

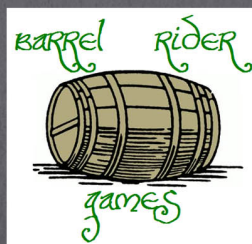
The King Betrayed

Written by James M. Spahn

Cover Art by Tamas Baranya



An adventure module for 4 - 6 characters of 3rd to 5th level
for use with Labyrinth Lord
and other old-school fantasy role-playing games



Labyrinth Lord
Compatible Product

THE KING BETRAYED

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Background: The dwarves of the Ironheart Clan were once a stout and proud people, but they had no home. Only an legend. This great tale, known as the Ballad of Iron foretold that the now fragmented and nomadic Ironheart Clan would one day find their way to a new and prosperous mountain home where better days and new glory would find them.

Lead by King Thraindan, they would spend decades traveling the world in search of this mythic land. But just when hints of the prophecy began to come true, the king's son Skaldrin let pride and jealousy destroy all hope.

The good king had found what believed to be the great valley that would lead the Ironheart Clan to their destiny. Early mining expeditions of his people showed signs of great veins of adamant and silver in this newly discovered valley, along with jewels and gems. Ordering his miners to build a small hall in the side of the mountain pass that lead into the valley, King Thraindan decreed that this, the Hall of Iron, would be the first and least of an empire worth of his Clan Ironheart.

But as the months passed and those few who had come so far with King Thraindan began to sing his praises and carve images of his glory, the young Skaldrin grew jealous of his father. He feared that he could never live up to the legacy the king would leave behind. Secretly, Skaldrin made an alliance with the evil dwarves of Clan Bloodbeard and a foul pact was made.

In return for Skaldrin telling the Bloodbeards of where the great Valley of Iron was located, the dour-hearted dwarves would slay the king and name his son their heir. All they asked was that they get to share in the riches of the valley. Skaldrin readily agreed, never suspecting the betrayal that awaited him.

The Bloodbeards came in the night and slaughtered all of Thraindan's clan. The king himself was the last to die, and as the life faded from his eyes in his last moments, only then did he realize his son's deception. But "King" Skaldrin did not reign long. With the Ironhearts slain, and no one left to protect him, the Bloodbeards turned their axes upon the usurper and slew him – claiming the Valley of Iron for their own.

Decades passed, but the Valley of Iron remained silent. The Bloodbeards were never seen or heard from again, and the Hall of Iron fell to silence and decay. Rumors began to spread that with his dying breath, King Thraindan laid a curse of ill fate upon those who slew his kin, especially

his own son. Only recently has the Valley of Iron been rediscovered. The doors to the Hall of Iron remain closed, though legends say that those willing to brave the Curse of the King will be richly rewarded – or horribly punished for further disturbing his tomb...

The King Betrayed is a short adventure module for use with the *Labyrinth Lord* fantasy role-playing game. Designed for a party of 4 – 6 player characters of between 3rd and 5th level, this small dungeon is a mixture of puzzles, traps, combat encounters and role-playing opportunities. Consisting of thirteen rooms, it is suitable for a single night of adventure, but offers seeds for larger campaign opportunities.

Preparing for the Adventure: Player characters should be an even mixture of classes, though having one Dwarf classed character in the party will lend certain gravity to the adventure. In addition, having both a Thief and a Cleric will be very useful. The *Labyrinth Lord* is encouraged to read over the module at least once and familiarize himself with the material presented.

Getting Started: There are many ways the player characters could have learned of the location of the Hall of Iron. It's exact location is up to the *Labyrinth Lord*, as it is designed to be set easily into a per-existing campaign setting. However, it is ideally placed in a valley of great mountains, fairly close to the entrance. The player characters may discovered a map in a previous adventure that provides directions to the Hall of Iron in a previous adventure, or maybe a dwarf of the Ironheart Clan who became separated from his kin before the founding of the Hall is searching for details to the fate of his long lost king. Whatever the reason, it should be tailored to the specifics of the *Labyrinth Lord's* campaign.

Notes for the Labyrinth Lord: The this module is set in a stone-walled dungeon. The Hall of Iron is lit by enchanted torches that are placed along the walls of the dungeon sixty feet, providing illumination through out the dungeon, except where stated otherwise. However, if the torches are removed from the sconces that holds them they flicked and fade to darkness and become nothing more than old, dry wood.

