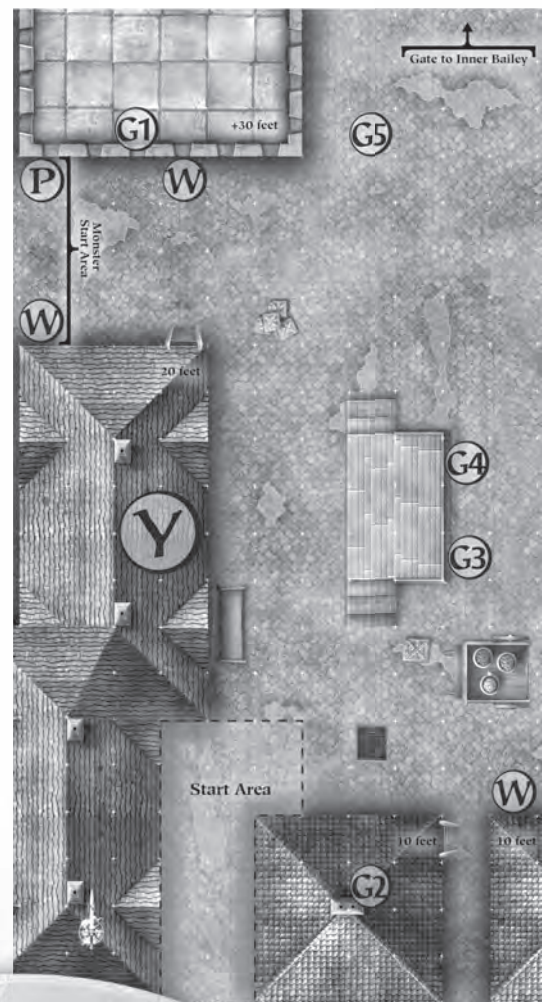
Bench/Boxes/Cart: These are difficult terrain.

Buildings: The walls of the buildings require a DC 15 Athletics check to climb.

Ladders: These ladders require no Athletics check to climb. It requires 4 squares of movement to move to the top of a ladder that extends 20 feet, and 2 squares of movement to move to the top of a ladder that extends 10 feet.

Public Platform: Moving onto the platform is difficult terrain.

Roofs: These shingled slopes are difficult terrain.



2 Poisonscale Magi (P)		Level 2 Artillery	
Medium natural humanoid (reptile), lizardfolk		XP 125 each	
HP 30; Bloodied 15		Initiative +2	
AC 14, Fortitude 15, Reflex 13, Will 12		Perception +4	
Speed 6 (swamp walk)			
STANDARD ACTIONS			
⚔ Dagger (poison, weapon) ♦ At-Will			
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC			
Hit: 1d4 + 2 damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).			
☞ Poison Blood (poison) ♦ At-Will			
Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +7 vs. Fortitude			
Hit: 1d6 + 4 poison damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).			
☘ Poison Rain (poison) ♦ Encounter			
Attack: Area burst 2 within 10 (enemies in burst); +7 vs. Fortitude			
Hit: 1d10 + 5 poison damage.			
Effect: The target gains vulnerable 5 poison (save ends).			
Skills Athletics +7, Stealth +7			
Str 12 (+2)	Dex 15 (+3)	Wis 17 (+4)	
Con 12 (+2)	Int 8 (+0)	Cha 8 (+0)	
Alignment unaligned		Languages Draconic	
Equipment dagger			

4 Greenscale Warriors (W)		Level 2 Minion Brute	
Medium natural humanoid (reptile), lizardfolk		XP 31 each	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.		Initiative +3	
AC 14, Fortitude 15, Reflex 14, Will 13		Perception +2	
Speed 6 (swamp walk)			
STANDARD ACTIONS			
⚔ Spear (weapon) ♦ At-Will			
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC			
Hit: 6 damage.			
☞ Javelin (weapon) ♦ At-Will			
Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +7 vs. AC			
Hit: 6 damage.			
Str 17 (+4)	Dex 14 (+3)	Wis 12 (+2)	
Con 15 (+3)	Int 8 (+0)	Cha 8 (+0)	
Alignment unaligned		Languages Draconic	
Equipment spear, 3 javelins			

Yulbraxis, Young Black Dragon (Y)		Level 4 Solo Lurker	
Large natural magical beast (dragon)		XP 437	
HP 104 (already bloodied)		Initiative +11	
AC 18, Fortitude 16, Reflex 18, Will 15		Perception +9	
Speed 7 (swamp walk), fly 7, swim 7		Darkvision	
Resist 10 acid			
Saving Throws +5; Action Points 1			
TRAITS			
Acidic Blood (acid)			
Whenever the dragon takes damage while it is bloodied, each creature adjacent to it takes 5 acid damage.			
Instinctive Devouring			
On an initiative of 10 + its initiative check, the dragon can use a free action to charge or to use <i>bite</i> . If the dragon cannot use a free action to make this attack due to a dominating or stunning effect, then that effect ends instead of the dragon making the attack.			
Action Recovery			
Whenever the dragon ends its turn, any dazing, stunning, or dominating effect on it ends.			
STANDARD ACTIONS			
⚔ Bite (acid) ♦ At-Will			
Attack: Melee 2 (one creature); +9 vs. AC			
Hit: 2d8 + 4 damage, and ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends).			
Miss: 5 acid damage.			
⚔ Claw ♦ At-Will			
Attack: Melee 2 (one or two creatures); +9 vs. AC. If the dragon targets only one creature, it can make this attack twice against that creature.			
Hit: 2d6 + 5 damage.			
☞ Breath Weapon (acid) ♦ Recharge ☑ ☑			
Attack: Close blast 5 (enemies in the blast); +7 vs. Reflex			
Hit: 2d8 + 3 acid damage, and ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends).			
Miss: Half damage.			
Shroud of Gloom ♦ Recharge ☑ ☑			
Effect: Close burst 5 (enemies in the burst). The target gains vulnerable 5 acid and takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls until the end of the encounter. A character can use a standard action to attempt a DC 10 Heal check to end this effect on himself or herself or an adjacent ally.			
TRIGGERED ACTIONS			
⚔ Tail Sweep ♦ At-Will			
Trigger: An enemy misses the dragon with a melee attack.			
Attack (Opportunity Action): Melee 3 (triggering enemy); +7 vs. Reflex			
Hit: 1d6 + 2 damage, and the target falls prone. In addition, each of the target's allies adjacent to the target takes 5 damage.			
Skills Stealth +12			
Str 16 (+5)	Dex 20 (+7)	Wis 15 (+4)	
Con 12 (+3)	Int 12 (+3)	Cha 10 (+2)	
Alignment evil		Languages Common, Draconic	

Conclusion

If Chendera dies in this encounter, the characters fail to gain the minor quest reward. Have the players note the success or failure on their tracking sheets. Also, have each player note if his or her keep guard survived.

After the fight, Chendera gives each character an *antivenom*, or the doses can be found on her body. She also restores a healing surge to one character.

Antivenom

This tonic can help counter the effects of most poisons.

Alchemical Item

Power (Consumable): Minor Action. *Effect:* You gain a +2 bonus to saving throws against poison effects until the end of the encounter.



ENCOUNTER 5–20: BENWICK'S STAND

Encounter Level 6 (1,300 XP)

Setup

Benwick (B)

2 deathrattle vipers (V)

4+ spitting cobras (see Tactics)

The characters and their allies (any that survived from Encounter 5-19) begin outside the hall. Place Kendon on the map as shown. Don't place Benwick or the snakes until the party enters the start area.

When the players are ready, read:

An old human in plate armor waits near the steps to the Great Hall. The doors to the hall hang ajar. The corpse of a servant lies in front of them.

The old man's name is Kendon Longstrider, and he is the bailiff and commander of the guards. He quietly waves you over.

"Thank the gods you've come. The villain is inside. He might have killed Drysdale already. We must hurry."

Heal check

DC 13: *The servant died of snakebite.*

Insight check

DC 21: *Kendon Longstrider seems unduly nervous about you.*

Allies

Kendon Longstrider, bailiff (K)

Chendera, chapel priestess (if alive)

Keep guards (survivors of Encounter 5-19)

Kendon wants to join the adventurers. The bailiff explains he just arrived and was formulating a plan. If questioned about his edginess, he waves it off as battle nerves. Hand him over as an ally for now.

When the party enters the hall, read:

The hall is empty of chairs, but its tables still stand, blood-spattered. Corpses of murdered guards and servants slump in various places. Fires burn in fireplaces and in braziers.

Benwick looms over the prostrate form of Lord Drysdale. He looks up as you enter and frowns, his jolly façade replaced with malice.

"So, it comes to this, friends," he sneers. "Zehir's darkness will take you all!"

Tactics

- ◆ **Benwick** uses *snake pellets* and then moves within range and spends his action point to attack. This is it for Benwick; he fights to the death.
- ◆ **The deathrattle vipers** move to defend Benwick, even if it means ignoring a mark or defensive aura, or provoking an opportunity attack. If Benwick is dead and they are bloodied, they might flee.
- ◆ **Spitting cobras** make ranged attacks until engaged in melee combat. They might climb pillars to maneuver out of melee range.

Kendon's Duplicity

Kendon once favored Benwick's take on keep politics. He wants to return command of the fortress to rulers who were more lax, specifically a group of former adventurers known as the Blades. Now, he's torn. If Benwick loses and Drysdale dies, Kendon can help the Blades rule Restwell Keep.

At the start of Benwick's turn in the third round, read the following text:

Benwick turns his gaze on Kendon and speaks. "Longstrider, don't be foolish like them. You can see the outcome of this battle. Join me, and I'll ensure you have the place you deserve among my ranks."

