

FAST-PLAY Game

TSR 11373

Dungeons & Dragons®

WORLDS OF ADVENTURE

Eye of the Wyvern

A Wilderness

Adventure for

Starting DMs



Jeff Grubb

What is All of This?

The booklet you're holding is divided into two sections. The first is the initial *Fast-Play Rules*, which is where you should start if you've never played the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game before. If you've already read through a copy of the *Fast-Play Rules* and played "The Ruined Tower" adventure, then skip right ahead to "Expanding the Game" on page 21 and start reading. If you've also already read and played the *Wrath of the Minotaur* material, then start on page 27 at "Getting Started (Again)." Keep in mind that if the players bring their heroes to this adventure from *Wrath of the Minotaur*, they may want to bring any extra treasure and magical items. Let them. This is one of the cool things about the game and adds to the sense of continuity. Most of all, have fun!

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The warrior shouldered the door open, and it creaked on hinges unused for centuries. The air smelled of damp earth and ancient, unspoken secrets. Ahead of them, a stone-lined hall disappeared into the darkness beyond.

"Let's go," said the wizard, consulting his map.

"Hold on," said the rogue. "Listen!"

From the hallway ahead came the soft scraping of bone against bone, and out of the darkness stepped a skeleton, the torchlight reflecting off its polished bones. Another skeleton joined it, and then a third. Their lower jaws opened in a voiceless battle cry, and the undead warriors raised their rusted swords and charged the adventurers. . . .

Welcome to the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Fast-Play Game. This booklet is an introduction to the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game—the world's most popular roleplaying game. If you're an experienced player who knows all this stuff, share it with someone who hasn't played before. If you're interested in how to play the D&D game, read on.

What Is a Roleplaying Game?

In a roleplaying game, each individual involved pretends to be an imaginary character, much the same as an actor plays a part in a film or a play. The big difference is that in a film, the actors are following a script—but in a roleplaying game, you and the other players are writing your own lines as you play out an adventure, and the ending of the story is not determined until you get there.

One of the individuals in a D&D game is the Dungeon Master (DM for short), the person who knows what the adventure is all about and tells the players what's happening as the story moves along. It's always necessary for someone to be the DM, but this doesn't have to be the same person every time you play. The other individuals are players, each one playing the role of his or her own player character (PC for short). The adventure included with these rules, titled "The Ruined Tower," is for one DM and up to four players.

In the D&D game, player characters are heroic fighters, mighty wizards, and cunning rogues. They journey into lost ruins (the "Dungeons" of the game's title) and battle fierce monsters (sometimes, though not always, "Dragons"). To play "The Ruined Tower," each player picks one of the characters from the sheets on pages 5–6. If you want to play more adventures, you can use this character over and over—you don't have to use a new character every time you play a new game.

The DM should read over all of these rules and the adventure before starting play. The players should read pages 2–4 and look over the character sheets on pages 5–6—but don't read any farther, or the surprises of the adventure will be ruined!

What Are Characters Made Of?

Take a minute to look at the character sheets on pages 5–6. Make photocopies of those pages if you want, cut each of the pages in half, and make sure that every player in your group has the sheet for the character he or she wants to play. Here's what all the information on the character sheets means.

Name: The character's name, already written in.

Player: That's you, the player "running" this character. Put your own name here.

Class: D&D characters fall into general classes. Each class has advantages over the others. The character classes in this adventure include fighters (who are good at fighting with swords and other weapons), wizards (who can't fight with swords but can cast spells), and rogues (who are okay with swords and can also do sneaky stuff like picking locks).

Race: In the D&D game, characters can belong to different races. In this adventure, most of the characters are human. Niles is a halfling, which is a diminutive race of beings who are known for their bravery and cunning.

Level: Characters can be carried over from one adventure to the next (like a "saved game"). As they have more adventures, they become more powerful. Level is a measure of how powerful the characters are. In this adventure, all the characters are level 2, which means they are still fairly inexperienced and can grow more powerful.

Ability Scores: These numbers are the heart of a character's description. They tell what the strong points and weak points of the character are. (Just like real people, most characters are better at some things than others.)

Strength is how strong your character is.

Dexterity is how quick your character is.

Constitution is how healthy your character is.

Intelligence is how smart your character is.

Wisdom is how much common sense your character has.

Charisma is how appealing your character is.

Ability scores range from 3 to 18, with 3 being the lowest (and weakest), and 18 being the best.

Fighters usually have high Strength, rogues have high Dexterity, and wizards have high Intelligence. Your character's ability scores have an effect on how well he or she does at certain things. We've done all the calculations you need to play the adventure, so don't sweat it.

Armor: This line tells you what type of armor your character is wearing.

Armor Class: This number tells you the benefit

Funky Dice

Weapons (and a lot of other things in the game) come with a set of numbers, like 1d8, 2d6, and 1d4+1. What do the numbers mean?

They describe different types of dice used in the D&D game. The number after the "d" tells you how many sides the die has. A "d6" is the normal kind of die you're probably used to seeing—a cube with each side representing a number from 1 to 6. Other dice come in different shapes and have different numbers of sides: 4, 8, 10, 12, and 20.

A number in front of the "d" tells how many dice should be rolled, so 1d8 means roll one 8-sided die, and 2d4 means roll two 4-sided dice. A plus sign followed by a number means that the number should be added to the roll: "1d8+1" means roll an 8-sided die and add 1 to the result.

Sometimes, you might see a number like 1d3, which doesn't have an actual die for it. Obviously, there is no three-sided die, but you can generate the right number range by rolling a six-sided die and dividing by 2, then rounding up. Thus, a 1 or 2 equals 1, a 3 or 4 equals 2, and a 5 or 6 equals 3.

A lot of games use these dice. If you don't have them, you can get them at a game store or maybe a bookstore, or perhaps you can borrow some from someone. If you can't get them right away, here's how to use 6-sided dice to take the place of all the other sizes. This isn't a perfect solution, however, so you'll want to get your own set pretty soon if you plan to keep playing.

d4 – Roll a 6-sided die; roll over if the result is a 5 or 6.

d6 – Roll a 6-sided die normally.

d8 – Roll one die and add 2 to the result.

d10 – Roll two dice and add them together.

If an 11 or 12 comes up, ignore that result and reroll.

d12 – Don't worry about a d12 right now; you won't need one in this adventure.

d20 – Roll three dice (or one die three times) and add them together. Then, add 2 to the result.

of the armor your character is wearing. A *low* number for Armor Class is a good thing—a 3 is better than a 4.

Move: This number describes how fast your character moves. All the characters in this adventure move at the same rate, except for Niles the halfling. He's slower than the rest. That's important if the party runs away from danger, since Niles will lag behind.

Hit Points: Hit points are a measure of how much damage your character can withstand. Weapons, monsters, and falling into deep holes can all do damage to your character.

Wounds: This line is used to keep track of the wounds your character has taken. If this number gets to be more than your character's hit points, he or she is defeated and out of the game. Use a pencil to tally your character's wounds, in case some of them get healed. (Elanna has a healing potion that, if drunk, will restore lost hit points.)

Gold: Money in the D&D game is expressed in gold pieces. Everybody starts out with no money, but characters can pick up gold as a treasure or a reward during an adventure. The amount of gold your character collects goes on this line.

XP: Short for eXperience Points, XP is a measure of how successful you are as a fighter, wizard, or rogue. Everyone has a certain amount of XP (the number varies) so that they are 2nd level.

Next Level: This is the amount of XP your character needs to go to the next level. You get XP by defeating monsters and completing quests.

Weapons: This section tells the types of weapons each character has and how much damage each weapon causes. To find out what things like "1d8" and "1d10" mean, see the box in the next column that talks about "Funky Dice."

Spells: Because Thaddeus is a wizard, he has spells he can cast. His spells are listed here. He can cast one *magic missile* and one *sleep* spell during the adventure.

Abilities: Most of the characters have different abilities, depending on their class, race, and ability scores. These are covered here.

Equipment: This is a listing of other important stuff your character may have. Ordinary items like cloaks or boots aren't mentioned, but things that may be useful, like rope and torches, are.

How the Game Works

In the D&D game, the Dungeon Master and the players team up to tell a story. The DM has a script, also called an adventure, that tells what the characters will face in the dungeon. The players have character sheets, which tell them what their characters can do and what items they can use.

The DM sets the stage, usually by reading a prepared bit of text, telling the players what their characters see. This might be a brief description of the area where the characters are, or an old legend being told by the fire, or a passage from a book. The players then can ask questions and tell the DM what they want their characters to do. The DM tells the players what their characters see and hear. Here's an example of how that works:

DM: You see a corked bottle sitting on a shelf.

Player: I pick up the bottle and look to see what's in it.

DM: The bottle is corked, and you can't see through the glass.

Player: I pull the cork out of the bottle.

DM: A black mass of smoke swirls out of the bottle, and from the heart of the smoke a voice thunders, "At last I am free! Now I can conquer the world!"

Player: Uh, is it too late to put the cork back into the bottle?

You get the idea. Sometimes there is some doubt about if a particular action is successful, if you hit an opponent, or how much damage you cause. For that you need the funky dice (see the previous page). Sometimes the players will roll the dice and sometimes the DM will roll the dice, depending on the situation.

Combat

The players are running characters who are going into a dungeon in order to defeat the monsters and take their treasure. The monsters aren't happy about this, and as a result . . . we have combat.

The players roll the dice when their characters are doing things. The DM rolls the dice for the things he controls, like the monsters, or when he wants to keep the results secret from the players. If there's any question about who rolls, the DM decides (making decisions is part of the job). In combat, players always roll for their characters.

When combat starts, each player needs to say what weapon his character is using. Darkblade, for example, may use his long bow or his long sword. Both have advantages and disadvantages.

Each of the players needs to make an "attack roll," trying to get a particular number or higher on 1d20 (a 20-sided die). In general, fighters are best at combat and wizards worst, and characters with high Strength do better than weaker ones. Each player gets to roll to see if his or her character scores a hit. In the adventure, we summarize all this and tell you what number each of the characters needs in order to hit. If you miss, there is no penalty, except that the monster is still there and takes a swing at your character in return.

What Is All This Stuff?

The D&D game is set in a fantasy world, a lot like our world back in the Middle Ages. D&D characters use swords instead of guns, ride horses instead of cars, and fight monsters instead of rush-hour traffic. In the game, we throw around a lot of words describing stuff from that age. In case you're not sure what we mean . . .

Swords are good weapons, but not all swords are equal. Niles has a **short sword**, which is best for him because he's not very big. Darkblade has a **long sword**, which is longer and has a better reach. Elanna uses a **two-handed sword**, which causes the most damage of the three.

Daggers are sharp knives, handy for cutting things and stabbing monsters. Daggers can also be thrown to do damage.

A **quarterstaff** is a pole about seven feet long, useful for bashing opponents and testing the ground ahead.

Armor comes in several different styles. **Chain mail** is made of loose links of metal. **Scale mail** is made of overlapping metal sheets. **Leather armor** is more flexible and quieter (and therefore better for rogues to sneak around in), but it doesn't protect as well as chain mail or scale mail. Wizards don't wear armor—it messes up their ability to cast spells.

Thieves' tools are handy to have because sometimes it's easier (and smarter) to open a door by picking a lock instead of bashing it down. A set of tools includes bits of wire, clippers, metal picks, and other small items that a rogue uses to do all sorts of crafty things.

On a hit, your character's weapon causes a certain amount of damage. The long sword, for example, causes 1d8 points of damage to an opponent. The DM keeps track of damage to the monsters—when a monster's wounds are greater than its total hit points, the monster is defeated.

After the characters each get a chance to hit, the DM makes attack rolls for the monsters. Again, we've done the calculations already in the adventure, and we just give you the number required.

If a character is hit, the monster does an amount of damage determined by another die roll. The player marks this damage as wounds on his or her character sheet.

What's Next?

You've got the character sheets, you've got the basic info about how the game is played and how combat works, and now it's time to get into the real action. The person who's going to be the DM should read the rest of this booklet. The rest of you will be players, so don't read any farther. When the DM is ready, you can begin the adventure.

Dungeons & Dragons

Character Sheet

Name: **Darkblade** Player: _____
Class: Fighter Race: Human
Level: 2

Ability Scores

Strength	17
Dexterity	15
Constitution	14
Intelligence	11
Wisdom	13
Charisma	15



Armor: Chain mail

Armor Class: 4

Move: 12

Hit Points: 12

Wounds: _____

Gold: _____

XP: 2000 Next Level: 4000

Weapons:

Long bow
Damage 1d8

Long sword
Damage 1d8

Spells:

Darkblade has no magical spells.

Abilities:

When attacking with his bow, Darkblade makes two attacks each round. He cannot use his bow if he is in close combat.

When attacking with his sword, Darkblade does an additional point of damage. (Roll damage, then add 1 point.)

Equipment:

Torch
50-foot coil of rope
Backpack

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Dungeons & Dragons

Character Sheet

Name: **Elanna** Player: _____
Class: Fighter Race: Human
Level: 2

Ability Scores

Strength	15
Dexterity	17
Constitution	15
Intelligence	13
Wisdom	11
Charisma	16



Armor: Scale mail

Armor Class: 3

Move: 12

Hit Points: 14

Wounds: _____

Gold: _____

XP: 2000 Next Level: 4000

Weapons:

Two-handed sword
Damage 1d10

Dagger
Damage 1d4

Spells:

Elanna has no magical spells.

Abilities:

Elanna has three daggers. She may fight with one of them, or throw up to two per round. She cannot throw her daggers if she is in close combat.

Equipment:

Torch

Potion of Healing: This is a small bottle of liquid that, if drunk, heals 2d6 hit points of damage (or 1d6 points if half is drunk). It will not raise the drinker's hit points above their original level. The potion smells of peppermint.

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Character Sheet

Name: **Niles** Player: _____
Class: Rogue Race: Halfling
Level: 2

Ability Scores

Strength	11
Dexterity	18
Constitution	13
Intelligence	12
Wisdom	10
Charisma	12



Armor: Leather armor

Armor Class: 6

Move: 6

Hit Points: 7

Wounds: _____

Gold: _____

XP: 1250 Next Level: 2500

Weapons:

Short Sword

Damage 1d6

Dagger

Damage 1d4

Spells:

Niles has no magical spells.

Abilities:

Niles has two daggers. He may fight with one of them, or throw up to two per round. He cannot throw his daggers if he is in close combat.

If Niles attacks a humanoid creature from behind, he hits more easily and doubles his damage roll.

Equipment:

Lantern

Thieves' tools: Niles may open a locked door using his tools, and will succeed on a roll of 4 or less on 1d10.

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Dungeons & Dragons

Character Sheet

Name: **Thaddeus** Player: _____
Class: Wizard Race: Human
Level: 2

Ability Scores

Strength	9
Dexterity	12
Constitution	15
Intelligence	18
Wisdom	16
Charisma	13



Armor: None (robes)

Armor Class: 10

Move: 12

Hit Points: 6

Wounds: _____

Gold: _____

XP: 2500 Next Level: 5000

Weapons:

Quarterstaff

Damage 1d6

Dagger

Damage 1d4

Spells:

Thaddeus may cast each of these spells once per day:

Magic missile: This spell automatically hits a creature and inflicts 1d4 +1 points of damage.

Sleep: This spell causes living things to fall into an enchanted sleep. Sleeping creatures are helpless, but can be awakened normally.

Equipment:

Lantern

Magical Scroll: Thaddeus has a scroll with a *knock* spell on it. When he reads the scroll aloud, the spell causes a stuck or locked door to automatically open. The scroll can be read aloud only once; then it disappears.

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The Dungeon Master's Section

This part of the booklet is for the DM, and contains information that the DM should know, but the players should not (like what monsters are lurking behind which doors). If you just want to be a DM, keep on reading. Otherwise, pass these rules back to your DM.

What the DM Does

The Dungeon Master is part director, part storyteller, part central processing unit for the game. The DM is responsible for telling the players what their characters see, telling them what the results of their characters' actions are, and keeping the game moving. The DM runs all the characters and monsters that are not controlled by the players. (That's not as hard as it might seem, because only a few of these characters and monsters are active in the story at any single time.)

This part of the D&D Fast-Play Game is an introduction to being a DM. We walk through a very simple "dungeon" adventure, which you can run for your friends. We cover the basics of combat and movement. There are a lot of numbers and tables in the AD&D game, but we've simplified everything for the adventure you're about to run—we did the calculations so you don't have to.

How do you tell who wins? Well, a roleplaying game is different from a lot of other games because there is no clear "winner." Instead, the characters all grow and improve together, and the players enjoy seeing their characters succeed in one adventure after another. The DM gets his reward by helping that growth, challenging the players as everyone gets together to tell a group story. If you and the players have fun with the game, you're all winners.

What to Tell the Players

Some sections of the text of the adventure are inside boxes. These sections are usually supposed to be read aloud to the players, and are preceded by some line like "If the characters do such-and-such, read the following aloud." This is information that you, the DM, are giving the players—what their characters see and hear.

In addition, the players will have additional questions about what their characters see and experience. You might say, "You see a door," and the players will respond, "What does the door look like?" You check the text of the adventure to see if there's anything special about the door. If there is, you say something like "It's a large oak doors with iron bands." If there isn't, you make something up. This is what the DM is allowed to do. The players won't know if it was in the text or not (well, if you

don't get carried away, that is). The DM is in charge of filling in the blanks. We can't cover everything that might happen in the text of the adventure (though we're shooting for the major ones), so the DM is encouraged to provide his own input into the game.

The DM plays the roles of particular characters from time to time. In this adventure there's an old man, the Patriarch, who sends the player characters off to the Ruined Tower, and a monstrous ghoul that shows up later. At times like this, you are asked to act "in character," as if you were the Patriarch or the ghoul. When you're "in character," you might not know certain facts. (For instance, the Patriarch doesn't know what's inside the Ruined Tower, although you, the DM, do.) Playing the parts of these characters is your chance to do a little role-playing of your own.

Time and Combat

Time in the game is broken down into rounds—like the rounds of a boxing match, only a lot shorter. In a single round, your character can generally do one particular thing: pull a sword from a scabbard, move around a bit, take a swing at a monster, open a door, and so forth. During most of the adventure you don't have to keep close track of time. But there are certain situations, like combat, when time becomes important.

When the characters are fighting monsters, you need to know what everybody is doing at any certain time. Here's how you keep things straight:

- Decide what the monsters you control are going to do: Who are they attacking? How are they attacking? Are they running away?
- Ask each player what his or her character is doing. Usually allow a character to do only one thing at a time. (Some characters can do some things more than once a round—shoot arrows and throw daggers, for example.)
- After all the players have said what their characters are doing, let them execute their actions. (In this adventure, the players always get to try to hit their opponents first.)
- Then execute your monsters' actions.

That's about it. The rest of what you need to know to run the adventure is in the adventure itself. Go for it.

The Physics of a Gaming Session

You're ready to play. You've read over the scenario, you're comfortable with the adventure, and you even have a set of the funky dice.

So how do you really start?

Get your friends together, as few as one and as many as four. If you have only one or two players, you might want them to double up, each playing two characters instead of just one. Give them a choice of which character to play. One player may feel more comfortable with a fighter, another with a wizard. If more than one wants a particular character, either let them hash it out among themselves or else make multiple photocopies and let them change the names. (Just remember that in the adventure, "Bob the Fighter" uses the same combat numbers as "Darkblade.")

Get comfortable someplace with enough flat space to roll dice. Usually this means a kitchen or dining room table, but if you're just as comfortable on the floor, sitting on bean-bag chairs, go for it.

The players' dice should be rolled where everyone can see them. The DM's dice may often need to be rolled in secret, where the players cannot see them. This is because the DM may have to roll the dice, then give the players information based on that die roll, and the players might get an unfair hint on how their character succeeded (or failed) if they can see the roll. In those cases, the DM should use a book or piece of paper to shield the result from others. This isn't cheating—the DM is supposed to be fair with his rolls, regardless. It's generally a good idea to make combat rolls out in the open and let the players keep track of their characters' hit points.

The DM should sit where the other players cannot look over her shoulder (so they can't read what's coming up in the adventure). Usually this is at the head of the table, with the players on both sides. Leave enough space to roll dice in front of you.

Once you get started reading the adventure, you'll ask the players what their characters are doing. At first, you should go around the table, asking each in turn. For a lot of decisions the choice is fairly clear, and after a while the DM doesn't have to ask everyone, but at first it's a good idea to keep everyone involved. In combat, you always ask each person what his character is doing, even if he is not immediately involved in the fighting.

Try to keep everyone from talking at once. When you're reading a section aloud or answer-

ing questions, the players should listen to you. Similarly, you as the DM should listen to their comments and actions fully. Get everyone's input before going on with the next round or action.

It may be to your advantage to know in the course of an adventure where all the characters are, exactly. If the characters in the front row step on a hidden trap door, or a monster attacks the last character in line, it's very important to know who is where ahead of time, so there are no arguments. Set up a "marching order" to determine who is in front and who is in the rear. You can do this on a sheet of paper, or you can arrange dice, counters, or miniature figures to show who is where. This is very useful when large combats with multiple opponents break out.

A group of players may have a natural party leader, or caller, who states what the characters are doing as a group. (For example: "We're all going down the hallway.") That's fine, but don't let the caller dominate the others or state their actions for them. (For example: "Bob's character will valiantly lay down his life while the rest of us escape with the treasure!") If this happens, turn to the other players and get confirmation. (For example: "So, Bob, do you *really* want to lay down your life here?")

Sometimes a character may discover something that the other characters might not know—an example might be the character who opens a treasure chest that might have an explosive trap on it while the other characters stay safely out of explosion range. If that is the case, ask that player to step aside, to a corner or another room, and quietly tell him what his character sees. That player in turn might have his own actions, which might require a die roll or two. Don't take too long, but give him the gist of what he sees or can do.

Last, players may disagree about the wisest course of action for their group. That's normal, and it's not your primary task to steer them to one decision or another. Let them find their own way of figuring out who's in front, who gets first dibs on the treasure, who has the best idea of how to fight the bad guys, and who's going to sacrifice herself valiantly while the rest escape. Just remember that a player controls her character's actions, and that she has the final decision on those actions.

That's about it for the basics. Get your friends and jump in!

Getting Started

Let's say you're going to be the DM for this evening. It's always a good idea to read through the adventure before you run it, just so you know what's coming. You bring to the table this adventure, either some 6-sided dice or a set of the funky dice (if you have some), some scratch paper, pencils, and some graph paper (if you want—it's not a necessity). If you can, photocopy the character sheets so the players can use them without writing on the originals. It should take about an hour to play this adventure, more if you take your time, less if you speed right along.

You should have between one and four players for this adventure, three or four being the ideal. If you have only one player, let him run two characters—the monsters in this adventure aren't too tough, but they could be too much for just one character to handle. It's good if the players have a chance to read pages 2–4 of this booklet ahead of time, but that's not a necessity. You can fill them in on things as they go along. It will just be easier for them if they already have a handle on the basics.

