

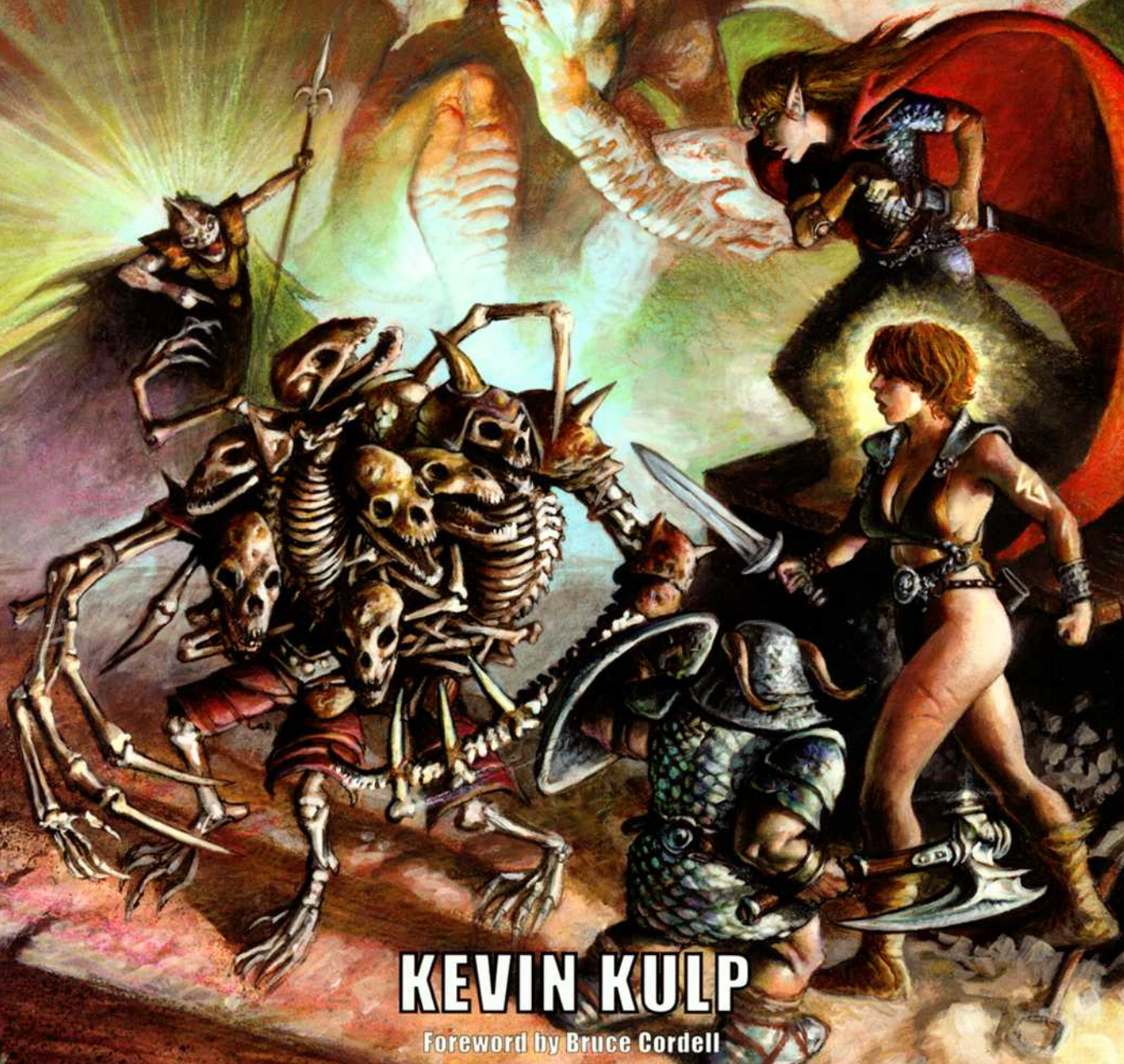


# SWORD & SORCERY



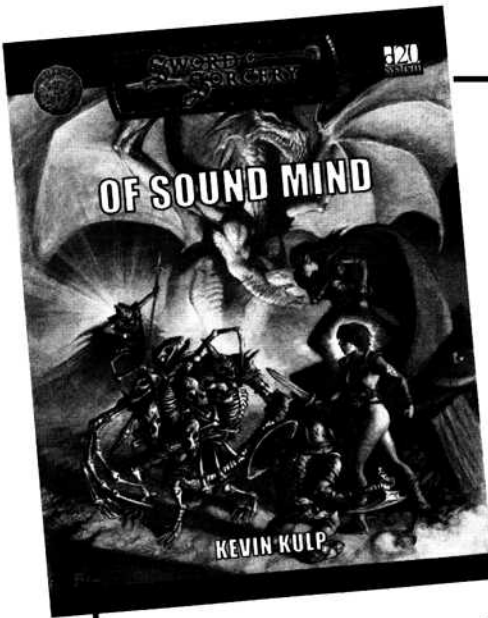
# OF SOUND MIND

A Psionic Fantasy Adventure



**KEVIN KULP**

Foreword by Bruce Cordell



**The Plot:** The characters are motivated by strange nightmares, missing children, and a bizarre murder to investigate the odd happenings around the town of Bellhold. They must penetrate the former lair of a slain dragon, discover what bizarre force is tormenting the town, and put a stop to it before the town is turned into mindless slaves.

**The Mood:** Odd occurrences, terrible nightmares, and ancient secrets haunt the town. The frayed nerves and shattered spirits of the townspeople have everyone on edge. Children and animals have gone missing, and the aura of fear is nearly palpable in the air. Whispers audible only in the mind add to the confusion, but it is clear that a dark force is determined to rob the people of Bellhold of their sanity and freedom.

**Of Sound Mind:** A psionic fantasy adventure for the d20 System. Designed for 1st-level characters, *Of Sound Mind* provides an adventure where investigation, bravery, stealth, skill, and a strong will are the keys to completing the adventure and rescuing the people from the small town of Bellhold from a terrible enslavement.

Of Sound Mind Challenge Chart

Encounter Key	Encounter Level	Challenge Rating	Challenge Statistics
Bellhold	1	3	Utrish: hp 22; Init +0; AC 10; Atk +1 melee or +2 ranged or Spells
Bellhold	3	2 (x 2)	Psionic Horses: hp 19, 19; Init +1; AC 13; Atk +3/+3(1d6+2/1d6+2) or Psionics
Area 10	2	1/2 (x 4)	Troglodyte Zombies: hp 16, 16, 16, 16; Init -1; AC 11; Atk +2(1d6+1)
Area 12	6	6	Copper Golem: hp 66; Init -1; AC 20; Atk +15(2d10+6)
Area 14	5	3	Tamalruk: hp 17; Init -2; AC 14; Atk +1/+1-1(1d4-2/1d4-2/1d4-2) or Stench or Spells
Area 14	4	2	Bonetangle: hp 26; Init -1; AC 11; Atk +1/+1+1(1d6+2/1d6+2/1d6+2) plus Constriction
Area 14	4	4	Stone Dragon: hp 77; Init -2; AC 25; Atk +14(1d6+5)
Area 18	3	2	Velea: hp 7; Init +1; AC 11; Atk +1(1d4) or Domination
Area 18	3	1/3 (x 2)	Dire Rats: hp 7, 5; Init +3; AC 15; Atk +4(1d4)
Area 19	2	1 (x 4)	Monstrous Spiders: hp 11, 11, 11, 11; Init +3; AC 14; Atk +4(1d6 and poison)
Area 20	2	1/2 (x 32)	Copper Minions: hp 6 each; Init -2; AC 13; Atk +1(1d4+1)
Area 24	4-8	2	Akratt: hp 8; Init +3; AC 17; Atk +1(1d8-1) or +5(1d6-1)
		2	Guzzum: hp 19; Init +1; AC 12; Atk +5(1d8+3) or +4(various)
		3	Pruk: hp 8; Init +4; AC 15; Atk +2(1d6-1) or +7(1d8)
		1	Sprelt: hp 4; Init +1; AC 16; Atk +1(1d6-1) or +3(1d6-1) or Psionics
		2	Thimdrul: hp 7; Init +1; AC 16; Atk +1(1d4-1) or +3(1d6-1) or Psionics
Area 24	4-8	1/4 (x 12)	Goblins: gp 7, 7, 5, 5, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 3, 3; Init +1; AC 15; Atk +1(1d8-1) or +3(1d6-1)
Bell Tower	2-4	1 (x 8)	Dominated Townspeople: hp 4 each; Init +0; AC 10; Atk +3 (grapple)



# Of Sound Mind

No longer mourn for me when I am dead  
Than you shall hear the surly sullen bell  
Give warning to the world that I am fled  
From this vile world, with vilest worms to dwell.  
- William Shakespeare, Sonnet LXXI

A Psionic Fantasy Roleplaying Adventure for the D20 System

Requires the use of the Dungeons and Dragons® *Player's Handbook*, Third Edition, and the *Psionics Handbook*, published by Wizards of the Coast®

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## FOREWORD BY BRUCE CORDELL

When approached to write an introduction for a psionic adventure, I admit to having some trepidation. After all, at that time I had no idea who these Fiery Dragon guys were. Then I found out that Kevin Kulp was the author. I grinned from ear to ear. If you've read the credits in the *Psionics* rulebook, you'll notice Kevin's name in a prominent position. In fact, he gets equal billing with such 3rd Edition luminaries as Monte Cook and Jonathan Tweet. That's because Kevin became an invaluable asset during the playtesting and editing of the psionics rules. I credit Kevin with catching many of the errors that would have otherwise crept into the book, and remain grateful for his many superb suggestions.

So, on to the adventure itself. *Of Sound Mind* is a perfect adventure for low-level players, made all the more so if you intend to introduce psionics to your game. The pages are full of wonderful instructions for tweaking the scenario to fit any campaign. Kevin takes real pains to help the Game Master introduce psionics specifically (though he also offers easy alternatives for game masters who might prefer a completely arcane scenario). I enjoyed Kevin's literary style, especially in the way the encounters are detailed, and in the fluid way one encounter flows into the next.

The interesting handouts, combined with special instructions for "GM Theater," are something any Game Master will appreciate. For instance, when characters are subject to insidious mental voices, the adventure tells the GM to stand, walk up behind the player, and whisper the message into the player's ear. It's great!

If you are reading this after having purchased the adventure, you made a good decision, and your players will thank you for it. If you're reading this trying to decide whether this adventure is for you, I counsel you to hesitate no longer. Get this adventure, and add psionics to your campaign. *Of Sound Mind* is exceptional.

Bruce R. Cordell  
Seattle, Washington  
2001



## INTRODUCTION

In a town teetering on the edge of sanity, kidnapped children and an unexpected murder require fledgling adventurers to brave the not-so-abandoned lair of a long slain dragon. If what they find there does not break them, the heroes must defeat a dangerous psionic menace before it can transform the townspeople into mindless slaves!

*Of Sound Mind* is a fantasy roleplaying adventure designed for use with the d20 system, and requires the use of the *Dungeons & Dragons® Player's Handbook*, Third Edition, and the *Psionics Handbook*, published by Wizards of the Coast®. The adventure is tailored for a party of four 1st- or 2nd-level characters, but it can be easily modified to accommodate a larger group or more powerful characters. On average, a group of four 1st-level characters that completes this adventure will gain enough experience to pass 2nd level.

This adventure is designed to launch a new psionics-compatible campaign or to fit into any ongoing campaign. Wherever possible, the Game Master (GM) is provided with options for modifying and replacing parts of the adventure background with elements of his or her own game world. Further options are provided for using this adventure in a non-psionic campaign.

## PREPARATION

Before running this adventure, the GM should read it through carefully to gain a familiarity with its plot, layout, and various features. In addition, the GM should be familiar with the basic rules of play, particularly combat and skill checks. Lesser used rules such as undead turning mechanics, psionic combat, and psionic power activation should also be reviewed, as they will come into play during the course of the adventure.

For best results, the adventurers should have between four and ten total character levels. Although this adventure works best when the adventuring party includes at least one psion or psychic warrior, their presence is not required for the successful completion of this adventure. A rogue, a cleric, and a character with the ability to track will also be useful.

This adventure contains creature counters for the monsters encountered herein, as well as several handouts for the characters. These aids will need to be separated and readied before play.

If you plan on playing a character in this adventure, STOP READING NOW! The following notes are for the GM only; reading them may spoil the secrets and fun found in *Of Sound Mind*.

### Using Counters

This adventure comes with a set of full-color counters, based on a one-inch equals five-foot scale. Therefore, creatures with a 5-ft. by 5-ft. Face statistic will occupy a single one-inch counter. Before beginning play, carefully remove the counter page from the center of the book and cut apart the counters with an x-acto knife or scissors. Be sure to take care with these tools.

The counters come in two types: characters and monsters.





Character counters provide a blank space at the bottom for the character's name. For game purposes, the arrow in the top left corner indicates the direction that the character is facing. Monster counters have a small arrow in the top left corner indicating direction, as well as a blank square in the bottom right, allowing the GM to assign numbers to multiple monsters of the same type. For example, the party may encounter four goblins, which would be numbered 1 to 4. The GM can then keep track of the individual hit points and actions according to which particular guard is involved in the resulting combat.

Monster counters are not labeled with the monster type, as many characters may encounter creatures for the first time and player knowledge of the monster may provide an unfair advantage. The GM should use this mystery to his or her benefit. For instance, instead of saying, "You encounter four goblins," the GM might say, "You encounter four small humanoids, with flat, broad-nosed faces and pointy ears," then place the appropriate counters on your battle grid for the players to see the picture.

While not strictly required for play, the counters may provide a great aid during complicated combat encounters, such as a group of heroes attacking a number of well-positioned goblins in an enclosed cavern. With that in mind, on to the adventure!

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Until fifty years ago, the town of Bellhold existed almost entirely at the whim of the tyrant dragon Choth, colloquially known as Copperdeath. In his hard-to-reach lair atop Steeple Mountain, Copperdeath would lounge upon his hoard while his charmed and dominated human slaves in the copper mines below would labor ceaselessly, digging and smelting copper ore to increase his riches. Although commonly rumored to be a copper or out-of-place blue dragon, Copperdeath was actually an evil sapphire dragon, and he delighted in boasting to his mind-controlled guests while his slaves made him ever richer.

This local dictatorship ended almost fifty years ago when a group of powerful adventurers decided to free the telepathically controlled slaves by destroying both their troglodyte slavemasters and the dragon himself. Entering the dragon's lair through a secret passage in the copper mines instead of through the main entrance on Steeple Mountain, the heroes slew Copperdeath after a difficult fight that took three of their own lives.

After Copperdeath was slain, his hoard helped finance Bellhold's renewal. A new copper mine sprung up after the old mines were closed as unsafe. Dwarven craftsmen came down from the mountains, and the town soon became famous once again for the quality of its copper goods and the pure tones of the church bells forged there. Since then, Bellhold has finally become a pleasant place to live. Trained guards keep the valley mostly free of humanoid and monstrous threats, and the small town known for its bells has slowly grown.

Three weeks ago, a competent and well-armed squad of goblins arrived from up in the mountains in search of a particular object.

Driven by visions, a psionic goblin named Thimdrul has convinced Akratt, a goblin prince, to lead a foray to Copperdeath's lair in search of objects of power that will help the prince seize the goblin throne from his father. Urged on by Thimdrul, the goblins quickly wiped out most of the remaining troglodytes in the old copper mine before climbing Steeple Mountain in search of Copperdeath's former lair.

There, Thimdrul found what he sought: a crystal within Copperdeath's mummified belly that still held the dragon's imprinted soul and personality, transferred there in desperation through an unknown psionic process as his body was dying. Thimdrul awoke Copperdeath's intellect for the first time in five decades, and the Dragonstone thirsted for both companionship and revenge. Finding its mental powers both greatly amplified and horribly diminished by the trauma of its death, it is using the goblin psion Thimdrul as a tool as it prepares to take revenge against the town that betrayed it.

Meanwhile, Thimdrul performs his psionic research upon unwilling subjects as Akratt chafes at the delay, a traitorous member of the goblin tribe does his best to betray his fellows, the one remaining troglodyte plots vengeance from the depths of the old copper mine, and the townsfolk suffer from Copperdeath's psychic conditioning. If nothing is done soon, both the goblins and the townsfolk will succumb to the Dragonstone's overwhelming psychic conditioning, and it will rule Bellhold once again.

### The Original Heroes

One good method of integrating this adventure into a new campaign is to have the player characters (PCs) be the grandchildren or (in the case of elves) children of the original adventuring party that slew the dragon. This provides them with a reason to visit Bellhold and an intimate tie to the main villain of the adventure. In this case, the GM will need to customize the default description of the original group to match the characters' histories. Should the GM decide to do so, she may wish to provide individual characters with more information on Bellhold and the fight with Copperdeath than this adventure assumes they will know.

The adventuring group that slew Copperdeath 50 years ago consisted of a dwarven cleric of the All-Father named Thrommel Redstone, an elven wizard named Halias, a human rogue named Toren, a half-elven bard named Alissa Songsword, and a human fighter named Dorek. Although these names are specified in the diary handout, the GM should feel free to change them as necessary.

The Fiery Dragon website at [www.fierydragon.com](http://www.fierydragon.com) contains the text of this diary, easing the work needed in copying the text and customizing the names.

## ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

Encountering a town full of people being driven insane, the player characters (PCs) are led by a murder and kidnappings to investigate the mountain lair of a dead dragon. Making their approach either up the treacherous mountainside or through hidden tunnels,





the characters face the goblins and their psionic advisor, all while being badgered mentally by the telepathic voice of the dead dragon. Upon slaying the goblins, the group realizes that only sonic damage can easily destroy the Dragonstone, and that the only convenient source of massive sonic damage is the ringing of a large bell. As they approach the town to use its bell tower, the Dragonstone seizes control of the townfolks' minds, and the characters must race to the bell tower while chased by dozens of shambling, mindless villagers.

## SETTING THE STAGE

### The Situation in the Town of Bellhold

During the last few decades, life in Bellhold has given all that its inhabitants could desire. Fertile fields and plentiful game have meant that no one goes hungry, and the clerics that often come to town to commission church bells have meant that few people suffer from disease. Forty-nine years ago adventurers vanquished the tyrant dragon Copperdeath, and since that time Bellhold's people have lived free. The mayor, Hob Waterman, has already begun to plan next year's festival to mark the 50th anniversary from the time of Copperdeath's demise. The Wyrmcalls, Bellhold's huge alarm bell hung from a tower in the middle of the town square, hardly ever calls the town's people to arms.

In comparison, the last few weeks have been a nightmare. Bad dreams and irritability plague the townsfolk, and although theories abound, no one actually knows why. A few locals blame wizards and priests, even though they appear to suffer from the nightmares more than most townsfolk. Many wizards and priests have actually left town rather than suffer poor sleep. With no one able to snatch more than a few hours of good sleep a day, the people of the town are almost sleepwalking through their chores, feeling on edge and harassed. If it were not for a local oracle who predicted that the dreams and sleeplessness would stop within a week, more people would have left town already.

Animals seem to be similarly affected, and the hunting has worsened significantly in recent days while livestock has begun to stray. The biggest concern at the moment is that three local children (two boys and a girl) have gone missing – as has the local adventuring party that swore to find them. Whether the children ran away or were kidnapped remains unknown, and no one knows what happened to the Heroes of the Bell who left to track them down. Some people wonder if the old dragon could have anything to do with this, but that explanation is not especially believed; over the years, Copperdeath has become almost a folk villain to the town, and few remember how powerful he once was.

The mood in the town is one of barely controlled tempers, of inattention and despair, and of desperation. People are slipping into insanity, which is beginning to show.

### The Goblins in the Mountain

Seventeen goblins remain out of the 25 who first set off two months ago to find Copperdeath's lair. Two years ago the psionic

goblin Thimdrul received a vision of power, and finding the dragon's lair became an obsession for him. After endless covert spying missions and research, he identified Bellhold as the town he sought, and he used his psionic powers to convince Akratt, a cowardly goblin prince, that his ascension to kingship in the goblin tribe depended solely on a trip to this far-off place. Gathering warriors and scouts, Akratt and Thimdrul led the expedition across the mountains to find Bellhold.

Finally arriving three weeks ago, the goblins tried to reach the dragon's lair through the old mines. After ambushing and slaughtering a number of troglodytes, they decided that the lair could not be reached from the mine, which they left in favor of climbing the mountain. After a difficult ascent, they found Copperdeath's old lair, and inside the mummified corpse of the dragon, Thimdrul discovered a large blue crystal stone that still contained an imprint of Copperdeath's psyche. Using psionics, Thimdrul managed to awaken the stone to sentience, and he was quickly warped by its overwhelming urge for vengeance upon the humans that had killed it.

Now Thimdrul performs bizarre and horrid psionic experiments upon kidnapped children and animals, while Akratt chafes, worried that he has made a horrible mistake.

### The Horse Farmer

An elderly farmer named Othic encounters the PCs on their way into Bellhold, as they possibly help him to retrieve two of his recently escaped horses. The next morning, Othic is found horribly murdered, slain by a mysterious creature that almost bit him in half.

Othic's two horses are actually responsible for the murder. Captured and experimented on by Thimdrul the goblin, the horses have become psionic, sentient, and evil in nature. They will pretend to be normal as they try surreptitiously to slay humans without being caught.

### The Missing Adventurers

The Heroes of the Bell set off a week ago to track down and rescue the missing children. They have not been seen since. The heroes correctly discerned that the children were taken to Copperdeath's old lair, and they tried to reach it through forgotten tunnels in the Old Copper Mine. Unfortunately, they were slain by troglodytes and other monsters as they investigated. The PCs may discover their fate as they proceed.

### The Dying Troglodytes

After assaults from both the goblins and the Heroes of the Bell, the troglodyte tribe that once served as overseers for Copperdeath in his mine is now almost extinct. Only the shaman is left, and he dreams of taking vengeance upon the goblins that killed so many of his people. He is constructing an undead horror to serve as his agent of retribution, and whether the PCs fight him or ally with him depends upon their actions while in his territory.





## The Dragonstone

After it was revived by Thimdrul, the Dragonstone was horribly disoriented and confused. It thinks it is Copperdeath's soul, somehow transformed into an immense crystal, and it still does not understand why its psionic powers are now so different from what they once were. Its major goals are personal power and revenge, and it has no moral qualms about who gets hurt during its quest to regain control of the people of Bellhold.

In truth, the Dragonstone is nothing more than a fractured piece of Copperdeath's psyche, imprinted upon a piece of psychically resonant crystal during the dragon's death throes. It retains some of the sapphire dragon's memories and motivations, but only a twisted fraction of its power. Although Thimdrul thinks that he is using it, the Dragonstone knows that it is using Thimdrul, and the goblin's ignorance amuses it.

## USING OF SOUND MIND IN YOUR OWN CAMPAIGN

### Hints and Tips

In order for this adventure to be completed successfully, the PCs must learn three pieces of information before they set off on the adventure. These are:

- The mountain is climbable, but the climb is awfully difficult for anyone who is not trained. (Available from anyone in town, or just by looking at the mountain.)
- The dragon used to have some method for getting between its lair and the Old Mines. (Available from Othic the horse farmer and from Thrommel Redstone's diary in the Bell & Clapper.)
- The bell in the town square, known as the Wyrmcalls, is so loud that its sound can shatter glass or kill a man if he is trapped in the tower with it. (Available from the bartender in the Bell & Clapper; Hob Waterman, the town's mayor; or any gossiping NPC.)

This information will hopefully guide the PCs throughout the adventure. If they decide to tackle the lair by climbing, the GM should let them know how difficult this is, but not forbid them; being repulsed by the goblins' better tactical position may provide an adventure in itself. Likewise, the PCs are welcome to try any number of methods for disposing of the Dragonstone. Unless they toss it into a cleft and forget about it (which will certainly come back to haunt them), they will soon find that it is immune to most types of damage other than sonic energy.

This adventure also works best when emphasizing the Dragonstone's disturbing nature. The PCs may be surprised to discover that their true enemy looks like a large chunk of crystal, and they likely will not understand its plan for revenge right up to the point that it dominates townspeople to try and save itself. If the GM plays up the haughtiness of Copperdeath's personality and its frustration in needing to manipulate others to do its bidding, the conclusion of the module should be exciting and deeply satisfying.

### Conversion to your campaign

The work involved in adapting *Of Sound Mind* to most campaigns where psionics exist is minimal and revolves around customizing Bellhold and the history of Copperdeath.

**Bellhold:** The town is small and is nestled away from most cities, being famous only for the manufacture of an obscure product (church bells) and for the quality of its copper mines. As the vertical waterfall coming down from the mountains is a key part of the dungeon, the town needs to be set in a valley next to a ridge of mountains. Other than this requirement, however, the size of Bellhold can be easily changed to make it larger or smaller. The GM should be aware that few medium- or high-level NPCs are currently in Bellhold due to its small size and their evacuation to avoid the nightmares. If the GM increases the size of Bellhold, or moves the adventure to a more populated area, be prepared to explain why higher level adventurers have not already solved the problem. The GM can change the concept that Bellhold is famous for its church bells, so long as a large bell is available in the middle of town for the PCs to use in destroying the Dragonstone.

**Copperdeath:** While written as an aberrant sapphire dragon, far more evil than most of his kin, Copperdeath's statistics (and, in fact, his breed) are immaterial to the actual flow of the adventure. Copperdeath could just as easily have been an evil crystal or copper dragon, so long as he possessed psionics. Nor does his death need to have occurred fifty years ago, so long as enough time has passed for the dragon's corpse to mummify and for people to forget what a threat the dragon once represented.

**The heroes who slew Copperdeath:** These heroes can be changed to famous adventurers or heroes with local fame who are little known outside of Bellhold.

**Treasure:** The treasure in the adventure can easily be changed to reflect the economics of the GM's campaign. Copperdeath was enamored with copper and had his slaves mint unique copper coins for him. A hidden hoard that the PCs may discover reflects this, with over 100,000 cp in it! While appropriate to the adventure, this may anger certain players, who will not want to haul over 2,000 lbs. of coins down a mountainside for the equivalent of 1,000 gp. If this is the case, feel free to change the hoard to a smaller mix of copper, silver, and gold, with several large and bulky art objects making up the difference in value. In addition, several of the items of treasure are psionic items. If the GM converts the adventure from psionics to arcane magic, she should be sure to change these items to arcane equivalents.

### Scaling the adventure

This adventure is designed to challenge 1st-level characters. It can be scaled for higher-level characters as follows. As always, the GM should increase the reward when increasing the risk.

- For 2nd-level parties, the following changes should be made: Othic's horse Broadsword should have *bite of the tiger* instead of *bite of the wolf*; Tamalruk the troglodyte shaman should have 1d6 strength drain instead of 1d4; the bonetangle should have one additional hit die.





