

THE DYING SWORD



A Labyrinth Lord Adventure

The Dying Sword
A Mid Level Labyrinth Lord Adventure
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Introduction

The stones have always been strange. Stones floating in the air, children attacking their parents after playing around them and the specter that can always be seen in the moonlight after someone was up there. It was a week ago that the wild wolves dug it out: the Dying Sword. The temple worshipers saw them run up on the hill and what ran out were not wolves anymore. The specter stood there and looked down on the people with the sword in its hand. It turned and walked back into the stones.

The men went up there a night later and what ran out wasn't human anymore. The priest walked up into the stones and saw the sword laying there. All around it skulls had risen from the ground. The specter was leaning over it. It looked at the priest and said "Find the fated ones, they must come here, their skulls must litter the ground like the hero's of the past. Only then will the sword let us go... you.. me.. .". The priest turned and saw his temple crumble. He knew it was the sword, a party he must find or who knows what else it would destroy. The sword...

The Adventure Uses Labyrinth Lord

The adventure uses Labyrinth Lord and Advanced Edition Companion. Armor Class is descending and starts at 9.

The Player's Mission

The priest will find the party. He will look terrible. The skin on his face seems to hang off the bones, his hair completely white. A dirty black robe he wears and an amulet with a tree branch inscribed on it hangs from his neck. "I.. need you to fight a specter. The thing haunts the stones on a hill above where the temple I worshiped at sat. It is nothing but rubble now. The specter is killing everything it can... I do not know how far it can reach. Come with me and end this evil." the priest tells the party. He has no name now for has given it up. He is only known as "the priest" by all. What other name would fit him better?

He tells the party that his religious order will make them rich, a sum he does not know yet but wealth. The religious order is a group the party will never have heard of. He calls it "The Local Branch". They are like druids almost but worship whatever nature spirits inhabit an area. These are typically worshiped by the local inhabitants. He gets no magical abilities from worshiping them

but is adept at communicating with them. This isn't always easy for the regular people to do. The priest has 4 HP, 1 HD and is AC 9. His only defense is a big stick he uses for walking that functions as a club(-1 to damage).

If the party agrees he takes them to the edge of his temple remains and points up at the stones. "Up there it haunts. I... will stay here. Wait for night for that is when he enters this world." he says. It is now up to the party to kill Delldrell. Delldrell is the specter the priest is talking about.

The Stones

The stones covered the Dying Sword ever since it was buried. As the years passed the stones were removed. Some were even used to build the temple. All that are left are the ones that are covering the hill. The party will have to explore the area enough for Delldrell to appear. If they return to the priest before fighting Delldrell he will implore them to return. The specter is there, he has seen it!

The stones are black and their height is proportional to how big they are on the map. The shortest is 10' tall while the tallest is 30'. The hill they are on is flat on the top and it is difficult to climb up to it, 1/4th the normal movement rate. The grass that was growing on the top has been

pulled up by the roots and is a brown and black carpet.

A stairway allows easy access to it. The bottom of the stairs is about 1000 feet from the ruined temple and where the priest will be waiting.

If the party retreats the priest will want to know what is wrong. He can't offer anything more at this moment. As they leave the area they will hear a terrible scream. If they return they will find the priest in the state as described in After Delldrell's Destruction.

1 A Skull That Talks

A stone that has been carved to look like a ridiculously fat woman sits here. Where the head would be is a human skull. A woman's voice comes from it and says one of these things(roll to see which):

1. "Delldrell, the fool that made us fools is here. He has been waiting for men like you. Delldrell is nothing now, the sword is the true enemy. The Dying Sword will have your souls if you do not take Delldrells with it. Run run run away before he sees you. The Dying Sword has called for you."
2. "There is no Delldrell, there is only the sword. It dies but wants you to go before it. Ignore Delldrell, the sword the sword the sword.... you must have the sword!"
3. "The battle is not over. Even now Delldrell looks for the army. Are you its generals? We may be dead but Delldrell will fight all of you, the hundreds, the thousands, the millions. Delldrell will be an army himself!"