Once you get settled, here is what you, the DM, say:

What we're going to do here is tell a story, a story that you're going to help create. Each of you has a character: a fighter, a wizard, or a rogue. The story takes place in a world filled with monsters, treasure, and adventure.

I'm going to be the Dungeon Master, or DM. I'll describe what your characters see, and you're going to tell me what your characters do in response. Do well, and your characters will be rewarded with treasure and increased power. Look at your character sheets and we can run down what the various numbers and items mean.

Give the players a chance to review their character sheets and ask any questions. You should know most of the answers about what the numbers mean from reading the first section of these rules. Ask each of the players to introduce their characters to the rest of the group. For example:

"I've got Niles, a halfling rogue," says one.

"I'm running Darkblade, and he's a fighter, and he's got a bow," says another.

"I'm playing Elanna. She's real strong and has a sword that does lots of damage," says a third.

This would be a good time to explain about the funky dice to the players if they don't already know. Don't worry about when you need to roll them—we'll tell you as the adventure progresses.

Beginning the Adventure

Once the players are comfortable with their characters, read the following aloud.

All of you are natives of the Vale, a small farming community made up of a number of small towns scattered along a broad, wooded valley. The Patriarch is the spiritual leader of the Vale, and he has asked you to come to his shrine when the noon bell sounds.

The noon bell is just striking as a servant ushers you into the Patriarch's study. The old gray-bearded man is bent with age and wisdom. He motions for you to have a seat.

Now you, the DM, are going to speak in the role of the Patriarch. You can give him an "old man" voice if you want, or just talk normally. There's a little bit of acting involved here, but you don't have to do anything you feel uncomfortable with.

"I am pleased to see that you have come," says the Patriarch. "The Vale has need for your talents, and your bravery."

"A week ago, some hunters found the ruins of an old tower in the forest. They did not like the looks of it, and quickly moved elsewhere. Now there are stories that something nasty has been raiding farms, and it might come from that tower. I'd like you and your friends to go to the tower and investigate it. Our very safety may depend on your bravery and heroism."

Now comes the players' chance to respond to the old man's request. They may have other questions about the tower and the raids on the nearby farms. Here's what you can tell them (and you can use the "old man" voice to do it, to show that this is the Patriarch speaking, and not the DM).

- No one knew about the tower before. Some hunters found it while chasing a wounded deer. However, long ago there was a powerful magician who lived in this valley. It might have been one of his towers, or his home.
- No one has seen what is raiding the farms. Several sheep have been carried off, and pens have been broken down. This always happens at night. No farmers have been attacked, but they are worried about their flocks.
- Any treasure they find, in the form of money or magical items, may be kept by the player characters. All the Patriarch asks is that any books or other useful items be turned over to him so he can learn more about the history of the Vale (he'll pay, of course).

- He tells the characters that the location of the ruined tower is off the beaten track, but easily found. (No map is provided for the Vale in this adventure, so this map is an imaginary one. It you want to have a map of the Vale to show the players, take a moment to sketch one out.) If no one brings it up, merely say, "The Patriarch unfolds a map and shows you the location of the tower. There should be no problem reaching it."
- The Patriarch does not have any guards or assistants to spare for the expedition. If he did, he would have sent them instead of the adventurers.
- Heroes only have what supplies are on their sheets; there isn't an opportunity for them to get anything else before starting.

The Ruined Tower

Once the players get everything squared away with the Patriarch, the group of heroes (known as "the adventuring party" or simply "the party") heads out toward the ruined tower with orders to investigate it and report back. Read the following to the players:

The trail to the ruined tower passes through the rolling farmland of the Vale and into the forest. The trees and undergrowth quickly grow dense, and you hear the sounds of small creatures moving through the underbrush. The thick shade of the forest cuts off a lot of the sunlight, and you move through a twilight-colored world of shadows.

Suddenly you come upon a small glade in the heart of the forest. A squat stone tower has been built into the side of the hill at the far side of the glade. The tower has been shattered, and all that remains is a ragged stump of fitted stone. Large blocks of granite litter the clearing, and some of these are covered with thick moss.

The tower is shown on the map on page 10. Use the information from this text and the map to describe the area. Don't show the map to the players—that would tell them too much about what they are going to discover later in the adventure.

Ask each player what his or her character is doing. Most likely their responses will be along the lines of "I am looking at the tower."

The tower is a wreck—it looks like it has been blasted by a bolt of lightning. Originally it might have been 40 feet tall, but now it is a blasted stump that does not extend more than 10 feet high. The tower wall nearest the characters is no more than a

low wall a foot high, and can be easily stepped over.

When the first member of the party enters the area of the tower itself, read the following to that player. The other players can listen in.

You step over the wall and see that the inside of the tower is filled with rubble and debris. Dead leaves, shattered stones, and rotted timbers are scattered around the floor. You see, partly buried by fallen timbers, a door on the far wall, leading back under the hillside.

As you notice this, you also see a pile of leaves rustle slightly to your left. A large rat pokes its head out from beneath the debris. It hisses a warning at you, showing long, razor-sharp teeth. It lunges forward, and behind it, three more leap from their hiding places.

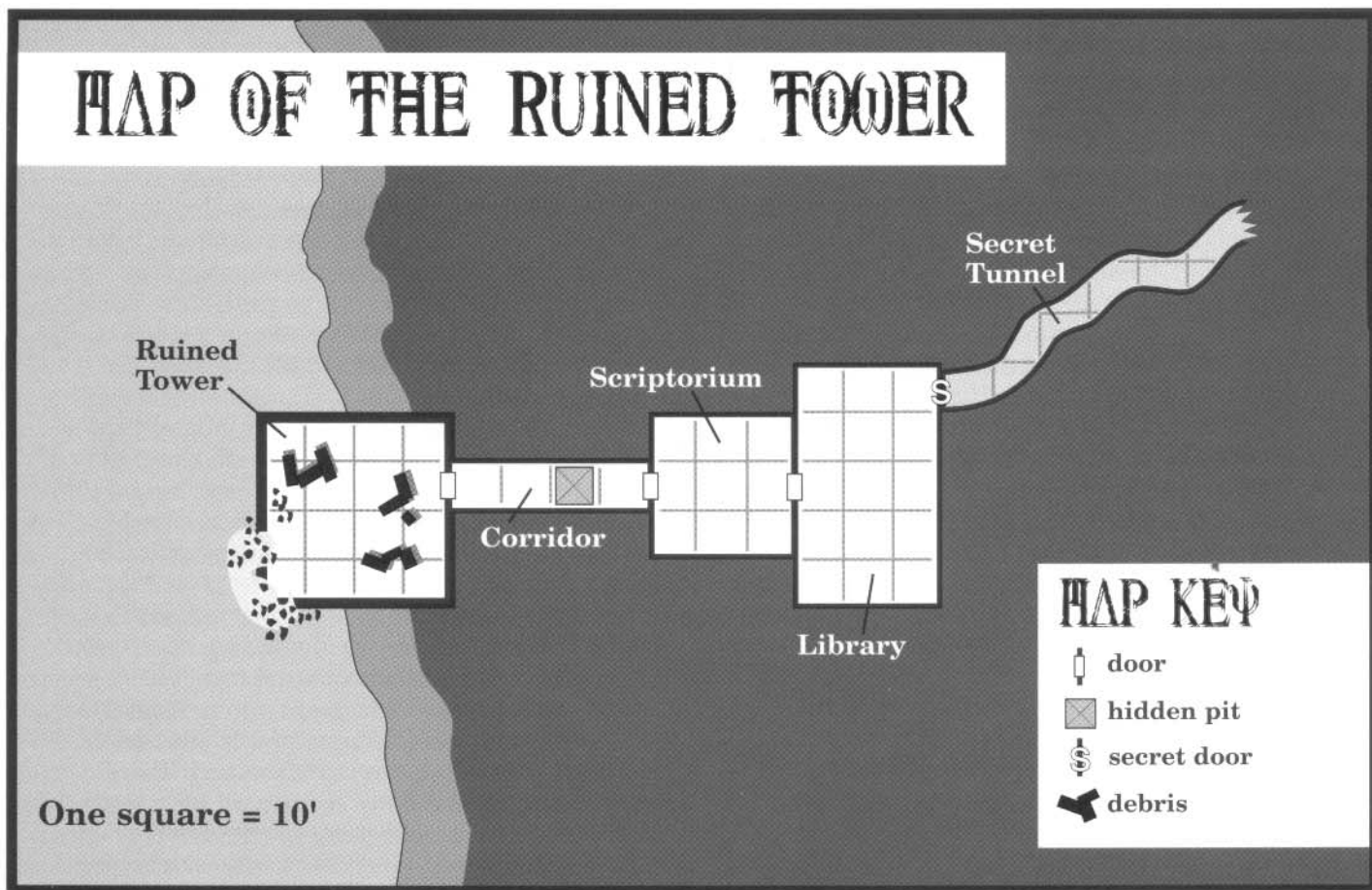
There are four giant rats among the debris within the tower, and they are defending their territory. The rats are grayish-brown, about two feet long, and have wicked, sharp teeth and red, feral eyes.

They only attack characters in the tower area, and will not climb over the walls. If there is only one character in the tower area, all four attack him. If there are two characters, two attack each character. If there are three characters in the tower area, two attack the first character who entered, and one attacks each of the others. If there are four characters in the area, then one rat attacks each of them.

Each of the players needs to roll a particular number or higher on 1d20 to successfully attack a giant rat:

- Darkblade needs an 11 or higher to hit. If he hits with his sword, he does 1d8 damage, and then adds 1 point. If he uses his bow, he can attack twice in a single round, even against different rats, and do 1d8 damage on each hit, but he cannot use his bow against rats that are attacking him.
- Elanna needs a 12 or higher to hit. If she uses her two-handed sword, she rolls 1d10 to determine how much damage she does. If she uses her dagger, she rolls 1d4 to determine damage. She can throw her daggers at rats that are not attacking her directly.
- Niles needs a 13 or higher to hit. He causes 1d6 damage if he uses his short sword, and 1d4 if using his dagger. He causes 1d4 damage if he throws a dagger, but can only throw daggers at rats that are not attacking him.
- Thaddeus needs a 13 or higher to hit. He causes 1d6 damage with his quarterstaff. Thaddeus's specialty is not combat, but magic

MAP OF THE RUINED TOWER



spells. If he casts his *magic missile* spell, he does 1d4+1 points of damage to a rat of his choice (no attack roll needed). If he casts his *sleep* spell, all the rats immediately fall into an enchanted slumber and are easily defeated.

Each rat starts with 3 hit points. If a character inflicts 3 or more points of damage, the rat is defeated. If a rat takes less than 3 points of damage, note on a piece of scratch paper how much damage the rat took. Subtract that number from 3, and what remains is how many hit points the rat now has.

Any rats not defeated get their chance to attack back. For each rat, you roll 1d20 to try to hit a certain character. The rats are all equally vicious, but they need different numbers to hit the characters because the characters are wearing different types of armor and have different Dexterity scores.

- To hit Darkblade, the rats need a 16 or higher.
- To hit Elanna, the rats need a 17 or higher.
- To hit Niles, the rats need a 13 or higher.
- To hit Thaddeus, the rats need a 10 or higher.

Needless to say, it's better if Thaddeus stays away from the rats. Rats bite for 1d3 points of damage.

A rat attacks a chosen character until that character leaves the area of the tower or is reduced to 0 hit points; then the rat chooses a new target from the

remaining characters. If all the characters are reduced to 0 hit points, or if they leave the tower area, the rats burrow under the debris and flee.

It's likely that the characters will defeat the rats with minimum damage to themselves. Any damage that was taken by the characters remains until the characters go back to the town or someone uses Elanna's potion of healing to restore lost hit points.

Defeating the rats gains experience points (XP) for the surviving characters. The rats are worth 15 XP each, so four of them are worth 60 points. That means if a single character stayed in the tower area and defeated all the rats, he gets all 60 points. If two characters defeated two rats apiece, each surviving character gets 30 XP. If three characters took part in the combat, each survivor gets 20 XP, and if all four characters helped (even if some were defeated by the rats), each survivor gets 15 XP. Have the players mark the XP earned on their character sheets. Each sheet tells how many experience points that character needs to advance to the next level. (Obviously, no one will get there very fast just by defeating rats.)

There is no treasure among the debris, but if the players want their characters to look, let them do so. When they decide to move on, they should want to investigate the door partly hidden by the fallen

timbers, which can be easily moved aside.

The door is a heavy oak door, with a lock that's rusted out and useless. However, the door is swollen in its frame and badly weathered, and the characters will have to use brute strength to open it. Let the players choose which character will open the door (it makes sense to give this job to the character with the highest Strength score), and have that player roll 1d20 to determine if he succeeds. In this case, a low result is better than a high result, which means:

- Darkblade needs a 10 or less to open the door.
- Elanna needs an 8 or less to open the door.
- Niles needs a 6 or less to open the door.
- Thaddeus needs a 5 or less to open the door.

Any character can try to open the door as many times as he or she wants. There is no penalty for failing—it just takes a while longer to get the door open. Also, Thaddeus may use the *knock* spell on his scroll to open the door. The door opens immediately if he does this, but as Thaddeus reads the spell, the words on the scroll fade from the paper and the spell cannot be cast again. (Make sure the player who's running Thaddeus understands this before the scroll is used.)

When the characters open the door, go to the next section.

The Corridor and the Pit

To start this section of the adventure, read the following paragraph to the players:

You force the door open, and a puff of damp, musty air billows out of the doorway. The dust settles, and you are looking down a long corridor leading back into the hillside. The walls and floor are made of finished stone, and are stained from water damage. The ceiling is supported by heavy oak beams. The corridor disappears into darkness about 20 feet away.

Now would be a good time for the party members to think about lighting their torches or lanterns. It only takes one torch or lantern to throw enough light to see by—but note that anyone who is carrying a lit torch or lantern has to use one hand to do so, so weapons like bows or the two-handed sword cannot be used. A lantern can be set down easily if someone suddenly needs to use both hands, but a torch goes out if it's laid on the floor. If the party heads down the corridor in darkness, tell the players that it's getting harder and harder to see . . .

This is part of roleplaying. You and the players consider the imaginary world as if it were a real one, so little things like what you're carrying in your hands or who's opening the door are some-

times important. Don't get bogged down in the details, but just keep an eye on what is going on and where.

When at least one character lights a torch or lantern, add the following information:

You see that a 10-foot-wide corridor continues into the hillside. The walls and floor have been heavily damaged by water, and the flagstones of the floor are pitched up in places from uneven settling. About 40 feet away, you see a door. There seems to be something written on the door, but you're too far away to make out what it says. What are you going to do?

Ask the players in what order their characters are moving down the corridor. (There's enough room in a 10-foot-wide area for two characters to walk or run side by side. This makes it easy for them to fight without bashing on each other.) One way to arrange the group is to put the well-armed, strong types in front to protect the guys with the lower hit points in the back. If the characters are afraid of being hit from behind, they may put a fighter in the front and one in the back.

The corridor is treacherous and uneven, and has been damaged by water seeping through the ancient walls. About 20 feet from the door, the

A Map for the Players

The players may choose to start making their own map of the dungeon at some point. A map is often helpful because it's a reminder of how rooms fit together, where things are located, and where the exits are in case of emergency. (Remember, the players don't get to see the map we've provided for you.) If the players bring up the idea of making their own map, and you want to let them give it a try, here's how to do it.

Give them a piece of regular graph paper (four squares to the inch will do nicely), and have each square represent 10 feet. You then describe the room or area based on the text and the map we've provided. For example, there are different ways to describe a corridor, such as:

"The corridor runs ahead of you 40 feet and ends in a door. The corridor is 10 feet wide."

"The corridor runs east 40 feet to a door on the far end. You are at the west end of the corridor."

Or, if you want to be sure the players understand where they are, you can simply make a sketch on the graph paper and let them look at it. As their characters move into a different area, add another piece of information to their map, according to what the characters would see, so that step by step it starts to resemble the map you're using.



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ground is so badly eroded that any pressure on the floor will cause the floor to collapse. On your map, that place is marked by the big symbol for a pit. (This is one reason you don't show the players the DM's map—you want this place to be a secret until the characters get there.)

If the characters merrily march down the corridor, heading for the door, the characters in front fall into the pit that suddenly appears before them as the floor disintegrates. Read the following aloud if this happens:

You walk down the corridor. About halfway down, the ground suddenly shifts beneath your feet and falls away, revealing a black chasm beneath you. The stones you're standing on slip into the blackness, and you follow.

The pit is 10 feet deep and filled at the bottom with water and soft earth. Each character that falls into the pit takes 1d4 points of damage. They also get muddy from the experience. The edges of the pit are rough and sloped, so it is relatively easy to climb out.

If the characters are a bit more cautious (and if the players listened to you when you told them about all the water damage in the hallway) and indicate that they are checking out the corridor as they move into the hillside, read the following:

You move cautiously down the hallway, making sure you have a firm footing on the uneven flagstones. One of the stones beneath your feet shifts as you touch it, and you pull back quickly. With a deep rumble, a large hole opens directly before you. Another step, and you would have fallen into a large, muddy pit.

If the characters were cautious, give each of them 10 XP. (As the DM, you're allowed to reward players for smart thinking.)

The pit is a ragged hole in the floor, and once it has opened it will remain there permanently. There is enough of a ledge around it that the characters can get past it easily.

Note that this is a natural pit caused by erosion. Some evil creatures put pits in their lairs just to catch those foolish enough to trespass, and sometimes those pits are filled with sharp spikes or poisonous snakes. (Just thought you'd want to know.)

When the characters reach the door at the other end of the corridor, they see it is badly rotted, and its hinges and latch are extremely rusted. There are words carved on the door, almost invisible because of the damage. The sign reads:

SCRIPTORIUM DO NOT DISTURB

A scriptorium is a place where scrolls and books are copied, usually by scribes or monks. (You can tell the players that—it's something that their characters would likely know.)

The door is almost completely rotted out, and will disintegrate at the first touch. Go to the next section.

The Scriptorium

When any character first touches the door (tries the knob, leans against it, knocks on it, whatever), read the following aloud:

The rotted door falls apart at the first touch. The wood cascades into a pile of splinters, and the hinges and knob clatter to the floor.

On the other side of the doorway is a large, square room, about 30 feet on a side. There is another door directly opposite yours at the far side of the room. The floor in here is more level and dry than the corridor was.

The room holds six copy desks and stools. Four of the desks are occupied by what look like monks, dressed in robes that at one time were fine but are now old and rotting, their bodies hunched over.

One of the monks looks up at you, his hood falling back as he does so. He has no skin or flesh, only a skull with small flickers of red flame burning in the pits of his eye sockets. He raises a bony hand and points at you.

As if by silent signal, the other three monks get off their stools. Their robes fly open, revealing that they are nothing more than animated skeletons. They all carry rusted, triangular daggers. They move toward you.

There are four skeletons, though only two may attack a particular target. If the characters stand their ground in the doorway, then only the front rank may be attacked. The characters get to make their attacks first, then the skeletons.

Because the skeletons are magically animated bones, they are less affected by weapons that cut. Swords, arrows, and daggers cause less damage when used against a skeleton.

- Darkblade needs an 11 or higher to hit. If he hits with his sword, he does 1d8 damage, then adds 1 point for his high strength. Find the total damage he causes, then divide by 2, rounding up (2¹/₂ becomes 3). If he uses his bow, he can attack twice, even against different skeletons, and do 1d8 damage. Again, divide the damage by 2 after it is rolled. Once the skeletons get close enough to attack, the bow is useless.

- Elanna needs a 12 or higher to hit. If she uses the two-handed sword, she rolls 1d10 to determine how much damage she does. If she uses her dagger, she rolls 1d4 to determine damage. Again, divide the result by 2.
- Niles needs a 13 or higher to hit. He will cause 1d6 damage if he uses his short sword, and 1d4 if using his dagger. Divide the result by 2 to determine how much damage Niles does to the skeleton he attacks.
- Thaddeus needs a 13 or higher to hit. He causes 1d6 damage with the quarterstaff—and this result is *not* divided by 2. The quarterstaff is a blunt weapon, not a cutting weapon, so it does full damage to the skeletons. If Thaddeus casts his *magic missile* spell, he does 1d4+1 points of damage to the skeleton of his choice (no attack roll is needed). If the player running Thaddeus wants to cast his *sleep* spell, you should mention that the spell would have no effect because the skeletons are not alive and the magic of the *sleep* spell only works against living creatures.

The remaining skeletons get their chance to attack back after the characters get their chance to hit. For each skeleton, roll 1d20:

- To hit Darkblade, a skeleton needs a 15 or higher.
- To hit Elanna, a skeleton needs a 16 or higher.
- To hit Niles, a skeleton needs a 12 or higher.
- To hit Thaddeus, a skeleton needs a 9 or higher.

A skeleton causes 1d6 damage when it successfully hits a character. The skeletons have 5 hit points each.

The skeletons fight until either they are defeated or the characters are. If the characters flee the room back the way they came, the skeletons will chase them. The skeletons can't catch the human characters, but they are faster than the halfling and will overtake Niles before he escapes the underground area. (The other characters should want to turn around and come back to help if that happens. One way or another, they're going to have to deal with these skeletons.)

Skeletons are worth 65 XP each, so four of them are worth 260 XP total. Just as you did with the rats, divide up the experience points between all the characters who took part in the combat.

When the skeletons are defeated, the players may have their characters search the room. They find nothing in the desks—the scrolls the skeletons appeared to be working on are nothing more than tattered scraps. The triangular daggers the skeletons carried are of an archaic design, and, though stained with rust, are still useful. The Patriarch gives the characters 5 gold pieces per dagger if they bring them back (20 gold pieces total if they part with all of them).

When the characters get around to checking the door out of the room, read the players the following text:

The door at the far side of the room is made of heavy wood and bound with bands of iron. A large plate of metal is mounted to the door, and that plate is inscribed with a symbol of a bull's head. The door has been locked and secured from the other side.

This door is not just stuck, like the one at the start of the adventure—it has been locked by the inhabitants of the room beyond. The characters may think of a number of ways to try opening the door.

- **Force it open:** They can try to force the door open with brute strength, but it is tougher than they are. It will not open, even if two or more characters try to force it open at the same time.
- **Hack it down:** The characters can try to hack the lock and hinges off the door. Up to two characters can hack at the door, the door is hit automatically (it can't get out of the way), and takes 20 points of damage before it springs open. The downside of hacking at the door is that it warns the inhabitants of the library (the room behind the door) immediately, and they can prepare. (See the next page for more information on this.)
- **Pick the lock:** Rogues are very good at opening locks, and if Niles is present, you can tell the players this. The player running Niles needs to roll a 4 or less on 1d10 in order to pick the lock. Niles can try three times to open this door. If he succeeds on one of those tries, he unlocks it without notifying the beings on the other side. If Niles fails to pick the lock after three tries, the lock is too tough for him to open by using his tools. The characters will have to try something else.
- **Cast the *knock* spell:** Thaddeus has a scroll with a magical spell on it. If he casts the *knock* spell, the lock clicks open immediately (and the spell disappears from the scroll).