- For 3rd-level parties, Othic's horse Broadsword should have *bite of the tiger* instead of *bite of the wolf*, and Tamalruk the troglodyte shaman should have 1d6 **strength drain** instead of 1d4 and **an additional level** of cleric. Give the four troglodyte zombies the **chameleon** and **nausea** abilities of normal troglodytes. The bonetangle should have **two additional hit dice**. Velea the dananshee has a third dire rat pet, and the spiders in the waterfall webs become more aggressive. All named goblins have **one additional level** of their character class. Increase by 5 the amount of free power points that the Dragonstone can use per day, and add an additional 2nd-level and 3rd-level **telepathic power** to its repertoire.
- For 4th-level parties, Othic's horse Broadsword should have *bite of the tiger* instead of *bite of the wolf*, and Tamalruk the troglodyte shaman should have 1d6 **strength drain** instead of 1d4 as well as **two additional levels** of cleric. Add two troglodyte zombies, and give all of them the **nausea** ability of normal troglodytes: these undead have been *bolstered* by Tamalruk, making them more difficult to turn. The bonetangle should have **four additional hit dice**. Velea the dananshee has two additional dire rat pets, and the spiders in the waterfall webs become more aggressive. All named goblins have **two additional levels** of their character class. Increase by 11 the amount of free power points that the Dragonstone can use per day, and add one 2nd-level and two 3rd-level **telepathic powers** to its repertoire.
- For parties higher than 4th-level, menaces should be similarly upgraded. The goblin menace can be swapped with a different form of humanoid, such as hobgoblins, smarter than average ogres, or hill giants. The Dragonstone should continue to get slightly more powerful.

#### Conversion to a non-psionic scenario

Psionics is integral to this adventure, as it is the key to the Dragonstone's and Thimdru's manipulation of animals and children. Converting the scenario to arcane magic is not overly difficult, however:

- Replace psionic treasure with arcane equivalents.
- Replace the psionic experiments in Copperdeath's lair (Areas 23 and 25) with arcane equivalents.
- Keep the Dragonstone as a blue crystal, but change it to a unique arcane crystal that captured a portion of Copperdeath's psyche upon its death. Keep its ability to project its voice to sentient creatures. Give it the powers of a 4th-level sorcerer, enchantment spells only. Its revenge upon Bellhold is in the form of a unique power, a combination of *dream* and *mass domination*, which is taking approximately a month to reach full effect from the Dragonstone's location atop Steeple Mountain.
- Change Thimdru from a psion to a sorcerer of equivalent level. He is experimenting on animals and people to give them odd sorcerous powers of mind control and physical attack.

- Replace the two psionic horses with *awakened* animals possessing one arcane spell-like power of 1st to 3rd level. Keep them evil, as the bizarre and untraditional method Thimdru used to awaken their intelligence has warped their personalities.

### Changing the Adventure's Focus (Combat, Roleplaying, Tactical)

*Of Sound Mind* offers a blend of action, roleplaying, dungeon exploration, and investigation. It can, however, be customized to fit certain playing styles.

If the GM's group is one that adventures under the theory, "if it moves, we can kill it," *Of Sound Mind* has the potential to be an extremely lethal adventure. Several encounters involving combat with the opponent will result in a number of rather dead heroes. In each case, the challenge can be safely solved with creative thinking, but if the GM expects her group to try and fight enemies who are clearly more powerful, she should preferably reduce the strength of the encounter over slaughtering her party.

**Combat.** Increase the number of psionically awakened, evil animals around the area of Bellhold. Increase the number of active troglodyte zombies in the Old Mine and have them roam throughout the complex, as well as have the troglodyte shaman refuse to bargain or ally with the PCs. The dananshee Velea's warped dire rats should attack, as should the medium spiders living on webs near the waterfall. The goblins should attack viciously, and any dominated townspeople should come after the PCs with blood in their eyes and a snarl on their lips. In addition, relax the time pressure for solving the mystery, to give the PCs a greater opportunity to withdraw and rest between encounters. Note that instituting these changes will make the adventure more lethal and thus less survivable for lower-level characters.

**Role playing.** Have the psionically awakened horses at Othic's farm taunt the PCs mentally before attacking them. The troglodyte shaman should be more lenient about using the PCs to extract his vengeance on the goblins for him, planning to kill them with the bonetangle when they return. Velea should appeal to the PCs, dominated or otherwise, to help free her. The Voice of the Dragonstone should harass the PCs regularly as they approach the dragon's lair, and the goblins may try to bargain with or pay off the PCs before attacking. Finally, the Dragonstone will continuously try to talk the group out of destroying it, using the voices of all dominated townsfolk in a weird stereophonic appeal to their better natures.

**Tactical play.** Do not discourage the PCs from initially trying to reach Copperdeath's lair by climbing Steeple Mountain. Play the goblins as good tacticians, keeping behind cover and using rolled boulders as well as missile weapons. The PCs will likely be initially repulsed and will then attempt the path through the Old Mines.

### Character Hooks to Involve the PCs

The PCs may be drawn to the town for any number of reasons:

**Escorting a caravan.** The PCs were hired to escort a merchant's shipments either into or out of Bellhold, or the merchant group







they are escorting pauses in Bellhold to do business for several days.

**Searching for their roots.** If one or more of the PCs had a parent or grandparent from Bellhold, or even among the adventurers who slew the dragon fifty years ago, they may wish to learn more of their history or reclaim a birthright.

**Investigation.** The PCs are from Bellhold or a nearby town and have heard of the nightmares and problems plaguing the town.

**Seeking treasure.** Rumors persist that treasure from Copperdeath's reign still remains in the Old Mine or hidden somewhere in the mountain, although this has never been proven.

**Errand for a church.** The PCs are asked by their patron church to go to Bellhold and pick up a commissioned church bell, escorting it safely back to its intended temple.

### Rumors for the PCs

The following rumors are available with a **Gather Information check** prior to arriving in Bellhold.

#### DC 5:

- Some of the most important churches and cathedrals for thousands of miles use bells from Bellhold. The brass forged there is considered superb due to its purity and the quality of the sound it produces.
- Next summer in Bellhold should be exciting, as the town plans to hold a huge festival to celebrate fifty years of peace and freedom from some dragon.

#### DC 10:

- An evil dragon named Copperdeath used to rule Bellhold, making humans into slaves who mined copper for him. The dragon was slain by adventurers almost fifty years ago. (DC 15: it was a copper dragon gone bad; DC 20: it was a blue dragon; DC 25: it looked like a blue dragon, but the dead dragon was of a species no one had ever seen before.)

#### DC 15:

- People have been leaving Bellhold for the last few weeks, complaining of headaches and bad dreams. Many folks think perhaps the water has gone bad, or that a sickness is sweeping the area. Others think that the town suffers under a mysterious curse.
- Three children, two boys and a girl, have disappeared from town in the last week. No one knows whether or not they ran away from home. A local adventuring party went in search of them, however, so they should be fine.

mountains looms up toward the sky. The mountain closest to them has a silhouette a little bit like a church steeple; a small town sits in the valley beneath it, perhaps a few miles from where the characters are currently standing. A river can be seen snaking out from the mountain, curling around the town, and then flowing down the valley. In the sunlight, plumes of smoke from several forges stain the otherwise clear air, and the PCs can hear the far-off ringing of church bells.

### Wild Horses

A few hundred feet away down the road from you, an elderly man dressed in work clothes stands in the road, looking frustrated. Seemingly unaware of the man, two large workhorses graze on the good grass of the field. As you watch, he sidles forward and grabs for one of the horses, but both bolt away down the road. They stop 20 feet away and seem to ignore the man once again, putting their heads down to graze. The man drops several lead ropes he was carrying and throws his arms up in disgust.



## CHAPTER I: APPROACHING BELLHOLD

As the PCs first approach Bellhold on the road, they will come out of a small forest into the open. The road is lined with fields on either side, rich with summer grass in reddish soil. Farms can be seen on both the right and the left, and the left-hand farm has a pasture full of horses. Directly ahead of the PCs, a ridge of large





The elderly man is Othic, a widower who runs the farm off to the left. He is a native of Bellhold and has lived here his entire life, taking over the family farm. He used to work in the Old Mine as a child, gladly digging out copper for the tyrant dragon, and he clearly remembers the day of liberation when Copperdeath was killed.

Seeing the PCs, he will wave his hand and approach. He will explain that his horses Blaze and Broadsword were missing for almost a week and just showed up back at the farm yesterday. Now they have somehow escaped from the fence *again*, and he is having a devil of a time recapturing them. He asks if the adventurers could possibly spare a few moments to help him.

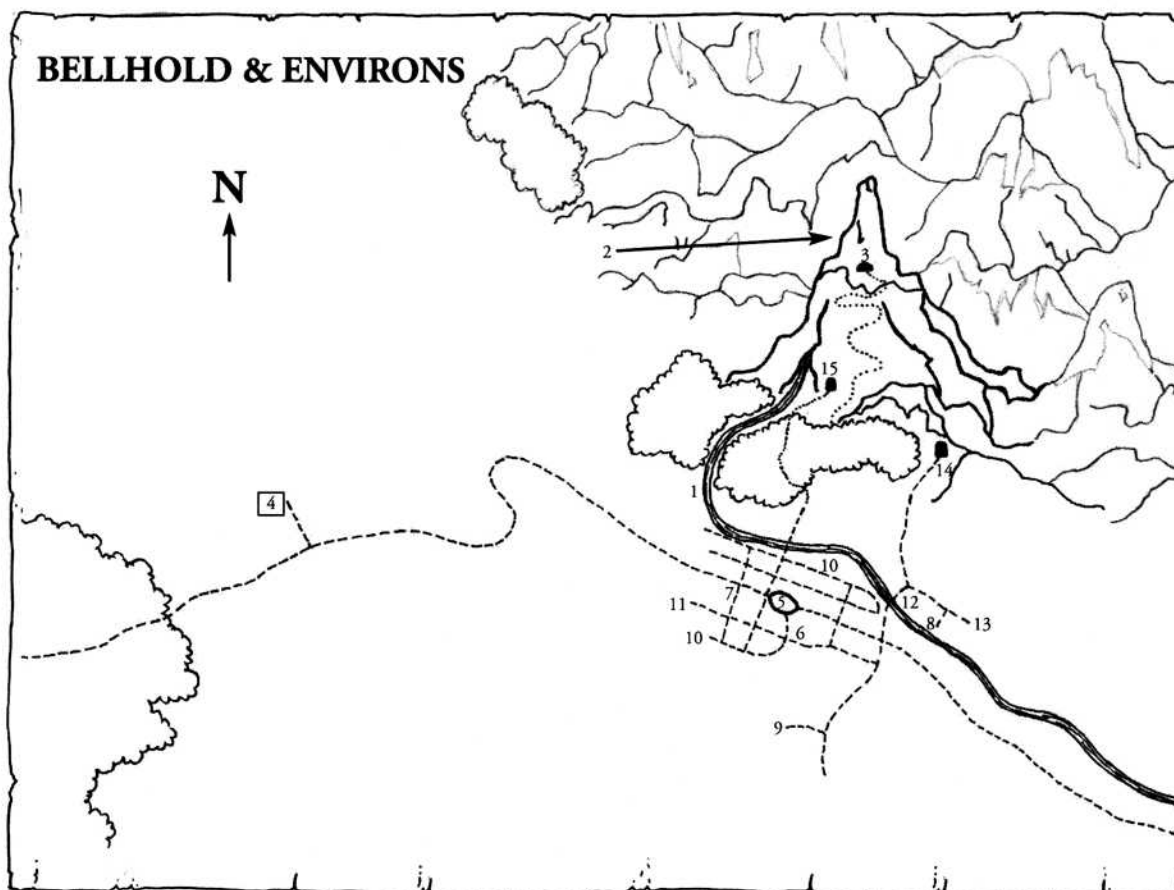
Both horses have become hostile and intelligent due to the goblin Thimdru's experiments, but this is not immediately obvious, and the horses try to hide signs of it. **Animal Empathy** or **Handle Animal** checks (DC 15) are required to close within 5 ft. of a horse, and a second skill check at the same DC is needed to slip a rope around the horse's neck. Anyone succeeding at the **Animal Empathy** check will notice that the horses seem irritable and upset. Nevertheless, once they are roped, they will allow themselves to be led docilely back to the farm.

A **Spot** check (DC 20) is required to notice that both horses seem to have a small scab on their forehead, as if they were pricked with some sort of thorn. A **Heal** check (DC 20) will reveal that

whatever pricked them there is still under the skin, pointing straight down into the brain.

Othic will thank the PCs for their help and invite them back to his farm for a meal. He is too far out of Bellhold to be plagued with the nightmares from which many people are suffering, and he is in a fairly good mood. He will be pleased to gossip with the PCs while he puts away the horses in their stalls and prepares a simple but tasty meal of mutton stew. He will tell them that he is a widower with two grown children, and he can tell the group about his youth in the mines as well as rumors about the excitement and problems currently plaguing Bellhold. Summarize the information given under *The Situation in the Town of Bellhold*, above. Othic does not think that the nightmares have anything to do with the old dragon, and he will not even mention them unless specifically asked. As he says, "My only problem is a couple of escaping horses, so I have a fair amount to be thankful for."

After the meal, he will send the adventurers on their way. If they have gotten along well, he will tell them that he is coming into town for some errands tomorrow, and would be pleased to join them for breakfast at the local tavern and inn, The Bell and Clapper. He also recommends the inn as a good place to stay, mentioning that it is owned by one of the dragon-slayers' descendants.





## BELLHOLD AND ENVIRONS

### AREA 1: Coldstream River.

This river begins its flow near the base of Steeple Mountain, winding along the edge of town before flowing down the valley. It varies in width from 20 ft. to 30 ft., in depth from 6 ft. to 15 ft., and for most of the year runs fairly quickly at 5 miles per hour (44 ft. per round). The river is used for washing, bathing, drinking water, and fishing an odd but delicious sort of cave fish called a white eye. Downstream of the town, the foundries often use the river to dispose of wastes, a situation that has caused them friction with local druids in the past.

### AREA 2: Steeple Mountain.

This tall mountain dominates the skyline in Bellhold. It is not especially tall as mountains go, but it is more difficult to climb than many, as Copperdeath went out of his way to destroy climbing paths. As a result, the top of the mountain tends to loom outward over the base of the mountain, dropping rocks on the trails below and making assaults very difficult.

Copperdeath maintained one hidden trail up the mountainside, and this is used by the goblins for their nightly forays. See Chapter III: Assaulting Steeple Mountain, page 15.

### AREA 3: Copperdeath's Old Lair.

Hidden 800 ft. up Steeple Mountain, these caves are where the tyrant dragon used to live before his death. See *Inside Steeple Mountain*, page 23.

### AREA 4: Othic's Farm.

Located a few miles from town, this farm is where the elderly farmer Othic raises workhorses and farms crops. See *Investigating the Murder*, page 14.

### AREA 5: Wyrmcalls Plaza.

The heart of Bellhold, this large plaza is where market day is held. At its center is a 50-ft. tall bell tower where the Wyrmcalls, a massive alarm bell, is hung. See *Race for the Tower*, page 33.

### AREA 6: The Bell & Clapper.

This popular inn and tavern, located just off Wyrmcalls Plaza, is well known among travelers for its cheap ale, delicious food, and good beds. It is run by a garrulous half-elf named Tokket, the son of one of the adventurers who slew Copperdeath. This was also the headquarters for the Heroes of the Bell, a local adventuring group that has gone missing. This area is detailed below.

### AREA 7: The Mayor's Office.

Hob Waterman, the town mayor for fifteen years, has never dealt with a crisis such as this before. He has responded as best he knows how, dispatching the town guard to search for the missing children while trying to maintain a difficult peace. He would probably be trying more drastic measures, but Hob is an optimist,

and Utrish, the local wise woman and oracle, has predicted that the nightmares and headaches will not last more than another week. As a result, he has asked the inhabitants of Bellhold for patience. While he may ask visiting adventurers such as the PCs for help in solving a murder or finding missing children, he is not as desperate as he probably should be.

If the PCs need encouragement, Hob will personally ask them for help. He will paint a picture of them as heroes, written down in legends as the people who saved Bellhold. If that does not convince them, he will offer them a flat fee of 100 gp per person if they save the missing children and stop whatever is causing the bad dreams.

Hob is deeply in debt to Lucius Krekkes (see Area 12, below), the owner of both Krekkes Mines and the Krekkes Foundry. He is not above turning a blind eye to Krekkes's shenanigans, or doing him a favor now and then.

Hob Waterman, mayor (1): hp 36.

### AREA 8: Cobble's Shack.

Cobble lives in a poor section of town near one of the foundries and gets by doing odd jobs for people richer than he is. He has been painting recently to give in to his nightmares; his shack is full of paintings of shackled slaves, of shadows wrapped around glowing stones, and of dark, endless tunnels. Cobble is not far from the edge, and his nightmares are more prescient than he knows. See *Rant of a Madman*, page 12.

### AREA 9: Utrish's Cottage.

Utrish the wise woman is the closest thing Bellhold has to an oracle, and she lives outside of the town proper in a small shack covered with pendants, wards, and symbols. Most of the decorations are just for show, but she does have some oracular abilities, and she is terrified by what she has seen. See *Visiting Utrish's Cottage*, page 13.

### AREA 10: Town Churches.

There are several churches in town, one to each of the prominent gods in the GM's campaign. The largest church belongs to the human God of Smithing, Crafting, or Mining. The GM can customize these churches to best fit her own campaign world. In each, higher-level clerics have temporarily left the area in order to avoid the horrible dreams that have plagued them, hoping to find a cure outside the town, where they are finally able to concentrate and gain restful sleep. They have left under-clerics to give sermons

**Bellhold (Small Town):** Conventional, NG; 800 gp limit; Assets 76,800 gp; Population 1,920; Human 79%, Halfling 9%, Elf 5%, Dwarf 3%, Gnome 2%, Half-elf 1%, Half-orc 1%.

**Authority Figures:** Hob Waterman, Lucius Krekkes.

**Others:** Adp4; Adp2 (x2); Ari3; Bbn2; Brd5; Brd2 (x2); Brd1 (x4); Clr4; Clr2 (x2); Clr1 (x4); Com6; Com3 (x2); Drd5; Drd2 (x2); Drd1 (x4); Exp5; Exp2 (x2); Ftr2; Mnk2; Pal1; Rgr1; Rog2; Sor2; War6; War3 (x2); Wiz2; Ari1 (x9); Adp1 (x9); War1 (x94); Exp1 (x56); Com1 (x1,710).





and tend to the people, one in the smaller churches and two in the largest church.

**Thorlenn, sample under-cleric (1): hp 8.**

### **AREA 11: Guardhouse.**

The guard house has one, seldom-used jail cell. The town guard is not extensive, doing little more than breaking up the occasional bar fight; sometimes, it is called upon to deal with a monster that has wandered into the new mines. Three guards are on duty at any given time, with a total of 12 guards and a guard captain available to deal with any trouble. Their usual method is to talk first, club second.

Captain Haldik is a driven man, convinced that copper is actually transmutable into gold. His lack of sleep is turning this belief into an obsession, and he mentions it in almost every conversation. Usually on duty during the day, he often appears stinking of alchemical substances and with acid-stained hands, the results of his nighttime experiments.

**Von Morris, sample town guardsman (1): hp 13.**

**Captain Haldik (1): hp 23.**

### **AREA 12: Krekkt Foundry.**

Owned by Lucius Krekkt, also the owner of the new copper mine in town, this foundry is renowned for its excellent craftsmanship. Customers send orders from hundreds of miles away, and Krekkt's tries not to disappoint. The Foundry employs many of the town's citizens who are not already working at the mine, and Krekkt employs a dozen superb craftsmen at good wages.

The foundry tends to pollute the river and the air, which does not endear it to many people; however, it is downstream and downwind of the town and is essential to the town's prosperity. Lucius wields a lot of political pull with Hob Waterman the mayor, able to arrange for prisoners to be freed or legal cases to be fixed. Krekkt is an abrasive but competent man, and his family has lived in Bellhold some five generations, so he is considered the town's foremost citizen. His insistence on efficient mining has earned him the nickname of "the new dragon."

Lucius' wife Phillippa comes from the nearest big city. She detests Bellhold as a provincial backwater, and spends most of her time lamenting, "How much better this town would be if only . . ."

**Lucius Krekkt (1): hp 27.**

**Phillippa Krekkt (1): hp 7.**

### **AREA 13: Steeple Foundry.**

This foundry is smaller, grubbier, and less popular than Krekkt's. It buys ore from Lucius Krekkt at an increased price and produces copper goods and bells from it that are quickly shipped out of town. No one knows exactly who runs Steeple Foundry; orders are given by a supervisor named Sargha Danth, who supposedly gets direct instructions from a mysterious owner named Master Heath, whom no one has seen in years. In any event, Sargha demands loyalty and efficiency from her workers, and she pays them well.

Rumor suggest that the employees of the foundry engage in bare knuckle fights on the foundry floor late at night, and that those with connections can attend and gamble on them. The truth of this, and the secret of Master Heath, can be used as a link to the sequel to this adventure. See *Continuing Plot Hooks* at the end of this adventure for more details.

### **AREA 14: Krekkt's Mine.**

This extensive copper mine is owned by Lucius Krekkt (see Area 12). It employs more than a hundred workers, and has its own rules and guards. Conditions at the mine are relatively safe as such places go, and Krekkt does his best to make sure that people are efficient and the copper ore keeps coming. The PCs are not allowed in, and guards will explain that there is nothing dangerous that needs their attention. If they do manage to roleplay their way into a tour, they will see a large mine with many branching tunnels, many workers, good support beams, and (other than the low ceilings) no obvious dangers.

### **AREA 15: Old Mine.**

This mine was closed after Copperdeath was slain 49 years ago. See *The Old Mine*, page 16.

## **CHAPTER II: EVENTS IN BELLHOLD** **Entering Bellhold**

Bellhold is a small town of 1,920 inhabitants. More than 500 of the inhabitants have left town temporarily due to headaches and bad dreams. With the exception of copper and bronze goods, the town has a purchase limit of 800 gp. The town is not intricately detailed in this adventure, with only prominent or pertinent locations noted (see *Bellhold and Environs*, above).

As the PCs enter town by the main road, they should be able to hear church bells being tested in the foundries by the river. Other than the belching smoke of foundries, the town tends to be fairly clean and unpolluted. The road takes the PCs into town and directly to Wyrmcalls Plaza. On the way, they pass dozens of small shops for mining equipment, smithies, butchers, taverns, foundry agents, copper dealers, caravan agents, and sundries. About a quarter of these are closed and locked. No gate or wall surrounds the town, and no one bars the PCs' entry. If the PCs are entering town on specific business, they should be able to find the business that they are looking for fairly easily. If they ask anyone for the best place to stay, they will be directed to the Bell and Clapper, off the Plaza.

Wyrmcalls Plaza is quite busy, as the PCs arrive on market day. Stray dogs rummage through rubbish in the street for food, and more than a dozen tables are set up and partially loaded with vegetables and other foodstuffs. The PCs will notice that more people are arguing and more people seem upset than normal, looking haggard and run down. People stare off into space for seconds at a time, losing their train of thought, and there is a tendency toward





irritability and anger, with the average citizen currently suffering a -2 circumstance penalty on skill checks using Int, Wis, or Cha due to headaches and lack of sleep. Near the bell tower, a bearded man with wild eyes is standing atop a crate, haranguing the crowd. If the PCs go to listen to him, see *Rant of a Madman*, below.

The only inn in town, other than a flophouse over near the foundries, is the Bell & Clapper. This inn and tavern looks directly onto Wyrmcalls Plaza, set on land given to the current owner's mother five decades ago.

The Bell & Clapper caters primarily to merchants coming to town. As a result, it has fifteen rooms on three floors, ranging from simple to luxurious accommodations, and the rooms are reasonably priced. The inn is relatively empty at the time of the adventure, leaving most of the rooms vacant. In the ale house downstairs, the walls are decorated with moldering items and trophies left over from the destruction of Copperdeath, including an arm-sized talon, a portrait of the adventurers who defeated him, non-magical weapons hung up out of arm's reach, and other artifacts. One of these artifacts is a diary formerly belonging to Thrommel Redstone, a dwarven adventurer.

The owner of the Bell & Clapper is Tokket, a muscled, middle-aged half-elf who inherited the inn from his mother Alissa. Tokket is garrulous, friendly, and full of gossip, despite his sleeplessness. He will gladly talk about the town, the old dragon, and the current problems, if he is asked. If someone is being annoying, however, Tokket's irritability may get the better of him.

Tokket will pass on the following gossip, with no skill checks required, if the PCs chat with him. Note that this gossip should be slipped into conversation. If the players prefer to use the **Gather Information** skill instead of roleplaying the conversation, this is also the information available on a successful **Gather Information** (DC 8) check.

- Three children, two boys and a girl, have gone missing in the past week.
- A local adventuring group called "The Heroes of the Bell" has also gone missing. They had sworn to find the children, and no one knows where they went to do so. It is thought that they have left town while tracking down one of the children. Their names (if anyone asks) were Corum Mosstoos, Deke Forgeman, Caliandra Stormhold, and Petros Bellson.





- No one knows why people are suffering from headaches and bad dreams. Tokket hopes it is not the water, but he recommends people drink ale or wine just to be safe.
- Tokket personally thinks that someone in town has offended one of the gods, and that this deity is punishing the town in return.
- Most of the people in town work for Krekkes's mine (or "The New Mine," as it is sometimes called), or one of the two foundries. Krekkes's always been a bit of a bully, but he is a good merchant. Without him, the town probably wouldn't survive.
- Utrish, an old witch who lives outside of town, has prophesized that the headaches and dreams will stop within a week. People generally believe her, as she has been correct before.
- The bell tower outside is used to call people to meetings and warn them of danger. It used to be sounded to tell the town that Copperdeath was coming. It is so loud that when a drunk passed out up there once, the sound actually killed him and shattered the glass wine bottle he was carrying.
- Tokket's mother was a bard who helped kill Copperdeath. He never got along well with her until just before she died, but he has kept some of her mementos, including parts of the dragon, a sundered great axe, and a diary belonging to one of her friends.

Tokket (1): hp 7.

### Rant of a Mad Man

A man at the base of the bell tower screams and preaches to a dozen people. He is muscled and filthy, and his hair is unwashed. His wild eyes take in the newcomers, and he pitches his voice even a little louder to include them.

"And here we have new friends! Welcome, friends, welcome. He will gladly take you as well. I was just explaining to these fine people here," and at this his voice drops to almost a conspiratorial whisper, "that we're all going to get swallowed." His voice returns to normal. "Yes, swallowed! Deep into the abyss, where we are kept for and cared for by the one who hates us! I can see him now . . . feel him. I have felt him against my skin at night. He . . . he will bury us all in the deepest pit!" His tone changes again, to one that is almost happy. "I'm not going back into the mine, you see. Never never never. The mine is where he'll find me, so I won't go. He talks to me every day, and tells me he misses me, but I don't miss his whispers!" Tears begin to roll down his face, slicing furrows through the dirt on his cheeks. "I don't!"

Cobble is completely insane. He is more sensitive than most to psychic attack, and the whisperings of Copperdeath have unhinged him. Tired of painting alone in his shack (see *Bellhold and Environs*, Area 8, above), he has come into town to try and explain himself. His conversation should include how he always hears whispering, how he is trapped in its belly while the flesh rots

around him, and how he has come to hate the sound of bells.

The PCs cannot cure him without a *heal* spell, but if they wish to escort him to a nearby church or the guardhouse, he will go willingly. He will not stop talking, though, babbling paranoid insanities that will turn out to be all too true.

Cobble (1): hp 3.