Kendon is a mercenary at heart. He will join Benwick unless one of the characters speaks up. A character can make a Diplomacy or an Intimidate check opposed by Benwick's Bluff check. If the character wins, Kendon remains on the adventurers' side. If Benwick wins, Kendon turns on the characters.

If Kendon turns on the characters, who then proceed to kill Benwick, then Kendon either flees or attempts to finish off Drysdale. If he goes after Drysdale, have him do it in a way that gives the players time to react and stop him.

Lord Drysdale

The lord is unconscious near Benwick, as shown on the map. If he takes two hits during the fight, he dies. The first time he is hit, be sure to describe his worsening condition. Even if Drysdale is healed, he doesn't wake up because he is poisoned.

Features of the Area

Illumination: Bright light.

Ceiling: The vaulted ceiling is 20 feet high.

Braziers: A brazier can be knocked over to attack an enemy.

Fire Brazier Single-Use Terrain

The burning fuel gushes forth, igniting all it touches.

Minor Action

Requirement: You must be adjacent to the brazier.

Effect: One creature of your choice that is adjacent to the brazier takes ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).

Fireplace: Fireplaces are blocking terrain. A creature forced into a fireplace square stops moving and takes 5 fire damage.

Furniture: These squares are difficult terrain.

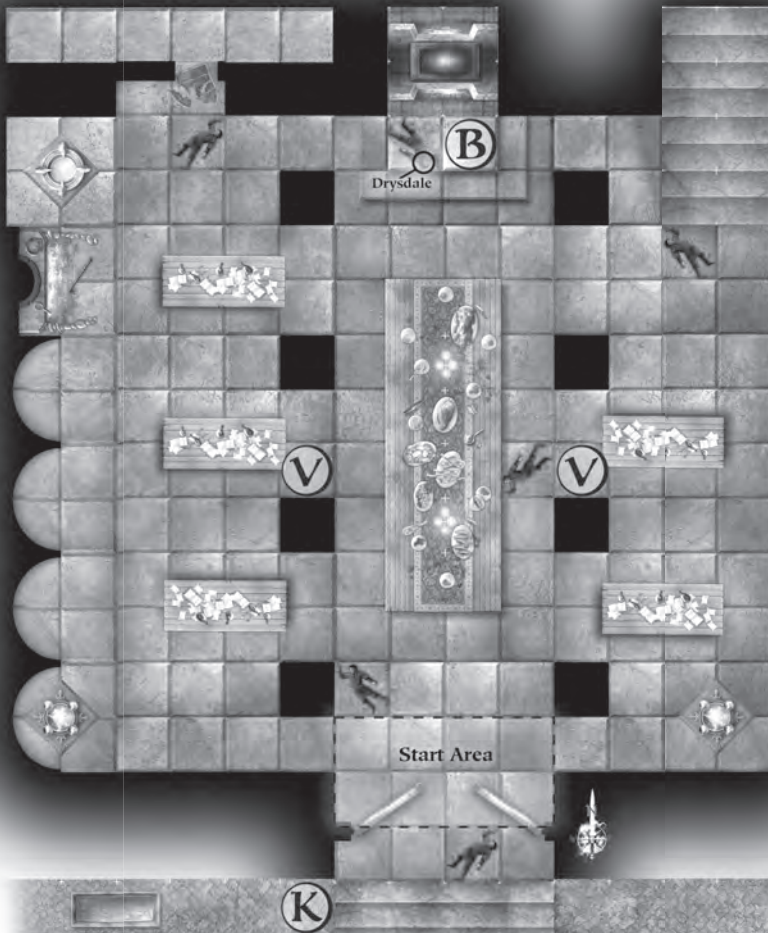
Pillars: The pillars are blocking terrain.

Stairs: The stairway is difficult terrain to ascend (normal terrain otherwise). It leads to the keep's upper chambers.

Tables: Moving onto a table is difficult terrain.

Conclusion

See "Ending the Adventure," page 8.



Benwick, Zehir's Zealot (B)		Level 6 Elite Controller
Medium natural humanoid, human		XP 500
HP 140; Bloodied 70		Initiative +6
AC 20, Fortitude 17, Reflex 18, Will 19		Perception +11
Speed 7		
Saving Throws +2; Action Points 1		
STANDARD ACTIONS		
⊕ Snake Staff (poison, weapon) ♦ At-Will		
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +11 vs. AC		
Hit: 1d8 + 4 damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).		
⊕ Serpent's Eyes (psychic) ♦ At-Will		
Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +10 vs. Will		
Hit: 2d6 + 6 psychic damage, and the target grants combat advantage until the end of Benwick's next turn.		
⚡ Sidewind ♦ At-Will		
Effect: Benwick makes a basic attack, shifts up to 2 squares, and then makes another basic attack against a different target.		
⚡ Biting Coils (poison) ♦ Recharge ☞ ☞		
Attack: Close blast 5 (enemies in the blast); +10 vs. Reflex		
Hit: 1d10 + 4 poison damage, and the target is slowed and takes ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends both).		
☞ Snake Pellets ♦ Recharge when first bloodied		
Effect: Area burst 1 within 5. Four spitting cobras appear in unoccupied squares within the burst.		
Skills Arcana +9, Bluff +12, Insight +11, Stealth +11		
Str 12 (+4)	Dex 16 (+6)	Wis 16 (+6)
Con 14 (+5)	Int 12 (+4)	Cha 19 (+7)
Alignment evil		Languages Common, Draconic
Equipment staff, hooded robe, 8 snake pellets		

2 Deathrattle Vipers (V)		Level 5 Brute
Medium natural beast (reptile)		XP 200 each
HP 75; Bloodied 37		Initiative +6
AC 17, Fortitude 16, Reflex 18, Will 16		Perception +7
Speed 4, climb 4		Low-light vision
TRAITS		
☞ Death Rattle (fear) ♦ Aura 2		
Enemies take a -2 penalty to all defenses while in the aura.		
Standard Actions		
⊕ Bite (poison) ♦ At-Will		
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +10 vs. AC		
Hit: 2d6 + 4 damage, and the viper makes a secondary attack against the target.		
Secondary Attack: Melee 1; +8 vs. Fortitude		
Hit: 1d6 + 2 poison damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).		
Str 12 (+3)	Dex 19 (+6)	Wis 10 (+2)
Con 15 (+4)	Int 2 (-2)	Cha 14 (+4)
Alignment unaligned		Languages -

4+ Spitting Cobras		Level 5 Minion Soldier
Small natural beast (reptile)		XP 50 each
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.		Initiative +8
AC 21, Fortitude 17, Reflex 18, Will 17		Perception +4
Speed 6, climb 6		Low-light vision
STANDARD ACTIONS		
⊕ Bite (poison) ♦ At-Will		
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +10 vs. AC		
Hit: 6 poison damage, and the cobra marks the target until the end of the cobra's next turn.		
⊕ Blinding Spittle (poison) ♦ Recharge ☞ ☞ ☞		
Attack: Ranged 5 (one creature); +8 vs. Reflex		
Hit: 6 poison damage, and the target is blinded (save ends).		
Str 7 (+0)	Dex 18 (+6)	Wis 15 (+4)
Con 15 (+4)	Int 1 (-3)	Cha 10 (+2)
Alignment unaligned		Languages -

Keep Guard (G1) Level 3 Minion

Medium natural humanoid, human

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

AC 17, Fortitude 16, Reflex 15, Will 14

Speed 6

STANDARD ACTIONS⊕ **Longsword (weapon) ♦ At-Will**

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC

Hit: 5 damage.

⊗ **Shortbow (weapon) ♦ At-Will**

Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +8 vs. AC

Hit: 4 damage.

Str 16 (+4) Dex 12 (+2) Wis 11 (+1)

Con 14 (+3) Int 10 (+1) Cha 10 (+1)

Equipment chainmail, longsword, crossbow, 20 bolts

Keep Guard (G2) Level 3 Minion

Medium natural humanoid, human

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

AC 17, Fortitude 16, Reflex 15, Will 14

Speed 6

STANDARD ACTIONS⊕ **Longsword (weapon) ♦ At-Will**

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC

Hit: 5 damage.

⊗ **Shortbow (weapon) ♦ At-Will**

Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +8 vs. AC

Hit: 4 damage.

Str 16 (+4) Dex 12 (+2) Wis 11 (+1)

Con 14 (+3) Int 10 (+1) Cha 10 (+1)

Equipment chainmail, longsword, crossbow, 20 bolts

Keep Guard (G3) Level 3 Minion

Medium natural humanoid, human

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

AC 17, Fortitude 16, Reflex 15, Will 14

Speed 6

STANDARD ACTIONS⊕ **Longsword (weapon) ♦ At-Will**

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC

Hit: 5 damage.

⊗ **Shortbow (weapon) ♦ At-Will**

Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +8 vs. AC

Hit: 4 damage.

Str 16 (+4) Dex 12 (+2) Wis 11 (+1)

Con 14 (+3) Int 10 (+1) Cha 10 (+1)

Equipment chainmail, longsword, crossbow, 20 bolts

Keep Guard (G4) Level 3 Minion

Medium natural humanoid, human

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

AC 17, Fortitude 16, Reflex 15, Will 14

Speed 6

STANDARD ACTIONS⊕ **Longsword (weapon) ♦ At-Will**

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC

Hit: 5 damage.

⊗ **Shortbow (weapon) ♦ At-Will**

Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +8 vs. AC

Hit: 4 damage.

Str 16 (+4) Dex 12 (+2) Wis 11 (+1)

Con 14 (+3) Int 10 (+1) Cha 10 (+1)

Equipment chainmail, longsword, crossbow, 20 bolts

Keep Guard (G5) Level 3 Minion

Medium natural humanoid, human

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

AC 17, Fortitude 16, Reflex 15, Will 14

Speed 6

STANDARD ACTIONS⊕ **Longsword (weapon) ♦ At-Will**

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC

Hit: 5 damage.