The Library

As soon as the characters have managed to open the door, read the following to the players:

On the other side of the door is a large, well-furnished room. The walls are lined with shelves that are filled with large, water-stained books. The floor is littered with bones.

Directly before you are two zombies, unliving humans with their flesh dried and pulled tight over their bones. Their bodies are miss-

ing chunks of flesh. It looks as if something has taken bites out of their arms, legs, and torsos. They have blank, mindless expressions on their faces.

Behind these two monsters is another creature that resembles a human, but this one is more savage-looking. Its skin is the purple color of a bruise, its eyes glow with a yellowish light, its hair is mangy and patchy, and its teeth are inhumanly sharp. It is a ghoul, an undead creature of deadly power. The touch of its taloned hands or bite can paralyze a living creature.

The ghoul points at you and hisses, "Kill them! Kill the living intruders!" At his command the zombies shuffle toward you.

The ghoul in the library is the one responsible for the missing livestock on the nearby farms, and the bones scattered around the room are from the goats and lambs that it has stolen. The zombies are in its service, and it uses them as bodyguards.

The ghoul does not want to fight, but instead tries to flee with its treasure. How successful the ghoul is in getting away depends on how much warning he had before the characters entered the room. (If they tried to force the door or hack it down, the ghoul is alerted to their presence.)

Here's what the ghoul would prefer to do. As soon as it realizes that it's about to be visited by the characters, it goes to a shelf along the east wall and grabs a small chest that contains its "treasure." That takes one round. Then it goes to the northeast corner, where there is a secret door covered by a bookcase. That takes another round. It takes two more rounds to shove aside the bookcase and open the door. After the ghoul passes through the secret door into a tunnel that leads to the surface, the monster is gone, leaving the zombies to fight the characters.

Summarizing, here are the ghoul's actions, round by round:

- 1 – is made aware of the heroes outside.
- 2 – goes and gets the small chest from the shelf.
- 3 – goes to secret door.
- 4 – shoves aside the bookcase.
- 5 – opens the secret door.
- 6 (or later) – escapes through the tunnel.

This "schedule" means that if the characters take too long bashing in the door, the ghoul is well on its way to escaping. On the other hand, if the characters pick the lock or use the *knock* spell, they can catch the ghoul flatfooted. Where the ghoul is in the room depends on when the characters enter. If they take a long time to get into the room, they find the secret door open and the ghoul standing in front of it. The ghoul tells the zombies to kill them, and dashes into the tunnel in the next round.

The ghoul tries to escape, letting its zombies handle the adventurers, unless the characters manage to cause damage to it. If it is damaged (by a hit from a weapon or by the *magic missile* spell), the ghoul gets mad and attacks the party along with the zombies.

The players need to roll different numbers on 1d20 for their characters to hit the zombies or the ghoul. The ghoul's a little tougher than the zombies are.

- Darkblade needs a 10 or higher to hit the zombies, and a 12 or higher to hit the ghoul. If he hits with his sword, he does 1d8 damage, and adds 1 point for his high strength. If he uses his bow, he can attack twice in one round, even against different targets, and do 1d8 damage, but cannot use it in direct combat.
- Elanna needs an 11 or higher to hit the zombies, and a 13 or higher to hit the ghoul. If she uses the two-handed sword, she rolls 1d10 to determine how much damage she does. If she uses her dagger, she rolls 1d4 to determine damage.
- Niles needs a 12 or higher to hit the zombies and a 14 or higher to hit the ghoul. He causes 1d6 damage if he uses his short sword, and 1d4 if using his dagger. As a rogue, Niles gets a special benefit for attacking from behind. If he manages to sneak up behind a zombie, he needs only an 8 or higher to hit, and if he gets behind the ghoul, he needs a 10 or higher. In addition, he does *double* damage—multiply the result of his roll by 2.
- Thaddeus needs a 12 or higher to hit the zombies and a 14 or higher to hit the ghoul. He causes 1d6 damage with the quarterstaff. If he casts his *magic missile* spell, he does 1d4+1 points of damage to the zombie of his choice or to the ghoul (no attack roll is needed) If he wants to cast his *sleep* spell, tell the player running Thaddeus that there would be no effect—the zombies and ghoul are not living things, and aren't affected by the magic.

The zombies have 9 hit points each, and cause 1d8 damage when they hit.

- To hit Darkblade, a zombie needs a 15 or higher on 1d20.
- To hit Elanna, a zombie needs a 16 or higher.
- To hit Niles, a zombie needs a 12 or higher.
- To hit Thaddeus, a zombie needs a 9 or higher.

The ghoul has 14 hit points and, unlike the zombies, can make multiple attacks against the same target. The ghoul tries to hurt the character that wounded it, but if it has to fight its way through others it will do so. It can attack with both of its claws, each causing 1d3 points of damage (roll 1d6

and divide the result by two), and its bite, which causes 1d6 points of damage. However, if it is carrying its chest of treasure in one hand, it can only make one claw attack. If the ghoul loses the chest or puts it down, it can use both of its claws.

- To hit Darkblade, the ghoul needs a 15 or higher on 1d20.
- To hit Elanna, the ghoul needs a 16 or higher.
- To hit Niles, the ghoul needs a 12 or higher.
- To hit Thaddeus, the ghoul needs a 9 or higher.

The ghoul also has a special ability. Each time it claws or bites an opponent, it has a chance of paralyzing that individual. A paralyzed character can't fight, move, or talk, so zombies can hit him automatically. This paralysis lasts for 1d6+2 rounds. A character can avoid the effects of this paralysis if the player makes a successful die roll using 1d20. This roll is called a *saving throw*. As with combat, each character has his or her own number to avoid the effect of the ghoul's special ability:

- Darkblade, Elanna, and Thaddeus all need a 14 or higher to avoid being paralyzed.
- Niles needs a 13 or higher to avoid being paralyzed.

If a character makes his saving throw, then the ghoul's touch has no effect. A new saving throw must be rolled every time a character is clawed or bitten by the ghoul—avoiding the paralysis once is no guarantee that it won't happen next time.

The characters can choose to let the ghoul escape, but they won't get any experience points for defeating it, and they won't get its treasure. Defeating the ghoul is worth 175 XP, which means 44 XP for four characters, 58 XP for three, and 88 for two.

The zombies are worth 65 XP each, so two of them are worth 130 XP total. That breaks down to 33 points per character for four characters, 43 points for three, and 65 XP for two characters.

The Ghoul Might Fight!

The way we've set up this adventure, getting away is more important to the ghoul than seeing that the characters are defeated—but you, as the DM, can have the ghoul act any way you want. With some lucky dice rolls for the ghoul and some unlucky ones for the characters, the ghoul might be able to paralyze and defeat all the characters if it decides to stay around and fight. This might be a cruel thing to do to the characters (and their players), but it would be a good way to show the players how dangerous a monster like the ghoul can be. (And you can always back up and start the adventure over, or just replay the scene in the library, if you want to give the characters another chance.)

The room contains no monetary treasure, but the books are valuable beyond belief to the Patriarch. If the characters bring them back to the Patriarch (or simply bring news back to the Patriarch of the library's existence), he gives each of them 400 gold pieces.

The chest that the ghoul was guarding contains its personal treasure of gems and magical items. The chest is locked. Niles has a 4 in 10 chance of opening the lock (roll of 4 or less on 1d10), or the *knock* spell can be used, or the lock can be bashed in (one hit from a sword or dagger will do it). Within the box are the following items:

- 12 black pearls.
- A scroll.
- A bottle similar in shape and size to Elanna's potion of healing. If a character pulls the cork, the liquid inside smells like peppermint.
- A dagger with symbols carved along the blade in an unknown language.
- A sack made of blue cloth.

The characters may play around with the items, seeking to figure out what they are, or they can take them back to the Patriarch. The items are explained in the "Wrapping Things Up" section.

If the characters caught the ghoul by surprise and defeated it before it reached the secret door, they might not find the door (unless someone thinks to move the bookshelf aside). If they find the secret door, it leads into a narrow, dark tunnel that burrows for about 50 feet and finally surfaces on the far side of the hill from the tower. This tunnel is how the ghoul made its entry to and from his lair. Otherwise the characters can get out of the ruined tower by backtracking, and then return to the Patriarch with their information.

Wrapping Things Up

If the characters are defeated in the dungeon beneath the ruined tower, read the following:

Alas! For all your bravery, you failed to discover and defeat the secret of the ruined tower. You awaken a day or two later, resting at the church in the Vale. Hunters found and rescued you. Your wounds are healed, so perhaps it is time to make another foray into the ruined tower.

If you want to, you can try the adventure again, either from the very beginning, or with whatever changes occurred because of the characters' actions. For example, the corridor may already have the pit in the middle of it, and there may be fewer (or more) rats.

If the characters discover some of the secrets of

the ruined tower, but then turn back before reaching the ghoul's lair, read the following:

You return to the Patriarch and tell him what you have discovered. The old man is very excited by your news, and believes that there is greater treasure and knowledge beneath the ruined pile of stones. He asks if you will return to finish the job, or if you would prefer that someone else gets the honor of discovering the secret of the ruined tower.

Again, you can run this adventure again, either from the very beginning, or with the changes that have happened because of what the characters did the first time they visited this place.

If the characters found the library (whether or not they defeated the ghoul), read the following:

The Patriarch is extremely pleased with your discovery of the library beneath the ruined tower! He believes that it may have belonged to an ancient and powerful wizard, whose lair has not yet been discovered and whose treasure still lies out there, waiting for brave adventurers to find it! Congratulations!

If the characters defeated the ghoul, add this:

The Patriarch is happy that you have defeated the ghoul that was plaguing the local farms and homesteads. With this menace put to rest, he can turn his attention to other matters, such as finding the hidden tomb of the wizard who once ruled the valley.

As stated above, the Patriarch gives each character 400 gold pieces to reward them for their discovery of the library. If they defeated the ghoul, he gives them an additional 100 gold pieces each.

Give the undefeated characters a special story award of 200 XP for completing the story, even if they didn't actually defeat the ghoul. Remember, the Patriarch wanted information, so they still accomplished a lot.

The Patriarch will gladly identify the magical items the characters found:

- The pearls are worth 100 gold pieces each.
- The dagger is made of magically sharpened and reinforced metal. It is a *dagger+1*, which adds 1 point to a character's attack roll and 1 point to any damage the attack causes.
- The scroll contains spells, which a wizard may cast. It has a *knock* spell, a *magic missile* spell, and a *lightning bolt* spell—which shoots a bolt of lightning that causes 6d6 points of damage.
- The liquid in the bottle is a potion of *extra-healing*, which heals 3d8+3 points of damage, or 1d8 if a third of the potion is drunk.
- The bag is bigger on the inside than on the outside. It is a *bag of holding*, and can hold up to 250 pounds of stuff while still being easily lifted.

The players can work out their own ways of dividing up the treasure. The best way to split up the gold and gems is to give every character an equal share. Magical items can be divided up according to usefulness—the wizard should get the scroll, one of the fighters the potion, the other fighter the dagger, and the rogue the bag, for example. Or, the players can roll dice and the high roll gets the first choice.

Each character has a new XP total now—the original number plus any XP earned during the adventure. When a character goes over the "Next Level" number, he or she gains more power, more hit points, and more abilities.

The number of gold pieces a character has is recorded in the "Gold" blank on the character sheet. As the game goes on and characters have more adventures, they can buy things with their gold—better weapons and armor, magical scrolls, and other handy items.

Once the treasure is divvied up and the XP and gold recorded on the sheets, the characters retire to the local inn for a fine meal to celebrate their adventures and brag about their success. They might even buy some more equipment in The Vale. The players can bring these characters back to play again, through another adventure, on another day.



Expanding the Game

In "The Ruined Tower" adventure, we walked you through the basics of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS rules and what it means to roleplay. In the process, we skimmed over a few things in order to get up and playing. Now let's backtrack, explain a few things, pour in some additional neat stuff, and continue the adventure.

The material within is primarily for the DM. You can share the rules information as you see fit with the players, but they don't have to read all this. There are some changes that will need to be made to the first four characters to accommodate these new ideas. In addition, we're adding four new characters that can be played.

The New Guys

On pages 22–23 are four new characters that can be played. They include a cleric (a holy man who has the ability to cast spells and wear armor), a dwarven warrior, an elven fighter/wizard (less powerful, but more versatile, than either the warrior or the wizard), and a paladin (a holy warrior with some limited healing abilities).

These player characters can be used in a number of ways. They may be used as replacements for characters who died earlier. They may also be used to bring new players into the game. Not all eight player characters need to be in the adventuring party—it's designed for three to six.

More Damage!

You'll notice that the weapons the new guys are carrying inflict two types of damage, separated by a slash. For example, the paladin's long sword is listed as inflicting 1d8/1d12 points of damage. What does this mean, and why don't the other guys get it?

Well, the other guys *do* get it. The damage is listed according to type. The number listed first (before the slash) is the amount of damage inflicted on creatures that are man-sized or smaller, and the second number (after the slash) is for creatures larger than man-sized. The long sword inflicts 1d8 points of damage to man-sized or smaller creatures and 1d12 points to the bigger ones.

In "The Ruined Tower" adventure, all the opponents were man-sized or smaller (giant rats, skeletons, zombies, and the ghoul). In this new adventure, the characters will encounter larger-than-man-sized nasties. Make the following additions to the character sheets (of course you can mark up your sheets!):

- Darkblade's long sword inflicts 1d8/d12 (he adds 1 extra point of damage from his high Strength, as well)
- Darkblade's long bow inflicts 1d8/1d8
- Niles' short sword inflicts 1d6/1d8
- Thaddeus' quarterstaff inflicts 1d6/1d6
- Elanna's two-handed sword inflicts a massive 1d10/3d6!
- All the daggers inflict 1d4/1d3

There may be some smart guy who just wants to punch something (or a character who has lost his or her weapon and wants to kick the monster). Without any weapon, a character inflicts 1 point of damage (plus any Strength bonus). If they are using makeshift weapons such as rocks or branches, treat them as clubs, inflicting 1d6/1d3.

Oh Great, More Toys!

With the new player characters, there are new weapons and armor. Let's take a moment and go through them.

Splint mail is a type of mail made of overlapping vertical strips with chain mail at the joints. It provides better protection than chain mail.

Plate mail is the best type of readily available armor. It's closest to the type of "knights in shining armor" that you think of in fantasy. Plate mail consists of large sheets of steel protecting the chest and back with chain at the joints. Note that neither thieves nor wizards (including our elf) can use splint or plate; it gets in the way of thief abilities and magical spell casting.

A **shield** is just that: A flat sheet of metal with hand-holds on the inside. The big thing about shields is that, if you use one, you cannot use weapons that require two hands (in this situation, the two-handed sword and the bow).

There are a number of new weapons as well. The dwarf's **battle axe** is a huge, oversized, two-headed axe. A **war hammer** is a similarly oversized sledge hammer with a large head. Finally, the **footman's mace** is a flanged metal head atop a short wooden shaft that acts like a metal club. Priests tend to prefer blunt weapons as opposed to those that hack or slash, and the mace is a weapon of choice. (They also use war hammers, but never swords, axes, or bows.)

Mitchifer the priest also has a **Holy Symbol** of his faith. These vary from church to church, but the Holy Defender's is a sunburst. Holy symbols are used to cast spells and to turn undead. (Yeah, where was this guy when we needed him in the *first* adventure?)

Where Do All These Numbers Come From, Anyway?

In the opening adventure, when a particular situation came up, we gave you a specific number to roll in each situation, whether it was to open a door, hit a monster, or pick a lock. Believe it or not, these numbers have a real meaning within the game, and there are various arcane methods by which we determine them.

Armor Class: Armor Class (AC, for short) determines the chances of a character being hit and is a reflection of both what the character is wearing and his or her dexterity. A low number for Armor Class is good, so an unarmored man (such as Thaddeus) is considered AC 10. In addition, certain situations may affect Armor Class, like when a shield is being used. (A warrior has to choose between the added protection of a shield or the added damage of a larger two-handed weapon.) Finally, there may be magical items that improve one's Armor Class and particular situations that may raise or lower it.

In this adventure, we base the numbers on the "typical" Armor Classes of the characters. If those Armor Classes change, then the other numbers will change, as well. Check out the sidebar entitled "Figuring Armor Class."

"To Hit" Numbers: In every encounter in the first section, we talk about the number needed to hit. You need to roll the "to hit" number or greater in order to strike an opponent. We're going to figure that out and present it in

Dungeons & Dragons

Character Sheet

Name: **Mitchifer** Player: _____
Class: Priest Race: Human
Level: 2

Ability Scores

Strength 14
Dexterity 13
Constitution 15
Intelligence 11
Wisdom 17
Charisma 10



Armor: Plate mail

Armor Class: 3

Move: 12

Hit Points: 9

Wounds: _____

Gold: _____

XP: 1500 Next Level: 3000

Weapons:

Footman's mace

Damage 1d6+1/1d6

Spells:

Mitchifer may cast each of these spells once per day:

Bless: All characters in your party gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls for the rest of one particular battle.

Protection from Evil: Evil monsters suffer a -2 penalty to hit the recipient of this spell.

Cure Light Wounds: The recipient of this spell heals 1d8 hit points of damage. Mitchifer can cast *two* of these each day.

Abilities:

Mitchifer can turn undead, using his holy power to drive away creatures such as skeletons and zombies.

Equipment:

Holy Symbol (Church of the Holy Defender)

Two vials of holy water; these cause 2d4 points of damage to undead creatures if it is splashed on them.

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Dungeons & Dragons

Character Sheet

Name: **Sunblayze** Player: _____
Class: Fighter/Wizard Race: Elf
Level: 1/1

Ability Scores

Strength 12
Dexterity 16
Constitution 12
Intelligence 12
Wisdom 12
Charisma 14



Armor: None (Robes)

Armor Class: 8

Move: 12

Hit Points: 9

Wounds: _____

Gold: _____

XP: 500 (fighter)/500 (wizard)

Next Level: 2000 (fighter)/2500 (wizard)

Weapons:

Quarterstaff

Damage 1d6/1d6

Short sword

Damage 1d6/1d8

Spells:

Sunblayze may cast this spell once per day:

Magic Missile: This automatically hits a creature of Sunblayze's choice and inflicts 1d4+1 points of damage to it.

Abilities:

Sunblayze gains a +1 bonus to hit with her bow and her sword.

Sunblayze can see up to 60 feet in the dark.

Sunblayze has a better chance to spot Secret Doors. She detects them on a roll of 1 or 2 on a 6-sided die.

Equipment:

Torch

50-foot coil of rope

Small metal mirror

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Dungeons & Dragons

Character Sheet

Name: **Thordar** Player: _____
Class: Fighter Race: Dwarf
Level: 2

Ability Scores

Strength 15
Dexterity 13
Constitution 18
Intelligence 10
Wisdom 9
Charisma 10



Armor: Splint mail

Armor Class: 3

Move: 6

Hit Points: 15

Wounds: _____

Gold: _____

XP: 2000 Next Level: 4000

Weapons:

War hammer
Damage 1d4+1/1d4
Battle axe
Damage 1d8/1d8

Spells:

Thordar has no magical spells

Abilities:

Thordar can throw his hammer up to 30 feet away. He cannot throw his hammer if he is in direct combat.

Thordar gains a +1 bonus to hit orcs, half-orcs, goblins, and hobgoblins. Ogres, trolls, and giants all suffer a -4 penalty to hit him.

Thordar can see in the dark up to 60 feet away.

Equipment:

Lantern
Blanket
Chalk

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Dungeons & Dragons

Character Sheet

Name: **Peregrine** Player: _____
Class: Paladin Race: Human
Level: 2

Ability Scores

Strength 14
Dexterity 12
Constitution 10
Intelligence 9
Wisdom 14
Charisma 17



Armor: Plate mail and
Shield

Armor Class: 2

Move: 12

Hit Points: 12

Wounds: _____

Gold: _____

XP: 2250 Next Level: 4500

Weapons:

Long sword
Damage 1d8/1d12

Spells:

Peregrine has no magical spells

Abilities:

Peregrine has the ability to detect evil creatures and evil intent, at will.

Peregrine can heal up to 4 points of damage per day, to himself or to others by touching them.

All evil creatures suffer a -1 penalty to hit Peregrine and any of his friends within 10 feet of him.

Equipment:

Lantern
Holy Symbol (Church of the Holy Defender)

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Figuring Armor Class

Start with what your character is wearing:

Normal clothes or robes	AC 10
Leather armor	AC 8
Scale mail	AC 6
Chain mail	AC 5
Splint mail	AC 4
Plate mail	AC 3

If your character has a shield, you lower the number by 1. Therefore, our paladin with the plate mail and shield is AC 2.

Check out your Dexterity. High Dexterity gives you a bonus to your Armor Class (and low Dexterity imposes a penalty, but we don't have to worry about that with these characters).

If your Dexterity is:	Lower your Armor Class by:
15	1
16	2
17	3
18	4

So Niles, our nimble halfling thief, has an AC of 8 (from the leather armor he's wearing). He doesn't carry a shield (no bonus there), but he does have a Dexterity of 18. His AC drops to 4, which is a very nice thing for Niles.

future sections, but for now, you are probably asking, "where are we getting these numbers?"

Different character classes at different levels of experience need different numbers to hit certain types of armor. Let's break that down a little. In general, fighters hit a target more easily than wizards, with priests and thieves falling in the middle. In addition, a higher level character hits a target more easily than a lower level one. Finally, stronger characters hit more easily than weaker ones.

When determining how well someone hits, we use a number called THAC0, which means "To Hit Armor Class 0." That would be the number needed to hit a creature of AC 0. The THAC0s for the various player characters are fairly low, since they are mostly starting out:

Darkblade, Elanna, Peregrine, and Thordar all have a THAC0 of 19.

All other characters have a THAC0 of 20.

That sounds pretty dire, but remember that most of the creatures you're fighting have ACs significantly worse than AC 0. To figure out what you need to hit a creature, you subtract its Armor Class from the THAC0. For Darkblade to hit a creature with Armor Class 6, he needs a $(19 - 6 = 13)$ to hit.

But wait, there's more. A number of other situational modifiers affect the "to hit" roll. Strength is one of the most important ones for melee weapons (swords, maces, and other things you need to be close to an opponent to use) and thrown weapons (like a dagger), and Dexterity is important for missile weapons (stuff that is thrown or fired). And yes, this means you get to add both a Strength bonus and a Dexterity bonus when you throw a dagger, if you are entitled to

them. It's a benefit of how hard you throw *and* how well you aim.)