### Town Meeting

In the evening of their first day in town, perhaps during their dinner, the PCs will hear the Wyrmcalls rung. It has a deep, tolling \* bong \* that echoes in everyone's chest. Even inside, the bell seems unnaturally loud and beautiful of tone, although that is just due to masterwork construction. Messengers will then begin calling out, "Town meeting in the Plaza at the twilight-bell! Town meeting in the Plaza at the twilight-bell!" Their voices will fade as they move down the streets, spreading their message.





Shortly after the bell rings the arrival of twilight, the Plaza will be packed with hundreds of people. The mayor, Hob Waterman, will be standing on a platform set outside of the bell tower. Near him will be Lucius and Phillippa Krekktet, and Captain Haldik of the town guard. Hob will call the meeting to order, banging a mallet down loudly to try and get the annoyed population to be quiet.

Hob wishes to address the current crises and to calm peoples' nerves. Lucius Krekktet was getting worried about mine production, and so asked him to tell people that everything is fine. He will run through each problem and then his answer to it, while people scream out suggestions and possible solutions. People will also yell out insults and threats if they do not believe him.

**Problem:** Three children, two boys and a girl, are missing.

**Hob's answer:** All the children were old enough to have run away on their own. He has messages out to nearby towns through the caravan companies, and the town scouts are out looking for them. In addition, the notable adventurers The Heroes of the Bell are also out seeking the children. Doubtless, they will be found soon.

**Problem:** The Heroes of the Bell are also missing!

**Hob's answer:** Of course they are! They're looking for the children! Surely people don't expect them to find the children right here in town, lost in the inn's common room, do they?

**Problem:** People are suffering from headaches.

**Hob's answer:** It's certainly annoying, but no known spell or curse could cause it. He has asked the druidical order to send someone to ensure that the water supply and the well are not contaminated. He asked the town's clerics to check for poison, and they have found none.

**Problem:** People are suffering from bad dreams.

**Hob's Answer:** We know that we aren't cursed by a god for sins, no matter what people say, and we don't know what else could cause it. Utrish the wise woman ("Witch!" someone in the crowd cries out, before being shushed) has prophesized that the dreams and headaches won't last more than another week, and she's always right. Hob isn't very worried; just wait a bit longer, and they'll go away. It's been guaranteed by the local Oracle.

**Problem:** Animals are acting funny. The chickens aren't laying eggs, the cows aren't milking, and the horses are skittish.

**Hob's Answer:** We know, and we think that they're getting headaches too. We'll ask the knowledgeable druids when they finally get here in a few days.

**Problem:** People are scared to go down in the mines.

**Hob's Answer:** There's no reason for that at all. Master Krekktet here has guaranteed that the tunnels are safe, and what more assurance do you need than that? This isn't the old days, and it's the town's job to ensure that just as much copper gets made this month as last month, headaches or not.

He will then take open comments and statements from the crowd before the meeting breaks up. If the PCs volunteer to help, Hob will tell them that their help will certainly be appreciated if they think that there's anything they can do. He invites them to visit his office tomorrow afternoon.

Tokket closes the tavern during the meeting. If the PCs still decide not to visit the town meeting, they miss out on quite a bit of information. Since most people in town were there, however, anyone they ask should be able to answer questions for them.

### Visiting Utrish's Cottage (EL 1)

While investigating, the PCs will possibly want to meet Utrish. The only local arcane spellcaster who has not yet left Bellhold, she is an odd, old woman who lives alone with her twelve cats just outside of town. Utrish is gifted with a talent for foreseeing the future, and she makes her living reading the palms of gullible people from town.

Occasionally, though, she prophesies truly. When she was visited by Phillipa Krekktet yesterday, Phillipa demanded a reading, and the irritable Utrish agreed. Instead of making up pretty lies and fanciful claptrap, Utrish felt herself seeing the truth, and, shaken, she told Phillipa part of what she had foreseen: that the headaches and dreams would stop within a week. Terrified, Utrish did not tell Phillipa the entire story – that the headaches and dreams would stop because no free-willed people would be left in town. She could not foresee why or how, but she knew that the missing children were somehow tied up in it, and she got the sense of a horribly strong, implacable mind bent on revenge.

Phillippa was ecstatic and told her husband the good news, and Lucius told Hob the mayor, and Hob told the entire town during the town meeting. Utrish has finally lost her courage, and when the PCs arrive walking up the lane, she is finishing her packing and attempting to sneak out of town. She will likely spot the PCs coming unless they try and be stealthy, so she will quickly try and sneak out the back entrance into the woods (Hide check at -2 vs. PC Spot rolls).

As you come down the narrow dirt lane, you can hear the whinnying of a mule somewhere ahead. A squat cottage is in front of you, dark and sullen under the trees. A cat runs across the path as you approach. Many of the decorations on the outside of the house are apparently arcane symbols of different kinds. You hear a faint bang from somewhere, as if a window shutter closed.

A Spellcraft (DC 12) check is needed to determine that none of the arcane wards have true arcane power. A Knowledge (arcana) (DC 12) check is needed to determine that they are designed to ward against mind-affecting magic. A Spellcraft or Search (DC 10) check reveals that they were constructed hastily, within the last day.





Any PC succeeding at an **opposed Spot check** will see a shape slowly moving through the woods behind the house. They can catch up to the old woman easily, as she can move no faster than 15 ft. per round. If no one spots her, the PCs will find that the house was abandoned but minutes before, with half a cup of warm tea still sitting on a table and the house mused from hasty packing. Mean, angry cats stalk the cottage, ready to scratch anyone who comes near.

Utrish is in her 60s and often plays the part of the wise woman in order to con the locals out of money and gifts. Her actual oracular talents sneak up on her occasionally, however, as much as she would like to deny them. In the past, she has predicted floods, deaths, and famine. She even remembers as a girl seeing the adventurers who would one day slay Copperdeath – and seeing them as walking dead. Thus, when she was telling Phillippa Krekket's fortune, she spoke honestly when she said the dreams would end within the week. She kept to herself that she knew this because there would be no one left who could dream. With her nerve broken, she is sure that she will die if she does not leave.

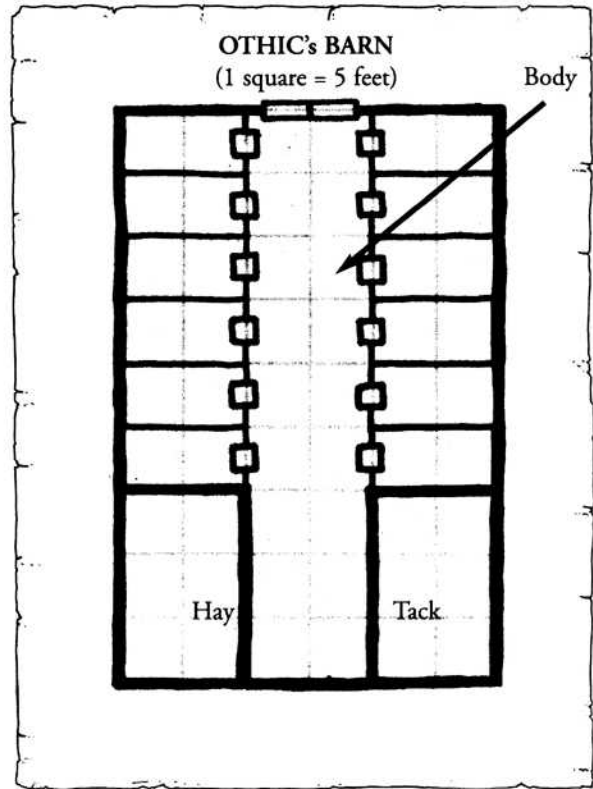
Obviously scared, she will tell the PCs the truth if they use **Intimidation** or **Diplomacy** (DC 10). Otherwise, she will try to lie and tell them that all will be fine. She is nervous enough that her lies are not terribly convincing, and she will have a **-2 competence penalty on any Bluff check** she makes. Utrish's major goal is now to leave town; if helping the PCs will speed her on her way, she will reluctantly help them. She has hidden away a *potion of love*, a *potion of charisma*, and a *potion of cure light wounds*. She will sell all three to the PCs for dramatically reduced prices (50% normal), or give them away if allowed to leave immediately.

Utrish (1): hp 22.

### The Nightmares

Any PC that sleeps in Bellhold experiences a nightmare, as detailed in the handouts. These dreams should be distributed either by character class, or by GM choice; one nightmare per character class is included, and many of the nightmares can be used for more than one class. The GM should pick which nightmare a multiclassed PC receives. Alternatively, the GM should feel free to create her own nightmares modeled on those provided, taking into account more personal details of each PC. In any case, these dreams require spellcasting PCs to roll a **Concentration check** each morning against a **DC of 0 + the number of days of poor sleep**, in order to prepare new spells; spellcasters who fail this check cannot prepare any new spells that day. Since the first morning the DC is 1, no one will initially have trouble preparing spells after the nightmares.

After the GM gives each player a handout, *she must not let the players read one another's dreams*, and she should take back each handout a minute or two after distributing it. This tactic simulates the odd feeling of having a dream fade, and it will likely catch the players off-guard. They should feel free to discuss their dreams as much as they like.



### Investigating the Murder (EL 3)

The first morning after spending the night in Bellhold, the PCs will awake with a faint headache. They are likely due to meet Othric for breakfast. Unfortunately, Othric never shows up.

If the PCs do nothing, within an hour one of Othric's workers, named Tal, bursts into the tavern with the news; if they go to see Othric, they will meet Tal on the road. Othric was horribly murdered! Tal found him ripped apart in his barn, half eaten by some monster, but with no tracks about.

If the PCs go and investigate, they will find the barn floor covered with Othric's dried blood, his body still lying where Tal found it. Large buzzing flies lazily circle and land on the corpse, and the coppery smell of blood will fill peoples' nostrils. Othric is face down and virtually ripped in half, with two large chunks of his chest and shoulder bitten out of him as if by a wild animal. He has been trampled, too, probably by panicked horses. The nearby house is untouched, and no one took the small pouch Othric had on him.

If anyone turns the body over, they will discover that Othric has a bridle bit shoved deep into his mouth, apparently by his own hands.

A successful **Search check** (DC 15) reveals that he is still carrying money, that he was apparently taken by surprise from behind, and that no tracks go through the dried blood other than hoof marks. A successful **Wilderness Lore check** (DC 15) confirms this, and shows that instead of being trampled once by many horses, Othric was trampled many times by only two horses.







A look out in the pasture shows the herd of horses, with most of the horses clustered at the far end and two horses grazing next to one another half-way down the field. These two horses are Blaze and Broadsword, the two horses that the PCs saw the previous day. A **Spot check** (DC 15) will reveal dried blood upon their hooves and flanks. If approached, the horses will continue to act docile, wanting to wait until the odds are mostly in their favor before they attack anyone. They do not understand good strategy, but they are unnaturally cruel and crafty.

#### **Psionic Horses (2): hp 19, 19.**

Blaze can manifest *id insinuation*, *empty mind*, and *control body* at a DC of  $d20+4$ . Broadsword can manifest *id insinuation*, *empty mind*, and *bite of the wolf* (1d8 points of damage; +3 to attack).

The horses are both sneaky cowards and have extremely poor morale; if hurt in combat, they are much more likely to break off combat and run instead of continuing to attack.

Both horses were previously captured by goblins, who, on Thimdru's orders, had hammered a shard of the Dragonstone into the horses' brains. Now the horses are psionic, evil, and under the Dragonstone's basic control. The previous night, after the PCs had left the farm and Othic was alone, Blaze used his new power *control body* on Othic, making him shove a bridle bit into his mouth before marching him over to Broadsword. Broadsword then manifested *bite of the wolf* and gleefully ripped Othic in two. All the while, they taunted him mentally about how he would never harness them again.

If given the opportunity, the two horses will try to take a single PC by surprise, scaring him badly and mentally taunting him before slowly killing him. If not given the opportunity, they will act just like normal horses for as long as they can. Unfortunately, they detect as evil and normal animals want nothing to do with them, which makes hiding somewhat more difficult. When they attack, they will act as a team, Blaze using *control body* to humiliate a person before Broadsword bites him in two. All the while, they will use their telepathy to taunt the PC, perhaps revealing that they were given intelligence and powers by the "beasts of the mountains," and that now no one can stop their conquest of the town's farmers and whip-makers.

### **Investigating the Kidnappings**

The PCs will likely try to learn all they can about the three missing children. All three, two boys and a girl, went missing in the woods near the river. Search parties have found nothing, but would welcome help.

If the PCs start looking for tracks down along the banks of the Coldstream River, they must succeed in a **Search check** (DC 15) to find mud-encrusted footprints. These footprints are not human; instead, they are smaller and more primitive, and a **Wilderness Lore check** (DC 20) reveals them to be goblinoid. Any PC who has tracked goblins before receives a +4 **competence bonus** to this identification check. A **Wilderness Lore check** (DC 15) is required to **track** the footprints back toward Steeple Mountain and the hidden trail there. Close to the mountain's

base, another **Wilderness Lore check** (DC 15) will reveal that more goblin footprints have joined the group, including the footprints of what looks like a human child or halfling. These tracks lead across the old mining road, up to the mountain, and eventually onto the narrow secret path.

PCs searching the woods may find the spot where one of the children was taken. Prukk the goblin spy (see *The Goblin Forces* in Chapter III: Assaulting Steeple Mountain, below) has made the spot as easy to find as possible, in the hopes that someone will trace it to the mountain. A **Search check** (DC 12) will let the PCs come across a small clearing in which a struggle clearly took place. Goblin footprints cover the soft ground, and a **Wilderness Lore check** (DC 10) reveals that a small human was held down and bound here. Prukk has even left a small pile of red dirt lumped in a mountain shape alongside where the prisoner was taken, on the off chance that *some* humans will finally figure it out and come to stop Thimdru and Akkratt. He is not very hopeful. These footprints can be followed toward the mountain and across the Old Mine Road, where they meet up with other goblin footprints from recent days before finally leading to the beginning of the secret path.

#### **Blaze and Broadsword**

This encounter is both frightening and darkly amusing. The GM can use it as foreshadowing for what the goblins are doing, but should not give away too many secrets. At the end of the encounter, as they stand next to the two dead horses, the PCs should be asking themselves, "What was THAT all about?" Watching a horse's jaw extend into a fanged monstrosity can cause those sorts of questions.

Keep in mind that, like any weapon, *bite of the wolf* can potentially kill some 1st-level PCs in one bite; for this reason, the horses have poor morale and taunting personalities. Those traits may give the rest of the PCs time to save a captive's life.

## **CHAPTER III: ASSAULTING STEEPLE MOUNTAIN**

Old-timers in Bellhold can point out roughly where on the face of the mountain the entrance to Copperdeath's lair lies. The lair is only about 800 ft. above ground level, but in his day Copperdeath delighted in breaking off any ledge or outcropping that was even moderately climbable. As a result, the mountain's upper reaches virtually overhang its base; climbing it would require the ability to cling to walls like a spider. Just looking at the mountain is enough to tell an experienced climber that it will not be an easy climb. *The GM should make sure to tell the PCs this fact.*

A **Search check** (DC 20) along the base of the mountain, however, reveals a faint, seldom used path along narrow ledges up the side of the cliff. This path may also be revealed by anyone tracking the goblin footprints from Old Mine Road.

Even with this path, anyone attempting it quickly understands that a successful assault will require large quantities of rope, spikes, and other climbing gear. This Climber's Kit can be bought in





town for less than the normal price (60 gp), and will grant a +2 circumstance bonus to Climb checks. If a Climber's Kit is unaffordable, the Mayor can pull strings to let the PCs borrow one, or normal ropes and pitons can be purchased at standard prices. Equally as valuable as the gear, however, is an experienced climber. The availability of such a climber is entirely at the discretion of the GM. If you prefer to discourage the PCs from making the climbing attempt, no one is available. If you want your PCs to try the nigh-impossible mountain entrance before possibly retreating and trying the Old Mines, Heather Mosstoos (see Appendix II: Monster & Character Descriptions), a local halfling who climbs mountains as a hobby, is available for the modest fee of 10 gp. If she does come, she will not join in the assault; her only job is to try and get the PCs up the mountain alive.

**Heather Mosstoos (1): hp 12.**

Heather is a fun-loving, friendly halfling, and the sister of the missing adventurer Corum Mosstoos. She does not like real danger, but she loves the thrill of mountain climbing. When combat breaks out, she will refuse to take part in any attack; instead, she will hide until she has the opportunity to retreat down the mountain.

Refer to the climbing rules in *Core Rulebook I* to adjudicate the climb. Heather can ease the ascent by adding a +2 circumstance bonus to all climbers' skill checks.

The narrow path along Steeple Mountain can be climbed in three stages:

**Stage 1:** Mountain's bottom. A moderate ascent varying between DC 10 and 15, characterized by scrambling up loose rock beds and along very narrow paths.

**Stage 2:** First 300 ft. up. The way becomes much more difficult as the path reaches the section that Copperdeath tore away. DCs vary between DC 15 and DC 25.

**Stage 3:** Last 200 ft. until the lair. Moderately difficult, with DCs varying between DC 15 and DC 20. During this stage, there is little cover against goblin attacks, as most of the rock outcroppings have been knocked away. At best, PCs on this stage will have 20% cover against arrow or boulder attacks.

Remember that failing a Climb check by more than 5 indicates a fall, and that suffering damage while climbing necessitates an immediate Climb check. Please see Area 29 of *Inside Steeple Mountain*, below, for details of the goblins' defense; and *The Dragonstone's Voice*, page 23, for a description of how the Dragonstone responds to the PCs' approach.

Properly prepared characters attempting to climb down will find it easier than climbing up. Characters sharing a Climber's Kit may subtract 5 from Climb DCs when descending the mountain. Characters without such gear will find the descent more difficult, and may subtract 2 from Climb DCs as they try to descend the steep mountain slope.

## The Old Mine

Two sets of mines are dug into the earth at the base of Steeple Mountain. The first, Krekkek's Mine, is an active and thriving operation run by Lucius Krekkek. His grandfather started this operation after the old mines run by the dragon were closed. It employs many dozens of townsfolk and is the largest single employer in town. Other than some rats, the mines are kept monster-free through the use of adventurers and trained guards.

The second set of mines in town is much less safe. Now abandoned, the series of half-collapsed and sealed off tunnels is known colloquially as "the Old Mine" or "the Dragon's Mine." It was run by Copperdeath, who used his mental powers to enslave hundreds of villagers into working for him with little pay or reward, other than protection from not being eaten. Considered dangerous and taboo after the dragon was slain, it has since been left undisturbed, its entrances sealed.

The entrance to the old mine is out of town in the shadow of Steeple Mountain, up an overgrown cart track. This road was once paved with dark red crushed stone, but now after fifty years fairly large trees and grasses grow up across it. A **Wilderness Lore check** (DC 5) or a **Search check** (DC 15) is needed to find and follow the old road. Butterflies and insects dance across the tall grasses under tree-dappled sunlight, undisturbed by either the psychic emanations or their usual predators. No random encounters occur between the town and the old mine. A **Wilderness Lore check** (DC 15) indicates that other people came this way within the last week.

### *Features of the old mine*

The air in the mine is very humid and clammy. Over time, ground water has caused small greenish stalactites and stalagmites to form across most ceilings and floors, and stone walls appear to be almost melting in some areas from the growing rock formations. These rock formations, and the pools of harmless slime under them, are extremely colorful; they range from reddish-orange to bluish-green, and in length from half an inch to two feet.

Few bats live in the mine; until very recently, all access was sealed off by copper plates. The troglodytes have eaten most of the rats, but large bluish-green beetles abound. These scavenger beetles do not attack, but are omnivorous and will swarm over any sleeping characters in the hopes that they are edible. They cannot do any actual damage, although their presence may be disturbing.

Passage width is usually 10 ft., and unless noted otherwise ceiling height is 6 ft. in corridors and 10 ft. high in cleared rooms. Most rooms and passages are supported by ancient, rotting wooden support beams. The faint vibration of the underground river can often be felt in the stone throughout the mine.

Areas 1, 2 and 3 are shown on the Side View Map (page 25).

## AREA 1: The Cracked Entranceway.

As you climb the hill, it is difficult to tell that the old trade road used to run here. The hill is badly overgrown with trees,





and it is clear that no carts have come this way in decades. Reaching the top, you can see down to where the mine's entrance must be. No entrance is immediately obvious; instead, the rotting remains of winches and odd dwarvish machinery sit in the valley below, surrounded by piles of red rocks.

The entranceway is a pit leading straight into the ground, blocked by large sheets of copper when the town closed the mine. The copper sheets (each an inch thick) were bolted together, bolted into the ground, and weighed down by boulders. It is difficult to see the copper sheeting from a distance (**Spot DC 15**); it is covered with dirt and verdigris, and is now a blue-green color that blends in with the surrounding plant life. Nearby are the remains of various types of dwarvish-designed hauling, lifting, and load-moving equipment. All of these are rotted and effectively useless.

Closer examination of the copper sheeting reveals that the plates were recently pried open. One of the plates was heated and bent back far enough for a medium-sized creature to slip through. A **Search check (DC 20)** reveals that this sheet was apparently bent with two different types of tools and at two different times. (After the goblins came through on an unsuccessful search for the back entrance to the caverns, the adventuring group entered a week ago with somewhat more successful results.) A sturdy, knotted 100-ft. long rope is still tied to a nearby boulder and is snaked into the gap.

Rain fell within the last week, and so almost all tracks in the area have disappeared. A **Wilderness Lore check (DC 10)** will indicate the odd fact that not one animal has come by since the last rain.

If the characters choose not to use the dangling rope, it is a simple matter to tie a rope off to a nearby obstacle and slip down into the darkness. If they wish to bend the copper plate back further, it will take a **Strength check (DC 20)** and the proper tools (such as a crowbar). Currently, the gap is wide enough for a human in plate armor barely to slip through.

## AREA 2: The Unstable Platform.

The 10-foot by 10-foot shaft below the copper plate descends out of sight into the darkness, accompanied by the sound of muffled roaring. You can feel a slight vibration, and the air in the shaft is moist. You do not see any sign of light. The knotted rope dangles down into the darkness, right next to the corroded remains of a metal ladder attached to the wall.

The shaft drops 80 ft. straight downward before ending in an old wooden platform. A PC can easily descend this shaft on a rope (**Climb DC 5 with a knotted rope, or 13 with an unknotted rope**), while using the ladder for extra support, or try to clamber down the slippery and corroded ladder (**Climb DC 20**). The walls of the shaft are hewn from stone and are slimy with bright greenish-blue algae. Falling PCs will take **1d6 points of damage** for every 10 feet fallen, with the first **1d6 points of damage** being

considered **subdual damage**. Note that a PC only falls if he fails his **Climb check by 5 or more**, making a fall impossible from the knotted rope. If the PCs choose to use an unknotted rope, the chance of falling becomes much higher.

The platform below fills the entire shaft and was once sturdily built, but time and moisture have loosened its foundations. Every round that more than 500 lbs. is placed on the platform, it begins to creak, and there is a cumulative 1 in 20 chance that it gives way. If it does so, any PCs standing on the platform may make a **Reflex save (DC 10)** to leap to safety in the abutting corridor. If the platform does fall, mist from the falling water beneath the platform will thereafter billow upwards, limiting vision in the shaft to 20 ft.

Underneath this platform, the shaft continues straight downward another 90 ft. before opening onto an underground river. Forty feet down from the platform, roiling water cascades into the shaft from a set of old unused and unremarkable tunnels. This water is the diverted runoff from Area 18, finally rejoining the river before eventually exiting the mountain near Bellhold. No valuables lie underneath the shaft, as the current carries all rubble and items downstream.

Any PCs who fall into the water here will suffer **3d6 points of damage, half subdual**, before being quickly swept downstream. An initial **unarmed attack roll against AC 10** will allow an adventurer to grab onto a piece of debris long enough to get a good breath of air, but a person swept uncontrollably through the underground river will suffer **1d6 points of subdual damage** each round from being banged against rocks by the current. A **Swim check (DC 15)** will negate this damage. Two minutes will pass before the river emerges from the mountain into the open air, so anyone who is swept away is likely to drown in the fierce water. Rules for **drowning** can be found in *Core Rulebook II*.

## AREA 3: Flooded Shaft Entrance.

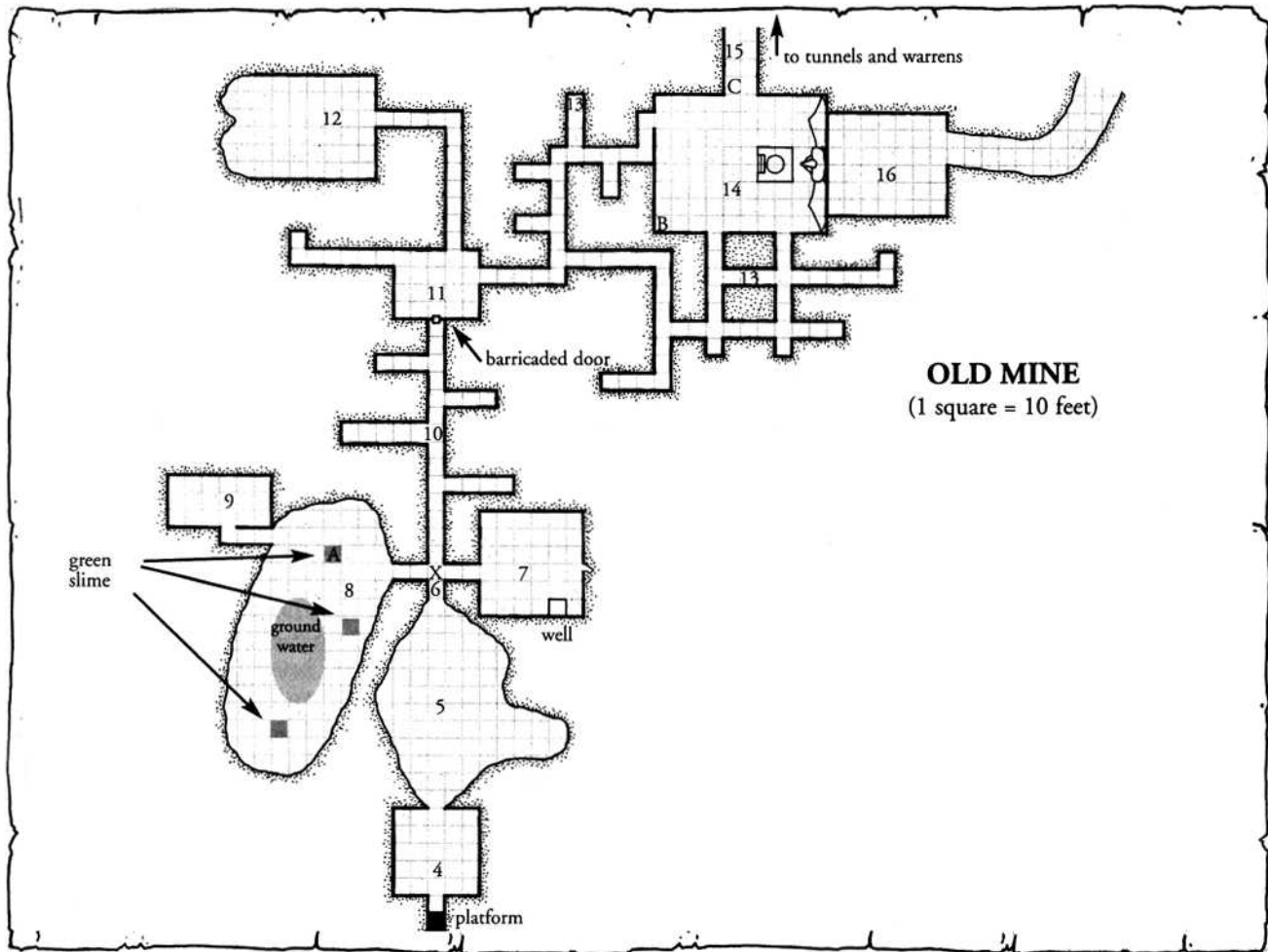
Black water is pouring out of this large tunnel opening, streaming out and falling 50 feet to the underground river below you. Mist from the falling water makes it very hard to see, but it looks like the whole tunnel is filled with fast-moving water.