The description of each room in the adventure features descriptive text in italics. The *Labyrinth Lord* may read them verbatim, or paraphrase in order to provide an accurate description of each

location.

Wandering Monsters: Every six turns spent in the Hall of Iron, the Labyrinth Lord should check for wandering monsters. Roll 1d6. On a roll of 1, a wandering monster is encountered, based on the chart below.

Roll	Monster	No. Appearing
1	Dwarf Specter Warrior	1d4
2	Gelatinous Cube	1
3	Zombie	2d4
4	Wight	1d4
5	Spider, Giant Tarantula	1d3
6	Shadow	1d8

Room 1: The Grand Gate

Great stone stairs lead to the grand entrance to the Hall of Iron. These massive stone double doors that lead inside are closed and loom heavily before you. Runes of dwarvish make cover its surface in angular, cavern script. Even from this distance, you can see that they are some sort of incantation or poem, though closer examination may be required to decipher them. They glow with a faint silver light as the sun fades into the west and a cool wind blows through the valley in a low howl.

There are dwarven runes that are inlaid with silver scrawled across the door. The runes covering this door can be read by any Dwarf or any player character who has chosen dwarf as a bonus language.

The runes read

Offer blade, brew or ballad for the King of Stone All wanderers who open the doors of his home If gifts cast before the threshold are fair and true The Stone Lord's blessing shall come upon you But if your gifts are false and you come in greed We will lay dire curses upon the invading thieves
--

In order for the player characters to open these doors, one character in the party must give up something of value in honor of the dwarven king. Their options are:

They may either raise a glass of ale, beer or mead of fine quality to the dwarven king. If the drink is of poor quality they invoke the king's curse and

every character in the party suffers one of the effects described in the boxed text below.

They may leave a weapon as an offering to the dwarven king. If the weapon is not magical they invoke the king's curse and every character in the party suffers one of the effects described in the boxed text below.

They may sing a song in honor of the dwarven king, if they make a successful Charisma ability check. If they fail this ability check they invoke the king's curse and every character in the party suffers one of the effects described in the boxed text below.

Even if the player characters fail in their gifts to honor the dwarf king, the doors still open, though the entire party suffer the effects of the King's Curse.

King's Curse Effects

If the player characters fail in their offerings to the dwarven king, each character suffers one of the effects listed below while they are in the Hall of Iron. These effects are immediately removed if the character leaves the dungeon or receives the benefits of a <i>Remove Curse</i> spell.

1-2 -2 penalty to all attack rolls 3-4 -2 penalty to all saving throws 5-6 -2 penalty to Armor Class.
--

Room 2: Hall of Glory

The long passage of the entrance opens into a grand stone hallway. Tapestries depict images of dwarven warriors in the glory of battle and ancient stone sconces carved into the walls hold torches that still burn in spite of the years that have passed. A heavy silence fills the room for several seconds before the echo of steel on steel fills the room along with the cries of war and battle. The sounds fade quickly back to silence and you are left alone in the flicking orange light.

The room remains empty and silent unless the a member of the party disturbs one of the tapestries. Should they touch or attempt to take these beautiful images of dwarven glory, then several spirits of fallen warriors charge into the room from the halls on both sides of the room and attack the characters. If this happens, read the text

below.

The cries of battle and the sound of thundering warriors in armor fills the room. Suddenly a horde of translucent, wavering dwarven specters clad in armor and wielding axes charge into the room. Their wild beards are split by bloodthirsty smiles and the cry of "Cleave the traitors in two!" fills echoes against the stone. An instant later, their axes are upon you.

The statistics for these Dwarven Specter Warriors are detailed in the New Monsters section of this adventure. . When the Specter Warriors are reduced to zero hit points, they fade into nothingness and a chill wind blows through the room. After the Specter Warriors have been defeated the six tapestries on the wall can be retrieved. They can be sold to a dwarven merchant for 100 gold pieces each, or half that value to non-dwarven merchants.

Dwarf Specter Warriors (4): 12 hp, 14 hp, 14 hp, 20 hp.

Room 3: The Well

At the center of this room is a vast stone well. The portcullis covering it that has long since rusted and lay half-ripped from its hinges.