If your character has a Strength of 17 or 18, add 1 to the "to hit" roll for those times when your character is using a melee weapon or is throwing something.

If your character has Dexterity of 16, add 1 to the "to hit" roll if your character is using a bow or throwing something.

If your character has a Dexterity of 17 or 18, add 2 to the "to hit" roll if your character is using a bow or throwing something.

In addition, particular races gain abilities that affect the "to hit" roll. Elves get a +1 bonus to hit when using a sword or a bow. Dwarves get a +1 bonus to hit particular races because of long-standing grudges, while particularly large beings like giants and ogres suffer a penalty to hit dwarves.

Ability Checks: Often, the player characters are called upon to roll less than one of their abilities. This is a handy way to determine if they have successfully leapt over a small pit, manhandled a large object out of the way, or some other feat of strength or skill. If a player wants his or her character to do something, and you have *no idea* how to handle it, an ability check is a pretty nice way of determining whether he or she succeeds or not.

Here's an example: In "The Ruined Tower" adventure, we had that pit collapse in front of the characters. Whether someone fell in or not depended on whether they were moving cautiously or not. You, the DM, might decide that a sufficiently dexterous character may cause the collapse but be nimble enough to back away. A Dexterity check would be called for, and the player would have to roll his or her character's Dexterity or less.

A couple of guidelines here: First, let common sense prevail. Even your most heroic fantasy hero can't leap across the Grand Canyon or move Mt. Rushmore. Some things are flat-out impossible, and don't be afraid to tell your players that.

That being said, you can modify the check upward or downward as you see fit in order to match the situation. If you think the job is fairly easy, tell the player to subtract 1 or more points from the die roll. If you think it's a more difficult task (but not impossible), add a few points to the die roll. You can also declare that an unmodified 1 will always succeed and an unmodified 20 will always fail. (By unmodified, we mean what actually comes up on the top face of the die before changing it with bonuses and penalties. And yeah, this ability check stuff is backwards from what you need for "to hit" rolls, where a high number is good and a low number is bad. Sometimes dice that are hot for you one way will suddenly turn against you, and vice versa.)

Ability checks are a method by which you, the DM, will use your own judgement in a particular situation. We can handle the major ones, but this is a tool you can use to handle those that are not foreseen in this text. It's a rule of thumb, not a rule.

Saving Throws: When the adventurers fought the ghoul, they had to roll a die to avoid being affected by the ghoul's paralyzing touch. This is called a saving throw. Saving throws are used against particular types of attacks with specific results, such as paralyzation (to avoid being frozen), poison (to avoid sickness or death), or against spells (to avoid or reduce particular spell effects, like becoming ensorcelled or taking large amounts of damage from a fireball).

Time, Movement, and Combat

Time: In the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game, time is pretty flexible for story telling. You can say “Three days pass” and three days within the game go by in the snap of a finger. Or you can become involved in combats where many things occur in the manner of instants. In order to control this, we talk about “rounds” or “combat rounds.” As a rule of thumb, your characters (and the monsters) can do one thing during a single round. As the DM, you might decide that several simple actions can be performed in a single round. (“I’m pulling out my *potion of healing* from my pocket, uncorking it, and drinking from it” may be something that takes only 1 round, while “I’m searching my backpack for a potion, uncorking it, and drinking it” may take several.)

Movement: In “The Ruined Tower,” we treat movement in a generally rough fashion, as a comparative idea of how fast characters move. Humans move at a certain speed, dwarves and halflings slightly slower. What does this translate into in real terms?

Well, every character has a “Move” value (also known as movement rate). A single point of movement is about 10 feet, walking cautiously and at a reasonable rate each round. (Thus, a Move value of 12 means walking up to 120 feet in a round.) Characters can run faster, as can the monsters chasing them, but the relationship of their movements stays about the same.

One thing that players are going to want to do is have their characters run into battle and hit their opponents. As a rule of thumb, if they have to run less than half their movement, then they can attack at the end of that charge. So a typical human with a movement rate of 12 can run up 60 feet and still bash an opponent, while a dwarf or halfling can run up to half that much.

Combat: In the thick of combat, who can attack whom will vary by situation. Many DMs use small figures, coins, or dice to show the spatial relationship between the various characters—who is bashing whom, and can someone reach another target? Here are some rules of thumb that are pretty common in the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game:

- No more than two people across in a ten-foot-wide corridor. Yep, there’s room there for more than two, but keep in mind, you are often flinging spells and flashing blades through there.
- No more than two people attacking the same side of a man-sized target. Only so many folk can get in and take a whack at an opponent. More folk can get in to attack a larger creature, and if you can surround a target, then you can attack from all sides. This cuts the other way as well, and limits the number of bad guys that can hit the player characters. So if your heroes open the door into a room full of zombies, it might be smarter to hold your ground at the door and fight them as they come through.
- Don’t fire into melee. When your friends are fighting the zombies, the last thing they need is an arrow in the back. There are a couple ways to handle this in the rules (an even chance of hitting a friend as well as an enemy, for example), but at this stage of the game, just remember it’s a bad idea. Spells are another matter, and may be good or bad, according to the spell.
- If an opponent tries to run away from combat, the attacker still gets one last hit on his, her, or its back. This applies both to monsters and player characters.

Initiative: In “The Ruined Tower,” the players always got to move and hit first in each round. Now, let’s make things more interesting, by giving the monsters the chance to hit first, instead. This is the idea of initiative, of who goes first. Here’s how it works:

- The DM (you) determines what the monsters are going to do. (Which monster is going to try to hit which character? Are some going to try to run away?) Write it down if it helps, but otherwise just keep it in your memory.
- The players determine what their characters are going to do and tell the DM.
- Each side (one person for the players, the DM for the monsters) rolls a d10. The side with the lower roll gets to go first and take their actions. Reroll ties.
- Magic takes place after all other actions on a side occur. The fighters take their swings, then the wizard’s spell fires off.

Now, one side’s actions may change or negate the other side’s actions. If a hero is fighting a goblin, and that goblin suddenly dies before the hero can attack, then the attack is lost. A DM may call for a Dexterity ability check if a player wants the character to alter or cancel his or her action.

Death: Yep, your character can die in this game. In “The Ruined Tower,” we talked about being knocked to 0 hp and being defeated and thereby taken out of the game. In a longer running campaign, death (and the potential of death) becomes more important.

A character that is knocked to 0 hp (or below) is dying. The character will lose 1 hit point per round while dying. Any type of medical attention (binding the wounds or staunching the bleeding, which takes 1 round, but not necessarily performing a magical spell) will stop that reduction, and the character is alive—though unconscious—at 0 hit points. A character can be brought back from an unconscious state through raising his hit points back above 0 with magic or rest.

If a character drops 10 points *below* 0 (in other words, -10 hp), then the character is dead. Kaput, pushing up daisies, cue the choir celestial. Even then, the character can be restored to the land of the living by the Patriarch, who has great and powerful spells. Reduce the character’s Constitution by 1 point and return the character to play after the party (if the party) returns to the Patriarch.

Experience

Characters grow more powerful by gaining experience. Experience is gained through killing monsters, completing specific tasks, and coming up with good ideas, and is awarded by the DM. In the Fast-Play Game, each encounter lists the amount of experience the characters gain. Usually, that experience is for defeating monsters, but additional experience may be awarded for making correct decisions, solving puzzles, or acting according to the role that one is playing.

As a rule of thumb, experience from killing monsters is awarded equally to everyone in the party who participated in the battle. In general, that means anyone that fought the monster, cast a spell, held his ground, or otherwise did not flee in craven cowardice at the first sign of the enemy. That means that a priest who might have used his spells to heal the fighters after the fight, or the wizard who stood in the back rank but helped argue tactics, should all get a share of

Switching Weapons/New Weapons

Here's the scene: It's after a major battle, the fallen form of the warrior is sprawled on the cold stones, dead. The priest examines his wounds, and the other party members surround the pair.

PRIEST: Alas! The noble warrior has fallen!
OTHERS: Alas!
PRIEST: His wounds were more than my skills could cure. He is dead!
OTHERS: Alas!

<There is a brief pause>

THIEF: So, uh, does anyone want his sword?

The characters all start with particular weapons and armor, and the damage that they inflict (and protection they provide) are listed on their character cards. Over the course of the game, the characters may purchase, discover, or otherwise acquire other items, which in turn will affect how they hit their opponents and how they are hit.

When dealing with armor, you can calculate the new AC as listed in the section on Armor Class. When dealing with weapons, the weapon will inflict the listed damage. Note that particularly strong characters will inflict more damage, and hit more easily, with the same weapon.

There are limitations on weapons and armor, according to the character class. They include:

The fighters (Darkblade, Elanna, Thordar, and Peregrine the paladin) can wear any type of armor and use any type of weapon with equal ease. However, Thordar is a dwarf, and his armor will not fit the others, nor will armor made for a human fit him.

The thief, Niles, can only wear leather armor or worse (higher AC). This is because the heavier armors inhibit the smooth motions needed for thievery behavior. In addition, he's a halfling, so any armor designed for another race would have to be cut down to fit him. As a thief, he also normally

only uses a select number of weapons: dagger, knife, short bow, a number of swords (broad, short, and long, but not two-handed), and quarterstaff. He can use other weapons, though he's not trained with them and not very good. When using a weapon not on the above list, he suffers a -3 penalty to the roll (so instead of needing a 16 to hit, he would need a 19). Best for Niles to stick to the weapons he knows.

The priest, Mitchifer, has similar limitations. Like a fighter, he can wear any type of armor, but he is also limited to what weapons he can use. Most faiths take a dim view of spilling blood, so he is limited to blunt weapons such as the club, mace, flail, sling, quarterstaff, and whip. If he uses any other weapon, he suffers a -3 penalty to the roll.

The wizard, Thaddeus, has the greatest limitations, since he is the most effective spell caster. He cannot wear any armor at all, as it messes up the forces of magic. He is also more interested in spells than weapons, so he is limited to dagger, quarterstaff, dart, knife, and sling. In a pinch, he could use other weapons, but it would be a rather dire situation that would cause him to do so, and he would suffer a -5 penalty to the roll. Nasty stuff, indeed.

The elf, Sunblayze, is both a fighter and a wizard, and her limitations are a combination of both. Like a fighter, she may use any weapon without penalty, but as a wizard she may not wear armor.

So, for example, a party consisting of Darkblade, Elanna, and Thordar find some human-sized chain mail. Thordar can't fit into it, since he is a dwarf. Darkblade is already wearing chain mail, but Elanna would go from being AC 3 to AC 2 as a result of changing to the chain mail. Through mutual consent, Elanna gets the chain mail.

In another example, Niles, Sunblayze, and Mitchifer find a magical long sword. Mitchifer cannot use a blade without a penalty, but both Niles and Sunblayze could use the sword. They may determine who gets it through discussion, carefully reasoned arguments, or a random die roll.

the experience. This method of awarding experience is particularly useful for those characters that might not otherwise survive long in combat (such as wizards).

Awards that are given for particular actions should be made to those players whose characters take the actions, solve the puzzle, or otherwise make the breakthrough. These awards should not be split up between party members. If more than one party member works together to solve a particular puzzle, then give them each the same full amount of experience.

Players should keep a running total of their experience. Over the course of time they may reach the "Next Level" mark of experience. Here's what happens as they reach the next level:

- Darkblade reaches Level 3 at 4,000 XP. His THAC0 drops from 19 to 18 (he now is effectively 1 better to hit than he was before). In addition, he gains another hit die. Roll 1d10 and add the result to Darkblade's total (when healthy) hit points. He rises to Level 4 once he gains 8,000 XP.
- Elanna reaches Level 3 at 4,000 XP. Her THAC0 drops from 19 to 18. She also gains another hit die. Roll 1d10 and add 1 (Elanna has an excellent Constitution score),

and add that result to Elanna's total hit points. She rises to Level 4 at 8,000 XP.

- Niles reaches Level 3 at 2,500 XP. His THAC0 drops from 20 to 19. Roll 1d6 and add the result to Niles' total hit points. Thieves are not as powerful at fighting as warriors, and they gain fewer hit points with each level. He rises to Level 4 at 5,000 XP.
- Thaddeus reaches Level 3 at 5,000 XP. His THAC0 is unchanged. Roll 1d4 and add 1, then add that result to Thaddeus' total hit points. However, Thaddeus now is able to learn 2nd-level spells (everything he's cast so far is a 1st-level spell). He gains the *blur* spell. He rises to Level 4 at 10,000 XP.
- Thordar the Dwarf reaches Level 3 at 4,000 XP. His THAC0 drops from 19 to 18. In addition, he gains another hit die. Roll 1d10 and add 4(!), then add that result to his total hit points (Thordar has a great Constitution, as befits a dwarf). He rises to Level 4 at 8,000 XP.
- Peregrine the Paladin reaches Level 3 at 4,500 XP. His THAC0 drops from 19 to 18, and he gains an additional hit die. Roll 1d10 and add the result to Peregrine's total

hit points. As he is more powerful, Peregrine can heal up to 6 hit points of damage per day, instead of 4, to himself or others. He rises to Level 4 at 9,000 XP.

- Mitchifer the Priest reaches Level 3 at 3,000 XP. His THAC0 is unaffected, but he does gain an additional hit die. Roll 1d8 and add that result to Mitchifer's hit points. In addition, Mitchifer can now cast two additional spells per day along with the rest of his arsenal. These are *find traps* and *spiritual hammer*. These are 2nd-level priest spells. He rises to level 4 at 6,000 XP.
- Sunblayze the Elf is a special case, since she has two classes (and is called multi-classed as a result). All experience gained is divided evenly between the two classes, with half going to the fighter and the other 50% going to the wizard. When Sunblayze goes up a level in one of her two classes, different things happen.

Sunblayze reaches Level 2 as a fighter at 2,000 XP. Her THAC0 goes from 20 to 19. She also gains half a fighter's hit die. Roll 1d10 and divide the number by two (rounding up), then add that result to Sunblayze's total hit points. She needs 4,000 XP to go to Level 3 in the fighter class.

Sunblayze reaches Level 2 as a wizard at 2,500 XP. Her THAC0 is unaffected. She does gain half a wizard's hit die. Roll 1d4 and divide the number by two (rounding up), then add that result to Sunblayze's total hit points. In addition, she can cast the *sleep* spell. She needs 5,000 XP to go to Level 3.

In general, when you go up a level, you get a little bit tougher to kill, hit your opponents a little better, can utilize more powerful magic, and generally get more powerful.

And, of course, you get more powerful opponents, courtesy of the DM.

Getting Started (Again)

After playing the Fast-Play Game adventure "The Ruined Tower," your players should be fairly comfortable with the basics of the D&D game. The "Eye of the Wyvern" adventure takes the concepts we introduced there and expands them into the full range of role playing.

Characters from "The Ruined Tower" can be brought over to "Eye of the Wyvern." They retain all the experience they gained, any gold they acquired, and any items they picked up in the course of that first adventure. New players can be added here, as well, and can pick from either the original characters that were not used or the new characters presented with this adventure.

The adventure assumes that the players have run their characters through "The Ruined Tower," but this is not really necessary (although it's a good idea). New players will have to be brought up to date by the individuals who have already played "The Ruined Tower." (For example: "Ah, the Patriarch is a good guy and can heal us if we get banged up," says one player, since her character was healed at the close of "The Ruined Tower.")

Finally, while "The Ruined Tower" was written to be played in an hour or less (to give a taste of role playing), the players may take several sessions to finish this adventure. See the sidebar entitled "Gaming over Several Sessions."

When you're ready to go, read the players the following aloud:

New Spells

As mages and priests grow more powerful, they may learn a larger number of spells and acquire more powerful spells. In the Fast-Play adventures, these spells are predetermined. Thaddeus gains *blur* at Level 3, while Mitchifer gains *find traps* and *spiritual hammer* at Level 3.

Blur—For the remainder of one combat, Thaddeus' form becomes blurred and indistinct. Anyone attempting to hit Thaddeus suffers a -4 penalty to hit him on the first attempt and a -2 penalty each round thereafter. Thaddeus also gains a +1 bonus to saving throws against spells.

Find Traps—This spell allows Mitchifer to automatically find traps (like Niles, but with no die roll needed) for the next thirty minutes of game time. Usually this means one particular encounter, but if several traps are close together, all are revealed.

Spiritual Hammer—For the remainder of this combat, Mitchifer can create and use a phantasmal hammer that flies around and strikes at opponents up to 90 feet away. The hammer is treated as a +1 magical war hammer, so Mitchifer has a THAC0 of 19 with it, and it inflicts 1d4+2/1d4+1 points of damage.

You receive a message from the Patriarch requesting that you appear in his study just after the noon bell. When you arrive, he is speaking in low tones with three burly men dressed in trader's garb—heavy white woolen shirts, dark pants and vests, and holding their wide-brimmed hats in their large hands. Their long faces speak the worries they feel.

The Patriarch looks away from the trio of merchants, sees you, and smiles broadly. "Excellent," he says, "I am very pleased that you've responded to my invitation. Once more the Vale has need of your services."

He motions to the three men. "These gentlemen are merchants, just returned from the farming communities on the north end of the Vale. They have a very troubling story to relate."

The Patriarch nods and the biggest of the three men clutches his hat and says, "There is trouble, all right, your Grace. We just came from the far end and there are all manner of big lizards raiding the countryside. The farmers are afraid to let their herds range, and that means less wool and cheese, and that means less for them to buy from us!"

The Patriarch nods sagely—he has apparently heard all this before. He turns to you and says, "The farmers asked these men to seek my aid. You heroes have in the past served the Vale well. I want you to travel to the northern farms and rid them of this menace."

As the DM, play the Patriarch as a warm individual who is truly concerned about the threat to the region and expects the heroes to be equally concerned. Indeed, the heroes have grown up in the Vale and any threat to one of the farming homesteads is a threat to all. He trusts the heroes with a matter this important, particularly if he and the characters have a good relationship (read: If they depended on him for healing in "The Ruined Tower"). The players will probably

Power Shopping

In "The Ruined Tower," the players were brought to the door of the dungeon with little preamble. Now, as experienced heroes (with a bit of pocket change), they might want to pick up a few things before they get going.

The Vale is dominated by small towns, of which the largest, Haven, is the player's main base of operations and the site of the Church of the Holy Defender (that is, where the Patriarch can be found). There are a number of small shops making a variety of things needed for successful adventuring. Here is a partial list:

Item	Price	Item	Price
Backpack	2 gp	Lantern	12 gp
Belt pouch	1 gp	Map case	8 sp
Blanket	3 sp	Mirror, metal	10 gp
Bucket	5 sp	Oil	6 cp/flask
Chain, light	3 gp/foot	Paper	2 gp/sheet
Chest, large	2 gp	Parchment	1 gp/sheet
Chest, small	1 gp	Piton	3 cp
Candle	1 cp	Rations (food)	3 gp/week
Chalk	1 cp	Rope	1 gp/50 feet
Flint and steel	5 sp	Sack, large	2 sp
Glass bottle	10 gp	Sack, small	5 cp
Holy symbol	25 gp	Thieves' picks	30 gp
Holy water	25 gp/vial	Shovel	5 sp
Horse, riding	75 gp*	Wine	2 sp/skin
Ladder, 10'	5 cp		

Armor	Price	AC Benefit
Banded mail	200 gp	AC 4
Chain mail	75 gp	AC 5
Leather armor	5 gp	AC 8
Padded armor	4 gp	AC 8
Plate mail	600 gp	AC 3
Ring mail	100 gp	AC 7
Scale mail	120 gp	AC 6
Shield	10 gp	Reduce AC by 1
Splint mail	80 gp	AC 4

Weapons	Price	Damage
Battle axe	5 gp	1d8/1d8
Bow, short (2 shots/round)	30 gp	1d8/1d8
Crossbow (1 shot/round)	35 gp	1d4/1d4
Dagger	2 gp	1d4/1d3

Weapons	Price	Damage
Footman's flail	15 gp	1d6+1/2d4
Footman's mace	8 gp	1d6+1/1d6
Hand axe	1 gp	1d6/1d4
Knife	5 sp	1d3/1d2
Morning star	10 gp	2d4/1d6+1
Quarterstaff	—	1d6/1d6
Spear	8 sp	1d6/1d8
Sword, broad	10 gp	2d4/1d6+1
Sword, long	15 gp	1d8/1d12
Sword, short	10 gp	1d6/1d8
Sword, 2-handed	50 gp	1d10/3d6
Warhammer	2 gp	1d4+1/1d4

gp = gold piece
sp = silver piece; 10 sp = 1 gp
cp = copper piece; 100 cp = 1 gp

***Riding Horses:** For outdoor travel, adventurers might want to pick up a riding horse. Riding horses allow speedy movement over normal terrain and can carry most of the adventurers' gear. They are, however, not bred for combat and will attempt to shake their riders and flee if they are attacked (dismounting is recommended if one finds one's self involved in a battle). Within the adventure, horses allow the heroes to cover twice the normal distance, allowing them to reach area 2 in one day. Riding horses are AC 7 and have 15 hp.

A note on purchases: The above are only guidelines. Characters can quickly overload themselves with all manner of gear, so don't dwell on purchases too long. Your players should be after high adventure, not bargains. Check the sidebar about using other weapons for limitations on which characters can use which weapons and armor. Armor purchased is fitted for the race of the character that bought it.

Regardless, it's likely there are items players want for their characters that are not on the list (one enterprising halfling in my first campaign wanted to buy an elephant, for example). There are a couple of options that you, as the DM, can use:

The item is not available in the Vale.

The item can be ordered and will be available after the adventure is over. This is particularly true for special orders.

Make up a price based on the guidelines listed above.

be interested in the Patriarch's offer (what else are they going to do?), but don't force it down their throats. He lets the merchants do the explaining.

The leader of the three men is a large, gruff individual who, if encountered in a tavern or inn, would be hale and hearty. However, in the presence of the Patriarch, he is timid and respectful, and this respect translates to the players as well. When speaking as the leader of the merchants (his name is Lydarr), refer to the players as 'Milord' and 'Milady' and treat them with respect. Here's what Lydarr has to say:

- The merchants have just returned from the small farming community of Wyvern Falls, along the eastern side of the Vale. They have been traveling three days to bring this news.
- The first reports of these lizards started about two months ago. Initial reports came from travelers through the mountains and were dismissed as being "monster tales" and little more than that. Then, sheep and goats began disappearing in the upper meadows. Now the beasts have been seen near the farms themselves, and several people have been attacked and killed in the past

The Vale



We've Got Horses!

The players have the option to purchase horses in the section entitled "Power Shopping," and if they have the money they will probably do so. The horses available are light riding horses and, while fast, are not bred for combat.

What this means in general: If the heroes are mounted and trouble erupts, the horses seek to flee the area quickly (even if they are being ridden at the time). The players have the choice of a) dismounting voluntarily, b) dismounting involuntarily, and c) going with the horse. Each case has several results.