This tunnel system is completely filled with runoff from the river. The water current is 60 ft. per round, too fast for anyone to swim into it successfully without the aid of magic such as *freedom of movement* or *expeditious retreat*.

## AREA 4: Entrance Room.

A short corridor from the platform leads to a large room. The walls and floors are reddish stone, with bluish-green slime dripping off short stalactites onto the floor. Large greenish beetles scuttle across the floor, away from your light. Ancient wheelbarrows, picks, and wheeled sledges lie rotting around the edges of the room.





The ceiling here is 12 ft. tall. The miners would organize the ore here before it was lifted up the mine's shaft by winches. When the humans abandoned the mine, the equipment was simply tossed here and left to rot. A Search check (DC 15) will uncover a small copper statuette of a coiled dragon, badly tarnished, worth 15 gp.

Additional searching will reveal that some animal (large rats) once made nests in the rubble, but do so no longer. In truth, these rats have long been eaten by the troglodytes who once lived in Area 15. The beetles are colorful, but harmless to anything that is not already dead.

A Wilderness Lore check shows that people have passed this way fairly recently.

- DC 10 shows merely that people have passed.
- DC 15 shows that two separate groups of people have passed, one within the week and one several weeks ago.
- DC 20 shows that the first group consisted of small-sized creatures, and there were many of them; the second group had four or five members, who were medium-sized creatures.
- DC 25 shows that the first group was goblins, who both came and exited. The second group did not leave by this same passage.

### AREA 5: Mined-out Area.

A large cave supported by rotting wooden pillars stretches out before you. The floor is covered with puddles of what looks like slime or ooze. Small stalactites hang from the 15 foot tall ceiling, and the only movement you see is that of beetles scuttling away from you.

Workers following veins of copper ore carved this large hall. The ooze, formed by the humidity, is harmless. At the far end of the cave, a 10-ft. wide arch has been carved into the red rock. The keystone of the arch was carved to resemble a smiling, kindly dragon face. The effect is marred by an old chisel-mark across the dragon's nose.

### AREA 6: Signpost.

In the middle of this intersection sit three severed heads, piled atop each other. They appear to be moving slightly.





The three heads are two male goblins, killed during the goblin raid, and Caliandra Stormhold, a female elf, killed when the adventurers infiltrated the complex earlier in the week. The movement initially seen is caused by the greenish beetles that crawl atop the heads' rotting flesh; these beetles will scatter as people approach.

Tamalruk the troglodyte shaman, however, has animated the heads as an act of vengeance. When someone approaches within 10 ft., all three heads will open wide their rotted eyes and scream as loudly as they can, in bubbling and raspy tones. This screaming will warn Tamalruk that invaders are back, though it will not summon the troglodyte zombies from Area 10.

The elven head is that of Caliandra Stormhold, who was slain by the troglodytes. It is wearing an *earring of fame* (see Appendix III: Arcana) that helped her not at all in her fight against the humanoids. The heads are animated by the spell *corpse scream*, granted to Tamalruk by his deity (see Appendix III: Arcana for full details).

**Animated heads (3):** hp 2 each (AC 5).

### AREA 7: Reptilian Remains.

From the corridor, it is clear that the door to this room collapsed long ago. You can see the remains of rotting beds, placed in front of what looks like a beautiful carving on the far wall. The air here has both a faint musky tang and the strong smell of rotting flesh. It smells almost like a skunk died here.

Tamalruk the shaman (see Area 14) used this room to strip the flesh off dead troglodytes as he prepared them for inclusion into his bonetangle (see Appendix I: New Monster Descriptions). This room once housed exhausted miners, although anything of value has long been stripped from it. Now, it looks more like an abattoir, with huge piles of stinking troglodyte flesh strewn about the ancient cots and hundreds of large blue-green beetles crawling upon the piles of flesh. With a Listen check (DC 20), the sounds of the beetles eating and moving can actually be heard from outside the room.

The back wall of this room was carved into a huge mural in three panels. The left panel shows a dragon, gracefully carved, looking beneficently over dozens of men gladly working in the mine. The central panel shows men working in a forge, smelting down the ore and forming bells and copper goods. The third panel shows the men presenting these happily to the dragon, placed before a huge copper bowl in fiery offering; the dragon looks well pleased.

This room also contains an old well, which drops 60 ft. straight down into the underground river, and a small crevice that was likely once used as a garderobe (a toilet).

### AREA 8: Mining Area.

Another huge room disappears off into darkness. This one looks like copper ore was once mined here; rotting wooden support beams hold up the ceiling, although the ceiling has partially collapsed in several places, leaving piles of rubble on the floor. Your light picks up an odd pool in the center of the room. It is bright blue, and looks quite unnatural.

This area was mined long ago. Since then, groundwater was been collecting in the center of the floor. The leached copper has given this pool of water an unnatural appearance and an odd metallic taste, but the water is not otherwise poisonous. As elsewhere, small stalactites line the ceiling, and stalagmites as well as slime cover the floor.

Some of the slime here is more lethal than elsewhere. Three 5-ft. patches of floor marked on the map have green slime growing on them instead of harmless algae. Feeding off beetles and rats, the green slime has evolved here over the years. Its appearance is slightly different than the slime around it, and good light and careful searching (Search DC 15) can reveal the presence of something strange before it is stepped in. There is no green slime adhering to the ceiling.

The slime at point A on the map is bigger than the others, and a stone with scratched writing in Common lies next to it. The writing reads, "Here lies Corum Mosstoos, dissolved before we could save him. He was a friend and a hero. We know the child was taken to the tunnels above us; we continue on, as Corum would have wanted." It is signed, "Deke Forgerman, Caliandra Stormhold, Petros Bellson."

A single patch of green slime deals 1d6 points of temporary Constitution damage per round while it devours flesh. On the first round of contact, the slime can be scraped off a creature (most likely destroying the scraping device), but after that it must be frozen, burned, or cut away (applying damage to the victim as well). Extreme cold or heat, sunlight, or a *remove disease* spell destroys a patch of green slime. Against wood or metal, green slime deals 2d6 points of damage per round, ignoring metal's hardness but not that of wood. It does not harm stone.

### AREA 9: Overseer's Office.

This room used to be an office of some sort, judging by the rotted desk against the far wall. It also obviously used to serve as a prison; corroded copper chains dangle from the walls, apparently used once to hold people; near them, a carved stone rack still holds rusty tools.

On the floor of the room, an object that looks like a dragon-headed copper statue lays sprawled on the floor, covered with green corrosion and stone drippings from the red stone ceiling 8 feet above. It appears badly damaged and chipped.





This small, square room was converted into an office for the overseers. When the mine was abandoned, the copper golem that once guarded the room was destroyed. Examination of the corroded and verdigrised statue will suggest that it was once animate; it might have once possessed gems in its eyes, but these were taken long ago, leaving nothing but hollow sockets. The golem's remains are not otherwise valuable, except perhaps for the value of the pure copper.

The desk is locked with an old corroded lock that can be picked by any competent rogue (**Open Lock DC 15**). Inside it, any papers have long since dissolved, but a tiny box and a small copper figurine are still in good shape. A small jar of dried copper polish also sits in the drawer, usable if mixed slightly with water.

A **Search (DC 8)** check will reveal that behind the desk has fallen a high quality, shiny copper mirror. It needs polishing, but can be used in Area 14 to open the secret door. It is beautifully crafted and decorated, and is worth 20 gp.

The small box is unlocked and contains five crystal shards. These shards impart a +5 bonus to **Knowledge (Mining)** skill checks, one time per shard. The bright copper soldier is 6 in. tall and is completely untarnished. A slightly magical children's toy that is worth 200 gp, it will march back and forth, waving its sword, when it is held for a round and then released; it has no other useful purpose.

## AREA 10: Troglodyte Ambush (EL 2).

The corridor is more than 100 feet long, and mining tunnels extend off it on either side.

In the two central tunnels, troglodyte zombies lay in wait. Tamalruk has not stripped them of their flesh, preferring to use them as an advance guard to slow down or stop any intruders. They no longer possess their racial abilities, such as chameleon-like skin blending and stench. While the two zombies in the further tunnel swing around the corner and attack, the two zombies hidden at the far back end of the earlier tunnel will slouch forward and try to attack the party from the rear. Alternatively, if the first zombies are found and attacked, the second two zombies will attack the rear of the PCs' group.

**Troglodyte zombies (4):** hp 16, 16, 16, 16.

## AREA 11: The Barrier.

A 10-foot wide copper door waits at the end of this corridor. It is badly corroded, and looks like the metal has been weeping green tears. It is closed. The smell of musk here is very potent.

Tamalruk has barricaded this door from the far side. He is seething in fury as he waits on the far side of the door for the PCs to try and pass. All PCs within 20 ft. of the door must succeed at a **Fortitude save (DC 13)** or be overcome by nausea, losing 1d4

points of Strength for 10 rounds. When he can hear the PCs on the other side of the door, Tamalruk will call out to them in his palsied, whispery, furious voice.

"You! You hasss comes back to finisssh the job, eh? To killss the ressst of uss off? Come and killss me too, if you can. Sssssssss."

Tamalruk will entertain conversation if it is immediate. The goblins and the adventurers have killed almost all of his warriors, and his fury is boundless. He blames all surface creatures for this, and so is not especially in the mood to bargain. Nevertheless, he does want to know who these invaders are. If the PCs are truly convincing, he will wait and talk to them instead of immediately loosening the door bar and slipping back to the worship room.

Tamalruk is an embittered, ancient, troubled shaman. Once his tribe was strong in the service of the dragon, brutal to its enemies, and rich with treasure. Since then, the tribe has atrophied and withered, his deity seems to have withheld his favor, and in the past few weeks he has watched his remaining warriors get slaughtered first by goblins – goblins! – and then by non-reptilian adventurers. He has decided to sacrifice the souls of his warriors by combining them into an undead construct, planning on using the undead as a servant of his vengeance. And now, unexpectedly, more humans are on his doorstep. He hates them, but he hates the goblins more, and he does not want his undead to be destroyed by fighting against the wrong foe.

Clever questioning through the door may bring out some of this information. If the PCs do not want to fight Tamalruk and the bonetangle, their best strategy is to offer to ally with the troglodyte against the goblins. If they do so, Tamalruk will show them the worship chamber that the other surviving adventurers disappeared in, and he will refrain from killing them until they come back down through the tunnels with proof of the goblins' defeat. He will also talk about the goblin tribe, warning them against the clever warriors and the nasty sorcerer (meaning Thimdrul, the goblin psion) who follow false gods. The shaman does not know how to move or activate the sacred dragon idol in Area 14.

If the PCs do not successfully bargain with Tamalruk, he will loosen the door barricade and quickly scuttle to Area 14. If they do successfully bargain, he will do likewise, not trusting the humans and wanting to be in a position of safety near the bonetangle before facing them.

**Corroded Copper Door:** 2 in. thick; hardness 8; 45 hp; Break DC 28 (barred), 18 (unbarred and loosened).

Area 11 is a square room, filled with rock rubble. The walls have been carved into a tribute to some sort of dragon/lizard god, shown appearing and taking what is offered to him in fiery tribute before disappearing back into the stone.

Tamalruk is detailed in Area 14 and Appendix II: Monster & Character Descriptions.





## AREA 12: The Earth Moves (EL 1 or 6).

The ceiling of this room looks like it collapsed long ago. Half-shattered timber supports still stand, encrusted with slime and scattering stone from the rock above. Nothing lives here save for a few beetles scuttling through the slime. As you watch, a small stone is knocked loose from the pile of rubble, rolling down into a patch of slime on the floor. What caused the stone to fall is not obvious.

This gallery contains a huge pile of rubble at its end, which clearly came from the collapsed ceiling. The ceiling is still unstable, and anything that does more than **20 points of damage** to it (blow or spell effect) will collapse it further, doing **8d6 points of damage** to and possibly pinning the corpse of anyone within a 10-ft. radius of the collapse. Information on cave-ins and collapses can be found in *Core Rulebook II*.

The ceiling was originally collapsed by a freed miner trying to escape an ancient servant of the dragon, another copper golem designed for mining and slave tending. The construct functions still and continues trying to push its way out, despite a lack of success for over 50 years. Any PC standing on the rubble will feel it shift, just slightly, every 3 to 6 rounds. The shifting is enough that an observer can see the rocks rising a fraction of an inch if looking closely.

Should the PCs decide that they wish to dig the construct out, the work will require 15 hours worth of digging before the golem is sufficiently freed to force itself the rest of the way out. At that point, the PCs may want to retreat: the golem's last command from Copperdeath was to find and kill intruders . . . . The golem possessed a magical whip named *Slavedriver*, which it used on the prisoners; this whip will be revealed after 10 hours of digging and before the golem is uncovered, and it can be pulled from the rubble without freeing the golem. See Appendix III: Arcana for details on *Slavedriver*.

Copper Golem (1): hp 66.

## AREA 13: Abandoned Tunnels.

These tunnels are former exploratory mine shafts and are now largely abandoned except for beetles and rubble. Should the PCs be forced to flee from the bonetangle, it will chase them into these tunnels if possible.

## AREA 14: The Shrine of Copperdeath.

Light issues from the doorway to this room. As you look inside, your eyes are immediately drawn to a huge stone statue of a dragon seated against the east wall. It rears up, wings spread, staring down at all in the room. Its eyes appear to be huge faceted blue gems, which catch and throw shimmering images of sapphire firelight across the room.

In front of the statue is a giant copper bowl filled with a leaping fire. The bowl is raised five feet off the ground on a

stone block, and is eight feet high itself; it is untarnished and appears to be of beautiful construction.

This room is immense, 100 ft. by 80 ft., with a 30-ft. tall ceiling and multiple entrances. Dozens of stone benches, some overturned, are arrayed before the dragon idol. Once carved by mind-controlled miners as a shrine in veneration to the dragon, Copperdeath soon used the statue of himself to hide the secret tunnels linking his lair and the Old Mine. Here in this room he dominated his new slaves, took tribute and treasure, and investigated work in the mines. Due to near-constant inhabitation by the troglodytes, the smell of troglodyte musk is pervasive here, although not in quantities sufficient enough to cause nausea.

The PCs could confront Tamalruk and the bonetangle here; if so, see below.

### Building Paranoia

The characters will likely choose not to dig the golem free. The GM, however, can use this encounter to worry them. They will be wondering why the rubble is shifting and moving at irregular intervals, which is bound to trouble them as they delve deeper into the mines.

### The Walls

The walls are intricately carved, showing images of mining and forging. In every panel, Copperdeath is shown as a benevolent father, overseeing the work and rewarding the faithful. In payment, the carvings show offerings made to the dragon, all put in or next to the huge copper bowl next to the statue. The carving in one panel, for some reason, shows *two* dragons in the room accepting the offerings. Beneath this panel, a **Spot check** (DC 15) or a **Search check** (DC 10) (whichever is higher for each character) will show small words carved into the base of the image. The words say in Common, "Worship and praise him, for he is a just and true God. Touch him only with thine thoughts, for he shall not be sullied by thy earthy hand. View him only with thine eyes, if ye wish not to face him in judgment alone. His wrath is mighty, and while he descends from the mountaintop to praise, also does he punish the lazy and untrue."

A **Search check** (DC 10) of the wall directly across the room from the statue reveals a smooth spot without carvings. Directly underneath this spot on the floor are hundreds of tiny shards of glass (Search DC 15). These glass shards are all that is left of the mirror that the local adventuring group had used to pass into the tunnels above.

### The Bowl

The beautiful copper bowl sits on a block of polished red stone 5 ft. high and 20 ft. by 20 ft.; shallow steps have been carved up the western side of the stone block. The polished bowl itself is 10 ft. in diameter, 8 ft. tall, weighs more than a ton, and is carved and engraved with detailed draconic scenes. As is, it is worth some 15,000 gp to a collector, but it is permanently attached to the





stone block and cannot be removed without damage. Any attempt to remove it will require several winches, upwards of 12 people, and much time and effort; depending on the cleverness of such a plan, removal would reduce the bowl's value by 10%-90%, as judged appropriate by the GM.

The bowl is alight with a bluish-red *continual flame*, which burns without consuming the contents. This flame is harmless and cold. The bowl is almost full of offerings that the troglodytes have made over the last five decades since Copperdeath was killed. Emptying and searching the bowl will take three hours. Most of the offerings are worthless, such as pretty rocks and rat skeletons, but some items of value are present.

Valuables include a rough, 4-ft. long copper dragon sculpture (100 gp); 250 gp worth of rough turquoise; a masterwork short-sword (taken from Caliandra Stormhold, whose head was found in Area 6); a masterwork wooden buckler; a *crystal whistle* (see Appendix III: Arcana); and four *potions of cure moderate wounds* (also taken from Caliandra's body by Tamalruk). The bowl also contains troglodyte spears and axes of fallen warriors, 14 stone necklaces (worth 1 gp each), and a total of 22 gp, 54 sp, and 14 cp. Lying on top of the pile of offerings is the wooden frame of a shattered mirror.

#### *The Statue*

The head of the dragon sculpture brushes against the 30-ft. tall ceiling. Carved to appear friendly and kind, yet majestic, the red stone was treated with a glaze so as to appear bluish-green. The troglodytes have tended and polished it over the years, so that the stone statue almost seems to glow in the firelight and is free of both slime and stone formations. It looks down upon the room, leaning over to glare into the huge copper offering bowl. Its stone wings are spread as if for balance, extending 30 ft. outward, floor to ceiling, on either side of its body.

The dragon statue's eyes are huge sapphire blue gems, each the diameter of a baby's head (and about 1 in. thick) but badly flawed. They are cut so as to reflect as much light as possible across the room in arcs of flickering blue light that seem almost alive. Independent of magical powers, each eye is worth 500 gp. If the statue is climbed (Climb DC 15) and one or more eyes are pried out with a **Strength check** (DC 20), see below for the consequences.

#### *Tamalruk and the Bonetangle (EL 5)*

Tamalruk used this room to craft the bonetangle, fusing dark necromantic knowledge with the power and ritual he learned from his god. The bonetangle currently contains four skeletal troglodytes. Another eight skeletons are laid out on stone benches, unanimated and awaiting eventual inclusion into the undead mass. The bonetangle waits at point B on the map, and it will attack intruders on sight if Tamalruk does not command it to do otherwise. It is slow, however, and the PCs can possibly buy time by leading it away. If Tamalruk is both alive and hostile to the PCs, he will be waiting at point C, hiding until it looks like the bone-

tangle may be destroyed. He is old and a weak fighter and would prefer to live, sneaking off down the tunnel if possible to plan later revenge.

**Tamalruk (1): hp 17.**

**Bonetangle (1): hp 26.**

#### *Opening the Secret Passage (EL 4)*

There are two ways to gain access to the secret tunnel behind the dragon statue. The first, and safest, method is to hold or lean a mirror in the smooth place directly across from the idol. When this is done, a reflection from the dragon's gem eyes is caught in the mirror, bounced back toward the gems, intensified and bounced back to the mirror. Within seconds, the light will be a visible deep blue beam, growing brighter and brighter. One round after the mirror is put in place, the energy will shatter the mirror (those within 10 ft. of the mirror must make a **Reflex save** [DC 12] or suffer 1d4 points of damage from the shards). When this occurs, the huge dragon idol will animate, fold its wings, and step aside for exactly three rounds. If the PCs do not act immediately, they may not be able to reach the tunnel in time. Once the three rounds are up, the idol will settle back in place, spreading its wings and blocking the opening in the wall. If the PCs have multiple mirrors, they can activate the statue multiple times; there is one usable mirror still in the mines, fallen behind the desk in Area 9.

Once the PCs enter the secret passage, there is no method for returning, other than by tunneling or by asking the Dragonstone to activate the idol with a mental command. Non-psionic creatures cannot manually activate the idol from the inside. A psionic PC may be able to activate the idol from either side by making a successful **Psicraft check** (DC 15) and then expending 1 **power point** while in contact with the statue. This method of activating the stone dragon is not immediately obvious to an observer.

The more risky method of accessing the tunnel is to try and pry an eye out of the idol. Doing so will animate the idol on the following round, and it will try to shake off the thief (with an **opposed Strength check** for the stone dragon vs. a **Balance check** for the PC) and chase him about the room. This method is not lethal for a fast runner, but it is certainly risky. The dragon idol will return to its perch either when the thief is dead or after 10 rounds have elapsed, whichever comes first. If the idol does manage to kill the thief, it will replace the gem in its eye socket before returning to its normal location and de-animating. If the idol loses both gems, it will immediately de-animate and become nothing but stone until one or both gems are replaced.

By folding its wings and crawling at a **speed of 10 ft.**, the dragon can barely squeeze through 10-ft. wide tunnels, although doing so has a risk of knocking out tunnel supports and burying the dragon in rubble. Any pass by the stone dragon through a given 10-ft. wide mine shaft will weaken the supports; if the dragon passes back through the same narrow tunnel once again, the supports will snap, creating a bury zone 20-ft. across with a 10-ft. slide zone on either side. Creatures in the bury zone take 8d6 points of **bludgeoning damage**, or half that amount with a successful







Reflex save (DC 15). They are subsequently pinned, as detailed in *Core Rulebook II*. Creatures in the slide zone take 3d6 points of bludgeoning damage, or none with a successful Reflex save (DC 15).

If possible, the stone dragon will chase the thief even back into Area 16 and beyond. It will stop at Area 17.

Stone Dragon (1): hp 77.

### AREA 15: To the Warrens.

This tunnel leads to a warren of unmapped passages, corridors, and mining tunnels that the troglodytes have used as shelter over the years. There are currently no known links to the Underlands, and no remaining monsters or treasure. Tamalruk is the last of his kind in these caves, and he has sacrificed all valuables to the dragon during the long years. The mine shafts stretch back for hundreds of feet in a tangle of unstable tunnels.

### AREA 16: Waiting Area.

This room looks like it was carved out more by claw and magic than by human-wielded picks. Parts of the walls are worn smooth by the repeated rubbing of dragon scales, and an empty copper bathtub is pushed up against one wall. Examining the bathtub will show signs of wear from a tongue scraping across its bottom; apparently, at one time Copperdeath used this as a waterskin. The floor has been covered with a horribly green, tarnished flooring of copper sheets. A successful Spot check (DC 10) will indicate to PCs roughly where Copperdeath used to lie when he lounged in this room; he must have been more than 30 ft. long, based on the ancient corrupted stain his body has left on the copper flooring.

This large room empties onto a 20-ft. diameter tunnel that snakes away upward into darkness.

## Inside Steeple Mountain

### AREA 17: The Approach.

Sixty feet into the tunnels, the ceiling suddenly opens up into a vertical chimney 15 ft. wide and 20 ft. long. It rises vertically for 15 ft. above the ceiling height, emptying into a roughly circular tunnel 20 ft. in diameter above the PCs. Once again, the two adventurers who passed this way a week before left their rope; it dangles down from the chimney, unknotted and spiked into the wall above. If more than 300 lbs. are supported by the rope at any one time, it will pull free from the spike and fall. Should this happen, a Climb check (DC 20) will be needed to scale the chimney. Huge gouges in the red rock are apparent in the tunnel above, the result of the dragon's claws, and the rough finish of the tunnel floor is mostly worn smooth by the passage of sapphire scales. These tunnels were originally burrowed by Copperdeath himself. Several cracks web the floor, 2 to 3 ft. wide, which serve to carry away the trickles of ground water that the misty air leaves behind.

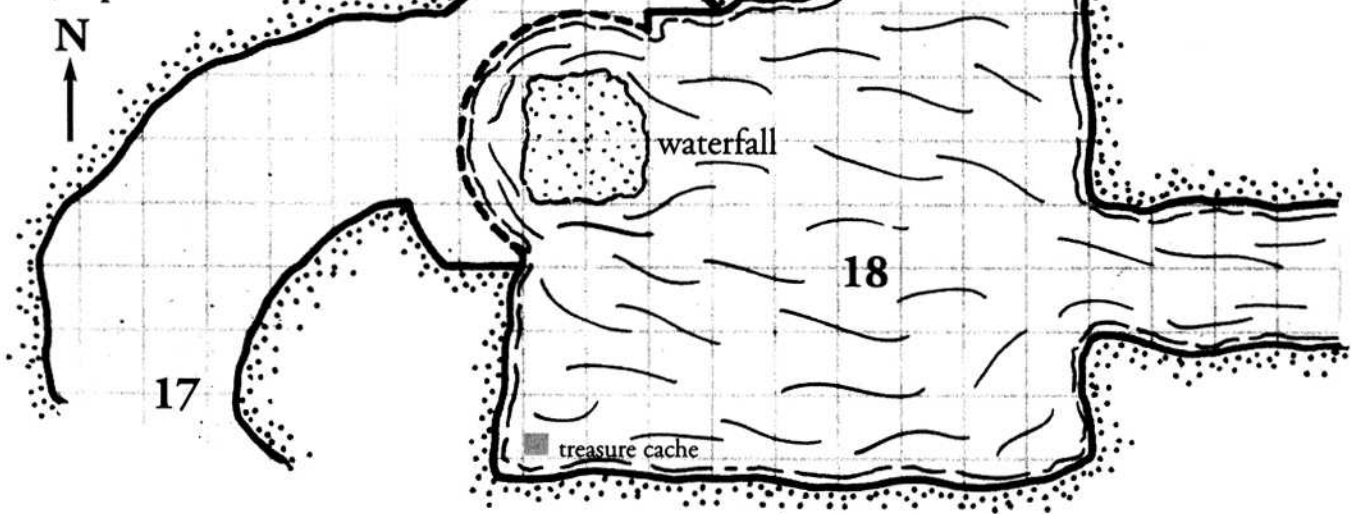
This tunnel climbs slightly and winds upwards for several hundred feet. Small bats can now be seen roosting overhead, and the tunnel floor is thick with bat guano. Soon, a rumble can be felt in the stone from the waterfall in Area 18, and the dull sound of roaring can be heard from ahead.

### *The Dragonstone's Voice*

Now that Thimdrul the goblin has revived Copperdeath's psyche, the Dragonstone is broadcasting psionic emanations in a fairly broad radius. In the last week, the Dragonstone has learned how to sense sentient creatures within approximately a 800-ft. range, unlimited by stone, lead, or any other substance. It does not know where in that 800 ft. they are, and it cannot hear any reply that they are making to its mental entreaties, but it can project thoughts

## VELEA'S GROTTTO

(1 square = 10 feet)





into their minds. As a result, it will never respond to anything that a creature says or thinks. No saving throw is allowed for this one-way telepathy, although a *protection from evil* spell (and similar spells) will block the voice while the spell lasts.