⊗ **Shortbow (weapon) ♦ At-Will**

Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +8 vs. AC

Hit: 4 damage.

Str 16 (+4) Dex 12 (+2) Wis 11 (+1)

Con 14 (+3) Int 10 (+1) Cha 10 (+1)

Equipment chainmail, longsword, crossbow, 20 bolts

Keep Guard (G6) Level 3 Minion

Medium natural humanoid, human

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

AC 17, Fortitude 16, Reflex 15, Will 14

Speed 6

STANDARD ACTIONS⊕ **Longsword (weapon) ♦ At-Will**

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC

Hit: 5 damage.

⊗ **Shortbow (weapon) ♦ At-Will**

Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +8 vs. AC

Hit: 4 damage.

Str 16 (+4) Dex 12 (+2) Wis 11 (+1)

Con 14 (+3) Int 10 (+1) Cha 10 (+1)

Equipment chainmail, longsword, crossbow, 20 bolts

Chendera, Chapel Priestess **Level 3 Leader**

Medium natural humanoid, half-elf

HP 35; Bloodied 17; Healing Surges 1

AC 16, Fortitude 14, Reflex 15, Will 16

Speed 6

STANDARD ACTIONS

⊕ Sacred Flame (radiant) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Ranged 5 (one creature); +6 vs. Reflex

Hit: 11 radiant damage, and one ally Chendera can see gains 4 temporary hit points or can make a saving throw.

↖ Avandra's Eyes (healing) ♦ Encounter

Attack: Close burst 5 (one enemy in burst); +6 vs. Will

Hit: 13 damage.

Effect: Chendera or one ally in the burst can spend a healing surge and regain 4 extra hit points.

Skills Heal +8

Str 12 (+2)

Dex 10 (+1)

Wis 14 (+3)

Con 11 (+1)

Int 14 (+3)

Cha 17 (+4)

Equipment leather armor, holy symbol

Ferdinand Ronnik**Level 4 Striker**

Medium natural humanoid, human

XP Cost 25 per PC

HP 41; Bloodied 20; Healing Surges 1

AC 18, Fortitude 15, Reflex 17, Will 16

Speed 6

STANDARD ACTIONS

⊕ Short Sword (weapon) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +9 vs. AC

Hit: 11 damage, or 13 damage if Ronnik has combat advantage against the target.

↓ Sly Switch (weapon) ♦ Encounter

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +9 vs. AC

Hit: 13 damage.

Effect: Ronnik shifts up to 3 squares, and one ally adjacent to the target can shift up to 3 squares.

Str 11 (+2)

Dex 18 (+6)

Wis 9 (+1)

Con 14 (+4)

Int 12 (+3)

Cha 16 (+5)

Equipment leather armor, short sword

Kendon Longstrider, Bailiff **Level 4 Defender**

Medium natural humanoid, human

HP 38; Bloodied 19; Healing Surges 1

AC 20, Fortitude 17, Reflex 15, Will 16

Speed 5

STANDARD ACTIONS

⊕ Greatsword (weapon) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +9 vs. AC

Hit: 1d10 + 7 damage.

↖ Whirling Blade (weapon) ♦ Encounter

Attack: Close burst 1 (enemies in the burst); +9 vs. AC

Hit: 9 damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).

Str 17 (+5)

Dex 15 (+4)

Wis 13 (+3)

Con 14 (+4)

Int 12 (+3)

Cha 11 (+2)

Equipment plate armor, greatsword

Moxulhar, Copper Wyrmling**Level 4 Striker**

Medium natural magical beast, dragon

HP 88; Bloodied 44 (flees when bloodied); Healing Surges 1

AC 18, Fortitude 16, Reflex 17, Will 15

Speed 8, fly 10 (hover)

Resist 5 acid

STANDARD ACTIONS

⊕ Bite ♦ At-Will

Effect: The dragon shifts up to 2 squares before or after the attack.

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC

Hit: 13 acid damage.

↖ Breath Weapon (acid) ♦ Encounter

Attack: Close blast 4 (creatures in blast); +7 vs. Reflex

Hit: 5 acid damage, and the target is slowed and takes ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends both).

Str 17 (+5)

Dex 12 (+3)

Wis 12 (+3)

Con 16 (+5)

Int 10 (+2)

Cha 14 (+4)



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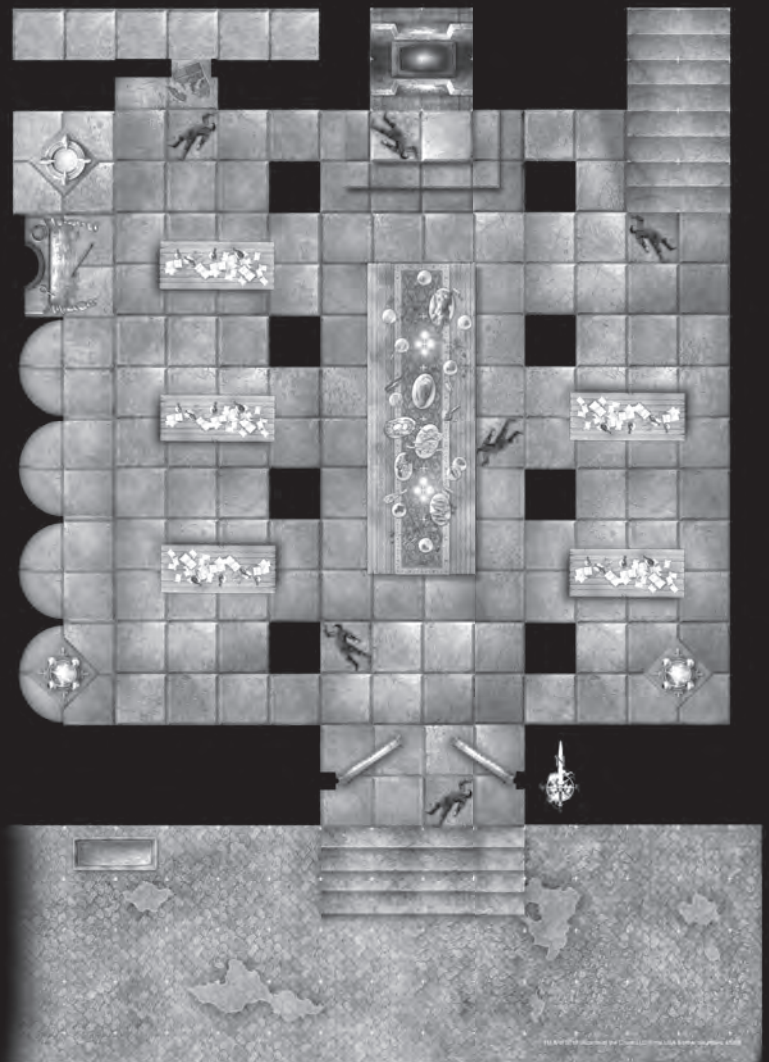
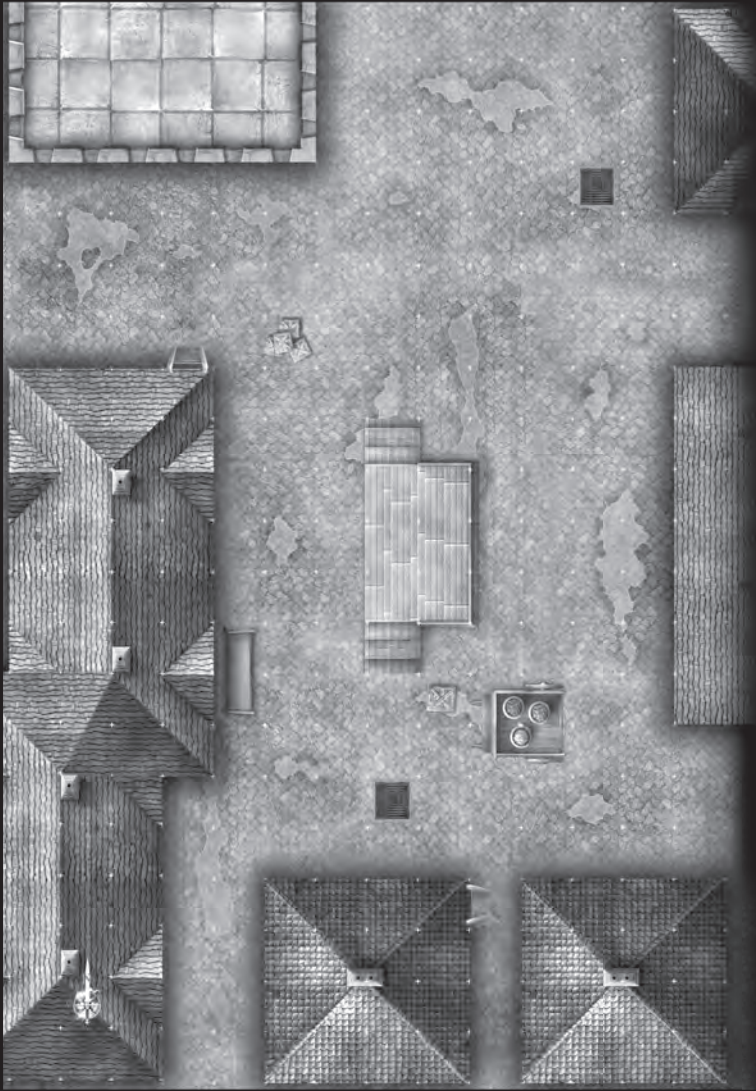


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**DUNGEONS
& DRAGONS**

NEVER SPLIT THE PARTY

ENCOUNTER 5-19:
YULBRAXIS



ENCOUNTER 5-20:
BENWICK'S STAND







DUNGEONS & DRAGONS
ENCOUNTERS™

FACE THE SERPENTINE SIEGE

The Keep on the Borderlands is assaulted by Benwick and his scaly forces, as you rally your own allies and prepare yourself for battle. Can you turn the tide and defeat Benwick and his alliance of evil before Restwall Keep is laid to waste?