A couple of fishes pop out of the

skull's mouth and lie dead on the ground. Then the skull turns into stone and becomes a part of the larger stone it is on. The fish seem to have lips, human lips.

The priest will recognize these fish as gifts from a fish spirit that still inhabits a dried up pond. He can go and speak with it and see if it will assist further. He will leave and return in a couple of minutes. The party must give him 100 GP to give to the spirit. If they do so the skull will speak again. The spirit told him it has 2 more things to tell the party. The gold will allow the spirit to intercede.

Once the gold is given to the priest he disappears for a few minutes and returns. "It will speak again." he says. When the party returns the original scenario will replay itself but the party will hear the other 2 things the skull has to say. It has nothing more to say then that.

2 Arm Bones

Skeleton arms, 20 of them, stick out of the stones in this area. The hands seem to be grasping something unseen. If given weapons skeletons will emerge when Delldrell appears and fight the party. The hands will clasp the weapon and not let go. Only when the hand is destroyed will the weapon be let go. The Skeletons walk out of the stones and begin marching to Delldrell's side.

Each of the stones that have an arm has an inscription on it "Delldrell's Warriors, Betrayed By Him In ...". The last part has been hammered out. Underneath one of the arms is a stone hammer. Must have been dropped by one of the arms. If the party digs under each of the arms they will find a hammer just like this one. After the party find the hammer all of the hands of the others arms will point downwards towards their hammers.

(AL CE, MV 60'(20'),
AC 7, HD 1, AT 1,
DG 1d6,
SV F1, MR 12, XP 13)

Immune to charm and sleep spells.

HP: 4, 4, 5, 8, 7,
3, 5, 7, 6, 8,
5, 7, 8, 7, 4,
8, 2, 4, 4, 6

3 The Wolves Of Hell

At this point the wolves that dug up the Dying Sword come charging at the party from all directions. They are no longer ordinary wolves. Flesh has been ripped off in different places and fire shoots from their feet. They attack not by biting but by opening their mouths. A sharp long sword shoots out of their mouths, like a tongue. Any character they kill they

impale and run off with the body, disappearing behind a stone after a round or 2 of running.

When Delldrell arrives the wolf will return and unleash the dead character who now fights as a wight for Delldrell. The wolf will run off again.

Delldrell's Wolves
(AL CE, MV 150'(50'),
AC 5, HD 2, AT 1,
DG 1d6,
SV F2, MR 12, XP 38)

HP: 8, 6, 11, 13, 5,
10, 9, 8, 14, 5

Wight
(AL CE, MV 90'(30'),
AC 5, HD 3, AT 1,
DG Drain life energy,
SV F3, MR 12, XP 110)

Only harmed by magic weapons, spells and silver weapons. Immune to sleep and charm spells. Attack drains 1 HD.

HP: 14 each

4 The Dying Warriors

The undead bodies of the men that investigated the stones are hidden in a large blue fire. The party will see their shadows, 15 of them, walking in it. The shadows are dark

and the fire around them is red. The fire is 20' in diameter. The moans of the dead in it can be heard 50' away.

Once the party gets within 20' of it the warriors will notice them. One of them will speak for the group to the party in a high pitched scream "Delldrell put us in the fire. The priest the priest the priest he made us look for him! Now we will roast you and your rotten priest. Damn his unburning branch!". The group and the fire will begin moving towards the party at 20' a round and continue tracking them.

Attacking the thing isn't easy. Any attack must be made vs AC 5 and target one of the undead. They will be close to the outer edges of the fire. A hit means that the fire cannot move for 2 rounds nor can it attack. But nothing beyond that occurs. The fire may diminish for a bit, the undead in it go quiet but that is all.

To destroy it Delldrell must be destroyed, the fire must be hit with the Dying Sword or the Mace Of Disruption from the A Chest Partly Exposed area. When that happens the fire goes out and all that remains are the charred remains of the undead. Blackened skeletons litter the ground.

The fire does not attack but does either 1 of 2 things to those within 10' of it: a -2 to hit for all or one character will lose their attack/spell casting for a round.

The fire does not try to consume any characters. Being close enough

is good enough. But any character that is foolish enough to enter the fire will take 1d6 HP of damage and must make a saving throw each round in the fire. A failure means the character has become like the rest of the undead in the fire. Another body for the fire to torment.