The PCs enter the Dragonstone's range once they clamber up the natural chimney in Area 17, or when they close to within 750 ft. of the lair opening on the outside of the mountain. From this point forward, the voice will taunt and badger them, communicating at least once per encounter area. Its taunts will vary, including such comments as:

"I am alive again, you know. I can smell your mind, sense your thoughts. They taste delicious."

"Are you coming to worship me? I will not turn away disciples. There are others here before you that I am helping, but perhaps you will be favored."

"I think you are coming to take my treasure. If you try, I will flay the flesh from your body and pick my teeth with your bones! Oh, my teeth, my teeth . . ."

"Finding the mountain climbing hard, are you?"

"You will fail, whatever you want. Will it not be wiser to turn

back now? Unless you wish to see my glory, to work my mine? Then come! Come!"

And so forth. Clearly, the Dragonstone is not precisely stable after its decades of sleep, but it is slowly getting more so as Thimdrul the goblin powers it with more psionic energy. The one exception to this type of taunting is a character who will be referred to as The Favored One. The Favored One will be preferably a psion or a psychic warrior; if there are none in the group, it will be the character with the highest Charisma. The Favored One will receive no mental threats, instead receiving requests for help and mercy such as:

"The evil one has me under his control. I cannot stop him. Please . . ."

"There is foulness here! So many people are in danger if you don't help."

"Beware! I think they know of your approach and are prepared for it."

The Dragonstone does not actually contain a separate personality, although it will try and encourage this belief. It has been far too long since it has played with the minds of the insects that slew it, and it feels good to be back in practice again. It hopes that this impression may buy it time later if worse comes to worse.

Once it senses the PCs' minds, it will notify the goblins that creatures are coming. The problem is that it does not know where they are coming from, and the goblins never found the back entrance to the lair. *As a result, if the PCs reach the dragon's lair within two hours of when they first hear the Dragonstone's voice, most of the goblins will be guarding the main gate or searching the mountain instead of guarding the inside of the lair.* After two hours, they will be less likely to stay on high alert unless ordered.

The GM must make this whispering voice as disturbing as possible. One good method for doing so is to stand up and walk around the table behind the players. As the voice speaks, lean over and whisper into the player's ear what he is hearing inside his head. This is much more effective than passing out a note or telling a player loudly across the gaming table. The Dragonstone's voice cannot hurt the PCs, but it can disturb and confuse them from the truth, and this should be the GM's goal.

### AREA 18: Nymph's Repose (EL 3).

The tunnel twists, and through the clouds of mist you can finally see what is causing the thundering noise. In a large grotto ahead of you, luminescent waters hammer down from an unseen height into an underground lake. A stone barrier prevents the water from flowing down the tunnel toward you, and clouds of mist rise from the glowing water.

The waterfall plummets more than 800 ft. downward through this extensive vertical cavern, not touching any of the walls as it cascades through the air. An ancient permanent illusion cast by a dominated wizard has turned the water gently luminous as it falls, changing colors slowly through the spectrum as it tumbles down-





wards. The luminosity of the water is the only light in this cavern, and it makes the scene breathtakingly beautiful.

This grotto is the lair of a dananshee named Velea. Copperdeath loved her singing (and was not affected by her domination magic), and he chained her here more than sixty years ago. Since the dragon's death, she has been forced to remain. Her hatred for humankind, who killed the dragon but would not release her, has only grown over the years. The key to unlock Velea was known only to Copperdeath himself, and Velea thinks she is trapped here forever unless someone helps her.

Dananshee are evil, supernaturally beautiful faerie creatures detailed in *Sword & Sorcery's Creature Collection II*. They are reproduced in Appendix I: New Monster Descriptions.

Velea has twisted and warped the animals in this area, even as she daily grows more twisted herself. Since Thimdrul has revived Copperdeath's personality in the Dragonstone, she has been hearing the voice of the dragon in her head, but, of course, the Dragonstone cannot hear her at all. After years of loneliness, this taunting seemed like the last straw, and she was more than happy to expend her frustration upon Deke Forgeon and Petros Bellson, the last two adventurers who journeyed this way earlier in the week to try and rescue the missing children. Their bones now lie in her pool, half-eaten (Spot DC 20 to notice), and she gladly plans on seducing and dominating more vict . . . err, guests. Velea has delicate features, with bark-brown skin and long, soaking wet red hair. Her only clothes are her long hair and the foam of the river splashing up around her, although she wears a golden anklecuff as a token of her binding to Copperdeath.

As the PCs move forward, a faint sound will catch their ear. Singing – a beautiful, perfect song – can barely be heard over the thundering of the falls. If they look for the source, they will see Velea, standing within the fringe of the waterfall, silver water raining down around her, smiling with true delight. Ask the PCs for Will saves (DC 13, due to the masking effect of the waterfall's noise). All PCs who fail their saving throws are affected as by a *dominate person* spell for the next 2d4 days. They will be madly in love with Velea and think of nothing but her comfort. Velea will be amused to watch smitten characters fight each other over her, and she will allow this, especially if it upsets the non-dominated members of the party.

Since she is not hungry and she has her pet dire rats to protect her, Velea would much rather engage in conversation with visitors than fight them. Horribly lonely, she has killed and eaten her last guests before she could talk them into freeing her from Copperdeath's binding, and now she regrets it.

If the PCs are not hostile, Velea can tell the group of Copperdeath as he used to be. She speaks in mixed tones of grudging respect, love, and pure hatred. If she thinks the heroes are amenable, whether out of kindness or *domination*, it will occur to her that they may be able to help her escape her long imprisonment. She will tell them that they must bring Copperdeath to her, if he is somehow alive, and convince him to free her. Ironically, Velea does not realize that the Dragonstone has no idea how to free

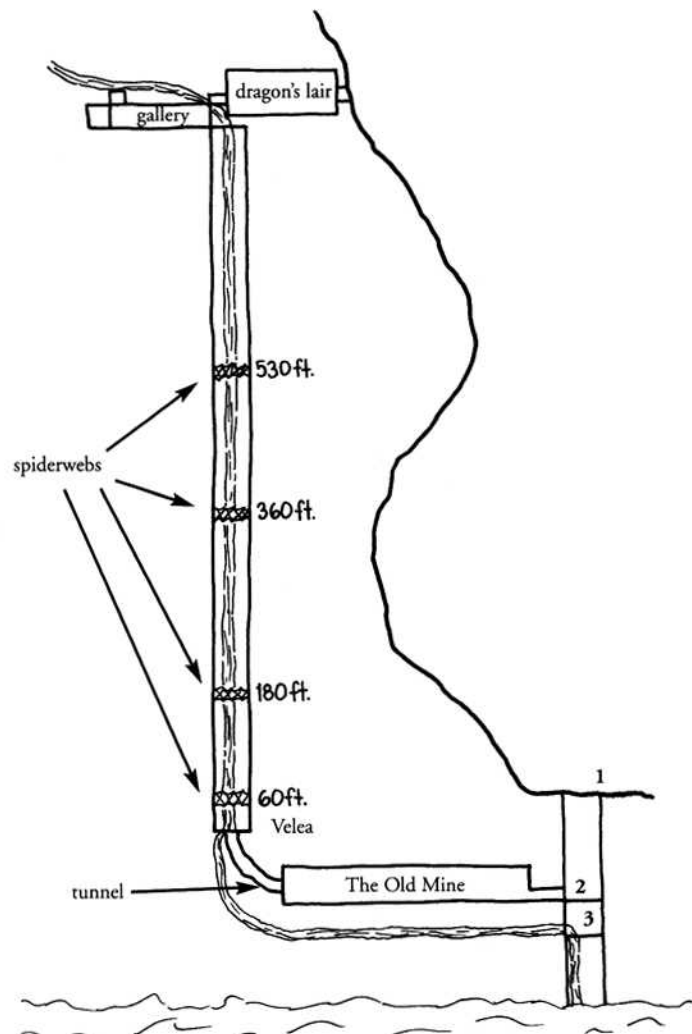
her, for she is chained in place by its very existence. When the Dragonstone is destroyed, Velea will be freed from her bondage. Should the PCs agree (willingly or not) to help her, she will forego her new meal for both herself and her two pet dire rats hidden nearby, equipping the PCs with her hidden treasure in order to help ensure their success.

**Velea, dananshee (1): hp 7.**

**Skring and Ettin, dire rats (2): hp 5, 7.**

These dire rats are warped both by Velea's presence and the mental broadcasts of Copperdeath from the caverns above. Their brains are beginning to swell, giving them a top-heavy appearance that only adds to their menacing look.

**Treasure:** Underwater, in a crevice of Velea's pool, can be found a suit of masterwork chainmail and a suit of half-plate armor. A small leather sack containing 45 gp, a jeweled copper armband (150 gp), 50 ft. of wet silk rope, 20 wet arrows, two *potions of cure light wounds*, and a waterlogged +1 *longbow* are also underwater.





### AREA 19: Slither-Ramp and Water Spiders (EL 2).

The slither-ramp is a 10-ft. wide ramp chewed out of the raw rock itself, which winds its way up and around the 800-ft. tall waterfall. Worn smooth by the dragon's many passages, it is wet, slippery, and covered with algae. PCs traveling at half speed up the ramp may make two **Balance checks** (DC 5) to ascend safely. PCs moving at regular speed require a total of eight **Balance checks** (DC 10) to climb safely, one per hundred feet of height. Running while climbing the slither-ramp is impossible. Failing a **Balance check** indicates that the PC has lost her footing and is sliding downward. A successful **Reflex save** (DC 10) indicates that the PC has stopped sliding, while an unsuccessful saving throw indicates that the PC has slid off the edge of the ledge into the waterfall's flow. If the characters had the foresight to rope themselves together, a slipping PC may take the best **Reflex save** result of anyone to whom she is roped; if everyone roped together fails the **Reflex save**, the entire group is dragged off the ledge by the slipping PC. A PC falling into water will take damage as indicated in *Core Rulebook II*.

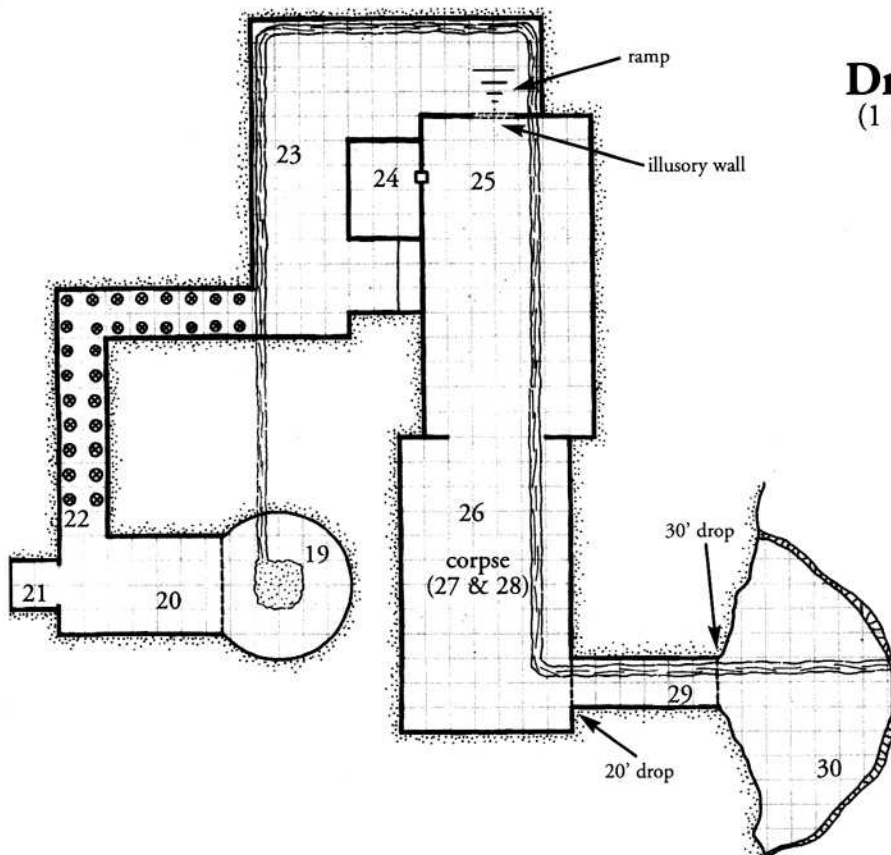
At the 60-ft., 180-ft., 360-ft., and 530-ft. levels of the waterfall, medium spiders have woven webs across the gulf, thicker than normal to withstand the pressure from the falls. They are well fed on fish that become caught in their webs after going over the waterfall; unless provoked, they will not attack the PCs during their climb, and they will not immediately attack any PC who falls into their web. A falling PC may make a **Reflex save** (DC 10) for each spider web he falls past, in order to twist his body into the web.

Successfully doing so will entangle the PC in the web, but will likely save the PC's life by negating falling damage. If a PC falls into a web, the spider will be hesitant to attack immediately anything so much larger than its normal prey. So long as a PC trying to free himself does not approach the spider, the spider will not attack until he has completely stopped moving.

A trapped PC can extricate himself from the webs by chopping himself free with any small piercing or slashing weapon. This will cause a section of the webs to sag, swinging the PC down toward the wall of the cavern, where he can pull himself onto the slither-ramp. As the PC is likely to still be partially stuck in the web's glue, a prepared PC does not have to make any skill or ability checks to hang onto a swinging web. An unprepared PC must make a **Strength check** (DC 10), or continue falling downward to the next layer of webs.

**Medium spiders (4):** hp 11, 11, 11, 11.

Climbing the slither ramp requires 15 whole circuits around the waterfall and will take most groups (without small-size characters) moving cautiously about 10 minutes, while groups moving at their normal speed can climb it in about 6 minutes. The scene is entrancing: the falling water glowing in different colors creates a surreal scene, set off by the droplets of water clinging to the spider webs spun across the cavern. While the view is beautiful, the area is also quite damp, and anyone making the climb will be thoroughly soaked within minutes.



**Dragon's Lair**  
(1 square = 10 feet)





## AREA 20: The Viewing Gallery (EL 2).

In the light of the glowing water, you can see the top of the ramp in front of you. It ends at a long open window, five feet off the level of the ramp and fifteen feet tall. The room behind the window looks dark and empty.

The slither ramp ends by a gallery room with only a low, wide window stretching across the entire room. Copperdeath used this room for viewing the waterfall and meditating. He would pull spare treasure out of the hidden room in Area 21, array it before the window, and relax for hours in front of the waterfall while he mentally commanded his slaves in the mines below. Now the room is largely empty.

While the window appears glassless, it still maintains a magical aura that evaporates water. Any water passing through this window frame is immediately and silently destroyed. Fluids that are not pure water, such as potions or ale, are untouched. Anyone who passes into this room will experience a momentarily dry mouth and find herself and her equipment bone dry.

This room also contains a large copper, 4-ft. tall chess set moldering in a dusty corner, an old brass bell covered with verdigris along the left wall, and one other large obvious exit. Old cobwebs from spiders that long-ago made this room their home hang across the ceiling and the far wall. Behind the cobwebs (automatically discovered if the cobwebs are cleared, **Search check** [DC 15] otherwise), a small copper decoration of a draconic face is embedded in the wall. It is badly tarnished. Rubbing the metal will cause the face to animate suddenly and look about the room, and then ask a riddle in Common.

*"This garden is a lonely place  
where many came, and yet remain  
the plants grow strong on fertile ground  
watered by legacies of pain  
and should I plow, my plow would break  
on cast-off husks of iron grain  
now buried where they fell like wheat.  
What am I? Speak! Or face the bane."*

The answer is "a battlefield." If the group does not answer correctly, or does not answer at all within one minute of real time, the copper sculpture will manifest the psionic power *fatal attraction* on the person who attempted to answer the riddle (Fortitude save at DC 1d20+4 or develop a death-urge over 1d4 days). Simultaneously, one of the copper minion chess pawns will animate, run over to the old bell, and ring it by throwing its body into it. Once the pawn has managed to ring the alarm bell, it will attempt to attack the PC who answered the riddle incorrectly.

Both of these effects, a secret manifestation of *fatal attraction* and the animation of a chess piece, occur every time the riddle is incorrectly answered. If the PCs manage to immobilize or dispose of the unanimated chess pieces, perhaps by throwing them out the

window into the waterfall, there is no obvious penalty for answering the riddle incorrectly; however, they will continue to animate with every wrong answer, and will attempt to track and kill the PC they are now linked to.

Ironically, although in life Copperdeath's hearing would have easily picked up the sound of the alarm bell, the Dragonstone has no ears, and the hearing of the goblins simply is not that acute. Unless the bell is rung repeatedly, the goblins cannot possibly hear it.

If the PCs do answer the riddle correctly, the dragon's face will grin, and the back wall of the room will slide quietly into the floor. It will rise again upon repetition of the word "battlefield."

**Copper Minions (32): hp 6 each.**

## AREA 21: The Hidden Hoard.

This 20-foot by 20-foot room is lit by flickering torches. The light gleams on the piles of coins that lay heaped just past the doorway. Other items, such as statues and several chests, are stacked in a corner of the room. The quantity of coins in front of you is simply immense.

These are the spare coins and items that Copperdeath used to pull out whenever he settled in the viewing gallery. Arrayed before the PCs are 2,200 lbs. of copper coins, 110,000 cp, many of them minted by Copperdeath himself and showing his draconic sigil. Separated from the copper coins are approximately 2,000 sp and 500 gp, piled within an unlocked chest. On the edges of the room are two famous matching statues of Bellhold's town founders, thought lost forever, worth 500 gp each. Returning these to town will bring the PCs additional public acclaim and appreciation. A bookshelf holds two dragon-sized books on mining and two equally-sized books on military tactics; sized 2-ft. by 4-ft., these books are worth 50 gp each to book collectors and twice that to individuals interested in the subject matter. Finally, a trapped chest contains a variety of minor arcane, divine, and psionic items for which Copperdeath had no immediate use. These items include an arcane *scroll of web*, an arcane *scroll of invisibility*, a divine *scroll of cure moderate wounds* and *cure light wounds*, a psionic *power stone* containing the power *chameleon*, and a psionic sword named *Luckringer*. This +1 *lucky longsword* is crafted of psionically hardened copper and has a rabbit's foot attached to the hilt by a thin copper chain; once per day the wielder can re-roll a single failed attack roll as a free action. If the rabbit foot is ever removed, *Luckringer* loses its *lucky* attribute, but keeps its +1 bonus.

Clearly, merely transporting and disposing of the copper pieces in this hoard presents logistical challenges even for clever adventurers. Adventurers may be better off gifting it to the town, to be melted down to make statues of them, than they would be removing it and using it as currency!





## AREA 22: Forgotten Statues.

This hallway stretches out of range of your light. It slopes sharply upward and appears to be lined with stylized statues, the left side depicting soldiers and the right side depicting miners and blacksmiths. Many of the statues are chipped or broken.

Before eating him, Copperdeath once dominated a prominent sculptor into producing these works. They were beautifully carved, but Copperdeath would amuse himself by animating the stone and having the statues fight out mock battles for his pleasure. Any enchantment upon them has long faded, and now they stand silent and unmoving.

The end of the hall opens up into a large, dark room. A 3-ft. deep gurgling stream flows past in a 4-ft. wide channel, diverted from the waterfall to provide the lair with a source of running water.

## AREA 23: Dollhouse of the Slaves.

The sound of voices starts filtering to you as you enter this room. The ceiling is 60 feet overhead, reinforced by rock arches, and faint light comes from around the corner to the northeast. There appears to be a 10-foot tall building on the east side of the cavern, complete with an odd overhanging roof, but you cannot see any doors or windows into it. On top of the building's overhanging roof you can see a... is it a huge handle?

The walls in this room are covered with beautiful gold, copper, and glass mosaics dozens of feet long, showing in intricate detail a sapphire-colored dragon lounging upon a tremendous bed of copper and gold coins. Nearby, a handful of corroded copper statues are displayed. Everything in sight is covered with dust.

Copperdeath designed this room with a special delight. It abuts to the rooms in which he used to keep his dominated personal slaves (Area 24). Occasionally for fun, he would let the *domination* effect on one of these slaves end, just to enjoy watching the person panic. Inevitably, the released slave would run into Area 24, knowing that the dragon could not squeeze into such a small space... and then Copperdeath would slither into this cavern and simply lift off the detachable roof of Area 23 with his 27 Strength, exposing the panicked slave in the same way a little girl would expose her dolls when opening the roof of her dollhouse. The horrible realization dawning in the slave's face always made the meal taste just a little sweeter.

No one has lifted the ceiling of the slave quarters in five decades, and the goblins have no idea that it is not attached to the walls, or even that Area 23 exists. This room opens onto Area 25 in the northeast of this room, through a hole covered by an illusionary wall set 20 ft. up the cavern wall.

The ten statues in this room are more gruesome than those found elsewhere. They are incredibly realistic copper statues of people in horrible pain; unlike more traditional sculpting methods, these were formed when the dragon had people who displeased him dipped alive into molten copper. Unlike a *flesh to stone* spell, these people are long dead, and any attempt to transmute them will be unsuccessful. The mosaics in this room are filthy from long years of inattention but are of masterwork quality. If someone were patient enough to scrape the gold from the mosaics over the course of several days, ruining them in the process, he would end up with the equivalent of 250 gp.

The southeastern corner of this room is where Copperdeath did his research on psionics, trying to maximize his potential and increase his personal power. His workbench is 15 ft. tall; on it, covered with the dust of decades, are his tools and unfinished experiments. These include:

- A medium-sized series of interlocking carved crystal tubes that are designed to channel and amplify psionic energy. They do not work as intended; if held by a psionic character and charged with psionic energy, they flash bluish-green and do one point of fire damage to the wielder for every power point placed into them. They have no other effect due to the uncorrected feedback effect that Copperdeath never managed to solve.
- Seventeen different varieties of crystal, separated but unlabeled, varying from fist-sized to cow-sized. The larger crystals are of sufficient quality to empower. One of these varieties is a crystal similar to the Dragonstone. A piece of this crystal, swallowed, has a 1% chance per week inside the body to pick up and store 10-40% of the swallower's personality and power, maintaining it locked in its crystal matrix even after death. When Copperdeath originally swallowed this crystal during experiments, he concluded that it had not worked, and he never knew that the crystal had embedded itself inside of him.
- Crystal dissecting equipment next to an old bloodstained copper slab. Copperdeath often dissected slaves, removing their internal organs and attempting to animate the pieces with empowered intelligence in order to determine which organ controls which type of sapient thought.
- A *crystal of recursive knowledge*. See Appendix III: Arcana for details.
- A full set of masterwork gem-cutting tools. They are 7 ft. long and size large, the appropriate size for a huge creature such as Copperdeath to use. These can be sold for 30 gp as curiosities, or for 300 gp to a huge-sized creature.

The passageway between Areas 23 and 25 is quite large and is reachable via a steep ramp. The opening is screened by an extremely convincing illusion of a stone wall. No ramp leads downward into Area 25, and the goblins have not guessed that this opening exists, so the PCs can sit and watch the goblins for as long as they like (and as long as they can stand listening to the voice of





the Dragonstone) if they are quiet. Note that the illusionary wall will be opaque for the PCs as well until they interact with it and disbelieve its solidity; once they do so, it will fade into transparency for them.



#### AREA 24: Goblin Bedrooms.

This room was probably nice once, with rich fabrics and beautiful furnishings. Now, it is a stinking mass of goblin nests. A large number of goblins obviously make this room their home and they are not being neat about it. Only a few goblins are currently visible from where you crouch.

Most of the goblin forces sleep here in shifts. If the Voice of the Dragonstone has alerted Thimdruil that someone is coming, which it is certain to do as soon as it senses and starts mentally taunting the PCs, all available warriors will be on alert outside. Otherwise, 5 goblins will be sleeping here at any particular point. They will wake at the sound of any fighting, joining in the melee 7 rounds after fighting begins.

##### *The Goblin Forces*

Several of the goblins are more than simple monsters waiting to throw their lives away on the swords and arrows of the PCs: they are motivated, self-aware, and dangerous NPCs. The goblins have

come dozens of miles across mountains and fought hard to reach this point. They will not give it up without a tough fight.

All of the goblins are beginning to change from exposure to the Dragonstone. Their heads are bulging as their brains begin to swell. The change is not entirely obvious at first, other than in goblins such as Thimdruil and Sprelt, who have taken on the bluish hue of the dragon's corpse. The goblins have not yet realized they are slowly changing.

Akratt is the titular goblin leader of the expedition, a son of the goblin king. While he is supposed to be in charge, in truth he is in awe of his advisors and tends to make whatever decisions they suggest. He is terrified that Thimdruil's order to kidnap human children will reveal the goblins to the town below, and he does not hold many illusions: any town capable of heroes that slew a giant dragon can slay a few goblins as well. He knows that they have too few warriors to fight off the nearby humans if the humans really try to assault the entrance, and he is afraid that they will be detected and slain. This fear makes him whiny, shrill, and not much like a Prince, no matter what the lopsided crown on his bumpy head proclaims him to be.

Akratt is a cowardly fighter, never ashamed to take the dirty attack or the quick kill. His reputation in their home tribe depends on the success of this mission, though, so he allows Thimdruil almost free reign: if the advisor can deliver the power he has promised, there is not a chance that his brothers or his father can stand before him.

Thimdruil instigated this mission. He is guided by his quest for psionic knowledge, and nothing stands in the way of that – not morality, not common sense, not decency, not loyalty. He is extremely cruel and enjoys odd experiments, shrugging off subject deaths with disappointment for his failure. His voice is flat, cruel, and convincing.

While he looked relatively normal before he arrived here, Thimdruil's work with the Dragonstone has begun to change him. His skin has turned the same shade as the dead dragon, a sapphire blue, and his head has become oddly swollen. This makes him look almost top-heavy at first glance. Thimdruil's **Diplomacy** and **Bluff** skills are well defined, and he does not hesitate to tell Akratt whatever he needs to allow him to work in peace.

Thimdruil has no intention of giving Akratt untold power with which to gain the goblin king's throne. It is a lie, and he knows Akratt is beginning to suspect as much. He may need to use powers other than his silver tongue in order to work uninterrupted.

In truth, Thimdruil is completely under the Dragonstone's sway. He loves it and would do whatever it asks.

Sprelt is Thimdruil's assistant, a younger goblin who is fanatically devoted to his swollen-headed master. He is Thimdruil's eyes and ears among the goblin troops. He has a bizarre love for humans; he thinks they are fascinating, and prefers not to kill them. Late at night, when he can, he slips down the mountain to watch them at their work.





Prukk is a goblin spy hired by one of Akratt's brothers. His job is to betray their presence to the humans, so that the mission fails and everyone gets killed. Prukk is frustrated that the humans could possibly be so stupid; it has been weeks, and no one yet! He even left clues at the place where he kidnapped a child. "Humans," he thinks, while shaking his bulbous orange head, "how'd they get so numerous when they're so slow?"