Keep on the Borderlands: A Season of Serpents (Chapter 5) is designed for five characters of 3rd level and is the fall and winter 2010-11 season of the D&D Encounters™ official play program. This DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® adventure includes a full-color battle map, ready-to-play encounters, and DM information on the D&D Encounters official play program.

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DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Fantasy Roleplaying Game

Heroes of the Fallen Lands™

Heroes of the Forgotten Kingdoms™

Rules Compendium™

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ABILITIES AND SKILLS

Strength

Strength measures your physical power.

MODIFIER _____

CHECK _____

Athletics

 Trained

MISC. _____

CHECK _____

Constitution

Constitution represents health, stamina, and vital force.

MODIFIER _____

CHECK _____

Endurance

 Trained

MISC. _____

CHECK _____

Dexterity

Dexterity measures coordination, agility, and balance.

MODIFIER _____

CHECK _____

Acrobatics

 Trained

MISC. _____

CHECK _____

Stealth

 Trained

MISC. _____

CHECK _____

Thievery

 Trained

MISC. _____

CHECK _____

Intelligence

Intelligence describes how well you learn and reason.

MODIFIER _____

CHECK _____

Arcana

 Trained

MISC. _____

CHECK _____

History

 Trained

MISC. _____

CHECK _____

Religion

 Trained

MISC. _____

CHECK _____

Wisdom

Wisdom measures common sense, self-discipline, and empathy.

MODIFIER _____

CHECK _____

Dungeoneering

 Trained

MISC. _____

CHECK _____

Heal

 Trained

MISC. _____

CHECK _____

Insight

 Trained

MISC. _____

CHECK _____

Nature

 Trained

MISC. _____

CHECK _____

Perception

 Trained

MISC. _____

CHECK _____

Charisma

Charisma measures force of personality and leadership.

MODIFIER _____

CHECK _____

Bluff

 Trained

MISC. _____

CHECK _____

Diplomacy

 Trained

MISC. _____

CHECK _____

Intimidate

 Trained

MISC. _____

CHECK _____

Streetwise

 Trained

MISC. _____

CHECK _____

POWERS AND FEATS

WEALTH

COMBAT STATISTICS

Initiative

Roll initiative to determine the turn order in combat.

Speed

Your speed is the number of squares you can move with a move action.

DEFENSES

Armor Class (AC)

AC measures how hard it is to physically land an attack on you.

Fortitude

Fortitude measures your toughness and resilience.

Reflex

Reflex measures your ability to deflect or dodge attacks.

Will

Will measures your strength of will, self-discipline, and devotion.

Attack Bonus

WEAPON / POWER _____

DAMAGE _____

Attack Bonus

WEAPON / POWER _____

DAMAGE _____

When you attack, roll a d20 and add your attack bonus. Compare the result to the monster's defense to see if you hit. If you do hit, roll damage.

Hit Points

Bloodied

Your hit points measure the damage you can take before falling unconscious. Your bloodied value is half of your hit points (rounded down).

Healing Surge Value

Surges Per Day

When you spend a healing surge, you regain hit points equal to your healing surge value, which is one-quarter of your hit points (rounded down).

CURRENT HIT POINTS

Temporary Hit Points _____

Surges Used _____

EQUIPMENT AND MAGIC ITEMS

ACTIONS IN COMBAT

On your turn in combat, you can take three actions:

- ◆ A standard action, which is usually an attack
- ◆ A move action, which involves movement
- ◆ A minor action, which is simple and quick

You can give up an action to take another action from lower on the list, so you can take a move or a minor action instead of a standard action or a minor action instead of a move action.

Class: _____ Level: _____

Race: _____ Gender: _____

Alignment: _____

Languages: _____

CHARACTER NOTES

Use this space however you like: to record what happens on your adventures, track quests, describe your background and goals, note the names of the other characters in your party, or draw a picture of your character.

EXPERIENCE POINTS (XP)

XP for next level: _____

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS ENCOUNTERS™

KEEP ON THE BORDERLANDS PLAY TRACKER: CHAPTER 1

Character Creation: Create a 1st-level *D&D Essentials* character using *Heroes of the Fallen Lands* or the *Dungeons & Dragons Fantasy Roleplaying Game* boxed set. Follow the steps presented there for character creation. Alternatively, you can use a provided pre-generated character.

CHARACTER NAME:	PLAYER NAME:
------------------------	---------------------

SESSION 1 PLAY	
Starting Gold ____ Gold Gained ____ Total Gold ____ Starting Renown ____ Renown Gained ____ Total Renown ____	Starting XP ____ XP Gained ____ Total XP ____ DM Name _____
Notes (Including Treasure Gained) _____ _____	

SESSION 2 PLAY	
Starting Gold ____ Gold Gained ____ Total Gold ____ Starting Renown ____ Renown Gained ____ Total Renown ____	Starting XP ____ XP Gained ____ Total XP ____ DM Name _____
Notes (Including Treasure Gained) _____ _____	

SESSION 3 PLAY	
Starting Gold ____ Gold Gained ____ Total Gold ____ Starting Renown ____ Renown Gained ____ Total Renown ____	Starting XP ____ XP Gained ____ Total XP ____ DM Name _____
Notes (Including Treasure Gained) _____ _____	

SESSION 4 PLAY	
Starting Gold ____ Gold Gained ____ Total Gold ____ Starting Renown ____ Renown Gained ____ Total Renown ____	Starting XP ____ XP Gained ____ Total XP ____ DM Name _____
Notes (Including Treasure Gained) _____ _____	

END OF THIS CHAPTER	
Total Gold ____ Total XP ____ Total Renown ____	
Other Notes _____ _____	

RENOWN POINT AWARDS

Many accomplishments are awarded only once per season. Check off those accomplishments as they are earned below. The amount of points earned for each accomplishment is available on the Renown Point Tracker and will be awarded by your DM. When you earn 20 Renown Points, you receive the **Delver Reward**. At 100 Renown Points, you qualify for the **Adventurer Reward**. Check with your organizer or DM for more details.

- | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Complete an Encounter 1/Session | Use the Reckless Breakage Rule | <input type="checkbox"/> | Revive a Dying Adventurer Ally | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Hit a Milestone 2/Chapter | Survive 12+ Sessions without Dying | <input type="checkbox"/> | Hit for 15+ Damage vs. 1 Enemy | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Moment of Greatness 1/Chapter | Take 50 Enemy Damage in 1 Session | <input type="checkbox"/> | Kill 3 Minions in 1 Attack | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Complete All Quests | <input type="checkbox"/> | Create a <i>D&D Essentials</i> Character | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | | Use the Character Builder | <input type="checkbox"/> |

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

ENCOUNTERS™

KEEP ON THE BORDERLANDS PLAY TRACKER: CHAPTER 2

Character Creation: Create a 1st-level *D&D Essentials* character using *Heroes of the Fallen Lands* or the *Dungeons & Dragons Fantasy Roleplaying Game* boxed set. Follow the steps presented there for character creation. Alternatively, you can use a provided pre-generated character.

CHARACTER NAME:	PLAYER NAME:
------------------------	---------------------

SESSION 5 PLAY	
Starting Gold ____ Gold Gained ____ Total Gold ____	Starting Renown ____ Renown Gained ____ Total Renown ____
Starting XP ____ XP Gained ____ Total XP ____	DM Name _____
Notes (Including Treasure Gained) _____	

SESSION 6 PLAY	
Starting Gold ____ Gold Gained ____ Total Gold ____	Starting Renown ____ Renown Gained ____ Total Renown ____
Starting XP ____ XP Gained ____ Total XP ____	DM Name _____
Notes (Including Treasure Gained) _____	

SESSION 7 PLAY	
Starting Gold ____ Gold Gained ____ Total Gold ____	Starting Renown ____ Renown Gained ____ Total Renown ____
Starting XP ____ XP Gained ____ Total XP ____	DM Name _____
Notes (Including Treasure Gained) _____	

SESSION 8 PLAY	
Starting Gold ____ Gold Gained ____ Total Gold ____	Starting Renown ____ Renown Gained ____ Total Renown ____
Starting XP ____ XP Gained ____ Total XP ____	DM Name _____
Notes (Including Treasure Gained) _____	

END OF THIS CHAPTER (LEVEL TO 2)	
Total Gold ____ Total XP ____ Total Renown ____	
Other Notes _____	

RENOWN POINT AWARDS

Many accomplishments are awarded only once per season. Check off those accomplishments as they are earned below. The amount of points earned for each accomplishment is available on the Renown Point Tracker and will be awarded by your DM. When you earn 20 Renown Points, you receive the **Delver Reward**. At 100 Renown Points, you qualify for the **Adventurer Reward**. Check with your organizer or DM for more details.

- | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Complete an Encounter 1/Session | Use the Reckless Breakage Rule | <input type="checkbox"/> | Revive a Dying Adventurer Ally | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Hit a Milestone 2/Chapter | Survive 12+ Sessions without Dying | <input type="checkbox"/> | Hit for 15+ Damage vs. 1 Enemy | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Moment of Greatness 1/Chapter | Take 50 Enemy Damage in 1 Session | <input type="checkbox"/> | Kill 3 Minions in 1 Attack | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Complete All Quests | <input type="checkbox"/> | Create a <i>D&D Essentials</i> Character | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | | Use the Character Builder | <input type="checkbox"/> |

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

ENCOUNTERS™

KEEP ON THE BORDERLANDS PLAY TRACKER: CHAPTER 3

Character Creation: Create a 2nd-level D&D Essentials character using *Heroes of the Fallen Lands*, *Heroes of the Forgotten Kingdoms*, or the *Dungeons & Dragons Fantasy Roleplaying Game* boxed set. Follow the steps presented there for character creation. Alternatively, you can use a provided pre-generated character; you will need to level up the character to 2nd level.