Characters who take the time to search this room for one turn may find a silver ring set with a large sapphire cut into the shape of two crossed war hammers. Their chance of success is 1 on d6 for human characters, or 1-2 on d6 for demi-humans.

Though the ring itself is highly valuable (5000 gp), the true power of the ring lay in its history. It was once the ring of the Prince of the Hall of Iron, Skaldrin – fallen from his hand when he attempted to flee the Bloodbeard Dwarves who slew him ages ago.

Room 4: Supply Room

The door to this room hangs slightly ajar. As you approach, it is pushed aside and you see two large brown-carapaced creatures with wavering antennae. Their antennae push aside long rusted and broken detritus of this storeroom before they turn their attention to your party and approach menacingly.

This room was once very well organized, containing hammers, picks, ropes and other

instruments of underground exploration and survival. Most of it has been destroyed, and is little more than a pile of broken and rusted relics of the past. Feasting on the remnants of these tools is a pair of Rust Monsters who attacks the party as soon as the door is opened. Unfortunately, none of the dwarven treasure has survived the passage of time and the ravaging of these creatures.

Rust Monster: 30 hp.

Room 5: The Feasting Hall

This grand hall was undoubtedly once the heart of the Hall of Iron. A great fire pit, undoubtedly for feasting, now serves as nothing more than resting place for long cold ashes. Great stone tables, carved from the floors of the hall itself run from both the northern and southern edge of the feasting pit, with matching benches.

Before your eyes, history again reveals itself as a great gathering of feasting dwarves fade into existence, translucent ghosts of an age past. The sound of revelry and mirth fills the room. Songs and laughter warms the room, along side a ghostly fire that springs from the fire pit. At the head of the table sits a golden-bearded dwarf who seems nervous and does not join in the celebration.

There is a great booming at the doors that lead into the feasting hall and a great host of bearded warriors wielding axes and with blood lust in their eyes descend on the feasting warriors. Merriment turns to bloodshed as those who are celebrating rise to defend themselves, though several are cut down before they can even rise from their seat. A great battle from ages past has sprung from the ethereal plane and carnage is upon you.

The various Specter Warriors of both the Ironheart and Bloodbeard clan attack one another, slaying and rising again in endless combat. Each round of combat, each member suffers 1d4 points of damage as the battle rages around them. Until all twelve of the Dwarven Specters are slain, the characters will continue to suffer damage. During the battle, each character has a chance (1 in 6) to notice the specter of the golden-bearded dwarf who flees the hall and is specifically not attacked by any of the Bloodbeard Specters.

Dwarf Specter Warriors (8): 9 hp, 12 hp,

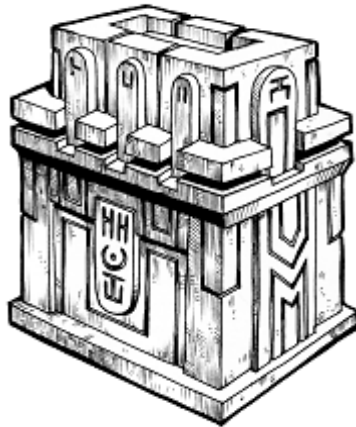
13 hp, 14 hp, 20 hp, 22 hp, 30 hp.

Room 6: West Barracks

Undoubtedly this room was once spartan barracks for the king's guards, time and war have not been kind to this place. The weapon rack bolted to the far wall has fallen into disrepair and the bunks have been hacked to pieces and rotted with age.

The only object that seems to have survived the ravages of past ages is the large stone chest against the southern wall. Like many of the works of cavern stone in the Hall of Iron, you see that the chest has been carved from the very stone floor itself. It is covered with symbols and runes that have long been forgotten by all but the most learned masters of lore.

The bunks on the northern wall have been hacked to pieces and the weapon rack against the western wall is empty, though still bolted in place. The stone chest against the southern floor is actually carved from the wall and floor. It is covered with dwarf runes. The chest is locked, though a thief player character may attempt to use their *Open Locks* skill to open it. The chest is also trapped with a poison needle and if the trap is not found and disarmed, anyone who opens the chest must make a Poison saving throw or be stricken dead instantly. The chest contains 200 pp, a sapphire (350 gp), a ruby (500 gp) and a *Hand Ax +1*.