When in battle, Prukk will deliberately miss any invader he aims at and will bargain for his life as soon as it looks like the invaders are going to win. Once he knows that Akratt, Thimdru, and the others are going to die, his goal is to escape with his own skin, and he will explain this in halting Common to anyone about to kill him.

Guzzum is Akratt's personal bodyguard. He is loyal to a fault and devoted, although he has a tendency to lose his temper easily after being taunted. Guzzum never leaves Akratt's side. As is tradition, he had his tongue removed so as not to tell any of his master's secrets. Listening to him when he slips into a rage is not a pleasant sound. Guzzum fights with a longsword gripped in both hands.

Twelve regular goblin troops fill out the contingent, used for guarding and reconnaissance. There used to be 20, but eight have been killed through various means within the cavern and during their journey.

Akratt (1): hp 8.

Guzzum (1): hp 19.

Pruk (1): hp 8.

Sprelt (1): hp 4.

Thimdru (1): hp 7.

Goblin troops (12): hp 7, 7, 5, 5, 5, 4, 4, 4, 4, 3, 3.

## AREA 25: Thimdru's Lab.

The illusory wall fades to transparency for anyone who has successfully disbelieved it. From this vantage point 20 ft. above the cavern floor, the PCs can see along a well-lit, gigantic cavern. The room is 70 ft. wide and 130 ft. long, with a thin stream flowing through it in a narrow channel. The floor of the cavern, amazingly enough, is of badly corroded beaten copper. Areas of the floor look as if they are partially polished, but most of the floor is covered with a blue-green film from the years of neglect.

The room has a variety of odd equipment in it. Other than old markings in the copper floor, most of the signs of the dragon have been removed and replaced with goblinoid gear. The PCs can see an impromptu kitchen and eating area, a livestock pen (with several stolen cows and horses waiting to be slaughtered), a rough slaughterhouse, and several workbenches next to huge chunks of bluish crystal. Chained to a stone block in the middle of the room is a human boy, trying to scream in terror through his gag. In the corner of the room to the right of the hidden opening is a large metal cage. In the cage are two children, a sleeping girl and a violently pacing boy.



### *Thimdru's Experiments*

Under the unnatural drive of the Dragonstone, Thimdru has begun creating his own psionic creatures. He is taking slivers of the bluish crystal and driving them into the skulls of his subjects, whether animal or human. When this does not immediately kill the victim (Fortitude save [DC 12] or suffer 2d6 points of temporary Constitution damage), the crystal shard has tended to settle in and alter the creature's brain chemistry and physiology. If a Will save (DC 15) is made after 24 hours, the crystal shard dissolves with no further harm. If that save is failed, the crystal seizes control, and the creature's alignment immediately turns to evil. In addition, the creature immediately gains the psionic creature template.

Unable to find wild animals due to the Dragonstone's disturbing psionic emanations, Thimdru has taken to sending goblins down toward the village with slivers of the Dragonstone, with instructions to implant them in any farm animals they can find, and to kidnap and bring back any children they can overpower. Farm animals other than Othic's horses have possibly been altered by Thimdru's experiments; if so, they have not surfaced yet.

Unknown to Thimdru, any sonic damage that harms a recipient will immediately shatter and dissolve the crystal shard. Within 12 hours, the creature will return to normal. Recipients of a shard dislike loud noises and will evince pain when exposed to even







moderately loud noises. Shards can also be dissolved by the use of any healing magic. Likewise, if the Dragonstone is itself destroyed, all creatures implanted with its shards will return to normal within 12 hours.

The goblins have captured three children, holding them in a cage that Copperdeath once used to keep prisoners in as well. Of these, one boy named Caleb has succumbed to the crystal shard and is being treated by the goblins as a pet; one girl named Tana has resisted the shard, but is terribly weak from the Constitution drain; and one boy named Dorik is currently being prepared for the implantation process. If the PCs do not stop Thimdrul, they may see an implantation taking place.

Caleb, psionic boy (1): hp 4.

Dorik, boy (1): hp 4.

Tana, girl (1): hp 1.

A handful of goblins can be seen in the next room, talking among themselves in tones far too quiet for the PCs to hear. What immediately attracts the PCs attention, however, is the dragon's corpse that is also in the next room. Surrounded by ancient char marks on the floor, a tremendous draconic form can be seen stretched out in death, its blue scales dulled by years of death and decay.

As the PCs prepare to act, they notice Thimdrul climbing out from the mouth of the dead dragon and walking toward the back room with a big toothy smile on his face. With him come two goblin guards.

"Congratulations," the swollen-headed goblin hisses to the captive boy, using loud and slow Common as if the child is an idiot, "today is your lucky day! Soon you'll have power . . . or you'll be dead. Either way, human, your life will be better." The goblin looks at the guards with him and raises a hammer and what looks like a piece of blue glass. The goblin-things says something in Goblin, and the guards move to hold the boy down even as he stiffens and goes limp.

This is likely the PCs' cue to attack. They have a 20-ft. drop that they must descend before attacking on foot, but they are in possession of an excellent missile platform; crouching on the ramp and using the opening's lip for cover will grant 50% cover against missiles. When attacked, Thimdrul will immediately run for the cover of the back room while screaming for the troops. Depending on the Voice of the Dragonstone, most of the goblin troops are probably outside; if so, it will take them 6 rounds of maneuvering, climbing, and running to reach a point that they can attack with missile weapons, using Copperdeath's mummified tail and crumpled wings to give them 50% cover of their own. In the meantime, those goblins already inside will attack from a distance, and Akkratt will begin screaming at Thimdrul to do something. If Thimdrul is truly worried about the fight, he will crawl into Copperdeath's corpse to save the Dragonstone. If Thimdrul has died by this point, Sprelt will attempt to save the stone.

## AREA 26: The Dragon's Final Tomb.

The real focal point of this room is the corpse of the tyrant dragon Copperdeath. It is huge, even shrunken in death, and its mummified body is sprawled across the room as if still trying to crawl to safety. The scales are a dull sapphire blue, and many have fallen off onto the copper flooring or been pried off by treasure hunters 50 years ago. Where the dragon's blood sprayed, the copper has never corroded, so patches across the room are still brightly polished. Some remnants from the final battle against the wyrm can still be seen, including charred marks and a *wall of iron* tipped up against the wall.

This room was completely looted after the dragon's death. The goblins are using it as an armory, storing spears and arrows here.

## AREA 27: Into the Corpse.

The dragon may be dead, but that did not stop someone from wrenching open its jaw and actually burrowing down into its stomach. Its huge mouth is propped open with long spears, and there is a narrow crawl space down through its throat. The smell is of dust, reptiles, and death. With a shudder you realize that a piece of someone's armor remains stuck in the sword-length teeth.

The area near the dragon's corpse sets your heads aching. Something near here seems to be pounding at your brain with waves of force.

The PCs are not under mental attack, but they are feeling the effects of being close to the Dragonstone. The Voice of the Dragonstone is very loud here, and will likely be thanking them for killing goblins and telling them to go away now.

With luck, either Thimdrul or Sprelt has retreated down the dragon's gullet. The PCs will need to follow them. The opening is not big enough for a small character in heavy armor or a medium character in medium armor to fit through. PCs that choose to enter must go through one at a time, either face first or feet first; no large weapons will fit. It is almost a guarantee that a PC will want to pry out some teeth. The teeth are no longer strong enough to enchant or use in a weapon, but they will make excellent trophies. Several of the teeth have already been removed, but there are plenty to spare.





### Powers of the Dragonstone

In life, Copperdeath had specialized in **psychoportive** and **telepathic** powers. The Dragonstone, however, is limited to **telepathic** powers only. Thimdrul and the Dragonstone itself believe that it is the soul of Copperdeath, but it is wrong. In truth, it is merely a chunk of the crystal found in Area 23 that has absorbed enough of Copperdeath's psyche to become self-aware.

The Dragonstone does not correspond to normal **psionic** or **draconic** powers, nor does it mirror normal power levels usually found. It is a unique item, and has powers that spring from reflections of Copperdeath's twisted psyche, mirrored and amplified by his hatred and odd psionic experiments. Such powers cannot be duplicated by human or other mortal psions.

In theory, the Dragonstone can have a maximum of **100 power points (PP)** per day for use in manifesting powers, but it has found itself unable to reach that potential. Thimdrul has been performing daily rituals that raise its total number of possible PPs by two each day. Currently, the Dragonstone regains 18 PP every day, 15 of which it immediately uses for its first priority (powering its psionic revenge). This leaves the Dragonstone with 3 PP available for other uses. The stone manifests as a **14th-level manifester** in terms of **range** and **area of effect**.

For each day that passes after the PCs climb Steeple Mountain or enter the Old Mine and Thimdrul is alive, this figure will rise by 2 PP. If the PCs have not destroyed the Dragonstone by seven days from the start of the adventure, or moved it more than two miles outside of town for more than a day (breaking the ongoing psionic conditioning), it will control every townsfolk in Bellhold as if in a special form of *dominate person*. See *Chapter IV: Returning... Triumphant?* near the end of this adventure for further details on what will happen when it is moved closer to the people that it is blanketing with its psionic fury.

The flesh of the throat is cold, hard, and vaguely greasy; crawling into a dead dragon's throat should be something that will be remembered for years to come. If the PCs decide to try to hack through the side, use the following statistics to penetrate the corpse's belly:

**Mummified dragon corpse:** hardness 5; 60 hp; AC 17.

Should the PCs pierce the interior chamber by hacking through the side, the goblin inside the corpse will fend them off as best it can with its half-spear. It will flee with the Dragonstone if given the opportunity.

### AREA 28: The Dragon's Belly (EL 3-5).

Any goblin in the belly will attack anyone crawling down the gullet; a halfspear (1d6 damage, x3 crit) is kept in this area for that exact purpose. Anyone crawling will be unable to use Dexterity to **dodge**, while the goblin wielding the spear receives a +2 **circumstance bonus to attack**. The excavated belly is 10 ft. wide and 15 ft. long, but only 5 ft. tall. Once PCs make it into the belly, anyone using a **medium weapon** to fight in the belly suffers a -2 **circumstance penalty to attack**. Anyone taller than 5 ft. who is trying to fight will suffer an additional -2 **circumstance penalty to attack**, due to the cramped conditions.

The belly is lit by the Dragonstone itself, which is pulsing sapphire blue from its bed atop a lump of congealed and hardened flesh. It is the size of a melon, jagged and uneven. Its bright blue glow will cycle into a dark blue flash, tinged with red, every time it is exposed to loud noise.

Sprelt or Thimdrul will fight to the death here, but their psionic powers will be backed up by the Dragonstone's. While maintaining its psychic barrage of the town, the Dragonstone has little psychic energy to devote to other

attacks, but it will do what it can. Any creature can communicate directly with it by touching it with flesh, and Sprelt or Thimdrul will certainly do this to apprise it of the situation and ask for its advice. As it contains much of Copperdeath's personality, the Dragonstone is a master tactician, and will give what good advice it can.

### AREA 29: The Mountain Entrance (EL 8).

Area 26 drops 20 ft. into this hall on the west side, and this hall drops another 30 ft. straight down onto a large balcony on the east side. It is designed for tactical defense, and the goblins have taken good advantage of it. The goblin troops normally are arrayed behind the rough crenellations in the east, watching the mountainside carefully for any sign of movement. When movement is spotted, coordinated arrow fire and rolled boulders should be sufficient to kill the attackers or knock them off the mountain.





Should that not be the case and intruders manage to reach the balcony level, the goblins fall back up ropes to the hall. Here they haul the ropes up after them and pepper intruders with more arrow fire. If this is still not successful, they climb the remaining 20-ft. ropes up to Area 26, and set up a killing field of fire once again.

The goblins get a +2 circumstance bonus to attack any PC climbing, and climbing characters get no Dexterity bonus to Armor Class and cannot use shields. Note that any goblin rogues get sneak attack damage on climbing PCs if within 30 ft. Any PC climbing the mountain who is hit by a rock or arrow must make an immediate Climb check (DC 15) or fall, taking appropriate damage.

The goblins roll boulders as a melee attack with a -4 competence penalty to attack. Boulders do 1d8 points of bludgeoning damage to anyone hit.

## CHAPTER IV: RETURNING . . . TRIUMPHANT?

Eventually, all the goblins will be dead or will have fled, and the PCs will have gained access to the Dragonstone. Three likely possibilities arise at this juncture: leaving the stone, trying to destroy the stone, or bringing the stone to town.

**Leaving the Dragonstone behind.** If the PCs do this, the nightmares and headaches of townsfolk do not decrease. If the PCs do not return for the Dragonstone, seven days later the entire population of the town will be mentally enslaved.

**Trying to destroy the Dragonstone.** As noted above, the Dragonstone is largely impervious to anything low-level PCs can throw at it, excepting sonic attacks. If the PCs have found the *crystal whistle* in the Old Mines, they will quickly learn that sonic attacks easily damage it, but the whistle cannot do enough damage to destroy the stone before its fast healing ability repairs it. With

luck, someone will remember the stories of the Wyrmscall killing a vagrant with its sound alone, and the PCs will head back to town.

If the PCs take the Dragonstone away from town and try to keep it, after a day it will temporarily cease putting power points into powering its revenge, and will use all of its power to charm a PC into bringing it back to Bellhold and hiding it someplace.

**Bringing the Dragonstone back to town.** While this is the best long-term plan, it has some short-term consequences. As the PCs return triumphant and bring the Dragonstone into the heart of the town itself, it realizes that distance had been limiting it. In a sudden epiphany it flares a brilliant sapphire blue . . . and every NPC from Bellhold in a one-mile radius of the town's center becomes *dominated* by the crystal. Their eyes all go blank and then turn sapphire as they slowly

start lurching toward the PCs. When the Dragonstone speaks to the PCs after this point, it will do so through the dominated townsfolk. More disturbingly, the hive-mind will be immediately obvious, because the same words will emerge from the mouths of every single dominated person in town. Sentences will echo through the streets, all spoken simultaneously by many hundreds of people. The effect should be terrifying.

**Dominated townsfolk:** hp 4 each.

### Race for the Tower

The PCs' best bet is to race for the tower in the center of Wyrmscall Plaza. They can outdistance the dominated townsfolk, but the Dragonstone can coordinate the townsfolk to cut off or block the PCs. Ideally, any PC should use non-lethal force on villagers trying to stop the party, but that is far from certain to occur.

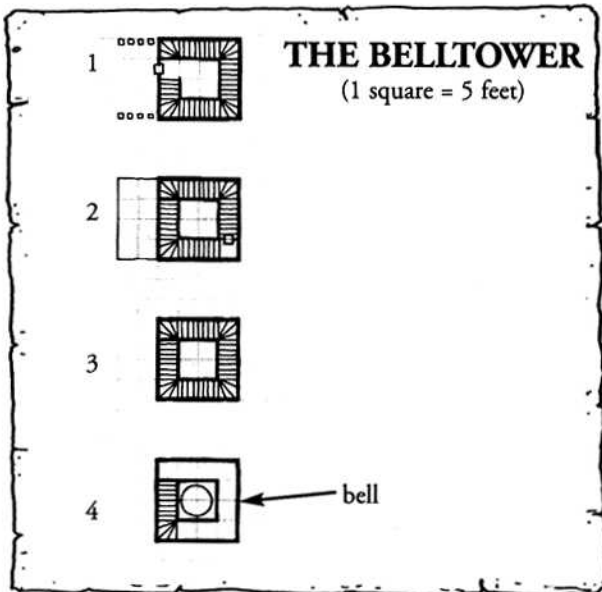
By the time the PCs reach the Square, dodging townsfolk and cutting through side alleys, a cordon of villagers one person deep have likely surrounded the bell tower. The PCs must break through this line of people and race up the stairs. An endless supply of townsfolk, including friends of

### Won't this kill all the characters?

It is not expected that 1st- or 2nd-level characters can successfully assault the mountain entrance without incredible luck, tactics, magic, or stealth. The Voice of the Dragonstone will put all the goblins on alert once the PCs close within several hundred feet, and so maneuvering up the steep mountain without being spotted becomes much more difficult.

If the PCs decide to assault the mountain entrance instead of initially entering through the mines, do not discourage them! Nevertheless, it is the GM's job to give them an accurate appraisal of their chances once they close within viewing distance. If they are going to try the climb, it is only fair that the GM describes how well entrenched the goblins are, and how lethal their attack is likely to be.





the PCs and people they have met, will shamble after them. The villagers react slowly; thus, a **bull rush** is an excellent strategy for moving through the line of dull-eyed guards.

A locked door halfway up the tower will stop the PCs cold, unless the lock is picked (**Open Lock DC 15**) or the door is bashed down. Alternatively, a **Search check (DC 5)** will reveal that the key to the door is sitting on top of the door jamb, hidden from normal sight. A PC must state that he is looking for the key in order to make a **Search check**.

**Simple locked wooden door:** 1 in. thick; hardness 5; 10 hp; **Break DC 15**.

Once the bell room is reached, the Dragonstone must be left on the platform next to the massive brass bell while someone returns to the lower level and starts ringing the bell. All the while, townsfolk will be trying to push their way up the stairs to reach the Dragonstone or the bell ringer. In one voice, they will be exhorting the PCs to stop before they are slain.

Standing next to the bell will cause **1d8 points of subdual damage per round**, or **2d8 points of sonic damage** to the Dragonstone, and the bell can be rung once per round. Thus, the bell must be rung continuously for an average of one minute before the Dragonstone explodes. When it does, the fact will be obvious, as every townsfolk will collapse in their tracks, **stunned** for ten rounds.

Over the ringing in the PCs ears, they suddenly realize that the town is completely quiet and that they no longer have a headache. The menace has been destroyed.

## ADVENTURE AFTERMATH

### Success

If the PCs successfully destroy the Dragonstone without killing any townsfolk, they will be hailed as heroes. Within a year, a copper statue commemorating their victory will be raised to them in Wyrmcalls Plaza. Their fame will be lessened if townspeople died

in the battle, but they will have gained victory nevertheless. Lucius Krekket will also give them a letter of introduction to any of his numerous contacts in cities across this part of the continent, as well as a copper and diamond medal for heroism granted to the PCs in a public ceremony. The medal is worth 500 gp, although selling it might be difficult.

### Failure

If the PCs fall or fail to destroy the Dragonstone, the town of Bellhold will be dominated within a week. Once the people fall under the Dragonstone's sway, it will work to make sure that no one will disrupt its plan. Eventually the inhabitants will succumb to death – the Dragonstone has forgotten about little details such as eating regularly – but will give mighty tribute to the Dragonstone in the interim.

### Continuing Plot Hooks

If the PCs release Velea from her bondage by destroying the Dragonstone, the evil nymph will be grudgingly (but charmingly) grateful. She will leap into the river without trying to dominate or kill any more PCs, traveling with ease downstream until she finds a glade open to the air where she may hunt her victims.

The local druidic order is displeased by the foundries' pollution. The PCs may be asked to handle negotiations, or may be forced to foil a druidic plot to solve the problem with violence.





The master of the Steeple Foundry is most certainly up to something sinister. Master Heath and his machinations will be detailed in the upcoming sequel to this adventure, for 5th-7th level characters, available in June 2002.

Some townsfolk may suffer lasting repercussions from their brief mind control. Some people may be driven fully insane and will track down the PCs, convinced that they are to blame for their wretched lives. Optionally, some townsfolk will remain mind-linked to each other, forming a common identity made up of all

the participants. Such a group of synchronized, mind-linked individuals may be recruited by an evil organization as spies or messengers.

Lucius Krekktet might hire the PCs to escort a caravan of his goods or to discover who has been raiding his caravans on a certain route. He may also sponsor the search for the original location of the Dragonstone gem; perhaps other sizable gemstones are waiting to be found.

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## APPENDIX I: NEW MONSTER DESCRIPTIONS

### Bonetangle

Large Undead

Hit Dice: 3d12 (26 hp)

Initiative: -1 (Dex)

Speed: 20 ft.

AC: 11 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +3 natural)

Attacks: 3 bone spurs +2 melee

Damage: bone spur 1d6+2; constriction 1d6

Face/Reach: 10 ft. x 10 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Improved grab, constriction

Special Qualities: Undead, immunities

Saves: Fort +0, Ref -1, Will +5

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 8, Con -, Int -, Wis 14, Cha 6

Feat: Multiattack

Climate/Terrain: Any

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 2

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: NE

Advancement: 4-10 HD (large)



### Copper Minion

Small Construct

Hit Dice: 1d10 (6 hit points)

Initiative: -2 (Dex)

Speed: 20 ft.

AC: 13 (-2 Dex, +5 natural armor)

Attacks: Fist +1 melee

Damage: Fist 1d4+1

Face/reach: 5 ft. x 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Qualities: Construct, damage reduction 1/+1, immune to electricity

Saves: Fort +0, Ref -2, Will +0

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 6, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 1/2

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 2-3 HD (Small-size), 4-6 HD (Medium-size)



The bonetangle is a necromantic construct made from a number of already animated skeletons.

A bonetangle is a mass of fused and sharpened bone, chattering skulls, and rotting armor. An outer web of bones protects an inner cavity of writhing skulls and sharpened ribs. Its size varies depending on how many skeletons are currently fused into it, but it is typically a loose tangle of bones 10 ft. across. The skeletons are not typically individual; their bones are distributed throughout the body of the creature, so that an arm bone may be attached to a hip socket, which in turn is fused into three spines and a rib cage. Only the skulls of the original skeletons are typically separated, loudly chattering their teeth as the creature engages in combat.

**Combat:** In combat, the bonetangle typically uses its reach to try an improved grab upon a combatant. Once a combatant is grabbed, it is lowered into the center of the tangled bones, where it suffers constriction damage each round as sharpened bones jab into it. Meanwhile, the bonetangle's other attacks seek to eliminate other combatants.

**SA—Improved Grab (Ex):** To use this ability, the bonetangle must hit an opponent of up to medium size with a bone spur attack. If successful, it can constrict.

**SA—Constrict (Ex):** A bonetangle deals 1d6 points of bludgeoning damage with a successful grapple check.

**SQ—Undead:** Immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, and necromantic effects, and ignores mind-influencing effects. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain, or energy drain. Immune to any spell requiring a Fortitude save, unless the spell affects objects.

**SQ—Immunities:** Bonetangles take half damage from any piercing or slashing weapon.

Copper minions are minor constructs. Only able to stay active for five minutes at a time before ceasing movement for one hour, they are typically used as triggered servants or minor traps.

Copper minions can be shaped into almost any appearance, but they are typically 3-ft. tall and bipedal. Made from solid copper, their skin glistens with golden light. They are often carved to resemble other objects, such as gargoyles or chess pieces.

**Combat:** Copper minions are weak combatants. With a slow movement rate and few immunities, they rely on their slight damage reduction to protect them while they swing their hammer-like fist at opponents. As they can be programmed for simple behavior by their creator, many copper minions exist only to activate mechanical traps at the appropriate time.

**SQ—Construct:** Impervious to critical hits, stunning, subdual damage, and death from massive damage. Immune to poisons, diseases, blinding, deafness, drowning, and to spells or attacks that affect respiration or living physiology. Not affected by attacks or spells of a mind-altering nature, or by spells based on healing/harming. Fire and acid spells or attacks deal half damage.

**Construction:** A copper minion's body must be poured from pure molten copper. The minor golem costs 6,000 gp to create, including 500 gp for the body.

The creator must be 10th level and able to cast arcane spells, including *major creation*, *fabricate*, and *stoneskin*. Completing the ritual drains 100 XP from the creator.





### Dananshee

Medium-Size Fey

Hit Dice: 2d6 (7 hp)

Initiative: +1 (Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 11 (+1 Dex)

Attacks: Dagger +1 melee

Damage: Dagger 1d4

Face/reach: 5 ft. x 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Song of fascination, spell-like abilities

Special Qualities: Low-light vision, skills

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +6

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 17, Cha 18

Skills: Animal Empathy +9, Escape Artist +5, Hide +6, Knowledge (psionics) +8, Listen +9, Move Silently +8, Sense Motive +6, Spot +10, Wilderness Lore +7

Feats: Alertness, Dodge, Great Fortitude

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 2

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always neutral evil

Advancement: 3-6 HD (Medium-size)



**Combat:** Dananshee avoid melee combat if at all possible, preferring instead to lure an unwary traveler to his demise through their singing. Driven by a hatred of "unnatural" races, dananshee prefer to attack dwarves, humans, goblinoids, and other such creatures. Elves and other sylvan races are usually left unmolested unless the dananshee is particularly hungry. She will not attack a group of individuals on most occasions. Fascinated victims are lured to a secluded spot, then slain by the dananshee and her beasts. If the dananshee is not hungry, she might spare a male victim with a high Charisma score and keep the victim *dominated* for several days.

Dananshee are often accompanied by woodland creatures that slay their victims then share in the subsequent feast. These creatures are twisted by contact with the dananshee.

**SA—Song of Domination (Su):** All characters within 60 ft. who hear a dananshee's song must succeed at a Will save (DC 15) or be affected as by a *dominate person* spell. The effect lasts for 2d4 days. The dananshee commands her victim to her lair, where she usually slays and devours him with the help of her animal companions. The victim can only defend himself if he is able to overcome the *dominate person* effect as described under the spell description. Even though the dananshee does not continue singing once a victim is dominated, a bard's countersong ability still allows a *dominated* creature to reattempt his Will save once.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** At will — *Speak with animals*; 1/day — *dimension door* as cast by a 7th-level sorcerer. Note that Velea is unable to *dimension door*, due to her entrapment by Copperdeath.

Note: The Dananshee is taken from *Creature Collection II*, published by Sword & Sorcery.

### Golem, Copper

Large (Tall) Construct

Hit Dice: 12d10 (66 hit points)

Initiative: -1 (Dex)

Speed: 20 ft.

AC: 20 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +12 natural armor)

Attacks: Fist +15 melee

Damage: Fist 2d10+6

Face/reach: 5 ft. x 5 ft./10 ft.

Special attacks: Electrical conduction

Special Qualities: Construct, damage reduction 20/+1, SR 24

Saves: Fort +13, Ref +3, Will +4

Abilities: Str 23, Dex 8, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 6

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 9-15 HD (Large)



Copper golems are constructed through the use of magical tomes or by wizards of 15th-level and higher. Construction requires 54,000 gp and two months, along with the service of a highly trained blacksmith having at least 10 ranks in Craft (blacksmithing) and access to a prodigious amount of copper ore. The end result is an animated statue with a gleaming surface of beaten copper. Copper golems obey the simplest of verbal commands given by their creator.

The dragon Copperdeath has designed his copper golems to look like human-dragon hybrids, with gleaming dragon skulls and scaled bodies.

**Combat:** The copper golem attacks with one blow each round.

**SA—Electrical Conduction (Ex):** The copper golem does not receive its standard Spell Resistance to electrical attacks. Instead, these attacks deal no damage, but actually heal the golem. For every 4 points of damage the copper golem would have taken from the attack had it failed any applicable saving throw, the golem heals one point of damage. This conduction is the only means of healing a copper golem.

Once the golem has recovered to its maximum hit points, it stores the remaining electrical energy and discharges it on opponents when it strikes. It can discharge up to 10 points of stored electrical damage with each of its blows (in addition to its normal crushing damage).