CHARACTER NAME:	PLAYER NAME:
------------------------	---------------------

SESSION 9 PLAY	
Starting Gold ____ Gold Gained ____ Total Gold ____	Starting Renown ____ Renown Gained ____ Total Renown ____
Starting XP ____ XP Gained ____ Total XP ____	DM Name _____
Notes (Including Treasure Gained) _____	

SESSION 10 PLAY	
Starting Gold ____ Gold Gained ____ Total Gold ____	Starting Renown ____ Renown Gained ____ Total Renown ____
Starting XP ____ XP Gained ____ Total XP ____	DM Name _____
Notes (Including Treasure Gained) _____	

SESSION 11 PLAY	
Starting Gold ____ Gold Gained ____ Total Gold ____	Starting Renown ____ Renown Gained ____ Total Renown ____
Starting XP ____ XP Gained ____ Total XP ____	DM Name _____
Notes (Including Treasure Gained) _____	

SESSION 12 PLAY	
Starting Gold ____ Gold Gained ____ Total Gold ____	Starting Renown ____ Renown Gained ____ Total Renown ____
Starting XP ____ XP Gained ____ Total XP ____	DM Name _____
Notes (Including Treasure Gained) _____	

END OF THIS CHAPTER	
Total Gold ____ Total XP ____ Total Renown ____	
Other Notes _____	

RENOWN POINT AWARDS

Many accomplishments are awarded only once per season. Check off those accomplishments as they are earned below. The amount of points earned for each accomplishment is available on the Renown Point Tracker and will be awarded by your DM. When you earn 20 Renown Points, you receive the **Delver Reward**. At 100 Renown Points, you qualify for the **Adventurer Reward**. Check with your organizer or DM for more details.

- | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Complete an Encounter 1/Session | Use the Reckless Breakage Rule | <input type="checkbox"/> | Revive a Dying Adventurer Ally | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Hit a Milestone 2/Chapter | Survive 12+ Sessions without Dying | <input type="checkbox"/> | Hit for 15+ Damage vs. 1 Enemy | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Moment of Greatness 1/Chapter | Take 50 Enemy Damage in 1 Session | <input type="checkbox"/> | Kill 3 Minions in 1 Attack | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Complete All Quests | <input type="checkbox"/> | Create a D&D Essentials Character | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | | Use the Character Builder | <input type="checkbox"/> |

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

ENCOUNTERS™

KEEP ON THE BORDERLANDS PLAY TRACKER: CHAPTER 4

Character Creation: Create a 2nd-level D&D Essentials character using *Heroes of the Fallen Lands*, *Heroes of the Forgotten Kingdoms*, or the *Dungeons & Dragons Fantasy Roleplaying Game* boxed set. Follow the steps presented there for character creation. Alternatively, you can use a provided pre-generated character; you will need to level up the character to 2nd level.

CHARACTER NAME:	PLAYER NAME:
------------------------	---------------------

SESSION 13 PLAY
Starting Gold ____ Gold Gained ____ Total Gold ____ Starting Renown ____ Renown Gained ____ Total Renown ____
Starting XP ____ XP Gained ____ Total XP ____ DM Name _____
Notes (Including Treasure Gained) _____

SESSION 14 PLAY
Starting Gold ____ Gold Gained ____ Total Gold ____ Starting Renown ____ Renown Gained ____ Total Renown ____
Starting XP ____ XP Gained ____ Total XP ____ DM Name _____
Notes (Including Treasure Gained) _____

SESSION 15 PLAY
Starting Gold ____ Gold Gained ____ Total Gold ____ Starting Renown ____ Renown Gained ____ Total Renown ____
Starting XP ____ XP Gained ____ Total XP ____ DM Name _____
Notes (Including Treasure Gained) _____

SESSION 16 PLAY
Starting Gold ____ Gold Gained ____ Total Gold ____ Starting Renown ____ Renown Gained ____ Total Renown ____
Starting XP ____ XP Gained ____ Total XP ____ DM Name _____
Notes (Including Treasure Gained) _____

END OF THIS CHAPTER (LEVEL TO 3)
Total Gold ____ Total XP ____ Total Renown ____
Other Notes _____

RENOWN POINT AWARDS

Many accomplishments are awarded only once per season. Check off those accomplishments as they are earned below. The amount of points earned for each accomplishment is available on the Renown Point Tracker and will be awarded by your DM. When you earn 20 Renown Points, you receive the **Delver Reward**. At 100 Renown Points, you qualify for the **Adventurer Reward**. Check with your organizer or DM for more details.

- | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Complete an Encounter 1/Session | Use the Reckless Breakage Rule | <input type="checkbox"/> | Revive a Dying Adventurer Ally | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Hit a Milestone 2/Chapter | Survive 12+ Sessions without Dying | <input type="checkbox"/> | Hit for 15+ Damage vs. 1 Enemy | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Moment of Greatness 1/Chapter | Take 50 Enemy Damage in 1 Session | <input type="checkbox"/> | Kill 3 Minions in 1 Attack | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Complete All Quests | <input type="checkbox"/> | Create a D&D Essentials Character | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | | Use the Character Builder | <input type="checkbox"/> |

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

ENCOUNTERS™

KEEP ON THE BORDERLANDS PLAY TRACKER: CHAPTER 5

Character Creation: Create a 3rd-level *D&D Essentials* character using *Heroes of the Fallen Lands* or *Heroes of the Forgotten Kingdoms*. Follow the steps presented there for character creation.

Alternatively, you can use a provided pre-generated character; you will need to level up the character to 3rd level.

CHARACTER NAME:	PLAYER NAME:
------------------------	---------------------

SESSION 17 PLAY	
Starting Gold ____ Gold Gained ____ Total Gold ____ Starting Renown ____ Renown Gained ____ Total Renown ____	Starting XP ____ XP Gained ____ Total XP ____ DM Name _____
Notes (Including Treasure Gained) _____	

SESSION 18 PLAY	
Starting Gold ____ Gold Gained ____ Total Gold ____ Starting Renown ____ Renown Gained ____ Total Renown ____	Starting XP ____ XP Gained ____ Total XP ____ DM Name _____
Notes (Including Treasure Gained) _____	

SESSION 19 PLAY	
Starting Gold ____ Gold Gained ____ Total Gold ____ Starting Renown ____ Renown Gained ____ Total Renown ____	Starting XP ____ XP Gained ____ Total XP ____ DM Name _____
Notes (Including Treasure Gained) _____	

SESSION 20 PLAY	
Starting Gold ____ Gold Gained ____ Total Gold ____ Starting Renown ____ Renown Gained ____ Total Renown ____	Starting XP ____ XP Gained ____ Total XP ____ DM Name _____
Notes (Including Treasure Gained) _____	

END OF THIS SEASON	
Total Gold ____ Total XP ____ Total Renown ____	
Other Notes _____	

RENOWN POINT AWARDS

Many accomplishments are awarded only once per season. Check off those accomplishments as they are earned below. The amount of points earned for each accomplishment is available on the Renown Point Tracker and will be awarded by your DM. When you earn 20 Renown Points, you receive the **Delver Reward**. At 100 Renown Points, you qualify for the **Adventurer Reward**. Check with your organizer or DM for more details.

- | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| <p>Complete an Encounter 1/Session</p> <p>Hit a Milestone 2/Chapter</p> <p>Moment of Greatness 1/Chapter</p> | <p>Use the Reckless Breakage Rule</p> <p>Survive 12+ Sessions without Dying</p> <p>Take 50 Enemy Damage in 1 Session</p> <p>Complete All Quests</p> | <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Revive a Dying Adventurer Ally</td><td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Hit for 15+ Damage vs. 1 Enemy</td><td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Kill 3 Minions in 1 Attack</td><td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Create a <i>D&D Essentials</i> Character</td><td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Use the Character Builder</td><td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> </table> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Revive a Dying Adventurer Ally | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Hit for 15+ Damage vs. 1 Enemy | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Kill 3 Minions in 1 Attack | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Create a <i>D&D Essentials</i> Character | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Use the Character Builder | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Revive a Dying Adventurer Ally | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Hit for 15+ Damage vs. 1 Enemy | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Kill 3 Minions in 1 Attack | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Create a <i>D&D Essentials</i> Character | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Use the Character Builder | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Event Name: _____ Event Code: _____
(This number was given to the organizer when the event was scheduled)

Adventure Title: _____ Session Number: _____
(For administrative use only)

Date of Play: / /
Month Day Year

Start Time: :
Hour Minute

Give hour in military time standard (p.m. hours = hour +12). Don't record the exact minute the adventure played. Instead list the closest 30-minute interval the game was scheduled to start at (30 or 00).

A legal table has no less than four players, and no more than six players.

Player Name	RPGA/DCI Number
1	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
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DUNGEON MASTER

DM Name: _____

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Event Name: _____ Event Code: _____
(This number was given to the organizer when the event was scheduled)

Adventure Title: _____ Session Number: _____
(For administrative use only)

Date of Play: / /
Month Day Year

Start Time: :
Hour Minute

Give hour in military time standard (p.m. hours = hour +12). Don't record the exact minute the adventure played. Instead list the closest 30-minute interval the game was scheduled to start at (30 or 00).

A legal table has no less than four players, and no more than six players.

Player Name	RPGA/DCI Number
1	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
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6	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>

DUNGEON MASTER

DM Name: _____

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MERRIC

MALE HALFLING ROGUE (THIEF) / LEVEL 1 / GOOD

"Armor and death have something in common. They are both for the slow."