Room 7: East Barracks

This room used to serve as a barracks for the guards who served the in the Hall of Iron. The beds along the northern wall have been hacked to pieces and the remnants are still covered in blood. There is a weapon rack on the far wall that has faded and rusted with age and there are several broken axes and hammers among the wreckage.

There is a large stone chest against the southern wall, crafted from the very floor itself so that it might never move. It is covered in runes and complex symbols, though remains untouched by

age.

Like the western barracks, the beds have been hacked to pieces and the weapon rack is empty. The stone chest against the southern floor is actually carved from the wall and floor. It is covered with dwarf runes. The chest is locked, though a thief player character may attempt to use their *Open Locks* skill to open it. The chest is also trapped with a poison needle and if the trap is not found and disarmed, anyone who opens the chest must make a Poison saving throw or be stricken dead instantly. The chest contains a set of *Chain Mail +2* armor and three *Potions of Cure Light Wounds* and a *Light Crossbow +1*.

Room 8: The Trapped Halls

The northern end of these halls has a large false stone door at the end. Any character who steps on the pressure plate depicted on the map activates the trap. When activated, the door swings open and a large, perfectly cut stone boulder rolls from a shoot buried deep in mountain. This is only a thin shell, and the stone shatters when it makes impact with anyone

standing in the hall and its insides explode, felling the whole length of the hall with a fiery explosion. Any who are in the hall are engulfed by the flames and take 8d6 damage. A successful *Breath Weapon* saving throw reduces this damage by half.

Once the stone has smashed against the wall, it takes 1d4 rounds for a second boulder to slide into place and the trap may be triggered again.

Room 9: The Great Forge

What was once a great forge has long become cold and hollow. Great recesses in the wall on both sides of the room once served as hollows for the smelting of stone. At the center of the room is a great anvil of solid iron and resting upon it is a perfectly crafted hammer, its head of dwarven steel set upon a shaft of silver.

The first character to approach the forge triggers the trap laid ages ago by the protectors of this hall. The forges on the northern and southern walls explode in flame, filling the room with unquenchable fire for an instant. Everyone in the room suffers 6d6 points of fire damage, though they may make a saving throw vs. *Breath Weapon* to take half damage. One round after the trap is

triggered, an 8 Hit Die Fire Elemental (as if conjured from a staff) materializes from the center forge appearing a dwarf wreathed in flame and attacks the party. After it is defeated the characters can see a *War Hammer +1, Flame Tongue* sitting on the great anvil in the center of the room that was once used in the forging of the weapons and armor of the dwarves who dwelt in the Hall of Iron.

Fire Elemental: 46 hp.

Room 10: The Hall of Knowledge

Countless shelves are carved into the walls of this room, and upon them rest ancient tomes and books of lore alongside countless stone tablets and scroll cases. At the center of the room is a stone table with a great leather book whose cover is cracked with age. Next to it is a single brass candlestick with a wax candle that still burns with a flickering orange light.

From the shadows comes a dwarven woman stooped with age. Her ghostly visage offers you a kind smile and beacons for you to enter the room before fading from view.

This great library is filled on all walls with books. On the stone table in the center is a journal. The full text of the journal can be read by any character who knows the dwarven language and is depicted by the Handout on page 10. In addition to the journal characters who take one turn to search the books find several magical scrolls, each scroll containing several spells. Clerical scrolls include *Cure Serious Wounds, Remove Curse, and Bless*. Magic-User/Elf Scrolls include *Magic Missile, Web, and Lightning Bolt*.

In addition, as long as the door is shut, the characters can rest freely in this room without fear of encountering any wandering monsters.

Room 11: The Throne Room

"Seal the doors!" comes the cry of

dwarven warriors clad in dented and battle worn armor. They fade into existence from nothingness, pale blue translucent images of fallen protectors. At their standing before the throne are a pair of mighty dwarves. One is broad, silver-bearded and carrying a great war axe. Upon his forehead is a crown of adamant, inlaid with sapphires. Beside him stands a young golden haired dwarf, wearing finery and carrying a shining, bloodless sword. He looks with angry eyes towards the king.



The sound of phantom doors having their locks door torn away with a screech of twisting metal. The dwarf king raises his axe and cries out, "Now my son, for the glory of the clan!"