The golem can store no more than half its maximum hit points in electrical damage, and any energy not discharged within 10 minutes of being absorbed dissipates out of the golem without effect.

**SQ—Construct:** Impervious to critical hits, stunning, subdual damage, and death from massive damage. Immune to poisons, diseases, blinding, deafness, drowning, and to spells or attacks that affect respiration or living physiology. Not affected by attacks or spells of mind-altering nature, or by spells based on healing/harm-





ing. Fire and acid spells or attacks deal half normal damage.

Note: The Copper Golem is taken from Creature Collection, published by Sword & Sorcery.

## APPENDIX II: MONSTER & CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS

This section has been split into three parts, detailing the Town of Bellhold, the denizens of Steeple Mountain, and the Goblin Forces of Akratt.

### Section 1: Town of Bellhold

While the adventure lists only the most relevant statistics for these interactive encounters, this section provides the complete attributes of the important members of the community. Also listed in this section are the statistics for the possessed horses, Blaze and Broadsword, as well as the statistics to use for the dominated townfolk during the conclusion of this adventure. Unless otherwise noted, all of the townfolk of Bellhold speak Common. Finally, most citizens do not normally carry weapons. If combat does occur, they commonly make use of clubs, daggers, short swords, or slings.

#### Blaze and Broadsword, psionic heavy horses

CR 2; Large Animal; HD 3d8+6; 19 hp; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 50 ft.; AC 13 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +3 natural); Atk +3/+3 melee (1d6+2/1d6+2, hooves); SA psionic powers; SQ scent, psionic template; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +2; AL CE; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.  
*Skills:* Listen +6, Spot +6.



*SA-Psionics:* Blaze can manifest *id insinuation*, *empty mind*, and *control body* at a DC of d20+4. Broadsword can manifest *id insinuation*, *empty mind*, and *bite of the wolf* (doing 1d8 points of damage, with a +3 attack bonus.)

#### Captain Haldik (guard captain), male human War4

CR 3; Medium Human (5 ft., 8 in. tall); HD 4d8+4; 23 hp; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (-1 Dex, +4 chain shirt); Atk +6 melee (1d8+2, longsword; or 1d6+2, club) or +3 ranged (1d8, longbow); SV Fort +5, Ref +0, Will +2; AL LG; Str 14, Dex 8, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 11.



*Languages:* Common, Dwarvish.

*Skills:* Alchemy +3, Climb +7, Hide -3, Intimidate +4, Jump +7, Listen +3, Move Silently -3, Ride +5, Spot +3.

*Feats:* Alertness, Endurance, Weapon Focus (longsword).

#### Cobble, male human Com1

CR 1; Medium Human (6 ft., 2 in. tall); HD 1d4-1; 3 hp; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Atk +2 melee, or +0 ranged; SV Fort -1, Ref +0, Will +1; AL CN; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 9, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12.

*Skills:* Climb +8, Hide +0, Listen +1, Move Silently +0, Pick Pocket +2, Spot +1, Swim +6.

*Feats:* Run, Skill Focus (Climb).



#### Dominated townfolk (sample), human Com1

CR 1; Medium Human; HD 1d4; 4 hp; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Atk +3 melee, or +0 ranged; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +2; AL LN; Str 16, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 13.

*SQ-Partial action only:* Will not use weapons, but will grapple instead.



#### Heather Mosstoos, female halfling Rog3

CR 3; Small Humanoid (3 ft., 1 in. tall); HD 3d6+6; 12 hp; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 14 (+3 Dex, +1 Size); Atk +5 melee (1d6+2, shortsword; or 1d4+2, dagger), or +6 ranged (1d6, shortbow); SV Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +4; AL CG; Str 14, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 12.

*Languages:* Common, Halfling, Orc.

*Skills:* Appraise +6, Climb +10, Diplomacy +6, Disguise +4, Escape Artist +9, Hide +7, Innuendo +8, Jump +2, Listen +10, Move Silently +5, Perform +6, Profession (tunnel scout) +10, Sense Motive +8, Spot +2.

*Feats:* Blind-fight, Skill Focus (Climb).



#### Hob Waterman (the mayor), male human Ari5

CR 4; Medium Human (5 ft., 4 in. tall); HD 5d8+15; 36 hp; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Atk +3 melee, or +5 ranged; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +8; AL NG; Str 11, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 15.

*Skills:* Bluff +10, Hide +2, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (copper mining) +7, Listen +8, Move Silently +2, Perform +8, Spot +10.

*Feats:* Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Bluff).



#### Lucius Krekkt, male human Exp6

CR 5; Medium Human (6 ft., 2 in. tall); HD 6d6; 27 hp; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Atk +2 melee, or +6 ranged; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +9; AL CG; Str 7, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 7.

*Languages:* Common, Dwarvish.

*Skills:* Animal Empathy -1, Decipher Script +2, Disable Device +10, Escape Artist +2, Hide +11, Intuit Direction +9, Knowledge (nature) +3, Profession (forging) +11, Profession (mining) +12, Move Silently +2, Pick Pocket +5, Spot +5, Use Rope +3, Wilderness Lore +9.

*Feats:* Exotic Weapon Proficiency (warhammer), Iron Will, Skill Focus (Profession [mining]), Track.



#### Phillippa Krekkt, female human Ari1

CR 1; Medium Human (5 ft. tall); HD 1d8-1; 10 hp; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Atk -2 melee, or +1 ranged; SV Fort -1, Ref +1, Will +3; AL N; Str 6, Dex 12, Con 9, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 12.

*Languages:* Common, Elven, Dwarvish, Gnomish, Halfling.

*Skills:* Bluff +5, Disguise +5, Hide +1, Knowledge (high fashion) +4, Listen +3, Move Silently +1, Sense Motive +5, Spot +1.

*Feat:* Toughness.







### Thorlenn (sample Under-cleric), female human Clr1

CR 1; Medium Human (5 ft., 5 in. tall); HD 1d8; 8 hp; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Atk +2 melee (1d6+2, light mace) or +1 ranged (1d4+2, sling); SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +4; AL LG; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 9, Wis 15, Cha 12.

Skills: Heal +6, Hide +1, Listen +2, Move Silently +1, Spellcraft +3, Spot +2.

Feats: Scribe Scroll, Brew Potion.

Cleric domains: Good, Sun.

Spells prepared (3/2+1 per day): 0 – create water, guidance (x2); 1st – command, endure elements, protection from evil.



### Tokket, male half-elf Com3

CR 2; Medium Humanoid (5 ft., 8 in. tall); HD 3d4-3; 7 hp; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 9 (-1 Dex); Atk +5 melee (1d10+4, greatclub); SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +6; AL NG; Str 18, Dex 9, Con 8, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 15.

Languages: Common, Elven, Dwarvish.

Skills: Hide -1, Listen +4, Move Silently -1, Profession (inn-keeping) +4, Profession (mining) +2, Ride +4, Search +1, Spot +4.

Feats: Iron Will, Martial Weapon Proficiency (great club).



### Utrish, female human Adp4

CR 3; Medium Human (5 ft., 0 in. tall); HD 4d6+4; 22 hp; Init +0; Spd 15 ft.; AC 10; Atk +1 melee, or +2 ranged; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +5; AL N; Str 9, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 17.

Languages: Common, Draconic.

Skills: Alchemy +6, Handle Animal +9, Hide +0, Knowledge +6 (arcana), Knowledge (nature) +6, Listen +1, Move Silently +0, Scry +8, Spot +1.

Feats: Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Scribe Scroll.

Spells prepared (3/3 per day): 0 – mending, prestidigitation, resistance; 1st – hypnosis, protection from evil, silent image.



### Von Morris (sample town guard), male human War1

CR 1; Medium Human (5 ft., 7 in. tall); HD 1d8+2; 13 hp; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (-1 Dex, +4 chain shirt); Atk +4 melee (1d6+3, club), or +0 ranged (1d8, light crossbow); SV Fort +4, Ref -1, Will -1; AL LG; Str 16, Dex 9, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Languages: Common, Dwarvish.

Skills: Appraise +3, Gather Information +2, Heal +1, Hide -1, Listen +1, Move Silently -1, Ride +3, Spot +1.

Feats: Alertness, Toughness.



### Section 2: Inside Steeple Mountain

This section contains four completely new monsters, which are fully detailed in Appendix I: New Monster Descriptions. In addition, there are several creatures that are variations on a familiar type (i.e., troglodyte zombies) or modified in other ways (i.e., intelligent dire rats).

#### Bonetangle

CR 2; Large Undead; HD 3d12; 24 hp; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 11 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +3 natural); Atk +1/+1/+1 melee (1d6+2/1d6+2/1d6+2, bone spurs); Face/Reach 10 ft. by 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Improved grab, constriction 1d6; SQ Undead, immunities; AL NE; SV Fort +0, Ref -1, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 8, Con -, Int -, Wis 14, Cha 6.

Feat: Multiattack.

SA—Constriction: 1d6 damage per round to victims with a successful grapple check. SQ—Undead: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

SQ—Immunities (Ex): half damage from any piercing or slashing weapon.



#### Copper Minions

CR 1/2; Small Construct; HD 1d10; 6 hp; Init -2 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 13 (-2 Dex, +5 natural); Atk +1 melee (1d4+1, fist); SQ Construct, damage reduction 1/+1, immune to electricity; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref -2, Will +0; Str 10, Dex 6, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1.

SQ—Construct: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, disease, and similar effects. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.



#### Golem, Copper

CR 6; Large construct; HD 12d10; 66 hp; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 20 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +12 natural); Atk +15 melee (2d10+6, fist); Reach 10 ft.; SA Electrical conduction; SQ Construct, damage reduction 20/+1, SR 24; AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +4, Str 23, Dex 8, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1. SA—Electrical Conduction (Ex): Every 4 points of damage the golem would normally take from an electrical attack heals it one point instead. Additional energy can be discharged at enemies, up to 10 points per attack.

SQ—Construct: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, disease, and similar effects. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Possessions: Slavedriver, a magical whip (see Appendix III: Arcana for details).



#### Monstrous spider (medium-sized)

CR 1; Medium Vermin; HD 2d8+2; 11 hp; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft, climb 20 ft; AC 14 (+3 Dex, +1 natural); Atk +4 melee (1d6 and poison, bite); SA Poison, web; SQ Vermin; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +0, Str 11, Dex 17, Con 12, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 2.





**Skills:** Climb +12, Hide +10, Spot +7.

**Feat:** Weapon Finesse (bite).

**SA—Poison (Ex):** A medium-sized monstrous spider's poisonous bite will deal 1d4 points of initial temporary Strength damage and 1d4 points of secondary temporary Strength damage, unless a Fortitude save (DC 14) is successful.

### Skring and Ettin, mutated dire rats

CR 3; Small Animal; HD 1d8+1; 5 hp; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 40 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 15 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +1 natural); Atk +4 melee (1d4, bite); SQ Increased intelligence; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 4, Wis 12, Cha 4.

**Skills:** Climb +11, Hide +11, Move Silently +6.

**Feat:** Weapon Finesse (bite).

**SQ—Increased Intelligence (Ex):** The rats are smarter than most due to the Dragonstone's emanations.



### Stone Dragon

CR 4; Huge Construct; HD 14d10; 77 hp; Init -2 (Dex); Spd 15 ft. (cannot run); AC 25 (-1 size, -2 Dex, +18 natural); Atk +14 melee (1d6+5, slam); Face/Reach 10 ft. by 20 ft./5 ft.; SQ Partial actions only, construct, damage reduction 15/+1; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +4; Str 20, Dex 7, Con -, Int -, Wis 8, Cha 1.

**SQ—Construct:** Impervious to critical hits, stunning, subdual damage, and death from massive damage. Immune to poisons, diseases, blinding, deafness, drowning, and to spells or attacks that affect respiration or living physiology. Not affected by attacks or spells of a mind-altering nature, or by spells based on healing/harming.

**Possessions:** Two gem eyes (see Appendix III: Arcana for details).



### Tamalruk, male troglodyte Clr3

CR 3; Medium Humanoid; HD 2d8 + 3d8 -5; 17 hp; Init -2 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 14 (-2 Dex, +6 natural); Atk +1/+1/-1 melee (1d4-2/1d4-2, claws; 1d4-2, bite); SA Stench, spells; SQ Darkvision 90 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref -1, Will +7; Str 6, Dex 6, Con 8, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 15.

**Languages:** Common (poorly), Draconic.

**Skills:** Concentration +3, Hide +10, Knowledge (religion) +3, Listen +3.

**Feats:** Iron Will, Craft Wondrous Item.

**SA—Stench (Ex):** When Tamalruk is angry or frightened, he secretes an oily, musk-like chemical that nearly every form of animal life finds offensive. All creatures (except troglodytes) within 30 ft. of him must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 13) or be overcome with nausea. This lasts for 10 rounds and deals 1d4 points of temporary Strength damage. Normal trogs deal 1d6 points of temporary strength damage; Tamalruk's advanced age has caused his glands to atrophy somewhat, resulting in reduced effect.

**SA—Domain Powers:** Death: already used each day in the creation of the bonetangle; Destruction: smite 1/day, +4 attack bonus, +3 damage bonus.

**Spells Prepared:** (4/3+1/2+1 per day): 0 – guidance, inflict minor wounds, resistance, virtue; 1st – doom, cause fear (x2), inflict light wounds; 2nd – corpse scream, desecrate, shatter.

**Possessions:** Copper orb shaped like a lizard head (worth 20 gp), copper scepter of



rule (as a masterwork heavy mace, although Tamalruk will not use it as a weapon), holy symbol.

### Troglodyte Zombie

CR 1/2; Medium Undead; HD 2d12+3; 16 hp; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (-1 Dex, +2 natural); Atk +2 melee (1d6+1, slam); SQ Undead, partial actions only; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref -1, Will +3; Str 13, Dex 8, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1.

**Feat:** Toughness.

**SQ—Undead:** Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

**SQ—Partial Actions Only (Ex):** Zombies have poor reflexes and can perform only partial actions. Thus they can move or attack, but can only do both if they charge (a partial charge).

**Note:** Their chameleon skills and poison stench no longer function due to their undead nature.



### Velea the Dananshee

CR 2; Medium Fey; HD 2d6; 7 hp; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Atk +1 melee (1d4, dagger); SA Song of domination, spell-like ability; SQ Low-light vision, skills; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 17, Cha 18.

**Skills:** Animal Empathy +9, Knowledge (Copperdeath) +8, Escape Artist +5, Hide +6, Listen +9, Move Silently +8, Sense Motive +6, Spot +10, Wilderness Lore +7.

**Feats:** Alertness, Dodge, Great Fortitude.

**SA—Song of Domination (Su):** Characters within 60 ft. hearing Velea's song must succeed at a Will save (DC 15) or be affected by a *dominate person* spell for 2d4 days.

**SA—Spell-like Ability (Sp):** At will – *speak with animals*.



### Section 3: The Goblin Forces (and the Dragonstone)

This final section details the remaining members of Akkratt's expedition, the Dragonstone itself, and the statistics for Caleb and Dorik, Thimdrul's unwilling experiments. For information on the personalities and motivations of each of the goblins, see *The Goblin Forces* on page 29. Unless otherwise noted, all goblins speak only their own foul language.

### Akkratt, male goblin prince Rog2

CR 2; Small humanoid (goblinoid) (3 ft., 4 in. tall); HD 2d6; 8 hp; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+3 Dex, +1 Size, +3 studded leather); Atk +1 melee (1d8-1, morningstar), or +5 ranged (1d6-1, javelin); SA Sneak Attack +1d6; SQ Evasion; SV Fort +0, Ref +6, Will +2; AL LE; Str 9, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 9.

**Languages:** Gnoll, Goblin, Undercommon.

**Skills:** Bluff +4, Climb +3, Concentration +2, Diplomacy +3, Disguise +6, Forgery +4, Hide +7, Intimidate +5, Jump +1, Knowledge(underdark) +4, Listen +2, Move Silently +9, Pick Pocket +7, Profession(Prince) +4, Search +7, Spot +3, Use Rope +4.

**Feat:** Skill Focus (Intimidate).





### Caleb, male human (psionic experiment) Com1

CR 1; Small Human; HD 1d4; 4 hp; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Atk +0 melee, or +0 ranged; SA Psionics; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +2; AL CE; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 13.

*SA—Psionics (Su):* Can manifest *ego whip*, *thought shield*, and *destiny dissonance* at will.



### Dorik, male human (psionic experiment) Com1

CR 1; Small Human; HD 1d4; 4 hp (currently 1); Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Atk +0 melee, or +0 ranged; SA Psionics; SV Fort +0 (currently -3), Ref +0, Will +2; AL CE; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 11 (currently 5), Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 13.

*SA—Psionics (Su):* Can manifest *ego whip*, *thought shield*, and *disable* at will.



### Dragonstone

CR 3; Tiny Construct; HD 14d12; 91 hp; Init +0; Spd 0; AC 11 (+2 size, -5 Dex, +4 inertial armor); Atk —; SA Psionics; SQ Construct, hardness 15, immunities, sonic vulnerability, fast healing 1; AL LE; SV Fort —, Ref —, Will +10; Str —, Dex —, Con —, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 18.

*Skills:* Bluff +15, Diplomacy +18, Gather Information +13, Knowledge (military tactics) +11, Sense Motive +18.

*Feats:* Enlarge Power, Extend Power, Hide Power, Inertial Armor, Maximize Power.

*SA—Psionics (Su):* (which the Dragonstone may manifest with its remaining 3+ PP per day, as a 14th-level manifester for range and area of effect) 0 —*daze*, *distract*, *telepathic projection* (17 uses per day for free); 1st — *attraction*, *charm person*, *lesser mindlink*; 2nd — *brain lock*, *suggestion*.

*SQ—Construct:* Impervious to critical hits, stunning, subdual damage, and death from massive damage. Immune to poisons, diseases, blinding, deafness, drowning, and to spells or attacks that affect respiration or living physiology. Not affected by attacks or spells of mind-altering nature, or by spells based on healing/harming.

*SQ—Immunities (Ex):* The Dragonstone is immune to slashing and piercing weapons, and all energy types except sonic.

*SQ—Sonic Vulnerability (Ex):* The Dragonstone takes double damage from all sonic-based attacks.



### Goblin

CR 1/4; Small Humanoid (Goblinoid); HD 1d8; 4 hp; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +3 studded leather); Atk +1 melee (1d8-1, morningstar) or +3 ranged (1d6-1, javelin); SQ Darkvision 60 ft.; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 8, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 8.

*Skills:* Hide +6, Listen +3, Move Silently +4, Spot +3.

*Feat:* Alertness.

*Possessions:* 1d8 gp, 1d10 sp, 1d20 cp; morningstar and 4 javelins, studded leather armor, foul goblin ale.



### Guzzum, male goblin Bbn2

CR 2; Small Humanoid (Goblinoid) (3 ft., 6 in. tall); HD 2d12+4; 19 hp; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 40 ft.; AC 12 (+1 Dex, +1 Size); Atk +5 melee (1d8+3, longsword) or +4 ranged (various); SA rage 2/day; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +2; AL CE; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 15, Cha 7.

*Skills:* Hide +5, Jump +7, Listen +2, Move Silently +5, Spot +2, Swim +3.

*Feat:* Blind-fight.



### Prukk, male goblin Rog3

CR 3; Small Humanoid (Goblinoid) (3 ft., 6 in. tall); HD 3d6-3; 8 hp; Init +4 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+4 Dex, +1 Size); Atk +2 melee (1d6-1, shortsword) or +7 ranged (1d8, light crossbow); SA Sneak Attack +2d6; SQ Evasion; SV Fort +0, Ref +7, Will +2; AL LE; Str 9, Dex 18, Con 9, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 8.

*Languages:* Goblin, Undercommon.

*Skills:* Bluff +4, Climb +2, Craft +6, Forgery +5, Hide +8, Innuendo +7, Knowledge (religion) +3, Listen +1, Move Silently +13, Perform +3, Search +7, Spot +1, Swim +5, Tumble +10.

*Feats:* Dodge, Mobility.



### Sprelt, male psionic goblin

CR 1; Small Humanoid (Goblinoid); HD 1d8; 4 hp; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +4 inertial armor); Atk +1 melee (1d8-1, morningstar); or +3 ranged (1d6-1, javelin); SA Psionic powers, psionic attack/defense modes; SQ Telepathy within 100 ft., darkvision 60 ft.; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 8, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 8.

*Skills:* Hide +6, Listen +3, Move Silently +4, Spot +3.

*Feat:* Inertial Armor.

*SA—Psionics (Su):* Can manifest *ego whip*, *spider climb*, and *thought shield* at will.

*Possessions:* 1d8 gp, 1d10 sp, 1d20 cp; morningstar and 4 javelins, pouch of meditation crystals, foul goblin ale.



### Thimdru, male goblin Psion (Seer) 2

CR 2; Small Humanoid (goblinoid); HD 2d4+2; 7 hp; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +4 Inertial Armor); Atk +1 melee (1d4-1, dagger) or +3 ranged (1d6-1, javelin); SA Psionic powers, psionic attack/defense modes; SQ Telepathy within 100 ft., darkvision 60 ft., psycrystal (liar); AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +4; Str 8, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 12.

*Skills:* Bluff +5, Hide +4, Listen +3, Move Silently +4, Spot +3, Diplomacy +2.

*Feat:* Inertial Armor.

*SA—Psionic Attack/Defense (Su):* Can manifest *ego whip*, *empty mind*, *mental barrier*, *mind thrust*, *thought shield*.

*SA—Psionics (4 pp/day):* 0 — *finger of fire*, *inkling*, *know direction*; 1st — *biocurrent*, *charm person*.

*Possessions:* 1d8 gp, 1d10 sp, 1d20 cp; dagger, 4 javelins, psycrystal (liar), foul goblin ale.





## APPENDIX III: ARCANA

### New Psionic and Magic Items

#### Crystal of Recursive Knowledge

Activation of this item takes one full minute, as the wielder focuses his mind into the endless chambers of the crystal library. Once this is completed, the wielder gains a +10 competence bonus to all Knowledge (psionics) checks made during the next hour. While activating the crystal, the wielder may make a Concentration check (DC 20) to maintain the connection if distracted by nearby events, but may not take any other actions without breaking the connection.

**Manifester level:** 5th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Universal Item, 6 ranks or more of the Knowledge (psionics) skill; **Price:** 1,500 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.



#### Crystal Whistle

The crystal whistle is a powerful psionic item that is powered equally by a psionic character's breath and mind. Once per day, a psion or psychic warrior may activate the crystal whistle as a standard action by spending 1 PP to awaken its crystal matrix. In the same round as it is activated, the whistle may be blown, creating an effect identical to the 3rd-level power *cone of sound*. The whistle does 5d4 points of sonic damage in a 60-ft. cone, with a Reflex save at DC 1d20+4 for half damage. Non-psionic characters cannot activate the crystal whistle.

**Manifester level:** 8th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Universal Item, *cone of sound*; **Price:** 5,400 gp; **Weight:** —.

#### Dragon's Eye

The crystal eyes of the dragon idol are beautifully crafted and slightly enchanted. In their presence, any light source is magnified, sending rainbows of rippling blue light across a 60-ft. cone. As a standard action, an individual eye can be used to duplicate the effect of a *flare* spell an unlimited number of times per day. These items are use-activated by holding and focusing the eye, but must be in the presence of torch light or brighter illumination in order to function.

**Caster level:** 1st; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *flare*; **Market Price:** 1,500 gp; **Weight:** 5 lbs.



#### Earring of Fame

This earring is a beautifully carved, tiny bone hearing trumpet that dangles from the earlobe, originally created for an extremely conceited bard. When the earring is worn, the wearer has the magical ability to hear whenever anyone on the same plane of existence says his full name, followed by about 5 seconds of conversation. For instance, if a hero named Rath was wearing the earring, he would hear, "... Rath is going to have to die. We'll trap . . .," or "... Rath so much. I just wish he could return my love. If he doesn't . . . ." In no case does the wearer get any indication as to the identity of the speaker, other than perhaps recognizing the voice, nor does he know the speaker's location. Anyone wearing this earring suffers from a -2 circumstance penalty to all Listen checks, as the earring dampens hearing slightly for the ear in which it is worn.



This item can be used by clever groups to pass very quick messages. "Rath, meet me at the inn!" would be heard if Rath had not yet taken off the earring in frustration. Obviously, it is easier to notice pertinent messages heard through the earring when one is a low-level adventurer, especially since bards tends to sing about high-level adventurers quite often.

**Caster level:** 7th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *divination*; **Market Price:** 2,500 gp; **Weight:** —.

#### Greater Crystal Focus

As *lesser crystal focus*, but adds a +4 enhancement bonus to the DC of psionic powers that require saving throws. After one use only it dissolves in a radiant burst of colored light, disintegrating into fine dust as soon as it is used.

**Manifester level:** 10th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Universal Item, Greater Psionic Focus, Psionic Focus; **Price:** 1,800 gp; **Weight:** —.

#### Lesser Crystal Focus

Held against the forehead while manifesting a psionic power, this chunk of crystal focuses the power into razor-sharp intensity. It adds a +2 enhancement bonus to the DC of psionic powers that require saving throws. After one use only they dissolve in a radiant burst of colored light, disintegrating into fine dust as soon as it is used.

**Manifester level:** 10th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Universal Item, Psionic Focus; **Price:** 600 gp; **Weight:** —.





### Slavedriver

This 15-ft. long +1 whip is magically enchanted to deliver a *daze* spell (DC 10 to resist) on the person successfully attacked, up to 5 times per day. In addition, the length of the whip has been enchanted with a minor version of the *animate rope* spell. While unable to entangle creatures, it will aid in climbing by wrapping around protrusions, giving a +2 circumstance bonus to Climb and Balance checks when used appropriately.



*Caster level:* 5th; *Prerequisites:* Enchant Arms and Armor, *animate rope*, *daze*; *Market Price:* 3100 gp; *Weight:* 2 lbs.

### New Spell

#### Corpse Scream

Necromancy

Level: Clr2

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 10 minutes per head

Range: Touch

Area: 25-ft-radius emanation centered on the material components

Duration: 6 hours per level per head used

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

*Corpse scream* uses severed heads to create a long-lasting audible alarm that triggers each time a creature of Tiny or larger size enters the warded area or touches it. A creature who speaks the password (determined by the caster during creation) does not set off the alarm. The alarm takes the form of all the affected severed heads suddenly opening their mouths and screaming loudly. The heads will continue to scream until the intruder leaves the area or the heads are destroyed (hardness 2, 2 hp each). The vocal tone of the screams generally depends on the physical condition of the severed heads, but the noise can be heard in a 50-ft. radius per head used (maximum one head per caster level). Reduce the distance by 10 ft. for each interposing closed door, and by 20 ft. for each substantial interposing wall. In quiet conditions, the screaming can be heard faintly for double the distances listed above. Creatures affected by a *silence* spell cannot hear the screaming.

Ethereal or astral creatures do not trigger the *corpse scream* unless the intruder becomes material while in the warded area.

*Focus:* Holy symbol and at least one severed head.

## Of Sound Mind Handouts

The following pages comprise the handouts for this adventure. The first page is a section of Thrommel Redstone's diary, which can be found in the Bell & Clapper. PCs learning his story should get a basic understanding of what they might be up against and direction in solving the mystery of Bellhold's nightmares.