- Dismounting voluntarily: this takes 1 round, and the hero is on his or her feet and ready to fight.
- Dismounting involuntarily: If the hero tries to stay mounted, call for a Dexterity Ability Check. If the hero succeeds, the hero is carried off with the fleeing horse (see result c). If the hero fails, then he or she is dumped unceremoniously to the ground (no damage, but it takes 1 round to stand up).
- Going with the horse. Horses flee from danger, strange smells, burning areas, etc. They run until they are out of danger, at which point they can be brought back under control (if being ridden), or start grazing (if not being ridden; so if your horses run off, you can get them back fairly easily).

Note that all of the above apply to light riding horses, noted for their speed, if not their battle prowess. There are breeds of horses trained for combat, but none are available in the Vale at the moment.

What this means in the adventure: The advantage of the horses is speed; the heroes reach their destination in a day and a half as opposed to three days' worth of walking. Their first campsite is area 3, and they avoid area 1 entirely. Once they get to Wyvern Falls, however, the trail becomes too steep for the horses to be ridden (though they may still be led as pack animals), and there is no further advantage.

What this means in "Wrath of the Minotaur": Players may play the companion adventure to "Eye of the Wyvern" after this. The presence of horses has no effect on that adventure, as most of the travel distance is along mountain trails. Horses cannot be brought into a dungeon situation.

"Hey, we've got mules": Players of "Wrath of the Minotaur" may have mules from that adventure. Mules provide no benefit from being ridden within "Eye of the Wyvern," though they may be used as pack animals.

week. People are afraid to venture out or risk themselves or their herds.

- These lizards are taller than a man and walk on their two hind legs, the upper limbs being a pair of long dragon-wings. They have been seen flying, but are usually on the ground when they attack. They have long, lean jaws and stingers on their tails. Those that have been struck with the stingers (and survived) became very sick.
- About a half-dozen of the lizards were spotted at one time, raiding one farmer's livestock pen and killing his cows. That farmer has abandoned the land now.

- Lydarr and his companions were trading in the area, and heading south, eventually out of the Vale. The farmers asked them to carry a message to the Patriarch, begging for help in dealing with this menace.
- The farmers have gathered up about 1,000 gp to pay for any help. The Patriarch adds that this money will go to the heroes for helping with this matter. It will be awarded after the lizards are defeated.

The Patriarch can add the following:

- The description that the merchants give fits that of a wyvern, a large, dragon-like creature that walks on two legs, flies on leathery wings, and has a poisonous sting at the end of its tail. However, normal wyverns are much larger (35 feet long from muzzle to tail). The Patriarch is puzzled—perhaps these are young wyverns, but then why would there be so many of them?
- As before, the heroes may take any monetary treasure or magical items they discover in the course of their adventures, but any books, scrolls, or other items of knowledge should be turned over to the church.
- In basic terms, the heroes are expected to go out to the outlying farms and destroy the wyvern-like creatures. The Patriarch would also like to know why there are so many wyvernlings in the area, and if there are more of them nearby.
- The Patriarch points at a map tacked over the window. It is an original map from the ruined tower laid over one of the current Vale. It shows the supposed location of the community, not less than three days' travel (on foot) up the valley.
- As before, the Patriarch has no men to spare as guards or helpers. If asked for other help, he provides a letter, set with his seal, explaining the purpose of the heroes and asking that those who read it aid the heroes in their quest. With this letter the farmers will know that the heroes act on the Patriarch's behalf and should lend their aid.

Beginning The Journey

Let the players get used to their characters, buying extra material (if they can) or asking additional questions. Then read the following aloud to the players:

Armed with a copy of the map of the Vale provided by the Patriarch, your group leaves Haven for Wyvern Falls. It is a warm, cloudless day as you pass through the rolling farmland. Once or twice you pass farmers from nearby homesteads taking their wares to market, but there is nothing unusual. The day passes without incident.

The map of the Vale is provided on page 29 and shows not only the route the heroes should be taking to Wyvern Falls, but also the location of the Ruined Tower (from the first adventure) and the Tomb of Alaxus from the "Wrath of the Minotaur" adventure. These are not important for this adventure, but it is interesting to know where they are.

You can just bring the characters along the adventure verbally ("You see this the first day," "You camp for the first night," etc.) or you can quickly sketch out the map on a sheet of paper. Don't mark everything, like the fact that the heroes eventually have to go into the mountains—just the

general layout of the vale, the location of Wyvern Falls, and how many days it takes to get there.

Encounter 1: Setting up Camp

If the heroes are all mounted (and therefore moving faster), skip this encounter and go on to Encounter 2. If they are hiking on foot, read the players the following aloud:

After a day's travel, you are some thirty miles out from Haven and have not seen a farmer's house for the past hour. The area consists of rolling, rocky hills with thick tangles of briars and brambles along the road. Your shadows are growing longer, and the sun is disappearing behind the western mountains of the Vale. It's time to camp for the night.

Not much happens with this encounter; this is just a dry run to get the players used to the camping experience. A campfire needs to be laid. The night is cool but not cold, and the heroes can sleep under the stars without needing tents.

Insist on knowing where the heroes are throughout the night. Usually a party sets an evening and morning watch and breaks the party up accordingly. Half the group sleeps while the other half remains awake in case trouble breaks out. Know where the players who are on watch are stationed around the campsite.

Small groups may decide to just "risk it" and not set up watches. For this first night, that is no problem. However, there will be problems the second night (see Encounter 3).

It also helps to know what is in the area. If the players camp out in a location known for its nasty inhabitants (like near a dungeon or in a swamp), then they can expect visitors. Some wilderness campaigns use "random monsters" that might just pop up in this case. "*Eye of the Wyvern*" has no random monsters, but it does have an evening encounter (Encounter 3).

Get the players used to the idea of setting up watches and being prepared for encounters in the middle of the night. That way it should not be a surprise when one does show up.

After the players establish watches, the DM can merely state "The night passes without incident, and you are ready to begin a new day." A DM may roll the dice a few times before saying this, just to create the impression that something *might* happen during the night. The DM rolling dice usually makes the players nervous. This is a good thing, but don't overdo it.

At the beginning of each new day, spell casters regain the use of their spells. In the morning, the mages can regain their spells through meditation, the priests can entreat the gods to grant them their spells, and play continues. Anyone who gets a good night's rest (uninterrupted by visiting monsters) regains 1 hit point (assuming they were injured).

Encounter 2: Murri

Toward the end of the second day (the first day, if the heroes are mounted on light riding horses), read the players the following aloud:

The group slowly overtakes a lumbering wagon on the road ahead. It is a creaking monstrosity that is

The Fine Art of Winging It

"Eye of the Wyvern" has been written along the same lines as "The Ruined Tower," in that we're laying out all the encounters and detailing the numbers the players need to roll for their characters to perform certain actions. But we're dealing with a roleplaying game here; it's not just rolling the dice and moving your heroes around. Your players are going to do things that are not planned for in this book, like:

- Trying to buy things not listed for their characters;
- Using everyday items as weapons (or even kicking an opponent with a heavy boot); or
- Wanting to know more about the Vale than is listed in the booklet.

Welcome to the fine art of winging it. This is why the D&D game has a DM as opposed to a CPU. As the DM, you're entrusted to come up with answers. When confronted with a situation that you don't have an immediate answer for, you can make up the answer. Often you'll be right. Occasionally you'll be wrong. That's part of the adventure of the D&D game.

Looking at the questions we pulled out of our hat above, here are some general answers:

- If the item is reasonable, set a price. If the item is not, it is either not in stock (sorry, no elephants today) or not available at all (sorry, no shotguns in this world).
- Set up how much damage the impromptu weapon would inflict. The weapon probably won't do as much as a real weapon; 1–2 points at most for a fist, kick, or two-by-four. A torch might do the same but also set flammable materials alight (an additional 1–2 points/round for 2 rounds). Don't give a Strength bonus, and if using a weapon that can break, tell them it breaks on an unmodified roll of 1 or 2.
- Make it up. No, we're serious. The Vale is a small set of farming communities located in a valley. Long ago, a powerful wizard ruled this territory. What lay beyond the mouth of the valley? What other secret places are hidden in its woods? What other creatures lurk on the flanks of Old Dometop? That's for you, the DM, to decide.

Remember, the goal is to have fun with the players within the bounds of the adventure. If the characters are seeking magic and weapons that would make it too easy, they cannot find those items. The adventure should be a challenge, but it should be fun, as well.

much higher than it is wide and seems to be in constant danger of toppling over as it lurches along the deeply rutted dirt road.

As you ride abreast of the wagon, you see that the wagon's driver is a halfling dressed in dark pants and vest with a white shirt and an oversized, broad-brimmed hat. As you pass he calls out to you.

The halfling is Murri Thistletoes, a merchant en route to Wyvern Falls with his overloaded wagon filled with wares. He is a short, talkative individual with a wide smile, large ears, and a (slightly) larcenous heart. He is prone to

Fighting Murri

The encounter with Murri is here in part to show that your players don't have to kill everything they encounter. Indeed, sometimes it's better not to. Treating Murri well results in gaining an ally that can provide healing potions, a potential extra hand in battle, and information.

However, some players may find Murri irritating at best and at worst, coniving. Note that Murri is not evil; he only wants to get the best deal possible. However, combat may occur, and this sidebar is to handle this situation.

With his heavy vest, Murri is wearing the equivalent of leather armor, giving him an Armor Class of 8. This means the player characters need the following numbers to hit him:

- **Darkblade** needs a 10 to hit, with either his sword or bow.
- **Elanna** needs an 11 to hit with her sword and a 9 to hit if she throws a dagger.
- **Niles** needs a 12 to hit with his sword and a 10 to hit with a thrown dagger. If he somehow gets behind Murri, he needs an 8 to hit and inflicts double the normal damage.
- **Thaddeus** needs a 12 to hit with his staff or dagger. His *magic missile* spell automatically hits. If he casts a *sleep* spell, Murri automatically falls asleep.
- **Mitchifer** needs a 12 to hit Murri. None of his spells harm the tradesman (they are more defensive and healing in nature).
- **Sunblayze** needs a 12 to hit Murri and hits automatically with her *magic missile* spell.
- **Thordar** needs an 11 to hit Murri with his hammer or mace.
- **Peregrine** needs an 11 to hit Murri. Peregrine is a paladin and a symbol of all that one considers good and right. Before he attacks, you might want to ask the player running Peregrine if he thinks it is good and

right to attack the halfling. Allow him to pass on his attack if he changes his mind.

Murri only has 8 hit points. He has a THAC0 of 20 and is armed with a short sword (1d6/1d8 damage) which means he needs the following to hit:

- 18 to hit **Peregrine**
- 17 to hit **Elanna, Thordar, or Mitchifer**
- 16 to hit **Darkblade**
- 14 to hit **Niles**
- 10 to hit **Thaddeus**
- 8 to hit **Sunblayze**

Murri defends himself with his sword if attacked, but he does not draw his own weapon first. He'd rather try to talk his way out of a situation. He fights until he is hit then flees. He's a halfling, which means even Niles and Thordar can keep up with him if they want to.

Naturally, harming Murri or robbing him is a bad thing, and he reports back to the Patriarch about these marauders that were waylaying honest businessmen. The Patriarch is no fool, and figures out that the heroes are involved if such a report is brought in.

In the unfortunate event that the players reduce Murri to 0 hit points, there are no immediate repercussions. They can press on with the adventure (ignoring any future references to Murri). Another farmer may find Murri and bring him back to the Patriarch.

Now, it is unlikely that the players will have their heroes attack Murri, but it is possible; hence, this long discussion. They should know that there are times when violence is not the first choice. If they defeat Murri in combat, no experience should be awarded. They screwed up.

homespun homilies ("Nervous as a long-tailed cat in a room full of rocking chairs") and humorous references ("You can be as brave as the day is long, but that don't scale the fish"). Play him as humorous but basically harmless. He does have a short sword he wears at his belt.

Murri asks where the heroes are bound, and if they tell him, he says he's heading in the same direction and wouldn't mind some company. He's heard that there are monsters loose in the area, which makes for great risk but also great profits.

The heroes do not have to accompany Murri; they can certainly snub him and ride on. He's here to provide a little information and perhaps some comic relief, as well.

The heroes lose nothing (much) if they do accompany Murri. It is toward the end of the day and they will be camping in a few hours, arriving at Wyvern Falls the next day, regardless. You as the DM can volunteer the information below in some other manner, if you desire.

- Murri has heard about the wyvernlings that have been terrorizing the area and describes them as huge monsters with jaws as big as a man, dripping venomous slime, and with long, whip-like tails that they bring up over their heads to strike at opponents. Much of that description is based on his perceptions as a halfling, but the line about striking above the head is true.

- Murri is originally from the Wyvern Falls area and describes it as a community of farms with a central hall that acts as the social center of the area. The hall has a calling bell. There's no real store, or shrine, or anything like what you can find in "the Big City" (Murri's opinion of Haven).
- Murri says Wyvern Falls takes its name from a high plume of a waterfall that rockets out from the mountain wall at that location. Long ago, when the evil wizard Alaxus ruled the valley, it was said that wyverns, trained and ridden by minotaurs, were raised there. Indeed, a lot of wyvern bones and skulls were found by early farmers ("As thick as fleas on an elven hunting dog," says Murri).
- Murri has a fully stocked wagon and can offer anything that is listed in the "Power Shopping" sidebar, with the exception of horses (his wagon is pulled by a pair of plodding, wide-footed plow horses). He charges *twice* the listed price. ("You want Haven prices," he says, "you have to go to Haven.") He is a tough negotiator, but if the heroes save his life later in the adventure, he shows his gratitude by selling at normal rates or even offering credit (but he has to *really* like the heroes).
- Murri has two *potions of healing* and three *elixirs of health* (see below) beneath the riding board, along with a locked strongbox (he has the key) containing 200 gold pieces in

a variety of coins. He parts with the potions and elixirs to save the life of another but would prefer to be paid for them (500 gp, easy terms, negotiable afterwards).

- An *elixir of health* is another curative potion similar to the *potion of healing*. Upon being consumed, it immediately cures all manner of blindness, deafness, disease, insanity, and most importantly for this adventure, poisoning. It does *not* restore lost hit points.

Note that Murri is no relation to Niles, even though they're both halflings (they're from different communities). Murri has relatives in Wyvern Falls, and if anything happens to him, his belongings (including his wagon full of wares) should go to them.

If the heroes pass Murri up, he does not catch up to them that evening. A cruel DM may choose to have word reach Wyvern Falls in a few days about Murri's wagon being found wrecked and Murri missing, with evidence of wyvernlings (presumed eaten), but this is up to the individual DM and party.

As stated, Murri is not a combatant, although he fights to defend himself (if, say, someone takes violent issue with his pricing policy). If you're confronted with a situation where the party attacks the halfling, check the sidebar entitled "Fighting Murri."

Encounter 3: Night Visitors

After either befriending or leaving Murri behind, read the following aloud to the players:

You are now some sixty miles from Haven and should arrive at Wyvern Falls tomorrow, if your map is correct. The land has been emptier, and there have been fewer and fewer homes and farmsteads as you've gone along. Now a cool evening breeze gusts down the valley, and it is time to camp.

If the heroes are mounted, this is the first night's rest. If they have been on foot, it is their second. Note that it is close enough to the end of the day that traveling with Murri does not slow the group down. If Murri is with them and on good terms, he volunteers to cook and rustles up a mighty fine stew.

As before (or for the first time) have the players set up watches for their heroes, a first watch taking them up to midnight and a second watch from midnight to dawn. Murri, if present, does not volunteer for either watch but does not complain if he is assigned to either one.

The heroes who are asleep are considered out of play until they are awakened. In general, sleeping characters miss the first round of combat unless immediately awakened by their comrades (shouts do it). They are up the second round of combat (in other words, the round after they have been warned) and are ready to fight normally on the third. Note that they might be attacked while they are on the ground, in which case they suffer a -2 penalty to their attack rolls and their opponents gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls to hit them. They can be awakened by shouts, someone shaking them, screams of pain, or by large lizard-like creatures chewing on their ankles (more about that later).

Choose one of the players whose hero is awake. Read him or her the following (Note: you don't have to send the

other players out of the room—their characters will be eventually awakened by the sounds of battle, and it makes for a few tense moments that their first awareness of the situation is a wyvernling dropping down on them):

It is nearly midnight. The coals of the fire have been banked and their glow bathes your sleeping comrades in a warm, dull glow. The night is partially overcast, and a waxing moon breaks through the cloud cover every now and again.

There is a rustling in the brush off to your right. It pauses for a moment, then rustles again. It could be a small animal, or something much larger. What is your character doing?

Ask this of the one player, and give him or her a chance to respond first (Yes, this may result in having to explain to other players that their characters are asleep and unable to shout helpful advice like, "Wake us up!").

There are wyvernlings in the brush, and these creatures react differently according to what the hero does.

If the player decides his or her hero checks out the rustling, read the following aloud:

You walk carefully toward where you saw the brush, trying not to alarm whatever is there. You see nothing for a moment. Perhaps the rustling was just some wild animal that ran off when you approached.

However, in the next moment, a large, lizard-like head rears up in front of you, its fanged jaws agape. Two more heads rear up behind you. You are being attacked.

If the hero moves away from the rustling (to wake the others, or perhaps to get a torch before checking out the noise), then read the following to the player:

You move carefully back toward the fire, but as you do you hear a heavy branch snap behind you. You look back and see that three large lizard-like creatures, walking on their hind legs, are following you into the campsite. They look very, very hungry.

If the hero does not move (for example, holding still and waiting or calling to the others), read the following aloud:

There is nothing for a moment; then one, a second, and finally a third lizard-like head pokes up from the brush. Three large, man-sized lizards break free of the tangles, slavering jaws agape and whip-like tails flailing back and forth. They look very, very hungry.

If the heroes decided not to post any watches, choose one of the players and read the following aloud to him or her:

You are roused from sleep by something heavy nudging you. Thinking it's one of your comrades waking you for snoring, you mutter something and turn over. You are nudged again into wakefulness. You mutter again and open your eyes. You find yourself staring into the slavering jaws of a large lizard-like beast. It gives a loud, hissing cry and attacks.

Quickly, before combat begins, sketch out the situation on a piece of paper. Show where the heroes who are on

Roleplaying Wyvernlings

Wyvernlings are cunning, rapacious, nasty, dangerous creatures, the products of a magical item known as the *Eye of the Wyvern*. The players encounter several groups of the wyvernlings over the course of the adventure, so some help in dealing with them is presented here.

Wyvernlings are unintelligent, but they do have a high degree of animal cunning. They are predatory in nature and think of other creatures only as predator (if bigger and more dangerous than them), as competition (if the same size as them), or as prey (everything else, which includes the above two categories until they know better). They fight among themselves for dominance but hunt together in packs to bring down large or dangerous prey.

Wyvernlings hiss and growl at each other and roar when they are attacking to frighten their prey. Although they can fly for short distances, they often are found on the ground at night (their night vision is not great). When running, wyvernlings don't hesitate to hiss, growl, or otherwise unnerve the heroes.

One easy prop to use to show wyvernling action is to hold up your hand, thumb in front of the palm. Touch the ring and middle fingers to your thumb and extend the whole outward. You now have a rough approximation of a wyvernling head, which you can use to demonstrate all types of wyvernling activity. Sock puppets work, too, but this is good on the fly.

Wyvernlings do have a natural curiosity and rip open bags, tear apart crates, and otherwise make a mess in their pursuit of food. In this, and because they do not believe there exists any other powerful species on the planet, treat them as cats—big, nasty, predatory lizard-cats with wings.

Wyvernlings do learn over time. If the heroes succeed in trapping one, the others grow more suspect of such traps. Make the wyvernlings a definite menace and challenge to the players, an enemy to be respected (and perhaps feared).

watch are, where the sleeping folk are (probably huddled near the fire), and where the wyvernlings are.

Remember to roll initiative (on 1d10), with the low roll going first. The wyvernlings concentrate on moving targets (live meat) before attacking sleeping targets. The wyvernlings are 6 feet tall (though only 4 1/2 feet at the shoulder) and as such are considered man-sized opponents. These Wyvernlings have 7 hit points each.

Darkblade has a THAC0 of 19 (18 if you count his Strength bonus) and as such needs a 12 or better to hit. If he hits with his sword, he inflicts 1d8 points of damage (because the monsters are Man-sized creatures), adding 1 point for his Strength. If he uses his bow, he can attack twice and inflict 1d8 points of damage, but he cannot use it in direct combat.

Elanna has a THAC0 of 19 and as such needs a 13 or better to hit with sword or

dagger in hand or an 11 if she throws her dagger. If she uses the two-handed sword, she rolls 1d10 to determine how much damage she does (for Man-sized creatures). If she uses her dagger, she rolls 1d4 to determine damage.

Niles has a THAC0 of 20 and as such needs a 14 or better to hit with sword or dagger in hand or a 12 if he throws his dagger. He inflicts 1d6 points of damage if he uses his short sword and 1d4 if using his dagger (damage vs. Man-sized creatures). As a thief, Niles would ordinarily gain a benefit for attacking opponents from behind, inflicting *double* the normal damage, but this applies only to human and humanoid opponents. The wyvernlings do not count.

Thaddeus has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 14 or better to hit. He inflicts 1d6 points of damage with the quarterstaff and 1d4 points of damage with his dagger. If he casts his *magic missile* spell, he inflicts 1d4+1 points of damage automatically (no attack roll is needed). If he casts his *sleep* spell, roll 2d4 dice. This is the number of wyvernlings that fall asleep (any value of 3 or higher indicates all of them fall asleep).

Sunblayze has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 14 or better to hit. She inflicts 1d6 points of damage with the staff. If she attacks with her short sword, she needs only a 13 to hit (all elves gain a benefit to hit with a sword) and inflicts 1d6 points of damage. Ask Sunblayze's player what weapon she is using if she attacks. If she casts her *magic missile* spell, she inflicts 1d4+1 points of damage automatically.

Thordar has a THAC0 of 19 and needs a roll of 13 or better to hit. Before he attacks, ask the player running the dwarf which weapon he is using to attack. He inflicts 1d8 points of damage with the battle axe and 1d4+1 points of damage with the war hammer. In addition, he can throw his hammer, but not in direct combat.

Peregrine has a THAC0 of 19 and needs a roll of 13 or better to hit. Using his long sword, Peregrine inflicts 1d8 points of damage. The wyvernlings are not evil (though they are dangerous), so Peregrine's ability to detect evil or affect evil creatures is not applicable here.

Mitchifer has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 14 to hit. He inflicts 1d6+1 points of damage with his mace. Despite their attacks, the wyvernlings are not considered evil, so *protection from evil* does not help in this situation (you can tell the player running Mitchifer this before he casts it).