5 A Glimpse Of The Priest

Two places on the map are marked with this area. One the party enters to trigger the illusion, the other is where they see it. The party will think they see the priest talking to some unworldly being holding a sword. It may seem as though they are exchanging money. As they watch a stone obstructs their view and then it does not. After they can see again both are gone.

If they investigate the spot where they saw the two they will find some dead fishes. Written in the dirt is a question "Where are the promised adventurers priest?".

The priest if asked why he was up on the hill will tell the party he was not there. He will seem guilty if the party tells him what they found written on the ground. "No no, I do not work with the specter. He is trying to turn you against me." is what he will say.

6 A Chest Partly Exposed

Beneath a stone part of a chest is sticking. It will take 5 rounds to dig it out. When they do the party will find some nice treasure: polished irregular black translucent stones that are worth 10 GP each(50 of them). Some of them seem to be shaped like fish heads. Under the stones are 4 scrolls of Cure Moderate Wounds written on empty crab shells and a Mace Of Disruption. If the party looks under where the chest was they will see something wrapped in a blanket. It is Delldrell's Trident + 1, Fish Command(20 charges).

The blanket has a picture stitched into it: A man is leading a great group of men, women and children. He is holding a trident. An ocean is in the background. Rising from the ocean appears a giant water elemental.

7 Writing On A Stone

The stone here has writing on it that tells the story of Delldrell and his people. As the party reads it they will wish they were being lead by Delldrell against the civilized world. What a great fight that would be they will think. Strange things will come up as they are reading it such as Delldrell's plans to build giant fishing boats wherever they win a battle. Subjected people of Delldrell would be expected

to have fish bowls in their houses and feed the fish before even their own children. Castles were to be rebuilt into giant pools and ocean creatures imported to swim in them. The strangest thing of all was a plan to replace the sun and moon with large whales. The stone also tells of the dozen battles Delldrell lead and lost.

At the end they will feel as though Delldrell is a great loser. How could someone lose so many fights? Why did he have all these strange ideas?

8 Skulls Rise

As the party walks through this area skulls and fish skeletons start to emerge from the ground. The skulls moan in a dead croaking voice "Delldrell...". From this point on as long as Delldrell exists fresh skulls and fish skeletons rise up from the ground wherever the party is.

The skulls say nothing if picked up, they are just dead things. If a fish skeleton is picked up the bones expand rapidly and are very sharp. Anyone who picks up one will take 1d4 HP of damage. After inflicting the damage the skeleton shoots out of the holder's hand and slams into a stone. The stone hit shakes strongly and the skeleton becomes stuck in it.

9 Stones Start Moving

As soon as the party reaches this point the stones start to shake. Some fall over then right themselves. Some will sink into the ground and quickly shoot back up. From this point on as long as Delldrell exists the stones continue to move.

If Delldrell has lost the Dying Sword and it is in the possession of a character the stones become more aggressive. Once every 5 rounds a piece will break off of one and fly through the air and try to hit a character. Attack with Delldrell's HD. If hit the character takes 1d6 HP of damage.

10 Where The Dying Sword Was Dug Up

A 10' diameter, 5' deep hole has been dug here. Dirt surrounds the hole. The impression of a sword is on the bottom. Flames jut out of the impression.

If the Dying Sword is returned here and covered up Delldrell rises from the pit with the sword in his hand. At first though it seems that the party has won the adventure. Everything returns to normal for a minute. Even the sky becomes daylight. When Delldrell emerges he will mock them and tell them the Dying Sword will never be buried again!

When Delldrell Arrives

After the party has(in no order):

1. Fought the Wolves Of Hell.
2. Has at least seen the Dying Warriors.
3. Activated the Skulls Rise area
4. Activated the Stones Start Moving area
5. Where The Dying Sword Was Dug Up must be visited.
6. It must be night time.

does Delldrell arrive. The Labyrinth Lord can decide how close they need to get. Perhaps right on the square or even 50' away! As the party reaches the necessary areas things happen. The party will see eyes looking at them from a stone, a hand will reach up from the ground and feel a sword, a character will feel like they are traveling back in time, etc... . Each time the party will sense that something terrible is drawing closer.