ABILITY SCORES	MOD	DEFENSES	INITIATIVE	TRAINED SKILLS
STR 11	+0	AC 16	+8	ACROBATICS +11
CON 14	+2	FORT 12	SPEED (in squares) 6	ATHLETICS +5
DEX 18	+4	REF 16	VISION normal	BLUFF +8
INT 10	+0	WILL 13	LANGUAGES Common, Elven	PERCEPTION +5
WIS 10	+0		SENSES Passive Insight 10, Passive Perception 15	STEALTH +9
CHA 16	+3			THIEVERY +11

HIT POINTS (Bloodied 13)	26	ACTION POINT	SECOND WIND
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HEALING SURGES	value 6								
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EQUIPMENT
 6 daggers adventurer's kit
 leather armor 34 gold pieces
 thieves' tools

OTHER EQUIPMENT



Melee Basic Attack Standard / Melee Weapon / At-Will

Dagger: Target one creature; +7 vs. AC; 1d4 + 6 damage.

Ranged Basic Attack Standard / Ranged 5/10 / At-Will

Dagger: Target one creature; +7 vs. AC; 1d4 + 6 damage.

Tactical Trick Move / Personal / At-Will

You move up to your speed, and you do not provoke opportunity attacks when leaving squares adjacent to your allies. Until the end of your turn, you have combat advantage against enemies that have at least one of your allies adjacent to them.

Unbalancing Trick Move / Personal / At-Will

You shift up to 2 squares. The next time you hit an enemy with a melee basic attack this turn, you can knock it prone.

Backstab Free / Personal / Encounter

Trigger: You make an attack roll against an enemy within 5 squares of you using a basic attack with a weapon. The enemy must be granting combat advantage to you. **Effect:** You gain a +3 power bonus to the attack roll, and the enemy takes 1d6 extra damage if the attack hits.

Second Chance Immediate Interrupt / Personal / Encounter

Trigger: You are hit by an attack. **Effect:** The attacker must reroll the attack and use the second roll, even if it is lower.

OTHER ABILITIES*

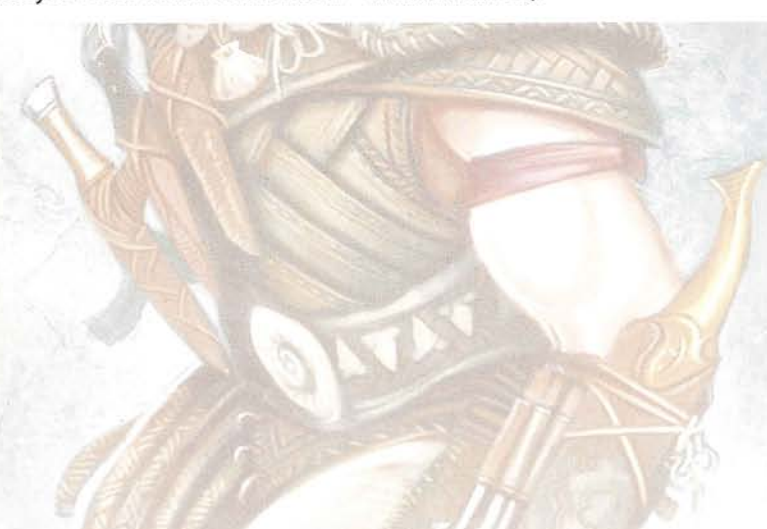
Bold:
+5 racial bonus to saving throws against fear.

Nimble Reaction:
+2 racial bonus to AC against opportunity attacks.

First Strike:
At the start of an encounter, you have combat advantage against any creatures that have not yet acted in that encounter.

Sneak Attack:
When you make an attack with a light blade, a crossbow, a sling, or a shortbow and hit an enemy granting combat advantage to you, that enemy takes 2d6 extra damage. An enemy can take this extra damage from you only once per turn.

* Some character options not present on character sheet for brevity.



QUINN

MALE HUMAN FIGHTER (KNIGHT) / LEVEL 1 / GOOD

"Those I protect will never be harmed by your evil!"

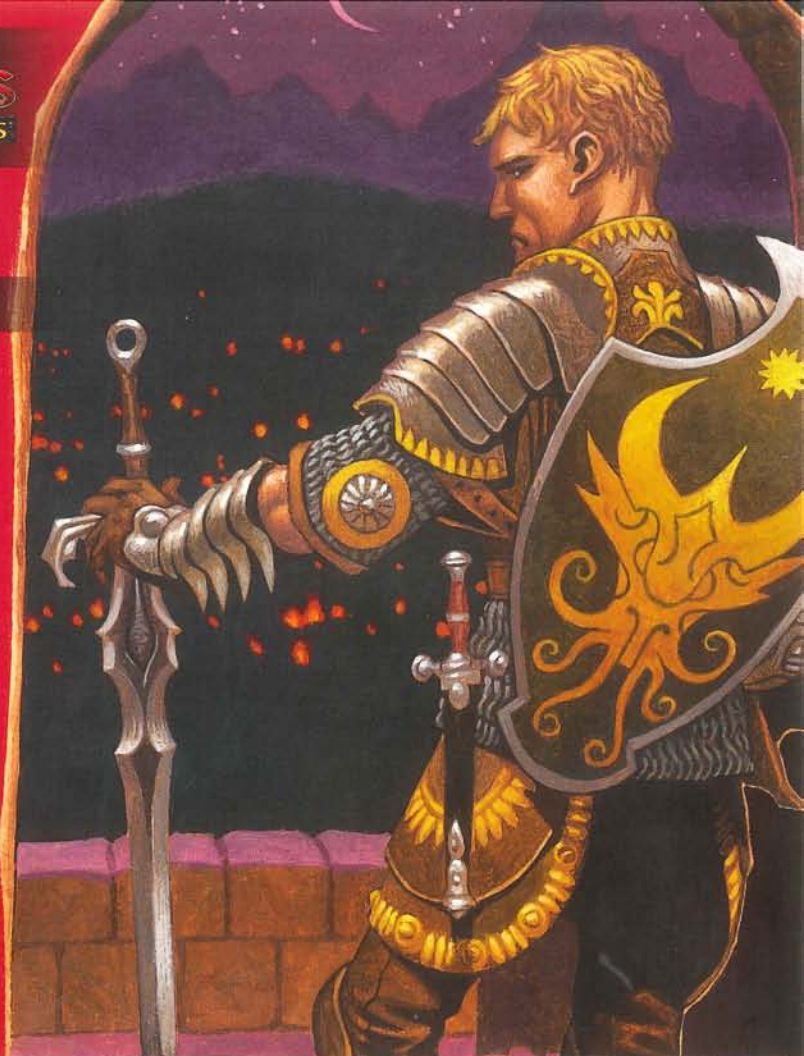
ABILITY SCORES	MOD	DEFENSES	INITIATIVE	TRAINED SKILLS
STR 18	+4	AC 20	+6	ATHLETICS +7
CON 14	+2	FORT 17	SPEED (in squares) 5	DIPLOMACY +6
DEX 14	+2	REF 15	VISION normal	ENDURANCE +5
INT 9	-1	WILL 12	LANGUAGES Common, Dwarven	INTIMIDATE +6
WIS 10	+0		SENSES Passive Insight 10, Passive Perception 10	
CHA 12	+1			

HIT POINTS (Bloodied 17) **34** ACTION POINT SECOND WIND

HEALING SURGES value **8**

EQUIPMENT
 longsword adventurer's kit
 plate armor 10 gold pieces
 heavy shield

OTHER EQUIPMENT



Melee Basic Attack Standard / Melee Weapon / At-Will

Longsword: Target one creature; +8 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage.

Defender Aura Minor / Personal / At-Will

You activate an aura 1 that lasts until you end it as a minor action or until you fall unconscious. While in the aura, any enemy takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls when it makes an attack that doesn't include among its targets either you or an ally of yours who has this aura active. Marked enemies are not subject to this aura.

Battle Guardian Opportunity / Personal / At-Will

Trigger: An enemy subject to your *defender aura* shifts or makes an attack that targets an ally of yours but not you or an ally who has an active *defender aura*.
Effect: You make a melee basic attack against the triggering enemy. If the attack misses, the enemy still takes 4 damage.

Defend the Line Minor / Personal / At-Will

You assume the defend the line stance. Until the stance ends, whenever you hit an enemy with a melee basic attack using a weapon, that enemy is slowed until the end of your next turn.

Hammer Hands Minor / Personal / At-Will

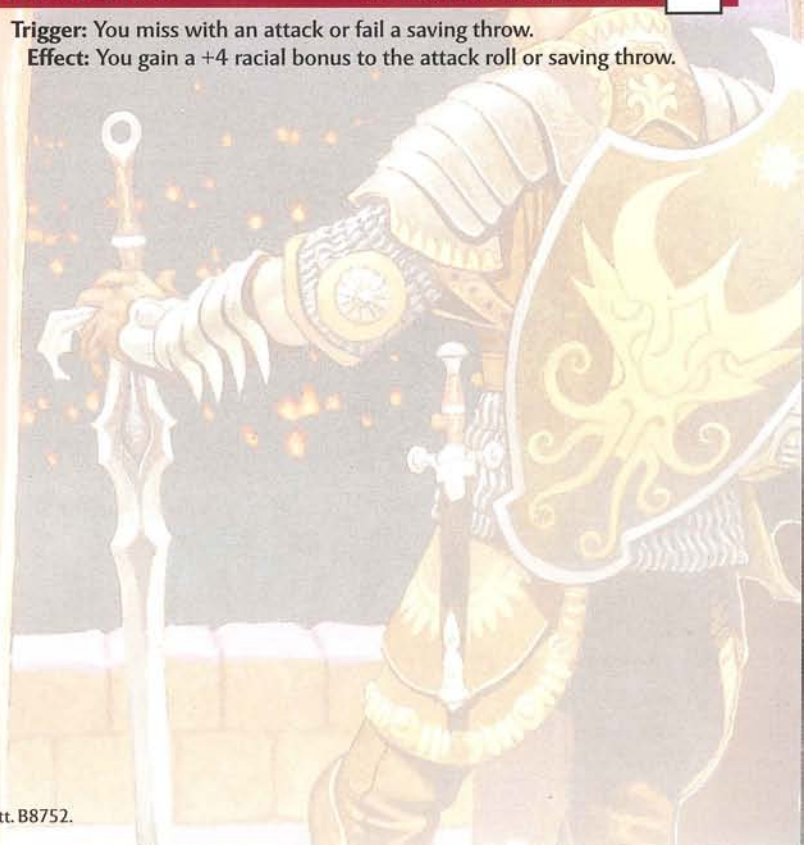
You assume the hammer hands stance. Until the stance ends, whenever you hit an enemy with a melee basic attack using a weapon, you can use a free action to push that enemy 1 square and then shift the same distance to a square adjacent to the enemy.