The wyvernlings, when it is their turn to attack, have a THAC0 of 19. They get to attack twice per turn, once with a bite (which inflicts 1d6 points of damage) and once with a sting (which inflicts 1d3 points of damage and is poisonous—see more below). The wyvernlings try to bite and sting the same target, but if presented with multiple targets, they choose one (roll randomly for which) and try to bite and sting it. Assign each possible target a number and roll to see who the wyvernling attacks. If possible, different wyvernlings attack different targets.

The wyvernlings need the following numbers or better to strike the characters (assuming the heroes still have the same armor on; if they have switched armor, the numbers will have changed):

Thaddeus	9
Sunblayze	11
Niles	13
Darkblade	15
Elanna, Mitchifer, or Thordar	16
Peregrine	17

Wyvernlings

AC:	6
hp:	7
THAC0:	19
#Atts:	2
Damage/Att:	1d6/1d3
Notes: 1d3 attack is a poisonous sting.	

The wyvernlings strike twice each round. Roll the biting attack first, which inflicts 1d6 points of damage when it successfully hits a character. Then roll the stinging tail.

Wyvernlings have a poisonous sting. A full-fledged wyvern can kill people with its sting, but the wyvernlings' stings only sicken their victims. When a hero is stung by a wyvernling, have that hero roll a saving throw against the wyvernling's poison. The saving throws of the entire party are as follows (remember, a successful saving throw means roll that number or *higher* on 1d20):

Murri	16
Darkblade, Elanna, Sunblayze, Peregrine, and Thaddeus	14
Niles or Mitchifer	10
Thordar	9

Mitchifer's good saving throw is due to him being a priest. Niles and Thordar gain benefits from being a halfling and dwarf respectively and, thus, being more resistant to poison.

Some poisons kill. The poison of the wyvernlings only sickens. A character that fails this saving throw suffers a -2 penalty to all attack rolls for the next day. When a poisoned character attacks, subtract 2 from each attack roll (an 18 becomes a 16, for example). The effects are not cumulative, so a hero cannot suffer more than a -2 penalty, regardless of how many times he or she has been stung. A full day's rest cures the poison, as does such magic as the *elixir of health*.

The wyvernlings are very hungry and attack until they are dead. If they are victorious over all the heroes, they eat them.

Mighty Murri! If Murri is with the party, he gets embroiled in the fight (he might even be on watch). He asks (shouts) for advice ("What do I do?") and takes advice readily (such as, "Wake up the rest of the party!"). He does not want to fight a wyvernling alone. He runs off screaming, "I'm a merchant, not a warrior!" if attacked, but stays and fights if there is another hero with him. Indeed, if helped in combat, Murri is very favorably disposed toward that hero and offers that character his *potions of healing* and *elixirs of health* first.

Each wyvernling is worth 175 XP, the total divided among all the members of the party (we're going to assume you got a handle on divvying up experience from "The Ruined Tower," so we're not going to go into it here). If Murri is involved in the fight, he should get an equal share of the experience. The wyvernlings have no treasure.

Encounter 4: Wyvern Falls

After their battle with the wyvernlings, the rest of the night passes without incident. The heroes still gain the benefit of a good night's sleep, including regaining 1 hit point (if they have been wounded), and the spell casters regain use of their spells. Read the following to the players:

The day after your encounter with the wyvern-like creatures, you continue up the valley to Wyvern Falls. To call Wyvern Falls a town would be a misnomer, since it is nothing more than a single building, a gathering hall used for meetings and fall dances. The nearest farm is a quarter-mile away, and the area is fairly deserted. Several miles away, the thin plume of a high waterfall shoots out over the cliff-like side of the vale.

There is a young boy standing on the porch of this

Paladins, Priests, and Evil

The priests of the Holy Defender, such as Mitchifer and the Patriarch, stand against the tide of evil in the world. In particular, holy fighters such as Peregrine can sense evil in others. How does this work? And what does one do when one confronts evil?

A paladin's ability to sense evil usually has to be "turned on;" the player running the paladin has to say he is detecting for evil. Particularly evil situations (like meeting Alaxus) can trigger this ability to sense evil automatically, at the DM's judgement. Moving down the passage of area 7 causes the hairs on the paladin's neck to bristle because there is evil ahead, but this will not apply to every case. Usually, you have to be close or be able to see the target in order to detect its evil intent.

The ability to detect evil depends on the nature of the target (there are folk who revel in evil behavior in this world) and intent (the target means malicious intent against the paladin and his friends). Animals are motivated by hunger or conditioning, not evil itself, and as such do not register. The undead and magical constructs are not truly living and as such do not register, nor do traps, pits, falling rocks, or other inanimate dangers. Thieves (such as the halfling) may or may not trigger this detection, based on their intent; a thief that betrays an ally is generally evil, while one who uses his abilities to help the other members of the party is not.

Once confronted with evil, how does one deal with it? Well, this is one of the questions of roleplaying and one that is up to the DM and the players to determine. Should evil be eradicated wherever it can be found? Should evil be simply contained? Can evil be controlled and made ineffective? Is it all right to use one evil to fight another?

There are no "right" answers to these questions; it is up to your players in general (and the priest and paladin in particular) to determine how they handle it. Some may take a hard line, condoning nothing that even has a whiff of evil to it. Others may deal with it in a situation-by-situation basis. Some may feel the need to take matters into his or her own hands.

This is part of what makes roleplaying games interesting. There may be more than one solution to any given situation, and as you play your character, you may discover how you yourself feel about particular situations.

lone building as you arrive. He waves as you approach. "Are you the heroes?" he asks, his eyes as big as platters. "Are you the ones that are going to defeat the wyvernlings?"

The young man's name is Bobbie, and his family has a farm about a half-mile distant. He was assigned to wait for the heroes' arrival and to gather the other farmers. He is 10 years old and holds the heroes in awe—after all, they're the ones who are going to solve all of the community's problems. (Go ahead, play up the hero worship angle as much as your players can tolerate; "Wow, are you *really* a wizard?")

Bobbie's job is to determine if the heroes are really the ones that the Patriarch sent to rid the area of the wyvern-

Gaming Over Several Sessions

By this point, your group probably has encountered Murri, fought a handful of wyvernlings, and perhaps met the citizens of Wyvern Falls. You may have played for a couple hours, and you want to take a rest. Can you break from the game now and come back to it later?

Sure. After all, it's your game.

Here are some hints to help you in playing the game over several sessions:

- Make sure the players have their current hit points and items marked down on their character sheets. Put a little "x" next to spells that have been cast. People forget over time, and it's a good place to mark it down.
- Gather up the sheets. This is not a necessity, but some DMs like to hold onto the character sheets, particularly if they might otherwise get lost. If your players are not prone to forgetting things, then let them keep the sheets.
- Set up the next time. A lot of D&D players meet on a weekly basis to play for a few hours. Pick a time suitable for everyone, including you.

There are a few things to worry about when running over several sessions:

- What has gone before. Run through at the start of the new session (briefly) a summary of what the characters are doing and what the heroes have done. If a player cannot make it, decide what to do with his or her character. This can either be done by assigning the character to another player to run, or simply "retiring" the hero back to Haven or Wyvern Falls, or having that character not contribute anything, effectively vanishing from play.
- You may have need to add new players in later sessions. One trick is to have the new heroes "catch up" with the old ones, meeting them in the wilderness (having encountered no monsters, nor gaining any experience). Another is to have new players take on characters whose original players are not available.

It's possible that you'll wrap up this adventure in an afternoon or evening, or you might take a couple of sessions to finish. Roleplaying isn't a race; it's not important how fast you complete the adventure, only that you feel you've accomplished something once you've done so.

lings. He takes their word for it, but someone should probably show him the letter from the Patriarch attesting to their validity. If Murri accompanied the heroes, he vouches for them, perhaps even exaggerating a bit as to their capabilities. Encourage the players to speak "in character" when their heroes are talking to others.

Bobbie, once he determines that the heroes are who they say they are, rings the great bell that hangs by the door. After a few moments, another bell answers along the valley and then another, fainter, one farther away. "The others will be here by dinnertime," explains Bobbie.

While the heroes are waiting, they can get settled in. The meeting building is little more than a single great room with a second, smaller room with cots in back where the heroes can store their gear. The great room is dominated by a huge fireplace, and a single, ancient wyvern skull about five feet across that hangs above the mantel. There is a fenced pasture nearby for any horses.

Bobbie can bring the heroes up to date on the activity in the area of Wyvern Falls. The wyvernling raids started at night; first one farm and then another has been hit in turn. More recently the raids have become nightly, and a couple farmers have been attacked in the day. As a result, no one travels alone, the farm animals are kept in barns in the evenings as opposed to being left in pasture, and guards have been posted over the herds.

Fire seemed to work at first, but after a few nights of scaring them off with torches and bonfires, the wyvernlings no longer seem to be afraid of it. One of the farmers, Old John, drove one out of his hen house with a shovel and is now a bit of a local legend as a result.

Bobbie also says that some of the farmers didn't like the idea of sending for help down in Haven. It was against their principles to ask for help, and they said it was only a matter of time before the Patriarch asks for their aid on something in return. The people of Wyvern Falls are proud and independent. Bobbie expects about a dozen people to show up for the meeting that evening at sundown.

Let the heroes tie up any loose ends (there are no curative magics in Wyvern Falls other than what Murri brought with him in the event the heroes are still wounded), then ask the players if they're ready to meet the farmers. When they are, read the following aloud:

That evening a large fire is built in the fireplace as the local farmers arrive. They are a hard-working, grizzled lot, used to toiling in the sun for long hours and tending their herds of cattle and goats. There are both men and women among the farmers, but all have the same sun-baked, rough nature to them. Some regard you with curiosity, some with outright suspicion. One of the men arrives carrying a shovel. That one is identified by Bobbie as Old John, who is the informal leader of the group.

Bobbie has to get back to his family's farm and excuses himself. About two dozen farmers show up in the hall and gather in a semicircle around the fireplace. Old John brings the meeting to order by rapping the handle of his shovel against the floorboards.

As the DM, you have a choice on how to handle what happens next. One option is to make the players play out their encounter with the people of Wyvern Falls. The other option is to merely lay out the situation for the players and move along to the "action" when the wyvernlings appear next.

Which option you choose is up to you and your own feeling about what the players will enjoy. If the players are getting into dealing with Murri and Bobbie and having conversations in the persona of their characters, then running them through the meeting is no problem. Paraphrase the information given in the texts, and wrap up the meeting with Bobbie coming back with the news of the wyvernling attack. If the players are enjoying hacking at reptiles more, then skip ahead to the next section of boxed text and get them fighting the wyvernlings as soon as possible.

If you go with the first option, have Old John call the meeting to order and say, "You know why we're here—there are a group of creatures raiding our lands. Haven has sent help," he waves a meaty hand at the players. "They will deal with the problem."

Old John is big, powerfully built, and more than mildly suspicious of the heroes. He wasn't in favor of asking for help in the first place and thinks that the farmers could handle the wyvernling incursion if they just took a few shovels and defended themselves. He can be impressed only with actions—mere talk is just hot air, and the fire makes it warm enough in the meeting hall already.

Old John leaves the heroes to introduce themselves and ask any questions of the farmers. The story the farmers tell is pretty much what they've already heard from the merchants back in Haven, as well as from Murri and Bobbie. The farmers call the creatures wyvernlings because they look like smaller versions of wyverns. They are aware that in the distant past wyverns were supposedly raised in the area, but no one has seen a live one up close in generations. They don't know if these are immature wyvernlings or just a particularly small breed of them; they do know they are voracious and cunning. The wyvernlings started out raiding every few nights, but the attacks have gotten worse, and some farmers have since been attacked in the daylight.

There is one additional bit of information, coming from a farmer named Ferga. Once the players have gotten as much information as you think they need, Old John speaks up and gives Ferga the floor. Skip to the second piece of boxed text below.

If you as the DM go with the second option and want to get the heroes bashing wyvernlings quickly, as opposed to proving their worthiness to the farmers, read the players the following aloud:

The leader, Old John, speaks bluntly. "You know why we're here," he says. "There are a group of creatures raiding our lands. Haven has sent help." He waves a meaty hand at your group. "They will deal with the problem."

The farmers nod in agreement, but more than a few of them look unimpressed. One after another, they tell their stories of encountering the wyvernlings. Goats and lambs were found missing. Cattle was found downed in the fields, the rest driven off. Then farmers themselves were attacked by the creatures.

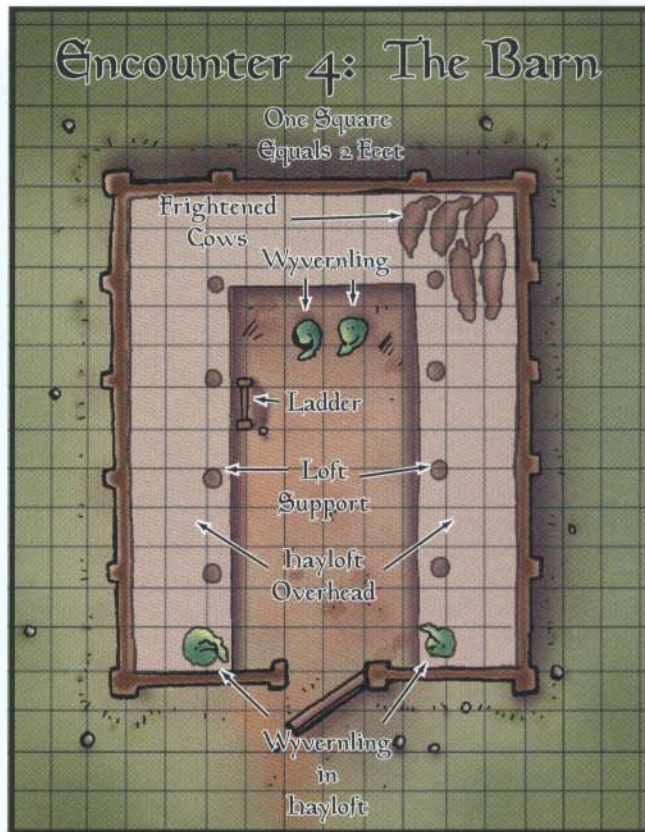
Finally, Old John motions to an older woman and identifies her as Ferga, from a spread up near the falls themselves.

Read this next bit aloud to the players regardless of which option you took in running this encounter:

Ferga is an old, broad-shouldered woman with long silver hair. She looks at the heroes with a steely eye, then speaks plainly.

"I was out at the Falls toward sunset, searching for a lost calf. As the last bit of sunlight disappeared, I saw those—things—coming out of the mountains. Came out of the falls, they did, gliding down from the top on their tiny wings. I got out of there as soon as I could, but that's where their lair is—somewhere at the top of the falls itself."

The other farmers mutter at Ferga's words; this is the first they've heard of this. Old John just nods.



At that moment, the front door of the hall bangs open, and young Bobbie is standing there, his face ashen, clutching his chest from running.

"The beasts," he gasps to the collected assembly, "They're at my farm. They're in the barn, killing the cows!"

The news should electrify the gathering. Many of the farmers spring to their feet at the news. Old John turns to the heroes and says, "Here's where you prove your worth."

The farm is only about a half-mile away, in the direction of the falls. It's a clear, cool night, and the light of a full moon bathes everything in a ghostly glow.

All the farmers want to accompany the heroes to see how they do against the wyvernlings. Enough brought horses that if the heroes ride to the farm, they can accompany them. They do not help attack the wyvernlings (except perhaps Old John; see below for him). Bobbie got the word while heading home to the farm and ran all the way back. Despite his own exhaustion, he accompanies the heroes back to his family's farm.

When the heroes get to the farm, read the following aloud:

You hear it long before you arrive at the farm—the long, panicked lowing of frightened cattle. You arrive at a small cottage with several outbuildings and a large barn. The lowing is coming from the barn itself. One cow lets out a high, keening cry that is suddenly cut off in a bellow and the sound of rending flesh.

Outside the barn, a safe distance away, is Bobbie's family. Two younger sisters clutch their mother's skirt while the mother bandages her husband's arm. Bobbie's father apparently tried to deal with the wyvernlings himself and barely survived the encounter.

What About Bobbie?

The farmers will expect the heroes to investigate on their own. The heroes may ask Old John, Murri, or even Bobbie along. If they do so, then you as the DM should decide if that particular character should come along. Does he like the heroes? Like them enough to plunge into unknown territory and face possible death? Have the heroes been friendly and supportive? Does it make sense for the individual to come along? If yes, then, sure, bring him/them along.

Keep in mind that the heroes are the important players on this stage; the others are here to support them, not overshadow them. Let the players make the choices; the other characters can give information, but they should not make decisions for them. Flashy Murri, gruff Old John, or adoring Bobbie may add some spice and excitement to the adventure (and, truth be told, provide another target for the wyvernlings to attack), but the adventure is here for the heroes.

Old John has a THAC0 of 20 and uses his shovel as a weapon (1d4 damage) unless given another one. He has an AC of 10 and a saving throw against the wyvernling's poison of 16. He has 8 hit points.

Murri has 8 hit points and has a THAC0 of 20. He carries a short sword (1d6/1d8 points of damage) and is AC 8. His saving throw against the wyvernling's poison is 16.

If Bobbie comes along, he has a THAC0 of 20, an AC of 10, and gains no benefit from Strength or Dexterity. He has a saving throw against the wyvernling's poison of 16. Bobbie has 4 hit points and needs to be provided with a weapon (he can punch for 1-2 points). If Bobbie comes along, the heroes had better be willing to return with him alive, otherwise his family will be extremely angry.

Any time nonplayer characters (controlled by the DM rather than the players) such as Murri, Old John, or Bobbie join the heroes' group for an adventure, they should be counted when dividing up experience points, receiving equal shares.

The barn itself is away from the other outbuildings and shown on the map on page 37. It is a large, two-story structure with a single area within and a hayloft above. There is only one large door to the barn. Bobbie volunteers that they have the wyvernlings trapped in the barn, but the family has eight cows within. They don't know how many wyvernlings there are. Bobbie's father attempted to scare them off but didn't get more than a step inside the door before being attacked. He fled and the wyvernlings turned back to dealing with the panicked cattle. The door to the barn is partially open, wide enough for a man to pass through.

The farmers wait for the heroes to decide what to do. Note that burning the barn is *not* an option; besides the loss of the barn, there are still cows alive within. Waiting for daylight is not acceptable either; the cattle will be dead. The farmers expect the heroes to take care of the wyvernlings. After all, they paid good money for the aid.

If and when the heroes decide to enter the barn, they find that the door swings open easily, wide enough for two characters at a time (or they can enter single file, as they choose).

Read the following aloud to the players as they first peer inside:

The interior of the barn is lit by moonlight falling between the slats of the roof, casting long shadows within. The barn is a single large area with a hayloft above. A ladder to the loft stands at one side. At the far right corner of the barn huddles a mass of panicked, frightened cows, their eyes wide and their muzzles frothed with fear.

In the center of the barn, trapping the cows in the back, is a pair of wyvernlings feasting on the fallen form of a cow. One of the wyvernlings raises a blood-smeared head and hisses a warning at you.

Because of the wyvernlings' tactics, it's very important for you and the players to know which heroes are going inside the barn and which ones are staying outside (like standing in the doorway). Sketch out the map (not mentioning the hidden wyvernlings, of course), and ask where the heroes are.

Wyvernlings

AC:	6
hp:	9
THAC0:	19
#Atts:	2
Damage/Att:	1d6/1d3
Notes:	1d3 attack is a poisonous sting.

There are four wyvernlings in the barn, though only two are visible at the moment. The other two are perched in the hayloft, one to each side of the door. The round after the heroes enter the barn, they jump down, either attacking the characters in the rear with a bonus (see below) or trapping

the heroes between them and the wyvernlings already on the ground.

The wyvernlings in the loft are not making any attempt to hide themselves, so any player that thinks to have his or her character look up into the hayloft sees them. The wyvernlings in the loft still jump down on the heroes but do not gain any benefit from their surprise attack. Assume that if someone is smart enough to check overhead, they are also smart enough to warn the others immediately upon seeing a slavering winged reptile looming above them.

Roll initiative, with the low roll going first. The wyvernlings in the loft do not leap down until either the heroes have moved into the barn or they are spotted. These wyvernlings have 9 hit points each.

Darkblade has a THAC0 of 19 (18 if you count his Strength bonus) and as such needs a 12 or better to hit. If he hits with his sword, he inflicts 1d8 points of damage, adding 1 point for his Strength. If he uses his bow, he can attack twice and inflict 1d8 points of damage, but he cannot use it in direct combat. (You can choose to let him fire a single shot at the leaping wyvernlings as they jump down on him, at your option).

Elanna has a THAC0 of 19 and as such needs a 13 or better to hit with sword or dagger in hand or an 11 if she throws her dagger. If she uses the two-handed sword, she rolls 1d10 to determine how much damage she inflicts. If she uses her dagger, she rolls 1d4 to determine damage.

Niles has a THAC0 of 20 and as such needs a 14 or better to hit with sword or dagger in hand or a 12 if he throws his dagger. He inflicts 1d6 points of damage if he uses his short sword and 1d4 if using his dagger. As before, Niles' backstabbing bonus does not apply to attacking wyvernlings.

Thaddeus has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 14 or better to hit. He inflicts 1d6 points of damage with the quarterstaff and 1d4 points of damage with his dagger. If he casts his

magic missile spell, he inflicts 1d4+1 points of damage automatically (no attack roll is needed). If he casts his *sleep* spell, roll 2d4 dice. This is the number of wyvernlings that fall asleep. If he casts the spell before the hidden wyvernlings are spotted, those two are unaffected. If he casts the spell when all the wyvernlings are on the ground, then all can be affected.

Sunblayze has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 14 or better to hit. She inflicts 1d6 points of damage with the staff. If she attacks with her short sword, she needs only a 13 to hit and inflicts 1d6 points of damage. If she casts her *magic missile* spell, she inflicts 1d4+1 points of damage automatically.

Thordar has a THAC0 of 19 and needs a roll of 13 or better to hit. He inflicts 1d8 points of damage with the battle axe and 1d4+1 points of damage with the war hammer. In addition, he can throw his hammer, but not in direct combat.

Peregrine has a THAC0 of 19 and needs a roll of 13 or better to hit. Using his long sword, Peregrine inflicts 1d8 points of damage. The Wyvernlings are not evil (though they are dangerous), so Peregrine's ability to detect evil or affect evil creatures is not applicable here.

Mitchifer has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 14 to hit. He inflicts 1d6+1 points of damage with his mace. Despite their attacks, the wyverns are not considered evil, so *protection from evil* does not help in this situation.