"Aye," comes the harsh whisper of the young dwarf, "for glory."

Suddenly, the prince drives his sword through the king's chest and the king falls back onto his throne with a look of betrayal and a gaze of anguish before the life fades from his eyes, "Come,

Bloodbeards, slay these fools and reap the rewards of your new king!"

The image fades and the room is silent and cold once more. Massive stone doors are on each side of the room and a pair of solid silver thrones are in the center of the room. The one on the right is slightly larger and every inch is covered in runes.

After the characters see the ghosts of the the king and his men fall to the prince's betrayal the room remains silent until the someone touches the two solid silver thrones at the center of the room. If they do this, several Dwarven Specters appear at the southern door, the restless spirits of the Bloodbeard dwarf clan. They immediately attack the player characters.

The only way to open the large stone door to Room Twelve is by using the key that is hidden beneath the king's throne. However, in order to retrieve the key, one of the player characters must kneel before the throne. If this is done a large stone key materializes on the seat of the throne.

Other than the key, there is no treasure hidden in this room.

Dwarf Specter Warriors (10): 8 hp, 12 hp, 13 hp, 14 hp, 20 hp, 21 hp, 22 hp, 24 hp, 30 hp.

Room 12: Thraindan's Tomb

Simple finery accents this room. Perfectly crafted tapestries line the wall and a lush bed with a polished oak frame is at the center of the room. In the corner is a suit of shining plate mail, shining like silvered steel and beside it sits a perfectly crafted war hammer of elegant martial construction. The room is magnificent in its simplicity.

This was the Thraindan's bedroom. Not one to flaunt his treasures, the axe and armor are the only treasures (other than the tapestries and bed frame, which collectively will net 1000 gold pieces if sold to a merchant). The first character to touch the axe or armor causes the specter of the dwarf king himself to manifest.

The spectral image of a dwarf clad in armored finery and wearing a crown of adamant and sapphire. His white beard is so long that he wears it tucked into a broad belt of gold. He raises a hand in pause as you lay eyes on him.

"I am Thraindan, Lord of the Iron Halls, and I would have to head my words."

The king lowers his hand and then speaks in a deep, booming voice to the player characters. He tells them the full story of his son's jealousy and betrayal. He then asks the characters to take his arms and armor and avenge him. By his blessing they can open the door to Room Thirteen, where the prince has been entombed for ages after the Bloodbeards betrayed and slew him. Once the prince has been put to rest, the king can move on and all the spirits of the citadel will fade away.

If the player characters attack Thraindan's

spirit, their weapons merely pass through his ghostly form. However, such an attack is not without consequence. Any who attack Thraindan immediately suffer the effects of the King's Curse, if they are not already cursed.

The king's armor is of fine dwarvish make, though it will magically size itself to fit any character capable of wearing this *Plate Mail +2*.

Lord Thraindan's weapon is a *Battleaxe +3*, called "Thrakul." It is a sapient weapon that communicates through Communion. It is of Lawful alignment and can *Detect Gems and Jewellery* with a range of 60

feet. Tharkul has an Intelligence of 7 and a Psyche of 9.

Finally, if the characters have Skaldrin's Ring (found in Room 3: The Well), Skaldrin will offer his blessing to any Dwarf who agrees to wear it. The ring will, after this blessing, grant a +1 bonus to the wearer's Charisma attribute for as long as they

wear it.

Room 13: Skaldrin's Cage

The door to this room opens and a cold wind steals your breath. What was once a the grand chambers of a dwarvish lord has become a tomb of destruction. Tapestries that once lined the walls have been torn to shreds. Great stone statues of warriors have been hacked and carved into monstrosities. At the center of the wreckage stands a creature of rage and savagery. Clad in once proud armor, rusted with age and clutching a war sword still dripping with blood., his faded golden beard is split by a skeletal grin revealing a maul of fangs. A cold blue light radiates from empty sockets where his eyes once were. Without a word, this fallen prince raises his weapon and charges with a guttural scream.

This is the remnant of Prince Skaldrin, driven by rage and failure to destroy all living things. He will attack the party ceaselessly until he is slain, using his collection of horrible powers to destroy those who have invaded "his" hall.

If Skaldrin is defeated his arms and armor can be recovered, along with personal treasure he had hidden in his room with which he planned to bribe the Bloodbeard dwarves.