10 minutes(1 turn) after the last requirement is met a stone near the party explodes in a great flame. When it is extinguished Delldrell stands there with the Dying Sword in his hand. "The battle continues..." he gasps. He will try to get the party to come to him to fight. He will hold off until he is damaged. Once damaged he will start his chase. He prefers to have the party come to him in all cases as this allows him to hold tightly

to the Dying Sword.

Every day the top of the hill resets itself. All encounters are restored to their original form. During the daylight hours there is nothing at all on the top of the hill, just the stones. Even the writing on the stone in the Writing On A Stone area is not there. When the sun has set everything appears. When it rises everything disappears, even if the party is in the midst of combat. Acquired treasure returns to its chest. The Dying Sword turns to mist. Only with the destruction of Delldrell/The Dying Sword does the party get to keep the treasure. The monsters will not follow the party if they leave the top of the hill. They are bound there for now. Though free at first Delldrell has bound them tighter to himself. A Skull That Talks area will not divulge anymore information if its already spoken to the party when things are reset. Used items are used up and not replenished such as the crab shells with healing spells written on them. Damage and level drains do not disappear with the daylight.

When nighttime resumes the party does not have to go through the steps to make Delldrell appear. He and his minions will appear when the Labyrinth Lord decides. Perhaps better organized than before. "The battle continues!" Delldrell shouts.

The Dying Sword

A long sword blade that is mostly rusted metal. Chunks have fallen off revealing red flesh underneath. Bones stick out of it and a pair of teeth are near the end of it.

The blade came into being centuries ago when the sword pierced Delldrell. Delldrell cursed it, hoping to curse its wielder. Things did not go as he wished as the blade consumed his physical being and the sword became the evil dying body of Delldrell. The sword is dying, just as Delldrell was dying when he unleashed his curse. Eternal pain, never death. Always the pain of dying.

When used by someone who isn't Delldrell the long sword resists them and tries to break from their grasp. They suffer a -2 to hit. It does +2 to damage against anyone (1d8+2). Minions of Delldrell take 1d20 HP of damage and must make a saving throw or instantly be destroyed. Against Delldrell it only does the HP damage.

The sword will fly from the hand of anyone but Delldrell if a hit roll misses by 4 or more. If Delldrell is around it will fly to his hands instantly. If not the sword flies and hits the ground 10'-30' feet away from the wielder.

Delldrell

Delldrell was a shaman who had led his tribe away from their normal life to conquer civilization. Every battle they fought they lost. Driven to the hill Delldrell fought his last there until his heart was pierced by a soldier's blade. He let loose his last magic but that to did not go as he desired. Now his spirit haunts the ground where his body, the Dying Sword, was buried. It wants men like the ones that buried it here to kill. Men like the adventurers. Delldrell will wield it and maybe it will be free once the battle is ended with a victory. Is he even Delldrell anymore or just the shadow of someone that is now a sword?

Delldrell appears like a 6' man with a white robe on when he is wielding the sword. When he isn't holding the sword his flesh becomes translucent. A skeleton appears underneath and little skeletal fishes can be seen swimming inside of him.

Delldrell requires magical weapons to damage. As with any undead he is immune to mind and sleep spells. Delldrell cannot be turned or manipulated by a cleric. The sword pulls itself out of Delldrell's hands and leads him where it wants to go. Only when he has finished moving does the sword let him hold it again. Delldrell follows the sword like a dog. Anytime Delldrell moves the sword is relinquished, as the sword is

the true master and leads the way. It is during this movement that the sword can be grabbed by an adventurer and used. Whenever the Sword and Delldrell move he attacks last. He can move before the others yet his attack comes after. After everyone has attacked does the sword enter Delldrell's hands. This gives the adventurers the chance to grab the sword every time Delldrell moves. For example Delldrell wins initiative and moves. But his attack is delayed to the end of the round. A character can then grab the sword when his combat moment in the round occurs. Characters should be allowed to give up their declared attacks if they want to grab the sword. The Labyrinth Lord can tell them that they can grab the sword instead of attacking. To grab the sword requires a hit against an AC equal to Delldrell's.