The wyvernlings, when it is their turn to attack, have a THAC0 of 19. They get to attack twice per turn, once with a bite (which inflicts 1d6 points of damage) and once with a sting (which inflicts 1d3 damage and is poisonous—see more below). The wyvernlings try to bite and sting the same target, but if presented with multiple targets, they choose one (roll randomly for which) and try to bite and sting it. Assign each possible target a number and roll to see who the wyvernling attacks. If possible, different wyvernlings attack different targets.

The wyvernlings need the following numbers or better to strike the characters (assuming the heroes still have the same armor on; if they have switched armor, the numbers will have changed):

Thaddeus	9
Sunblayze	11
Niles	13
Darkblade	15
Elanna, Mitchifer, or Thordar	16
Peregrine	17

The wyvernlings in the loft that leap down on unsuspecting opponents gain a +2 bonus to their attack rolls (They need a 7 to hit Thaddeus, a 9 to hit Sunblayze, etc.). These wyvernlings gain this advantage for both of their attacks in a round, but for the round they jump down *only*. The next round, and all following rounds, they attack normally.

The wyvernlings strike twice each round. Roll the biting attack first, which inflicts 1d6 points of damage when it successfully hits a character. Then roll the stinging tail.

Remember that the wyvernlings have a poisonous sting (no doubt the players whose heroes have already felt that sting will remember). When a hero is stung by a wyvernling, have that hero roll a saving throw against the wyvernling's poison. The saving throws of the entire party are as follows (remember, a successful saving throw means roll that number or *higher* on 1d20):

Wyverns By Moonlight (an Optional Encounter)

The heroes have no reason to doubt Fergus's word, but they may want to check things out for themselves. If they're cautious, let them stake out the falls on one of the following evenings.

On the evening in question, the heroes spend the first watch (before midnight) without any encounters. Shortly after midnight, they see a number of shadowy forms appearing at the top of the falls. One, then a second, and finally a third launch themselves from the top of the falls. Three wyvernlings, their leathery wings spread out in the moonlight, half-fly, mostly glide to the floor of the valley.

The players must make a choice at this point. They must either track down and fight the three wyvernlings (not a difficult task; indeed, the wyvernlings are hungry and will catch the heroes' scent), or let the wyvernlings go unmolested into the valley. If they do the latter, there are more reports of dead cattle, and the farmers are even more irritated with the heroes for wasting their time while monsters lurk in the shadows.

Use the wyvernlings from **Encounter 3** if the heroes end up in combat with them.

Darkblade, Elanna, Sunblayze, Peregrine, and Thaddeus	14
Niles or Mitchifer	10
Thordar	9

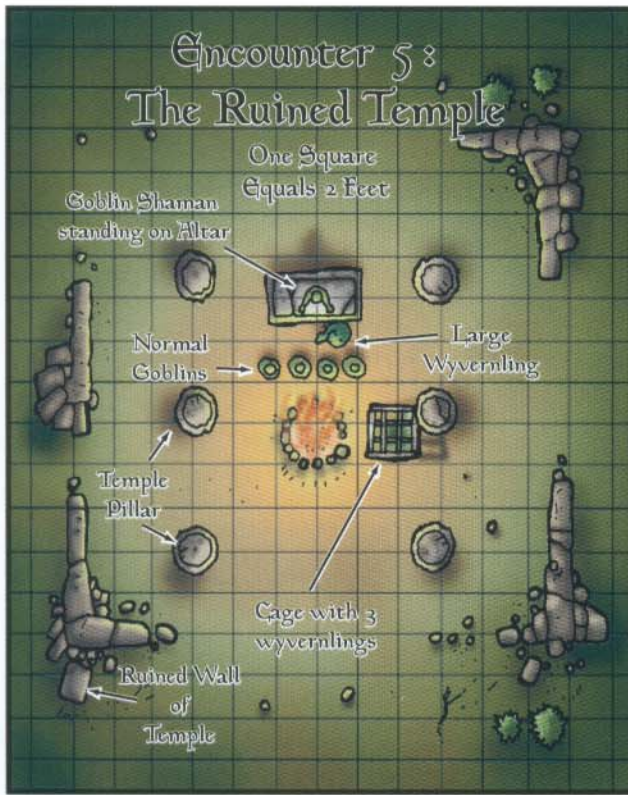
A character that fails this saving throw suffers a -2 penalty to all attack rolls for the next day. When a poisoned character attacks, subtract 2 from each attack roll (an 18 becomes a 16, for example). The effects are not cumulative, so a hero cannot suffer more than a -2 penalty, regardless of how many times her or she has been stung. A full day's rest cures the poison, as will such magic as the *elixir of health*.

The wyvernlings are fighting for their food (the dead cows). They do not retreat, and once they are attacked, they attack the heroes rather than continue eating, so the characters may try to lead them out of the barn and away from the rest of the cattle.

None of the farmers want to mess with the wyvernlings, with the exception of Old John (armed with his shovel). Old John is brave but not particularly powerful. He has a THAC0 of 20, which means he needs a 14 to hit the wyvernlings. The wyvernlings in turn need a 9 to hit him (he's not wearing any armor). He inflicts 1d4 points of damage with his shovel and has 8 hit points. He does not come into the barn with the heroes unless asked. (Bobbie wants to come, but his mother puts her foot down about the youth risking his life.)

There are five cows left alive, all pretty much petrified. If the heroes manage to clear a path to the entrance, they can be easily herded to safety. They do not attack, and if the wyvernlings attack them (say, if a hero hides among the herd), the cows are AC 7 (the wyvernlings need a 12 to hit) and have 8 hit points each.

If the heroes dispatch the four wyvernlings, they gain 175 XP for each one killed. They also get 50 XP for each cow they save (so if they wait too long, they lose experience points).



The wyvernlings, as before, have no treasure on them. However, if Murri is with the heroes, he offers, free of charge, his remaining *elixirs of health*, for use in their expedition into the mountains beyond Wyvern Falls.

If the heroes are defeated by the wyvernlings, the beasts slaughter the rest of the cattle, gorge themselves on the blood and meat, then break out of the barn, scattering the farmers. The farmers find the dying forms of the heroes among the straw and nurse them back to health. Needless to say, they are not impressed with the hero's prowess, and, being a direct and honest people, say as much to their faces.

Encounter 5: The Temple Beyond the Falls

The next day (or several days later, depending on how banged up the heroes are), read the following aloud to the players:

With dawn, the area around Wyvern Falls is wrapped in a false peace, as tranquil as the morning fog and just as insubstantial. Unless stopped at the source, these wyvernlings will just keep coming down from the falls. The path to defeating them leads to the headwaters above Wyvern Falls.

Ferga's story points the heroes towards the falls. There is a rough path along the side of the mountain that passes over several switchbacks before reaching the top. Horses cannot make the trip up the side of the mountain, but a mule can (if the heroes brought one along).

Have the heroes form up a "marching order" for the trip up the path on foot. (If other characters are present, see the sidebar entitled "What About Bobbie?") Read the players the following aloud:

A single path snakes up the cliff wall at the near side of the falls, and the climb is slow and dangerous. At last you reach the top of the falls themselves. Turning back for the moment, you see the Vale spread out before you—the rolling farmlands and deep forests still hedged in fog in places, and the mountains on the opposite side of the vale dark and foreboding.

Your group turns and follows the stream into the mountains. It's a fast mountain flow, swollen by rain, and it rushes past you in a white-foamed surge to reach the falls. The path is along one bank of the stream and a few feet above the flow of the water. Still, the rushing water makes it hard to communicate, and you need to shout to be heard.

For most of the day you travel up the narrow defile, a single route without any branches at all. If the wyvernlings came down this gorge, their lair must be further in. Finally, as the sky begins to darken and the defile is already in deep shade, the gorge begins to widen slightly into a meadow. Up ahead you see what looks like a ruined building with a large bonfire built in the center.

And you hear singing—rough, harsh songs that come from no human throat.

The area ahead is a ruined temple originally used by a wyvern-worshipping religion in the time of Alaxus. Only a cluster of individual pillars remain standing; the walls and roof of the original temple are long gone. The temple complex (and its inhabitants) are shown on the map on this page.

There are four goblins and their leader, a goblin shaman, in the temple area. They have three wyvernlings in a cage for the ceremony. They have captured the creatures and, after a ceremony to "bless" them, intend to release them and let them move downstream as a pack, eventually reaching the Vale.

In addition to the three wyvernlings in the cage, the goblin shaman also has a larger wyvernling that he uses as his personal mount and pet. This creature is about half again the size of the others (about 10' tall) and is capable of carrying the goblin shaman away.

The goblins have not noticed the presence of the party, and as yet the party does not know the nature of the service being held in the ruined temple. The players have several options for their heroes. They include:

- **Sitting Tight**—The heroes do not go forward, but wait for the singing to stop. After a while, the goblins finish their "blessing" ceremony and let the three wyvernlings go. The heroes are attacked by the three wyvernlings. The goblins and the large wyvernling retreat up the mountain and escape.
- **Sneaking Past the Temple**—The heroes decide not to mess with the temple, but push on up the narrow valley, hoping that the temple is not important. They can bypass the temple if they are relatively cautious and quiet. However, three more wyvernlings are let go to wreak havoc in the valley, and the heroes may still have to deal with the goblin shaman (See **Encounter 7: One More Thing . . .**). If the heroes create a lot of noise while they are moving around the temple, then go to the next choice.
- **Shouting to the Temple**—The heroes call attention to themselves by shouting, crying, or otherwise making a lot of noise. The singing stops immediately, and the goblins fade into the surrounding mountains. They leave the three wyvernlings for the heroes to fight, as in the first option.

- **Investigating the Temple**—The goblins are not expecting visitors, so the heroes can get fairly close before they are detected. However, they eventually are detected, and the goblins react accordingly.
- **Sending the Halfling Thief In**—If Niles is present, someone may get the bright idea to send him in to reconnoiter; after all, he can move silently and hide in shadows and stuff. If Niles' player is willing (nothing should be forced), then Niles gets to find out what is going on at the temple. Secretly make a roll to determine if Niles succeeds in moving silently. If he succeeds, then he can sneak in for a closer look. If he fails, he gets caught by the goblins while he is spying on them. Either way, take the player running Niles aside to explain what the halfling sees—the other characters remain out of sight (but they can reach the temple in 1 round if they need to rescue the halfling).

If the heroes investigate the temple (or send the halfling ahead), read the following aloud:

You see the wreckage of an old temple. At one time it was probably an imposing structure, but the walls and roof have long since fallen, leaving only six large stone pillars still standing among the rubble. You notice that the pillars and toppled stones are carved with the symbols of wyverns and dragons.

Among the fallen pillars is a great bonfire, and there are five goblins chanting around it. One is standing atop a low altar and wears a tall, feathered headdress. He seems to be leading the others in their chants. You notice that the goblin leader holds a chain attached to a large wyvernling, larger than any you have seen so far, and this large creature seems docile around the goblins.

Near the fire is a large cage made out of wicker reeds. Within the cage are three more wyvernlings. They thrash about in their cage and look very, very hungry.

Sketch out the area of the temple as noted on the map on page 40. Ask the players involved where they are located relative to the temple itself. If Niles was doing the scouting and succeeded in his attempt to move silently, then he can crawl back to the others and report what he has seen. If Niles failed in the attempt to move silently, or other heroes were checking out the area, add the following:

As you watch the proceedings, the goblin leading the chant pauses for a moment and sniffs the air (pause here to let the players involved say, "uh-oh"). Then his eyes narrow and he points in your direction. He hisses something in his incomprehensible language, and the other goblins draw their weapons—you've been noticed!

Goblins

AC:	6
hp:	6
THAC0:	20
#Atts:	1
Damage/Att:	1d6

The heroes investigating the matter can run from the temple area. If they do so, then the goblins release the caged wyvernlings to pursue them (it takes 2 rounds for the wyvernlings to be released). The wyvernlings pursue the

It Takes A Thief (Other Things That Niles Can Do)

In "The Ruined Tower" adventure, Niles was shown to have the ability to open a locked door using his thieves' tools. Thieves have a number of special abilities that allow them to do things that other characters cannot. In the "Wrath of the Minotaur" adventure, there are some situations where Niles may have useful abilities.

Open Locks: This ability was covered already and allows Niles to unlock doors and open secured chests. The player running Niles can make the roll, and there is a 4 out of 10 chance of opening the lock. Certain locks can allow multiple tries (up to three), while some just allow one, at the judgement of the DM. This ability cannot affect magically secured doors.

Find Traps: Using his thieves' tools and his extensive knowledge of traps and other thief-deterrent devices, Niles can search a box, chest, or door to detect if there are traps present. He has a 4 out of 10 chance to detect the trap. The DM makes the roll and, if it fails, merely states, "You detect no traps" (which would be the result if there was not a trap, as well). Once detected, the thief can foil the trap on another 4 out of 10 roll, but failure indicates the trap is sprung, instead. Let the player running Niles make this roll.

Move Silently: This is an ability to sneak quietly along, perhaps to get past some monsters or to creep up behind them. Niles has a 4 out of 10 chance of moving silently. The DM will make the roll; Niles always assumes that he's moving silently when he tries (even when he's not). The ability is not used too much in the adventure since, even if Niles is moving silently, he is accompanied by guys in full plate wearing heavy boots. Moving silently is best done alone, and being alone is not always good idea in the wilderness.

Detect Noise: This is the ability to listen to a door and hear if something is on the other side. Noises are not distinct; you cannot hear conversations. But you might get an idea of what is on the other side. For example, if there is a room full of kobolds right next door, you might here snippets of their high, yipping language. The undead make no noise, nor do traps or magical creatures that are not activated. There is a 3 in 10 chance of detecting noise, and the DM makes the roll. If the roll fails (or there is nothing to hear), tell Niles that he has not heard anything.

There are other abilities, but these are the ones that may have an effect on the current adventure. As the DM, you can choose to share this information with Niles (Take him aside as play begins; no need to let everyone know about this), or you can bring it up in the course of play. ("You know," you say, "Niles could *listen* to that door to hear if anything is on the other side.")

heroes and eventually overtake them (resulting in a battle). The goblins fade into the mountains.

If the heroes choose to stand their ground and fight, they have a chance of defeating the goblins before the wyvernlings are released. Because the goblins were not paying attention right away, the heroes automatically get to attack

Roleplaying Goblins

There is an off chance that the heroes may capture one or more of the goblins alive. This may be through crafty play or something as simple as a *sleep* spell. In this case, you may need to know a bit about playing a goblin.

Goblins are, by their very nature, evil, unpleasant creatures. They are petty and venal, and the strong rule the weak in a ruthless, bullying fashion. They are pitiless and delight in the pain of others. They speak through a mouthful of fangs and accent their speech with grunting noises. And those are normal goblins; the ones encountered here are even worse—the religious fanatics!

The goblin shaman believes that the wyvernlings are a boon sent by his dark goblin deity, the Great Wyvern, to punish the soft, dangerous humans in the valley. The shaman and his little band have been capturing wyvernlings, praying over them (with the result of starving them for a day or two), then releasing them and chasing them down toward the falls. They believe it is their holy duty and are not dissuaded.

The heroes can understand the goblins, but the goblins speak as fanatics (“The Great Wyvern must be served! Death to the invaders!”). The heroes are a threat to the goblins’ natural order and as such should be slain. They do so at the first opportunity if released or if they somehow escape. They lie if they think that will cause the heroes to spare them (long enough for them to stab the heroes in the back). The goblins have no fear of dying for their cause.

The normal goblins have no information useful to the players. The goblin shaman does know that the source of the wyvernlings is the great rock fall that blocks the stream but does not know of the power of the *Eye of the Wyvern* or its guardian. Whatever they know is sprinkled with fanatical declarations (“The wyvernlings are the Chosen! The invaders must die!”)

Goblin Shaman

AC:	4
hp:	10
THAC0:	19
#Atts:	1
Damage/Att:	1d6
Notes:	Can cast <i>cause light wounds</i>

Darkblade has a THAC0 of 19 (18 if you count his Strength bonus) and as such needs a 12 or better to hit the normal wyvernlings or the goblins, and a 14 or better to hit the goblin shaman or Fang (they have a better AC). If Darkblade hits with his sword, he inflicts 1d8+1 points of damage against the goblins, goblin shaman, and normal wyvernlings, or 1d10+1 points of damage against Fang. If he uses his bow, he can attack twice and inflict 1d8 points of damage against all targets, but he cannot use it in direct combat.

Elanna has a THAC0 of 19 and as such needs a 13 or better to hit the wyvernlings or the goblins, and a 15 or better to hit the goblin shaman or Fang, *if she has her sword or dagger in hand. If she throws her dagger, she needs an 11 to hit*

first in the initial round. After the first round, roll initiative to determine who goes first.

The normal wyvernlings have 4 hp each. The normal goblins have 6 hp each. The goblin shaman has 10 hp, and his pet wyvernling (the large one, Fang), has 15 hp.

Wyvernlings

AC:	6
hp:	4
THAC0:	19
#Atts:	2
Damage/Att:	1d6/1d3
Notes:	1d3 attack is a poisonous sting.

dagger, she rolls 1d4 to determine damage to the goblins, goblin shaman, and wyvernlings, or 1d3 to determine damage to Fang.

Fang

AC:	4
hp:	15
THAC0:	19
#Atts:	2
Damage/Att:	1d6/1d3
Notes:	1d3 attack is a poisonous sting.

shaman or Fang. Niles inflicts 1d6 points of damage if he uses his short sword (1d8 points of damage against Fang). He inflicts 1d4 points of damage if using his dagger (1d3 to Fang). As before, Niles’ backstabbing bonus does not apply to attacking wyvernlings, but it does apply to goblins. If Niles gets behind a goblin, he needs only a 10 to hit (a 12 to hit the goblin shaman) and inflicts double damage.

Thaddeus has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 14 or better to hit the normal goblins and wyvernlings. He needs a 16 or better to hit the shaman or Fang. Thaddeus inflicts 1d6 points of damage with the quarterstaff (regardless of target) and 1d4 points of damage with his dagger (1d3 to Fang). If he casts his *magic missile* spell, Thaddeus inflicts 1d4+1 points of damage to the target of his choice. If he casts his *sleep* spell, roll 2d4 dice. This is the number of living goblins and wyvernlings that are affected by the spell. Affect any normal goblins first, then the wyvernlings in the cage, then the goblin shaman, and finally Fang.

Sunblayze has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 14 or better to hit (a 16 or better to hit the goblin shaman or Fang). She inflicts 1d6 points of damage with her staff. If she attacks with her short sword, she needs only a 13 to hit (15 to hit the goblin shaman or Fang) and inflicts 1d6 points of damage (1d8 points of damage to Fang). If she casts her *magic missile* spell, she inflicts 1d4+1 points of damage automatically to the target of her choice.

Thordar has a THAC0 of 19 and needs a roll of 13 or better to hit the goblins or the normal wyvernlings. He needs a 15 or better to hit the goblin shaman or Fang. He inflicts 1d8 points of damage with the battle axe to all targets and 1d4+1 points of damage with the war hammer (1d4 points of damage to Fang with the war hammer). In addition, he can throw his hammer, but not in direct combat.

Peregrine has a THAC0 of 19 and needs a roll of 13 or better to hit the goblins or wyvernlings, and a 15 or better to hit the goblin shaman or Fang. Using his long sword, Peregrine inflicts 1d8 points of damage to the smaller targets and 1d12 points of damage to Fang. The wyvernlings are not evil, but the goblins are, so the goblins have a harder time striking Peregrine and those near him.

the wyvernlings or the goblins, and a 13 to hit the goblin shaman or Fang. If she uses the two-handed sword, she rolls 1d10 to determine how much damage she inflicts against the goblins, goblin shaman, and wyvernlings, or 3d6 to determine damage against Fang. If she uses her

Niles has a THAC0 of 20 and as such needs a 14 or better to hit the wyvernlings or goblins, and a 16 to hit the goblin shaman or Fang *if he is using his sword or dagger in hand. If he throws his dagger, he needs a 12 or better to hit the wyvernlings or goblins, and a 14 or better to hit the goblin*

Mitchifer has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 14 to hit the wyvernlings and goblins and a 16 or better to hit the goblin shaman or Fang. He inflicts 1d6+1 points of damage with his mace to the goblins, goblin shaman, and the normal wyvernlings, but only 1d6 points of damage to Fang. The wyvernlings are not evil, but the goblins are, so *protection from evil* helps in attacks by the goblins against Mitchifer.

The goblins try to attempt to free the caged the wyvernlings and let them take on the heroes. One goblin makes for the cage while the others engage the heroes. It takes that goblin 1 round to reach the cage and 1 more to open the front (standing on top of it to avoid the wyvernlings).

The goblin shaman remains with his pet at the altar for the first round. If the first goblin is kept from opening the cage, the goblin shaman attempts to make his way to the cage (with Fang) and open the cage door himself (again, this takes 2 rounds).

The goblins have a THAC0 of 20 and get to attack once per round, inflicting 1d6 points of damage if they hit. Note that as the goblins attack, one of their number is heading for the cage (far-seeing players may have one of their heroes head for the cage to prevent this, in which case the goblin must defeat the hero before letting loose the wyvernlings).

The normal goblins need the following numbers or better to hit the heroes:

Thaddeus	10
Sunblayze	12
Niles	14
Darkblade	16
Elanna, Mitchifer, or Thordar	17
Peregrine	18

In addition, anyone within 10 feet of Peregrine (including Peregrine himself) gains some measure of protection from the paladin's holy aura. Subtract 1 from any attack roll made by a goblin (including the goblin shaman) against a hero within 10 feet of Peregrine. Similarly, if a hero is the recipient of Mitchifer's *protection from evil* spell, then subtract 2 from any attack roll made by a goblin against that hero. "Natural" twenties (those that are 20 on the die) hit normally.

The goblin shaman seeks to make sure the wyvernlings are loose first before wading into combat, but if the heroes attack him, he fights as well. He is carrying an iron-tipped club and also has some spell ability. He can cast a spell called *cause light wounds*, which is the reverse of the *cure light wounds* spell. When he casts it, for that round, his hand is illuminated with a black aura, and should he touch an opponent (an attack roll is required) he automatically inflicts 1d8 points of damage. He can do this twice, and after that he uses his club (for 1d6 points of damage). The goblin shaman needs the following numbers to strike the various heroes:

Thaddeus	9
Sunblayze	11
Niles	13
Darkblade	15
Elanna, Mitchifer, or Thordar	16
Peregrine	17

More dangerous than the goblin shaman is his pet, Fang, who remains at his side in the combat. Fang has the same THAC0 as the normal wyvernlings (19) and inflicts the same damage if it hits, but it has more hit points than its fellows, as it has been well-tended by the goblin shaman.

Who Gets to Test the Potion?

Magic rarely comes with an operator's manual. Often, magical items are found in the tombs and dungeons without any clue as to what they are. A battered piece of armor may be an ancient artifact, and an oily, viscous liquid may be exactly what the players need at this moment, should they only realize it.