Power Strike Free / Personal / Encounter

Trigger: You hit an enemy with a melee basic attack using a weapon.
Effect: The enemy takes 1d8 extra damage from the triggering attack.

Heroic Effort No Action / Personal / Encounter

Trigger: You miss with an attack or fail a saving throw.
Effect: You gain a +4 racial bonus to the attack roll or saving throw.



DUNGEONS & DRAGONS ENCOUNTERS

SOLA

FEMALE ELF CLERIC (SUN WARPRIEST) / LEVEL 1 / GOOD

“Light’s blessings upon you!”

ABILITY SCORES	MOD	DEFENSES	INITIATIVE	TRAINED SKILLS
STR 10	+0	AC 18	+1	DIPLOMACY +7
CON 14	+2	FORT 13	SPEED (In squares) 6	HEAL +9
DEX 13	+1	REF 13	VISION low-light	INSIGHT +9
INT 10	+0	WILL 15	LANGUAGES Common, Elven	NATURE +6
WIS 18	+4		SENSES	PERCEPTION +6
CHA 14	+2		Passive Insight 19, Passive Perception 16	RELIGION +5

HIT POINTS (Bloodied 13)	26	ACTION POINT	SECOND WIND
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HEALING SURGES	value 6								
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EQUIPMENT
 mace heavy shield 5 gold pieces
 3 javelins holy symbol
 chainmail adventurer’s kit

OTHER EQUIPMENT



Melee Basic Attack Standard / Melee Weapon / At-Will

Mace: Target one creature; +3 vs. AC; 1d8 damage.

Ranged Basic Attack Standard / Ranged Weapon / At-Will

Javelin: Target one creature; range 10/20; +3 vs. AC; 1d6 + 1 damage.

Blessing of Battle Standard / Melee Weapon / At-Will

Mace: Target one creature; +7 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 radiant damage. **Effect:** You or one ally within 5 squares of you gains resist 2 to all damage until the end of your next turn.

Brand of the Sun Standard / Melee Weapon / At-Will

Mace: Target one creature; +7 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage. **Effect:** You or one ally within 5 squares of you can make a saving throw.

Sun’s Glow Minor / Melee 1 / At-Will

Target one object or unoccupied square. **Effect:** The target sheds bright light that fills its space and squares within 4 squares of it. The light lasts for 1 hour, until you use the power again, or until you end this effect as a free action.

OTHER ABILITIES*

Group Awareness:
 You grant non-elf allies within 5 squares of you a +1 racial bonus to Perception checks.

Wild Step:
 You ignore difficult terrain when you shift.

Sun Domain:
 +2 bonus to death saving throws. While within 5 squares of you, your allies also gain this bonus.

* Some character options not present on character sheet for brevity.

Elven Accuracy Free / Personal / Encounter

Trigger: You make an attack roll and dislike the result. **Effect:** Reroll the attack roll. Use the second roll, even if it’s lower.

Healing Word Minor / Close Burst 5 / Encounter

You or one ally in the burst can spend a healing surge and regain 1d6 additional hit points. In addition you or one ally in the burst regains 2 hit points. **Special:** You can use this power twice per encounter, but only once per round.

Smite Undead Standard / Melee Weapon / Encounter

Mace: Target one undead creature; +7 vs. Will; 2d8 + 4 radiant damage, and you push the target up to 6 squares. The target is immobilized until the end of your next turn. **Channel Divinity:** You can use only one channel divinity power per encounter.

Soothing Light Minor / Close Burst 2 / Encounter

Target you or one ally in burst. **Effect:** The target makes a saving throw with a +2 power bonus. **Channel Divinity:** You can use only one channel divinity power per encounter.

Sun Burst Standard / Melee Weapon / Encounter

Mace: Target one creature; +7 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 radiant damage. **Effect:** You and each ally within 5 squares of you gain 5 temporary hit points and can make a saving throw.

Nimbus of Holy Shielding Standard / Close Burst 1 / Daily

Mace: Target each enemy in burst; +7 vs. Will; 1d8 + 4 radiant damage. **Effect:** Each ally within 2 squares of you gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses. The bonus lasts until the end of the encounter.

HAGEN

MALE HUMAN CLERIC (STORM WARPRIEST) / LEVEL 1 / GOOD

"Kord favors the strong. Kord favors me!"

ABILITY SCORES	MOD	DEFENSES	INITIATIVE	TRAINED SKILLS
STR 12	+1	AC 18	+0	DIPLOMACY +5
CON 16	+3	FORT 15	SPEED (in squares) 5	HEAL +9
DEX 11	+0	REF 13	VISION normal	HISTORY +4
INT 8	-1	WILL 16	LANGUAGES Common, Dwarven	INSIGHT +9
WIS 18	+4		SENSES Passive Insight 19, Passive Perception 14	RELIGION +4
CHA 11	+0			

HIT POINTS (Bloodied 14)	28	ACTION POINT	SECOND WIND
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HEALING SURGES	value 7								
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EQUIPMENT
 mace heavy shield 8 gold pieces
 3 javelins holy symbol
 chainmail adventurer's kit

OTHER EQUIPMENT

Melee Basic Attack Standard / Melee Weapon / At-Will

Mace: Target one creature; +4 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage.

Ranged Basic Attack Standard / Ranged Weapon / At-Will

Javelin: Target one creature; range 10/20; +3 vs. AC; 1d6 + 1 damage.

Blessing of Wrath Standard / Melee Weapon / At-Will

Mace: Target one creature; +7 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage. **Effect:** You or one ally within 5 squares of you gains a +3 power bonus to his or her next damage roll against the target before the end of your next turn.

Storm Hammer Standard / Melee Weapon / At-Will

Mace: Target one creature; +7 vs. Fort; 1d8 + 5 lightning and thunder damage. **Special:** When charging, you can use this power in place of a melee basic attack.

Healing Word Minor / Close Burst 5 / Encounter

You or one ally in the burst can spend a healing surge and regain 1d6 additional hit points. The target also gains a +2 power bonus to the next damage roll he or she makes before the end of his or her next turn.

Smite Undead Standard / Melee Weapon / Encounter

Mace: Target one creature; +7 vs. Will; 2d8 + 5 radiant damage, and you push the target up to 7 squares. The target is immobilized until the end of your next turn. **Channel Divinity:** You can use only one Channel Divinity power per encounter.

Storm Surge Minor / Close Burst 2 / Encounter

You or one ally in the burst deals 4 extra lightning damage with his or her next damage roll with a melee weapon attack. **Channel Divinity:** You can use only one Channel Divinity power per encounter.

Create Water Minor / Melee 1 / Encounter

You cause an empty container, up to 1 gallon, to fill with fresh potable water.

Thundering Steel Standard / Melee Weapon / Encounter

Mace: Target one creature; +7 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 thunder damage. **Effect:** The next time you or an ally hits the target before the start of your next turn, the target takes 3 extra thunder damage.

Heroic Effort No Action / Personal / Encounter

Trigger: You miss with an attack or fail a saving throw. **Effect:** You gain a +4 racial bonus to the attack roll or saving throw.

Lesser Aspect of Wrath Standard / Melee Weapon / Daily

Mace: Target one creature; +7 vs. Will; 1d8 + 5 radiant damage. **Effect:** You gain 10 temporary hit points. Until the end of the encounter, you gain a +1 power bonus to attack rolls, and any enemy that ends its turn adjacent to you takes 3 radiant damage.

OTHER ABILITIES*

Cleric of the Storm: You gain resist 5 lightning and resist 5 thunder.

* Some character options not present on character sheet for brevity.

ELDETH

FEMALE DWARF FIGHTER (SLAYER) / LEVEL 1 / GOOD

"RETURN THEM TO THE EARTH!"

ABILITY SCORES	MOD	DEFENSES	INITIATIVE	TRAINED SKILLS				
STR	18	+4	AC	17	INITIATIVE	+3	ATHLETICS	+9
CON	14	+2	FORT	16	SPEED	(In squares)	DUNGEONEERING	+3
DEX	16	+3	REF	13	5	VISION	ENDURANCE	+9
INT	10	+0	WILL	11	low-light	LANGUAGES	INTIMIDATE	+4
WIS	12	+1			Common, Dwarven	SENSSES		
CHA	8	-1			Passive Insight 11, Passive Perception 11			

HIT POINTS (Bloodied 14)	29	ACTION POINT	SECOND WIND
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HEALING SURGES	value 7																		
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EQUIPMENT
 greataxe adventurer's kit
 2 javelins
 scale armor

OTHER EQUIPMENT



Melee Basic Attack Standard / Melee Weapon / At-Will

Greataxe: Target one creature; +7 vs. AC; 1d12 + 7 damage (1d12 extra damage on a critical hit).