This treasure included 11,954 gold pieces, 253 platinum pieces, *Bracers of Armor (AC 4)*, *Rope of Climbing* and a *Wand of Detecting Magic (11 charges)*.

Skaldrin: 90 hp.

Epilogue: After defeating Skaldrin and setting King Thraindan's spirit to rest with their victory, any characters suffering from the King's Curse have these effects immediately lifted. With the King's spirit at peace and the Hall of Iron

cleansed, it is possible that other scattered members of the Ironheart Clan might return to the caves. Or perhaps, the King tells the characters about other treasures that lay in the nearby Valley of Iron. Other options could be a deeper, more dangerous cavern beneath the Hall, perhaps accessed by the well in Room 3, or that survivors of the Bloodbeard Clan who were not part of the raid learn of the characters' deeds and come searching for them in an act of vengeance.



New Monsters

Dwarf Specter Warrior

No. Enc.: 1d4 (3d4)

Alignment: Neutral

Movement: 60' (20')

Armor Class: 4

Hit Dice: 4+4 (22 hp)

Attacks: 1 (weapon) or 1 (touch)

Damage: weapon, Constitution Drain or 1d3, Constitution Drain.

Save: D4

Morale: 11

Hoard Class: XX

XP: 300

Locked in an eternal struggle and driven by the regret of King Thraindan and the rage of Prince Skaldrin, undead Dwarf Specter Warriors of both the Bloodbeard clan and Ironheart clan haunt the Hall of Iron. They appear as ghostly, often half-rotted dwarven warriors clad in chain mail armor, carrying shields, and typically attacking with axes, war hammers or picks. The negative energy that powers them is the bane of living foes. Any living opponent struck by their weapons or their touch must make a saving throw vs. Death or suffer the permanent loss of a single Constitution point. Like other undead, they are immune to the effects of *sleep* and *charm* spells.

Skaldrin, Undead Prince of the Ironheart Clan

No. Enc.: 1

Alignment: Chaotic

Movement: 60'

Armor Class: 0

Hit Dice: 9+18 (90 hp)

Attacks: 1

Damage: 1d8+6, energy drain, or summon Dwarf Specter Warriors.

Save: D9

Morale: 12

Hoard Class: None

XP: 5,060

The undead form of Prince Skaldrin is a terrible sight to behold. Clad in the rusted armor and carrying a pitted and blood covered sword, the skin has slithered from his skull and his eyes glow with a cold blue light. In addition to wielding a *Sword +3, Frost Brand* and wearing *Plate Mail +3*, anyone who is struck by one of Skaldrin's attacks must make a saving throw versus Death or be permanently drained of 1 hit die or level. Finally, once per day, Skaldrin may spend one round to summon 1d6+2 Dwarf Specter Warriors to his service, who appear within thirty feet of him and remain until their destruction to serve him. These summoned Dwarf Specter Warriors cannot be turned. Like other undead, Skaldrin is immune to the effects of *sleep* and *charm* spells. He is also unaffected by the a cleric's Turn Undead.