Delldrell has 40 HP. Anytime he is brought to 0 HP but the killing blow is not delivered by the Dying Sword he will return in 2d4(2-8) rounds. Delldrell sinks quickly into the ground. The sword falls to the ground and sticks in it by the blade. At this point the sword can be grabbed without a roll to hit. If the party is taking the sword to the Where The Dying Sword Was Dug Up area to bury it wait for them to do that.

Each hit Delldrell from the Dying Sword causes him to howl in pain. Fire shoots briefly from the wound it inflicts. The wielder of the Dying Sword will feel like Delldrell is truly

dying before his eyes.

At the end of this time he rises up with all his HP restored. He will rise from the ground 10'-30' away from the Dying Sword if possible. If the Dying Sword is free it will fly to him. If a character is holding it he must make a Strength attribute roll or lose his grasp at it. The Dying Sword wants to be in Delldrell's hands. If the sword cannot get to Delldrell, Delldrell will move at triple his normal movement rate to get to the wielder. He who holds it becomes the focus of his and his minions attacks.

If for some reason the Dying Sword has been transported far away, even another dimension, it will transfer more power to Delldrell. Delldrell will be able to use all the powers that he has when wielding the Dying Sword. The party will eventually be destroyed by him for he will not relent.

If the Skeletons in the Arm Bones area have not already been activated Delldrell will begin summoning them after he has been destroyed once. On his second rise he will call 4 of them every 3 rounds. Their hammers will rip out of the ground and into their hands. To Delldrell they will march, to fight alongside their old shaman. When Delldrell summons them he does not attack that round.

When Delldrell does not have the sword he does 1d6 HP per hit. With the sword the damage is 1d10 + a level is drained. A character killed

or drained of all levels rises as a wight one round after death. Wight stats are in the Wolves Of Hell area.

Besides damage with the Dying Sword he can Dispel Magic as a 10th level spell caster. He must score a hit against an opponent and instead of doing damage he uses the force of the blow to dispel. Magical barriers cannot block the attack of the Dying Sword.

Once every 10 rounds Delldrell can summon 2-5 Shadows. He uses his attack for the round and cuts the night air. Black blood flows out and forms the Shadows.

Shadow
(AL CE, MV 90'(30'),
AC 7, HD 2+2, AT 1,
DG 1d4 + Strength drain,
SV F2, MR 12, XP 83)

Can't be turned. Magic weapon to damage. Unaffected by charm and sleep spells. Each hit drains 1 point of Strength. When a character reaches 0 Strength points he rises as a shadow.

Delldrell can walk through the stones. When he is wielding the Dying Sword the stones part as if cut by something hot. A red line goes down the middle and they split. A bit later the stones come back together and heal. Delldrell will not chase the party away from the stones. Though free the Dying Sword cannot get it out of itself that the last battle it fought is

not over. The party is just another group of warriors that it has never stopped fighting. Maybe they are all that remains of this army?

When Delldrell is killed with the sword both go through a slow destruction process. The Dying Sword flies into the air and homes in on Delldrell. Delldrell starts to look like a fish and grabs his throat as if he cannot breathe. The sword starts to beat him. With each hit a puddle of water grows under Delldrell. As the puddle grows Delldrell and the sword begin to sink into it. When they are both gone the puddle runs away in all directions. All the activity that has been going on reverses itself. Skulls sink into the ground, the stones stop shaking, undead minions fall apart, etc... .