Ranged Basic Attack Standard / Ranged Weapon / At-Will

Javelin: Target one creature; range 10/20; +7 vs. AC; 1d6 + 7 damage.

Poised Assault Minor / Personal / At-Will

You assume the poised assault stance. Until the stance ends, you gain a +1 power bonus to the attack rolls of basic attacks using a weapon.

Berserker's Charge Minor / Personal / At-Will

You assume the berserker's charge stance. Until the stance ends, you gain a +2 power bonus to your speed when charging and a +2 power bonus to the attack rolls of your charge attacks.

Power Strike Free / Personal / Encounter

Trigger: You hit an enemy with a melee basic attack using a weapon.
Effect: The enemy takes 1d12 extra damage from the triggering attack.

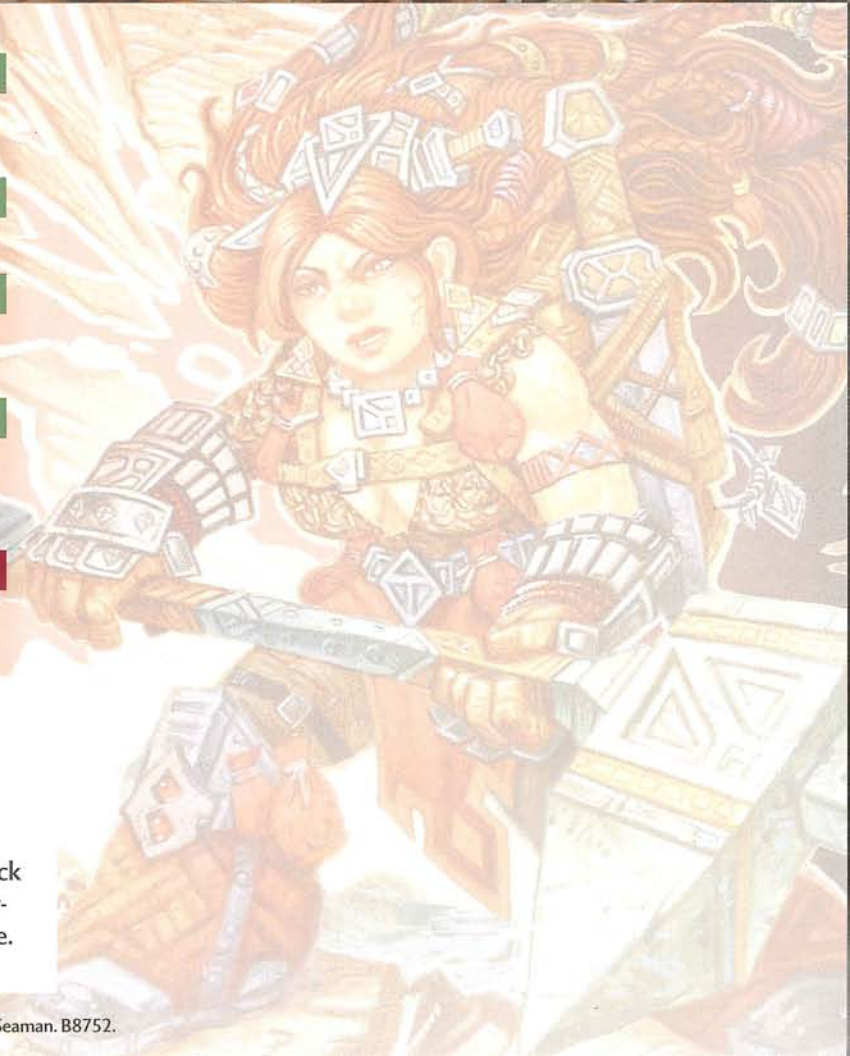
OTHER ABILITIES*

Cast-Iron Stomach:
 You have a +5 racial bonus to saving throws against poison.

Disciple of Stone:
 When you spend a healing surge, you gain 5 temporary hit points.

Stand Your Ground:
 When an effect forces you to move though a push, a pull, or a slide, you can move 1 less square. If an attack would knock you prone, you can make a saving throw to avoid falling prone.

* Some character options not present on character sheet for brevity.



BERRIAN

MALE ELADRIN WIZARD (MAGE) / LEVEL 1 / UNALIGNED

“Sticks and knives against my spells? How amusing!”

ABILITY SCORES	MOD	DEFENSES	INITIATIVE	TRAINED SKILLS
STR 8	-1	AC 15	+0	ARCANA +12
CON 10	+0	FORT 10	SPEED (in squares) 6	DUNGEONEERING +5
DEX 10	+0	REF 15	VISION low-light	HISTORY +12
INT 20	+5	WILL 16	LANGUAGES Common, Elven	NATURE +5
WIS 11	+0		SENSSES Passive Insight 10, Passive Perception 10	RELIGION +10
CHA 16	+3			

HIT POINTS (Bloodied 10) 20

ACTION POINT

SECOND WIND

HEALING SURGES value 5

EQUIPMENT

staff
cloth armor
adventurer's kit
spellbook
19 gold pieces

OTHER EQUIPMENT

Melee Basic Attack

Standard / Melee Weapon / At-Will

Staff: Target one creature; +2 vs. AC; 1d8 - 1 damage.

Magic Missile

Standard / Ranged 20 / At-Will

Target one creature. **Effect:** 7 force damage. **Special:** You can use this power as a ranged basic attack.

Light

Minor / Ranged 5 / At-Will

Target one object or unoccupied square. **Effect:** The target sheds bright light until the end of the encounter or until you use this power again. The light fills the target's space and all squares within 4 squares of it. Putting out the light is a free action.

Ghost Sound

Standard / Ranged 10 / At-Will

Target one object or unoccupied square. **Effect:** You cause a sound as quiet as a whisper or as loud as a yelling or fighting creature to emanate from the target. If you whisper, you can whisper quietly enough that only creatures adjacent to the target can hear your words.

Beguiling Strands

Standard / Close Blast 5 / At-Will

Target each enemy in blast; +6 vs. Will; 5 psychic damage, and you push the target up to 3 squares.

Arc Lightning

Standard / Ranged 20 / At-Will

Target one or two creatures; +6 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 5 lightning damage.

Suggestion

Free / Personal / Encounter

Trigger: You make a Diplomacy check. **Effect:** You make an Arcana check instead, using that result to determine the outcome of the Diplomacy check.

Fey Step

Move / Personal / Encounter

Effect: You teleport up to 5 squares.

Charm of Misplaced Wrath

Standard / Ranged 10 / Encounter

Target one enemy; +6 vs. Will; you slide the target up to 3 squares. The target is then dazed until the end of your next turn. **Effect:** The target makes a basic attack against a creature of your choice as a free action. This attack gains a +2 power bonus to the damage roll.

Fountain of Flame

Standard / Area burst 1 within 10 squares / Daily

Target each enemy in burst; +6 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 5 fire damage. **Miss:** Half damage. **Effect:** The burst creates a zone that lasts until the end of the encounter. Any enemy that enters the zone or ends its turn there takes 5 fire damage.

OTHER ABILITIES*

Eladrin Will:


You gain a +5 racial bonus to saving throws against charm effects.

Staff Expertise:

You do not provoke opportunity attacks from enemies for using a ranged or an area power while wielding a staff.

* Some character options not present on character sheet for brevity.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS



RULES

Condition

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ONGOING DAMAGE




CN17

CONDITION

Illus: Steve Prescott

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS



RULES

Condition

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ONGOING ACID DAMAGE




CN18

CONDITION

Illus: Eric L. Williams

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS



RULES

Condition

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ONGOING COLD DAMAGE





CN19

CONDITION

Illus: Mike Nash

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

RULES

Condition

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ONGOING FIRE DAMAGE





CN20

CONDITION

Illus: Julie Dillon

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RULES

Condition

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ONGOING FORCE DAMAGE





CN21

CONDITION

Illus: Anne Stokes

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RULES

Condition

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ONGOING LIGHTNING DAMAGE




CN22

CONDITION

Illus: Jim Nelson

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RULES

Condition

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ONGOING NECROTIC DAMAGE




CN23

CONDITION

Illus: Steve Belledin

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS



RULES

Condition

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ONGOING POISON DAMAGE




CN24

CONDITION

Illus: William O'Connor

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS



RULES

Condition

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ONGOING PSYCHIC DAMAGE




CN25

CONDITION

Illus: Gordan Josic

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS



RULES

Condition

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ONGOING RADIANT DAMAGE




CN26

Illus: Franz Vohwinkel

CONDITION

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS



RULES

Condition

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ONGOING THUNDER DAMAGE



CN27

Illus: Franz Vohwinkel

CONDITION

Heroic Aid

Delver Reward



I got the big one. You take care of that trap!" - Rurik, dwarf slayer

Accomplishment: Earned 20 Renown Points in *D&D Encounters™: Keep on the Borderlands*

Benefit: Once per session, discard this card before making an attack roll or a skill check. You gain a +1 bonus to the roll, and one adjacent ally gains a +2 bonus to their next attack roll or skill check. The ally instead gains a +4 bonus if you roll a natural 20.

At the beginning of each session during any *D&D Encounters* seasons, choose any one of your *D&D Encounters* cards. That card is usable during the session. All other cards are inactive for the session.



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Enchanted Heirloom

Adventurer Reward



"I found it under the floorboards in my grandpa's old place. I think it's magical."
- Malik, human farmer and adventurer-to-be

Accomplishment: Earned 100 Renown Points in *D&D Encounters™*: *Keep on the Borderlands*

Benefit: Once per session discard this card when you miss with an attack roll that's part of an at-will or encounter attack power to reroll the attack roll.

Organizer: At the beginning of each session during any *D&D Encounters* seasons, choose any one of your *D&D Encounters* cards. That card is usable during the session. All other cards are inactive for the session.



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