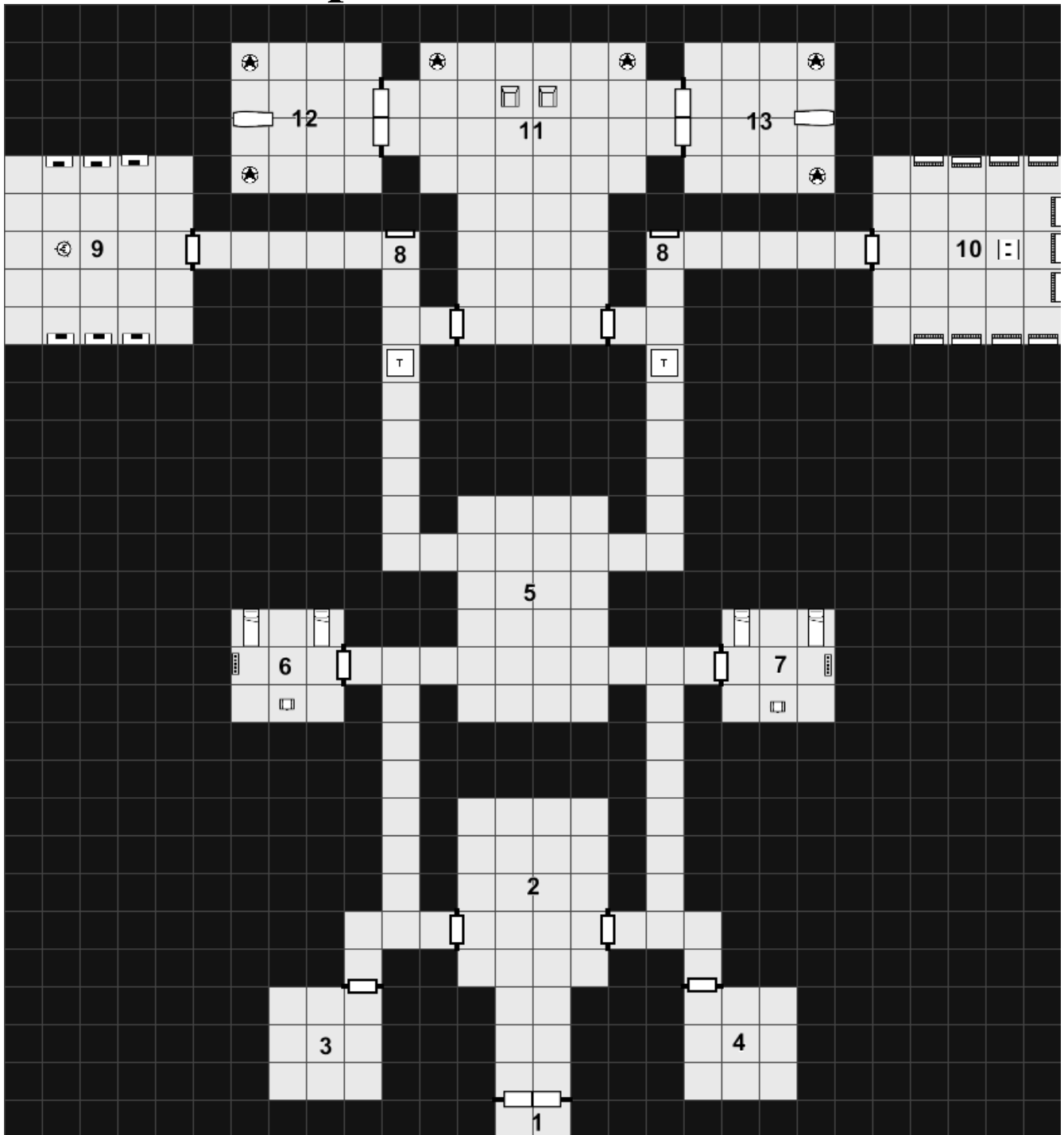
Handout

The Journal Entry of Thiz the Rune-Mistress

The good Lord Thraindan, may his beard grow ever longer, has refused again the audience of his subjects who claimed to have news and evidence regarding the rumors of Prince Skaldrin. Though I have never before doubted his wisdom in my three hundred years, I think the benevolent Lord is blinded by his compassion for the lad. Still, the Feasting Hall is heavy with whispers of the prince's disquiet and rumors of Bloodbeard marauders continue to grow. I can only hope that Lord Thraindan, King of the Iron Hall, can rally both his son and his clan, should they find their way to the Halls of Iron. Perhaps these are just the musings of a worried old dwarf lady. For now I must set aside my pen. Prince Skaldrin has arrived for his private audience.

*Thiz,
Rune-Mistress of the Iron Hall*

Map of the Iron of Hall



Advertisement



"The braying of horns, the fuming of tempers, the clanging of spear and shield.

Call all the families of the dwarves to war!"

The Dwarves are very different from all the other races of popular fantasy, and likewise this latest Lonely Mountain Band album is very different from the preceding two albums. Beyond the Western Seas and Second Breakfast were collections of songs primarily based in the rustic roots of acoustic instruments; Halfling celebrations, elven enchantment, and varied tales from a "minstrel with a wandering horse."

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The Lonely Mountain Band's newest album, ***Songs of the Dwarves*** (along with their previous releases ***Second Breakfast*** and ***Beyond the Western Sea***) are available for digital download or CD purchase at

Minstrelsongs.com

The Official Website of the Lonely Mountain Band

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