By the same token, that battered piece of armor may be useless scrap, or, worse yet, may be under the onus of an elder curse that causes more harm than good. And that thick, oily liquid may be a deadly poison, waiting for a hapless victim to consume it.

If the players bring magical items back to Haven, the Patriarch gladly identifies them in a manner that involves minimal danger. However, in the dungeon itself, trial and error may be called upon. Here are some helpful hints:

- Look to those with good saving throws. If poison is involved, halflings and dwarves have great saves. Dwarves also benefit from good saving throws from magic. For other matters, priests such as Mitchifer have a high resistance.
- Keep curative magic handy. If the priest or paladin is on hand, keep them close. Their abilities may be needed.
- Decide who among the party is trying the potion (or the armor, or whatever). The one who risks his life in this manner should be rewarded (a bit more experience from the DM—say 20 XP—or first dibs on the item if it turns out to be useful).

Questions about who risks life and limb to find out what a mysterious item does are standard grist for inter-party relationships. Let the players figure out among themselves how to resolve such matters, stepping in only if they are truly argumentative and slow down play. Spreading the risk around is usually a good idea, and if anyone is felled by some piece of unknown magecraft, strongly recommend that the survivors get the body back to Haven to be restored to life by the Patriarch.

The normal-sized wyvernlings, should they get loose, have a THAC0 of 19. They get to attack twice per turn, once with a bite (which inflicts 1d6 points of damage) and once with a sting (which inflicts 1d3 points of damage and is poisonous—see more below). The wyvernlings try to bite and sting the same target, but if presented with multiple targets, choose one (roll randomly for which) and try to bite and sting it. Assign each possible target a number and roll to see who the wyvernling attacks. If possible, the wyvernlings each attack a different target.

The wyvernlings (normal or economy-sized) need the following numbers or better to strike the characters:

Thaddeus	9
Sunblayze	11
Niles	13
Darkblade	15
Elanna, Mitchifer, or Thordar	16
Peregrine	17

The Celebration (an optional encounter)

The players may decide, after defeating the goblin shaman, that the menace of the wyvernlings is dealt with and return in triumph to Wyvern Falls. If they do, they are greeted as heroes by the people of the Falls area, and a celebration (premature as it turns out) is established in their honor. The heroes are provided with curative medicines by thankful farmers if they are injured.

Then read the players the following aloud:

You return to Wyvern Falls with word of your exploits. The news quickly spreads that you have dealt with the menace to the community, and a celebration is quickly planned for your benefit.

That evening, most of the community is gathered at the meeting hall, some people riding from far up the vale to see the heroes who have rid the area of the wyvernling menace. A huge side of beef is roasting on a spit over the fire, and you are plied with local delicacies while the young people ask you to tell the story of defeating the wyvernlings again. Even Old John seems impressed with your accomplishments.

The celebration is short-lived, however, for at the height of the party there is an inhuman scream from the paddock area. One of the farmers bursts into the main hall, shouting, "The beasts! They're back! And they're attacking the horses!"

The heroes have two problems now. First, they must defeat the wyvernlings that have crashed their party. There are four such wyvernlings, and they are similar to the ones in Encounter 4.

The heroes' other problem is that, with the wyvernling attack, it is clear to the farmers that the heroes have not solved the problem. The farmers drift off, some refusing to look at the heroes, others staring with accusing glances. The last one present is Old John, who nods towards the mountain cliffs and says simply, "It looks like your job's not done. You better get back up there and finish it."

The wyvernlings strike twice each round. Roll the biting attack first, (which inflicts 1d6 points of damage) when it successfully hits a character. Then roll the stinging tail.

When a hero is stung by a wyvernling, have that hero roll a saving throw against the wyvernling's poison. The saving throws of the entire party are as follows (remember, a successful saving throw means roll that number or higher on 1d20):

Darkblade, Elanna, Sunblayze, Peregrine, and Thaddeus	14
Niles or Mitchifer	10
Thordar	9

A character that fails his or her saving throw suffers a -2 penalty to attack rolls for the next day. When a poisoned character attacks, subtract 2 from each die roll (an 18 becomes a 16, for example). The effects are not cumulative, so a hero cannot suffer more than a -2 penalty, regardless of how many times he or she has been stung. A full day's rest cures the poison, as does such magic as the *elixir of health*.

The wyvernlings fight until slain, as do the normal goblins. If all the goblins are slain, the goblin shaman seeks to escape by climbing on the back of Fang and taking off. The heroes immediately next to Fang (those that were already fighting it) get one last attack, and those with missile weapons (bows or weapons that can be thrown) get one last chance to strike the wyvernling before it disappears into the night. As it is night, any weapons thrown or fired at the fleeing goblin shaman and his mount are at a -2 penalty to hit (subtract two from the attack roll).

If the heroes are defeated, they are offered to the goblin's pet as a special meal. Go to the end of the adventure, choosing the ending in which the characters do not return from the mountains.

If the goblins are defeated and their leader slain or driven off before the wyvernlings in the cage are released, then it is a simple matter to dispatch the beasts without risk to the heroes (by bow fire, torches, or other matters). Experience is reduced in this case (see below) but then again, so is the risk involved.

The four goblins are worth 15 XP each. The goblin shaman is worth 50 XP. The wyvernlings in the cage are worth 175 XP each if defeated in combat, but award only 60 XP for each one if they are killed in the cage and pose no real threat. Fang is worth 250 XP.

Once the goblins are defeated, the heroes may check out the area of the temple. The goblin shaman has a satchel behind the altar loaded with 500 gold pieces and two rubies worth 500 gp each. There are also two special *protection from poison* scrolls, clearly labeled as such. These can be read by any character. The protection applies only to the reader, and for the duration of one combat, that character is immune to the effects of poison. The scroll is consumed and vanishes when read. The goblin shaman leaves this satchel behind if he flees.

The goblin shaman also carries on him two *elixirs of health* (it always pays to be cautious when dealing with wyvernlings) and a map. The map is unreadable but does show the falls, the temple, and a third location further up the narrow valley. That's the wyvern's lair, and the true origin point of the wyvernlings.

The goblin's metal-tipped club is a *staff of curing* with all of its charges expended. It can be recharged by someone like the Patriarch, and he does so if the players bring it back to him. (see the section entitled "Wrapping Things Up")

If the goblin shaman flees the scene successfully, he takes his potions and map with him. He takes his metal-tipped club with him only if he is conscious when he flees. Otherwise, he drops it as Fang drags him off.

Encounter 6: Lair of the Wyvern

The battle at the temple in Encounter 5 occurs toward the end of the day. The heroes have a day (or two or three if they really need to heal up) to recover. Read the following aloud to the players:

You travel for the better part of the day, the tiny valley closing in again into a narrow defile that continues into the mountains. After a short distance, a landslide blocks the way, the stream rising out of the shattered rocks in a roaring cascade. The trail goes no further. The avalanche is recent, for the stones are still sharp and newly broken. Far up the hill of toppled rock is a great cavern torn in the side of the mountain.

Halfway up the slope something red gleams in the late afternoon sun. As you watch, the sun strikes the large, reddish gem, and it starts to glimmer. Slowly, mist gathers around the gem, forming into the shape of a wyvernling.

The reddish gem is the *Eye of the Wyvern*, a magical device that had been used by the ancient and powerful wizard Alaxus long ago to quickly summon wyvernlings. The device was hidden away in the cavern, but the recent rockslide dislodged it and exposed it to sunlight.

The *Eye of the Wyvern* is a large, flat, red crystal about a foot across, set in a brass holder that supports the crystal on three legs (currently folded up beneath the crystal). When there is sufficient direct sunlight, a wyvernling is created. It takes about an hour of such sun, but given the location of the slide in the defile and the recent weather, usually about three to four wyvernlings are created each day.

It takes 2 rounds for a wyvernling to come into being once there is sufficient light. The first round, the wyvernling has a ghostly, insubstantial form, while on the second, it takes more corporeal shape. The wyvernling cannot be harmed the first round, but it can the second (with its normal Armor Class of 6). After the second round, the wyvernling moves and attacks normally.

The current wyvernling is in the first round of being formed. In the second round, it becomes solid enough to be attacked, and the round after that, it attacks. It takes the heroes 2 rounds to reach the *Eye of the Wyvern*, which means the wyvernling can be attacked with missile weapons (thrown daggers or arrows) and spells the second round, but the wyvernling is able to close with the heroes and attack back in the third round and beyond. This single wyvernling is large (about the size of Fang) and has 9 hit points. The effects of attacking it (and being attacked by it) are summarized below.

Once the heroes reach the *Eye of the Wyvern*, read the following aloud:

You climb up the loose rock of the slide. The red gleam comes from a great reddish crystal set in a brass stand lying among the rubble of the recent landslide. The air seems to ripple around it, and your hair rises on the back of your neck as you approach it. It has just created a wyvernling; this is the source of the reptilian raiders.

As you near it, you hear a great roar from farther up the slope. At the entrance of the cavern is a huge wyvern—a real one, over 35 feet long from fanged muzzle to poisonous tail. It shrieks a defiant roar and charges at you.

The heroes have 1 round to react as the wyvern closes on them. They can use this round to fire missile weapons, cast spells, or set up their own attack.

The wyvern is a huge flying lizard. Its front limbs are great, leathery wings, and it has a wicked spike at the end

of its tale. Make clear to the players that this is no wyvernling; this is the real deal, a big, nasty creature that is difficult to take down. The wyvern has 40 hit points. Here's what the heroes need to hit:

Large Wyvernling

AC: 6
hp: 9
THAC0: 19
#Atts: 2
Damage/Att: 1d6/1d3
Notes: 1d3 attack is a poisonous sting.

man-sized). If he uses his bow, he can attack twice and inflict 1d8 points of damage, regardless of the target, but he cannot use it in direct combat.

Wyvern

AC: 3
hp: 40
THAC0: 13
#Atts: 2
Damage/Att: 2d8/1d6
Notes: 1d6 attack is a deadly poisonous sting.

rolls 3d6 to determine damage to either creature. If she uses her dagger, she rolls 1d3 to determine damage.

Niles has a THAC0 of 20 and as such needs a 14 or better to hit the wyvernling and a 17 or better to hit the wyvern with sword or dagger in hand, or a 12 or better to hit the wyvernling and a 15 or better to hit the wyvern if he throws his dagger. He inflicts 1d8 points of damage with his short sword and 1d3 if using his dagger. He does not receive a bonus for 'backstabbing' either monster.

Thaddeus has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 14 or better to hit the wyvernling and a 17 or better to hit the wyvern. He inflicts 1d6 points of damage with the quarterstaff and 1d3 points of damage with his dagger. If he casts his *magic missile* spell, he inflicts 1d4+1 points of damage automatically. If he casts his *sleep* spell, the wyvernling falls asleep automatically, but the wyvern itself is too powerful to be affected by this spell.

Sunblayze has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 14 or better to hit the wyvernling and 17 or better to strike the wyvern. She inflicts 1d6 points of damage with the staff. If she attacks with her short sword, she needs only a 13 to hit the wyvernling and 14 to hit the wyvern and inflicts 1d8 points of damage. Ask Sunblayze's player which weapon she is using if she attacks. If she casts her *magic missile* spell, she inflicts 1d4+1 points of damage automatically.

Thorar has a THAC0 of 19 and needs a roll of 13 or better to hit the wyvernling and a 16 or better to hit the wyvern. He inflicts 1d8 points of damage with the battle axe and 1d4 points of damage with the war hammer. In addition, he can throw his hammer, but not in direct combat.

Peregrine has a THAC0 of 19 and needs a roll of 13 or better to hit the wyvernling and a 16 or better to hit the wyvern. Using his long sword, Peregrine inflicts 1d12 points of damage. Neither wyvern nor wyvernlings are evil, so Peregrine's ability to detect evil or affect evil creatures is not applicable here.

Mitchifer has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 14 to hit the wyvernling and a 17 to hit the wyvern. He inflicts 1d6

Darkblade has a THAC0 of 19 (18 when you count his Strength bonus) and as such needs a 12 or better to hit the wyvernling and a 15 or better to hit the wyvern. If he hits with his sword, he inflicts 1d12 points of damage (both the large wyvernling and the wyvern itself are larger than

Elanna has a THAC0 of 19 and as such needs a 13 or better to hit the wyvernling and a 16 or better to hit the wyvern with sword or dagger in hand, or an 11 or better to hit the wyvernling and a 14 or better to hit the wyvern if she throws her dagger. If she uses the two-handed sword, she

points of damage with his mace. Despite their attacks, neither the wyvernling or the wyvern are evil, so *protection from evil* does not help in this situation.

The wyvernling, as before, has a THAC0 of 19. It gets to attack twice per turn, once with a bite (which inflicts 1d6 points of damage) and once with a sting (which inflicts 1d3 points of damage and is poisonous).

The wyvern has a THAC0 of 13. Like the wyvernling, it may attack twice per turn, biting for 2d8 points of damage and using its poisonous sting for 1d6 points of damage. Unlike the wyvernling, it may attack different targets (if available—if it's fighting one hero, that hero must deal with both the wyvern's bite and its sting).

The wyvernling needs the following numbers or better to strike the characters:

Thaddeus	9
Sunblayze	11
Niles	13
Darkblade	15
Elanna, Mitchifer, or Thordar	16
Peregrine	17

The wyvern needs the following numbers or better to hit:

Thaddeus	3
Sunblayze	5
Niles	7
Darkblade	9
Elanna, Mitchifer, or Thordar	10
Peregrine	11

Both the wyvernling and the wyvern have a poisonous sting. The saving throw against that sting is the same, but the effects are different. Here are the saving throws for the party:

Darkblade, Elanna, Sunblayze, Peregrine, and Thaddeus	14
Niles or Mitchifer	10
Thordar	9

The poison of the wyvernlings sickens its target. A character that fails his or her saving throw is suffers a -2 penalty to attack rolls for the next day. When rolling attacks by a poisoned character, subtract 2 from each attack roll. The effects are not cumulative, so a hero cannot suffer more than a -2 penalty, regardless of how many times he or she has been stung. A full day's rest cures the poison, as does such magic as the *elixir of health*.

The poison of the wyvern *kills*. Characters that fail this saving throw drop their weapons, fall to their knees, and quickly expire. Hit points don't matter. If curative magic of sufficient power (in this case, an *elixir of health*) is applied within 10 rounds, the character can recover (and begin fighting again in the round following recovery). Otherwise he or she is dead.

This is a nasty encounter, and the players should prepare for the fight. If the *protection from poison* scrolls are still around, two characters who plan to get in the thick of things with the wyvern should read them. Missile weapons should be used against the wyvern as it descends upon the group, and the priest, if present, should start off with a *bless* spell (to help the rest of the heroes in their attacks) and have his *cure light wounds* spells ready; even without the poisonous sting, the wyvern's bite can kill a hero.

If you, as the DM, think that your characters are over-matched here (only one or two is still standing by the time they reach this encounter), then feel free to drop the wyvern's poison to that of the wyvernling. The purpose of this encounter is to challenge the players with a powerful monster, not to wipe them out without a chance of harming the wyvern.

Similarly, players should be rewarded for improvising. They are fighting on a recent rock-fall, and someone may think to get above the wyvern and push rocks down on it. Doing so causes an additional avalanche. The heroes have a chance to make Dexterity ability checks to get out of the way (roll the character's Dexterity or *less* on 1d20), but the wyvern is not so lucky; it is struck automatically. Any characters or creatures caught under the barrage of falling rock suffer 5d6 points of damage, and the wyvern, if it is still alive at this point, is trapped for the next 3 rounds.

The large wyvernling is worth 250 XP, while the wyvern itself is worth 1,400 XP.

Once the wyvern (and wyvernling) is disposed of, the heroes have two things to investigate. One is the *Eye of the Wyvern* and the other is the wyvern's cave. The *Eye* can be easily smashed, destroying its power forever. Its power can be negated by putting it out of the light of the sun (say, in a pack or sack, or even beneath a cloak).

The cave was once a hidden repository of treasure for Alaxus, the minotaur mage. There are several large chests, which have split their sides from exposure to the elements, spilling gold and gems across the stone floor. There are 7,000 gp in the cavern, 6,000 sp, and five large rubies, each worth 1,000 gp. The entire haul is worth 12,600 gp, not bad pay for killing a lizard.

In addition, hanging along the back wall is a broadsword, a short sword, a mace, and a dagger. All are +1 magical weapons, granting +1 bonuses to both attack and damage rolls.

Encounter 7: One Last Thing . . .

This is an optional encounter and takes place only if the goblin shaman and Fang, his large pet wyvernling, escape back in Encounter 5. The heroes, if they have destroyed or are carrying the *Eye of the Wyvern*, are wrecking the goblin shaman's racket, and he wants revenge.

This encounter takes place in the area of the ruined temple from Encounter 5 during the return trip. As the heroes enter the area where the defile widens, and if the goblin shaman and Fang are still alive, read the following aloud:

You return down the gorge, passing the wreckage of the old temple on your right. The clouds are low and menacing, as if a storm is in the offing.

Above you, there is a high-pitched shriek, and a dark shadow falls upon you.

The dark shadow is Fang, with the goblin shaman astride its back, looking for revenge. The goblin shaman's plan is to have Fang grab one of the characters and fly to the temple, where the goblin is fairly certain that he and his pet can deal with the offending hero before rescue arrives.

Pick a character at random from those in the party; that is Fang's target. He can lift a man in plate armor for a short distance. If one character in particular has proven to be a

pain to the shaman, choose that one. Fang and the goblin shaman have stats as listed in Encounter 5. In addition, on this first attack, the flying wyvern gets a +2 bonus to its attack roll.

If the wyvernling hits, it inflicts no damage. Instead, it has grabbed the hero and lifted him or her off the ground. The wyvernling flies to the temple in the next round and drops him or her among the temple pillars (inflicting 1d6 points of damage from the fall). Then the wyvernling, with the shaman on his back, tries to kill the hero.

The hero can attempt to wriggle out of the wyvernling's grip. Make a Dexterity or Strength ability check (the player's choice—roll that ability score or *lower* on 1d20) to determine if the hero succeeds. If he or she does, the hold is broken. He or she still drops but gets to roll a Dexterity ability check to try to avoid suffering damage from the fall.

The hero in the wyvernling's grip is able to attack Fang (but not the shaman) with a -2 penalty to the attack rolls for being in the creature's grip. If the wyvernling is cut down in the air (as a result of the hero attacking or the other members of the party using missile weapons), then everyone falls to the ground and suffers 1d6 points of damage.

The hero's friends must run for 2 rounds before getting to the temple. If the heroes avoided the temple on the trip out, the other four goblins are here, as well. The small wyvernlings are gone, already released by the goblin shaman.

Experience, attack numbers, and treasure are as detailed in Encounter 5. Change what is necessary depending on the players' earlier actions (the shaman and Fang are no longer injured, however; they healed before confronting the group).

Getting Back to Wyvern Falls

If the characters all die trying to rid the region of the wyvernling threat, read the following aloud to the players:

Despite your heroism, the threat of the wyvernlings has proved too much for you. After another week, the farmers of Wyvern Falls send a merchant to Haven with the news that you have not been seen again and must have failed. The Patriarch offers of a prayer for your immortal souls and speaks to the other church elders. Other heroes must be called upon to fend off the danger of the wyvernlings and protect the farmers of Wyvern Falls.

If you want, you can try the adventure again, either from the very beginning or with whatever changes occurred because of the adventurers' actions. For example, the ruined temple may have fewer wyvernlings, or more goblins, or there may be more wyvernlings like Fang that have been domesticated.

If the heroes defeated the wyvern and either recovered or destroyed the *Eye of the Wyvern*, read the following aloud:

You return to Wyvern Falls with word of your exploits. The news quickly spreads that you have dealt with the menace to the community, and a celebration is quickly planned for your benefit.

That evening, most of the community is gathered at the meeting hall, some people riding from far up the vale to see the heroes who have rid the area of the

wyvernling menace. A huge side of beef is roasting on a spit over the fire, and you are plied with local delicacies while the young people ask you to tell the story of defeating the wyvernlings again. Even Old John seems impressed with your accomplishments.

An emissary from the Patriarch himself arrives at the height of the celebration, equipped with curative spells and miracles to restore your group to full health. She asks that, at the your earliest convenience, you present yourself to the Patriarch for both his thanks and payment.

The people of Wyvern Falls are ecstatic about the heroes' success, and they become local legends. They are asked to tell the stories of their victories and are treated as the heroes they are. For completing the adventure and saving the people of Wyvern Falls from the threat of the wyvernlings, each surviving character receives 500 XP as a story reward.

The Patriarch's emissary, Megan, is authorized to pay the heroes the money owed them. She is also capable of healing wounds and has magical scrolls that restore the life of lost party members and remove poison.

If the heroes have destroyed the *Eye of the Wyvern*, she nods approvingly and says that such an item was too dangerous to leave around. If they recovered the device, she offers 2,000 gp for the device, which is then kept safe at the Church of the Holy Defender in Haven.

Megan can also identify any items the heroes bring back from the mountains, including the weapons from the wyvern's lair—the *broad sword* +1, *dagger* +1, *short sword* +1, and *mace* +1. These, of course, may be kept by the heroes for future adventures.

Where Do We Go From Here?

Congratulations! You've run your first (and perhaps your second) D&D adventure. If you've had a good time, you might want to know where you can go from here:

You may want to try out the other D&D fast-play adventures now on sale. The other is "Wrath of the Minotaur," which takes the players on an adventure into the tomb of the former ruler of the Vale, Alaxus the Minotaur Mage.

If you think you've got a handle on playing the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game, you might want to check out the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS boxed game, also available at your nearby stores. This introductory project leads you through more of the nitty-gritty of the game and gets into more detail while still being easy to follow for new players and DMs.

If you want to leap into the deep end (and admit it, you really want to), you might want to check out the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS hardback rule books, again available at many fine stores. These books contain all the information you need to start and play an AD&D campaign.

And Darkblade, Elanna, Niles, and the rest? They'll still be around for the next time your players want to use them. Or, you may want to create your own characters, adventures, and legends.

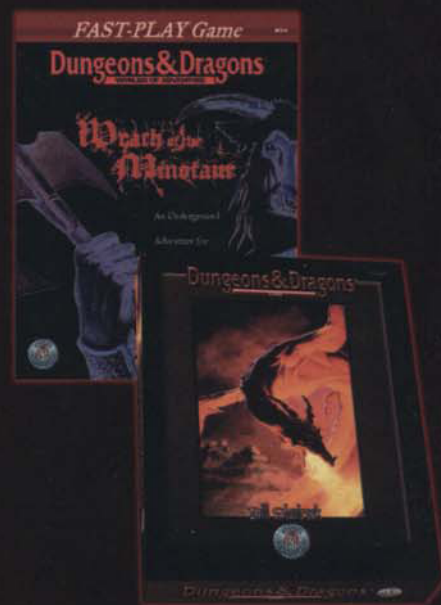
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