No. Enc.: 1
Alignment: Chaotic Evil
Movement: 120'(40')
Armor Class: 3
Hit Dice: 8(40 HP)
Attacks: See Description
Damage: See Description
Save: F8
Morale: 12
XP: 3060

After Delldrell's Destruction

When the party returns after killing Delldrell the priest will be laying dead on the ground. His eyes will

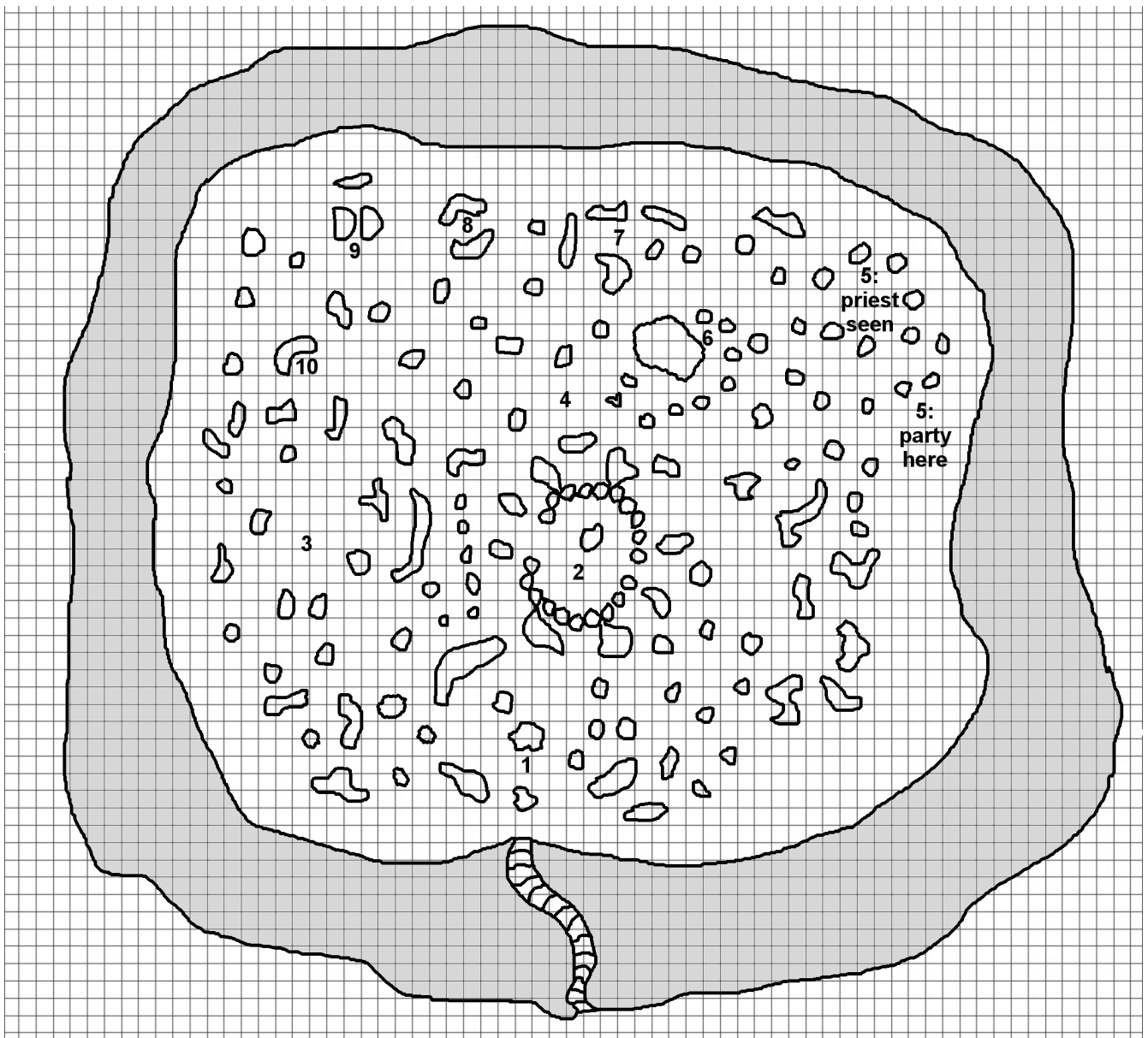
have melted out of their sockets, his tongue will lay on the ground next to his head. It looks as though a very sharp blade has cut out his heart. That is the end of the priest. If they try to contact his religious order they will never find it. It is like it never has existed.

Maps

1 square = 10'

Darker gray squares indicate a hard climb, movement cut to 1/4th. This is a hill. The top is flat and movement occurs normally. The stairs up allow normal movement.

Hill Map



Top Map Without Surrounding Hill