The following pages feature the nightmares themselves. As detailed in *The Nightmares* on page 14, these dreams have been broken down by class.

Dream 1: Barbarian (or any fighter-type)

Dream 2: Bard

Dream 3: Cleric (or any divine spellcaster)

Dream 4: Druid (or Ranger)

Dream 5: Fighter (or any fighter-type)

Dream 6: Ranger (or Druid)

Dream 7: Wizard

Dream 8: Sorcerer

Dream 9: Paladin

Dream 10: Rogue

Dream 11: Psion

Dream 12: Psychic Warrior

These handouts are available in a PDF download from the Fiery Dragon website at [www.fierydragon.com](http://www.fierydragon.com). Permission is granted to photocopy pages 44-48 for personal use.



## The Diary of Thrommel Redstone.

### The Diary of Thrommel Redstone

Midsummer, the 21st. The journey has not been bad so far. Although we've spent the holiday on the road. According to Halias, over in the next valley is a little town named Bellhold. The place is famous for the quality of its copper mines, the church bells they make there, and most importantly the tame dragon they've got. Apparently, some damn huge wyrm looks over and protects the town. Hoh. I never could figure humans out; taming a dragon is no task for dwarves.

(Later) At sunset, I could hear the bells echoing over the hills. Reminded me of the sounds of hammers on anvils, back home in the deep caverns. Beautiful sounds, for human make.

The 22nd. Toren was drunk last night, on less than a skin of elven fey wine. He is vomiting over in the berry bushes as I scribe this. Serves him right. The All-Father has no cause to curse him of the infirmities he brings upon himself. I hear the bells again, apparently marking the morning services. Must be a pious place, this Bellhold.

(Later) Made Bellhold in late afternoon. It is a nice town for dwarves - the smell of the mines in the air, the copper smelters and forges doing what they do best. Halias can't stand it, but he's being a priss as usual. We're staying in a place called The Copper Bed, more human-set than dwarven, but there are a few of my folk about. I've told them I'll do services if they want. The All-Father help their sinful souls, none of them have taken me up on it yet, but I'm sure they will.

Odd in a place with so many bells, but this town isn't pious at all. There's one church, of some human god of work and labor, which makes some sense in a crafts-town like this. Apparently, this dragon that they've tamed insists on helping to build new churches, and no one's wanted to ask its help. Towards I told Toren that he is to find out more about local politics, but the coward is pretending I'm not there again. Hammer and tongs, it annoys me when he does that.

The 23rd (early). Good breakfast. Got up at dawn, prayed. Tried to wake Dorek and Alissa to pray with me, but they insisted on sleeping in. Wandered through the smithies; work apparently goes on all day in the mines, and the smithies do astonishingly fine work for humans. Saw excellent copper statues, good forges and bronze works, and saw how bells are made. Looked at the Wyrncall, a huge 5,000 lb. bell set on a tower in the central square. According to rumor, this is used to signal emergencies and gather the town, and is supposed to be haunted; some drunk once died up there while it was being rung. As it's so loud that the sound actually burst his ear drums and shattered his spectacles and stopped his heart! Now THAT'S good workmanship. I say. You wouldn't get that from any elven bell. No sir, an elven bell would tinkle.

According to the innkeeper, the dragon Copperdeath itself wants to meet us this afternoon and give us a tour of the mines. Ought to be interesting, I'd say. Haven't seen a dragon before, other than that small white which Dorek, Halias, and I killed a few years back. Copper dragons are supposed to be good riddlers, I recall. I'll have to tell Alissa to think a few up.

(Later) We're worried. Halias just told us that there's something wrong with the people hereabouts. He says that they almost all radiate enchantment and charm sorcery, and that he thinks they're being mind-controlled. When we go to chat with that dragon, I'm bringing my bloody weapons.

(Later) Everything is fine. It was only our imagination. Met the dragon down in the copper mines, where it came through behind a beautiful copper statue of itself. We were in awe. He asked me if I'd consider leaving the adventuring company and working the mine with the tealodyte overseers. Of course, I told him I'd be pleased to. It's been a long time since I put pick to stone. Halias and Alissa have gone up the mine tunnels to its palace to chat with it while Dorek and I get to work; I think that good-for-nothing Toren is talking to merchants for it. It feels good to have finally found meaning in my life.

I don't know what the date is, but it seems like late autumn. I've been working with bloody tealodytes - trags! - to mine and forge copper and bronze for the All-Father, knows how long. By the hammer and tongs! I'm going to go try and find the others, maybe to snare them out of that damn beast's enchantment and stop it once and for all. It's got this whole town working as its slaves. We'll put a stop to that. I'm not sure if we'll come in up the mountainside or try to sneak in through the mine tunnels, where we saw it before. The mountainside seems more dangerous and open. May the Dwarven Gods bless my endeavor and deliver my soul if we don't succeed, as I'll not tucktle to it once again.

Thrommel is dead, ripped in half by the creature's teeth; likewise, Dorek and Halias have been killed, and Toren seems to have run with as much of the treasure as he could carry. Let him. He will not be accounted among the heroes who saved the town from its slavery. May Thrommel's soul be blessed by his god, and may he find peace in the celestial forge. Written in sadness, Alissa Songsword, bard and friend.

You are covered with filth, running through tunnels deep within the earth. Your head aches as you bang it once again against a low-hanging rock outcropping, and blood drips down the side of your face. You hear a bell ringing, the sound of hammers on metal. Somewhere above you is the sun and fresh air, but you are lost in the dark and stifling air of this deep place. Somewhere behind you, something is stalking you through the red stone. You try and muster enough will to work yourself into a rage, but fear grips your heart, and the ragged rasp of air through your lungs is never enough to even take a deep breath. Unable to stay still alone in the dark, you run forward, choosing a black tunnel at random.

Somewhere deep in your mind, you hear a slow chuckle. You realize that you made the wrong choice.

Time slows down. You can hear your father yelling for you, as the man who trained you looks on in disgust at your failure. Your right leg twists under you, turning, and as you fall screaming in pain you realize that something has simply grabbed it and twisted it off, just as you would twist a drumstick off a roast goose. The coppery smell of hot blood fills your nose as you try to pull yourself away, try to fight, try to reach any weapon, but the sound of horrid eating and crunching echoes through the small cavern. "Submit," says your father, his voice filled with disappointment at your weakness. "He knows best, you know, and will make you strong. Otherwise . . ." He shakes his head. "It'll come down to this." And just as your severed leg had been ripped from you, you feel something grabbing and twisting your neck, and you cannot help but scream in fear.

And as you wake up, your neck hurts horribly, and your leg seems to be asleep.

You hate the feeling of your fingers bleeding.

Not that they usually bleed, mind you. Yet you have been playing now for more than fifteen hours, only stringed instruments, and you realize that you do not even *like* the sound of stringed instruments anymore, but your audience does, and you cannot disappoint them. Oh, no. If they do not like your music, if they do not like you, this time it is not as if they will just not give you a good recommendation. Instead, they will rip out your vocal cords.

And eat them.

It feels as if your voice has already been ripped out. "Sing," your audience croons. "Sing, and keep singing, and do not disappoint." Yet your voice has become a croak, and your fingers are bleeding on the lute, and your best friends sit on the other side of the brass bars with their eyes pleading at you not to make any mistakes. You know that you cannot, you will not; you are better than that and you will not fail them. You will not fail yourself. You are better than that. You fill your lungs with air, and you start their favorite ballad. And with a *twang*, you break a string, and you realize that you are croaking the words to the ballad instead of singing it.

Your friends' eyes have opened wide with horror, and you feel yourself picked up and spun around, the bars of the cage falling away. "You might as well accept it," the audience says out of many mouths, with many voices. "You will have no other choice. So tell me," and a huge claw caresses up your torso from crotch to throat, "how are you going to choose?"

You open your mouth to answer, to make your choice, and your throat is too raw. No sound comes out, as you strain to answer. Your friends are laughing at you, or maybe screaming. And as your mouth is wrenched open and your tongue ripped from your throat, you start drowning on your own blood, and your eyes snap open . . .

And you wake up. Your fingertips burn, and your voice is nothing but a rasp.

Your knees ache from the hard stone floor. To worship him properly, you would not want to sit on the stone bench. But groveling with your cheek pressed to the red floor, you cannot see his face, which is what you really want. You left your own god for him, and you have never regretted it.

You feel his presence above you, inside you, where that core of faith resides.

"*You are true,*" he says, "*and a test of faith is coming. I will possess you and hold you and keep you safe, and you shall be with me, victorious beneath my wings. Ready yourself. Your sacrifices have not been in vain, and your rewards shall follow you in life and afterlife both. The work is hard, and the hours long, but your triumph oh so sweet.*"

He moves on as you genuflect, this time with the idol in front of you, and you know you have been blessed beyond all others if you follow his simple instructions. Briefly, you think of your old religion . . . and you know how glad you were to cast it away. Your heart beats. You breathe. You smile. Your time is coming.

And you wake up.

Dream 4

You are flying. Your wings beat the air, hammering the faint mist like a claw through bone. The world spins by underneath you, under your control. You laugh, and swoop, and breathe.

The wave of sound from your throat ripples out in front of you. You aim it downward, and you watch the trees shattering under its force. A hundred-year old oak tree dissolves into splinters as you swoop by, birds exploding from the noise. The waters of a stream leap in a hundred different directions, the boulder they gurgled past dissolving under the sonic onslaught. A deer leaps away and its flesh is flayed from its bones as you catch it with your song. You cannot even hear any more, your ears temporarily deafened by your own cries of glee, but you can see . . .

And it is beautiful.

Part of your mind wonders: Is this not horrible? There is a time coming, you realize, when you can make a choice. Fight the inevitable, you suddenly know, and you will wreak destruction upon all nature you see. Submit, even when you think you should not, and you will save it.

Is that right, you wonder? Or is it a lie? And then you see a village of elves below you, and once again you smile, and down you dive . . .

And you wake up.

Dream 5

The enemy waits just a few feet ahead of you. The halfling should never have challenged you, and now he will pay with his life. You feel the old familiar adrenaline coursing through your body, and you look forward to the feeling of slamming your weapon through your opponent's chest. Then you are rocked backwards as an unseen weapon ratchets off your chest, leaving you breathless.

The creature circles you, now human-sized, and you realize that you have been too busy thinking to get off a shot. "No problem," you think. "I'll get one . . ." And the creature strikes again, flicking you in the face with one lazy, ogre-sized hand. Desperately, you try to cudgel your lazy thoughts . . . your life is at stake! But you just . . . cannot . . . respond, and a huge clawed hand barely flexes as it flicks your weapon from your hand in the same way a child might flick an ant off a table.

You turn to run, and with you is your best friend. "Run!" you hear, but your legs are barely moving. The giant form looms over you, and shakes its head. "*Don't make the wrong choice,*" you tell yourself. "*Some things are better to live and let live.*" Can you do that – let go and let someone else make the decisions? You ponder, and your mother is laughing at you, and the creature you are following reaches out to your head . . . and twists.

You wake up.

Dream 6

It is a beautiful day, and you are lying outside under the sun. The sky is a deep, rich blue, and you can hear birdsong and animal noises around you. As you doze in the sun, half asleep, you can sense the animals of the forest padding across the clearing.

Then you feel the first bit of pain in your hand. You open your eyes, and see a crow perched on your wrist. It has a piece of your bloody skin clasped in its beak, and it looks at you with beady eyes before jabbing its beak down for another bite. You swat at it and it takes to the air with an awkward squawk.

Then behind you your dog growls, and you feel a ripping pain in your leg. A squirrel runs up your arm and bites your cheek, even as beetles descend from the tree and birds from the sky and animals from the forest, all intent on turning you into a meal. You scream, bleeding now from a hundred tiny cuts, and you feel yourself sinking in a blood fog of weakness and pain. "*This does not have to happen,*" you think to yourself before you pass out. "*I can let him speak for me, and none of this will happen.*" And then, as the bull deer lifts you up on its antlers, you feel yourself falling, drowning in darkness. The last sight you see is yourself, trying to hold in your innards with one hand.

You wake up screaming.



You do not know where you are.

You know you have been here before. But for the life of you, you cannot remember where it is. Or how you got there. Your surroundings look just familiar enough to be distracting. You had been casting . . . .

Wait. Can you cast spells?

You wander, seeing people that you might know, places you might have been in. People talk to you but their words mean nothing, and you forget what they say almost immediately. You run your tongue across the place where your teeth used to be, knowing that you used to be more than you are now. It infuriates you, with a sense of sick dread for all the things you cannot remember you have lost . . . .

And suddenly, it snaps back. You once had a mind that missed nothing. Arcane formulae were as nothing to you. Your memory was good. And then you resisted *him*. In anger he broke your mind, taking it apart piece by piece until you have been left a drooling, foolish imbecile who draws nothing but laughter as you walk the streets of the town you once called home. This did not need to happen; you could have helped him instead. And now, he just allows you these tiny windows of clarity that . . . .

And once again, for what you now realize is the many-hundredth time, you feel it all slipping away. You do not know where you are. And you wake up, confused and groggy, consumed by loss.

You are asleep. You know you are asleep, as you just saw your mother having a conversation with a dead king, seated in front of a life-sized chess set that moved every time you breathed. It is just a dream, you tell yourself, and you look around. You are in the home where you grew up. Smiling, you sit down on your bed. And then you double over screaming.

Your blood is burning.

You can feel it, bronze flames leaping within your veins, horrible pain that you cannot possibly endure, your heart hammering like a bell. You feel it, even though you know you are dreaming, searing knives driven into your belly, but you *could not* be dreaming with the pain this bad! And then your mother is standing over you, her face in shadows, and she lays a cool cloth on your forehead.

"Shhhhhhh," she whispers, and the flames die away. "Shhhhhhh. *Nothing to scream about. It's just your time, that's all. The time when you discover your heritage. My blood runs in your veins. We all know it, but you can feel it, can't you? It hurts. I know it hurts.*" Her soft voice continues. "You'll have to make a choice soon. You can help me, and find peace. Or you can oppose me, and I won't be here to help any more." She gently touches your cheek while the chess pieces look on. "Don't make the wrong choice. I'd feel bad . . . but you'd feel worse." And she draws away the cool cloth from your forehead . . . .

. . . and the world devolves into white-hot pain as your blood leaps once again into flame. Screaming, your throat raw from the pain, you try to wake up. You are dreaming, you should be able to wake up. To wake up! But you cannot, and **oh by the Gods it hurts** and what if it is not a dream, what if you should have chosen, what if . . . .

Blinded by the pain, sure that you are charred and smoking flesh, you sit bolt upright, awake.

They are cowering from you. You have no fear, no doubt, no remorse. The goblins are evil, they have offended your god, and it is a duty and a pleasure to do as you have been taught.

"Don't do that." It is your best friend, lounging on an altar, right behind you. Irritated, you ignore the distraction and raise your weapon.

"I'm telling you, you don't want to do that. Haven't I always known what was best for you? Haven't I always been there? It's the wrong choice."

Wrong.

You are in the right, you can trust your instincts, and you bring the weapon down. Time and again, back and forth, and the goblins lie in pieces at your feet. Pride may be a sin, but perhaps you are entitled to just a little bit. You can feel the admiration of your temple, of your god, knowing you did what was right. You close your eyes and bask in it . . . so you are not looking when it turns icy, cold, barren.

"Wha . . .?" You open your eyes and look around, and your feet are splattered with the blood of children. All around you, dead eyes look up at your own, mute and condemning. "How did . . .?"

From behind, you hear your friend's voice, sad and caring - but you cannot see anything but the dead, dead eyes. "I tried to tell you. You can't always trust your instincts. I'll try and always give you good advice, but if you need to make a choice, remember who your friends are. You could have prevented this. All you had to do was listen to me. Next time, don't forget. If you get a next time."

And you feel your divine power being stripped from you, the armor of faith rotting away like carrion under the sun. Crying, you wake up.

Dream 10

Everyone is watching you. You cannot mess this up. Easy now . . . slip the lockpick up to the tumblers and lift slowly . . .

And then you realize that they are not watching you. They are after you. And they are not your instructors, teaching you the finer arts of knavery. They are all strangers, and they want a piece of you. And here they come.

Quickly! You must get the door open! You've must . . . but there is no time, none, and now you are running, slower than you should and they are *right behind you* and you can hear them, smell them, the thunder of feet on stairs and the sour tang of unwashed bodies, they are not saying a thing but you can hear them grunting as they run. And you are running too but not nearly fast enough, no, and now you hear the howls of unnatural joy as they pull down one of your friends whom you outraced and they are after you next and, oh thank the Gods, there is a window. You are out it and up the outside wall before they can reach you. Safe.

And now a cold wind whips in your face as you realize that you are hundreds of feet up the side of a building. Your fingers are starting to burn from gripping the narrow ledge, but they are down below you, leaning out the window, so you can only climb up. You feel every foot of the climb, smelling the air, feeling the rough surface of the stone against your cheek as you inch upward. And then, at long last, the lip of the roof is above you. The sun is setting, copper in the night sky, and your father is standing silhouetted against the sky.

*"Do you need help, child? I could help you. But you have to choose. There are always choices. Yours will be in being a good child, someone who will make me proud."* You feel his hand close over yours, warm and strong, as he begins to pull you up. *"Respect my wishes and do what you are told, and the world will be yours. If not, well . . ."*

And he lets go, just like that.

Your arms cartwheel out as you begin to fall back down, down to those who await you. You feel yourself tumbling through thin air. And you wake up.

Dream 11

You are meditating, lost in thought. You swoop around mental constructs that look like pillars of golden fire. From here you could channel your intellect into the astral, into your own body, or even into your enemies. No one can attack you here, and your psionic power ripples around you, a fraction of what it one day may grow to. You can faintly feel your thoughts resonating with nearby crystals, and the mental chimes sound like church bells. Ahead of you is a crossroads, and you pick a path randomly and turn down it.

And that is when someone throws a jagged axe through you.

That is what it feels like, at least, and as you lower your hands to your belly, you expect to find the liquid warmth of your own intestines waiting for you. Shockingly, there is no blood. Then the pain comes again, and you realize that the attack is a mental one: brutal, agonizing, and overwhelmingly strong.

You look around for your friends. They are gone, faded away as dreams do. You throw up your mental defenses. They are shattered like a silver mirror, and fragments of your psyche go spinning around you as another attack hammers home. Where is that attacker? There . . . there! You focus your mind and a needle-sharp spine of thought lances out . . .

And you have just attacked an eye, as blue as the sky, that holds your thought and then returns it to you ten-fold. Things whirl and go black, and now you are lying on a metal floor that is also your bed. You can feel both the cold metal floor and the straw ticking of the mattress under your cheek, but you cannot move, and there is a Voice in your mind. *"You . . . have potential. When the time comes, you should choose the other path. Doing otherwise will bring death to you, and to those you love. You are clearly talented. It's a pleasure to sense that."* Part of you is stubborn and resists, and in a moment the voice passes, along with the pain. You sit up in bed. It was only a dream. Only a dream. You stand up.

And notice a drop of red blood on the sheets. Just a drop. And then a trickle, and then a flood, and you raise a tentative hand to your head, and you realize that something has sheared the top of your skull clean away. You touch your own brain, and your hand comes away bloody.

And then you *really* wake up.

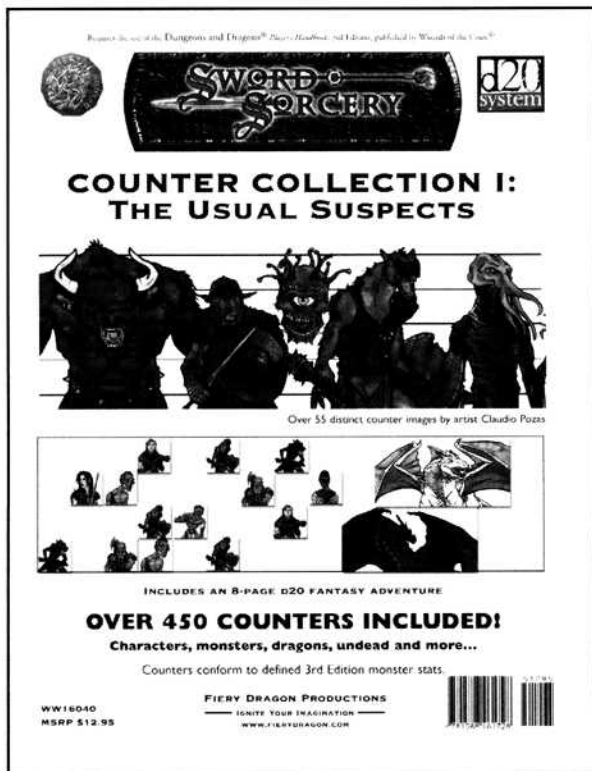
Dream 12

You are dancing. The music soars, and you swirl your partner around perfectly in time. You are good at this, probably due to the connection between your body and your mind, and your partner seems to be enjoying herself as well. It is a fancy dress ball, held back in your home town; the mayor is over there without a costume, but everyone else is wearing a copper-colored, featureless mask and extremely fancy party clothes. It is somewhat disturbing.

The dance finishes, and you bow to your partner. Curious as to what she looks like, you playfully reach for her mask . . . but it does not come off. Worried now, you pull, but it is stuck, and then you realize that it is not a mask, it is a face, and no one there has anything but a blank copper mirror where their face should be! They all turn toward you and you realize that you have been found out, and your bowels turn to icewater as the music changes and they all start toward you. You summon your mental powers to strengthen your body . . . and you somehow, inexplicably fail.

The music picks up and they close on you, and there is nowhere for you to run as they fling you from person to person, rattling your teeth as you are effortlessly tossed about. You can feel your neck snap as you are grabbed from the wild dance, and your body goes numb. The woman above you has a proper face . . . but she reaches up and pulls it off, and it is just blank metal underneath as well, and there is something horribly wrong with you because *you cannot even move . . .*

And as her head dips toward yours, you wake up in a cold sweat. The last thing you remember are her thoughts, as she says, slowly and quietly, *"I am tired of waiting."*



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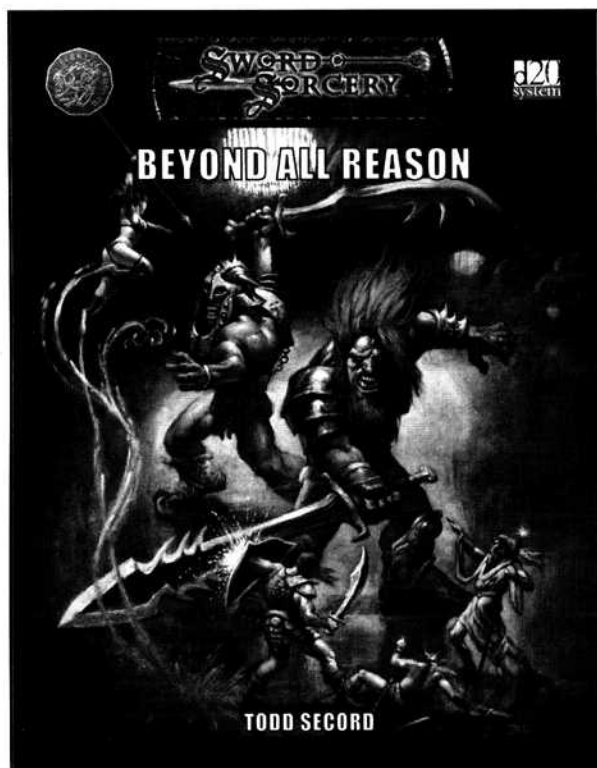
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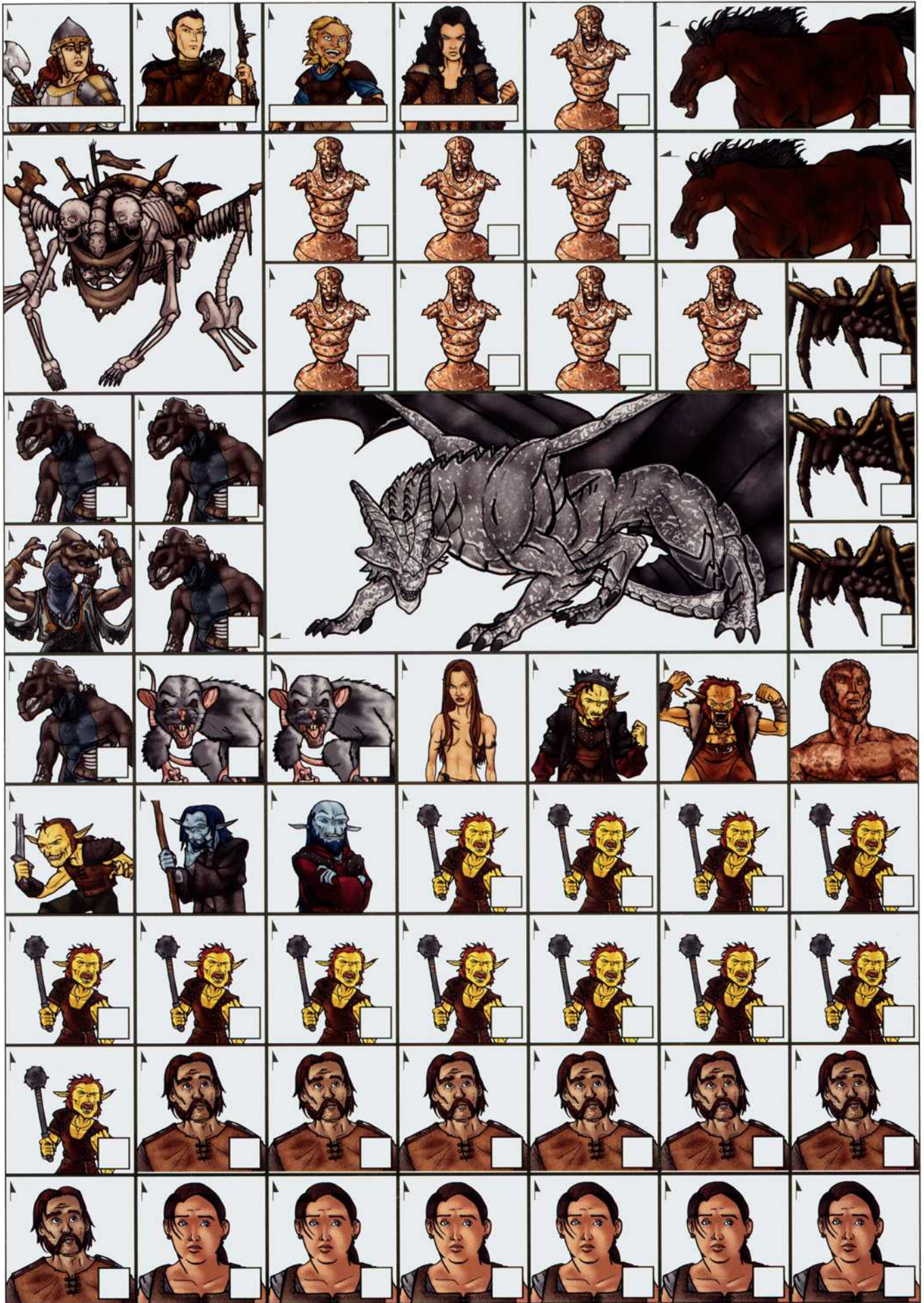
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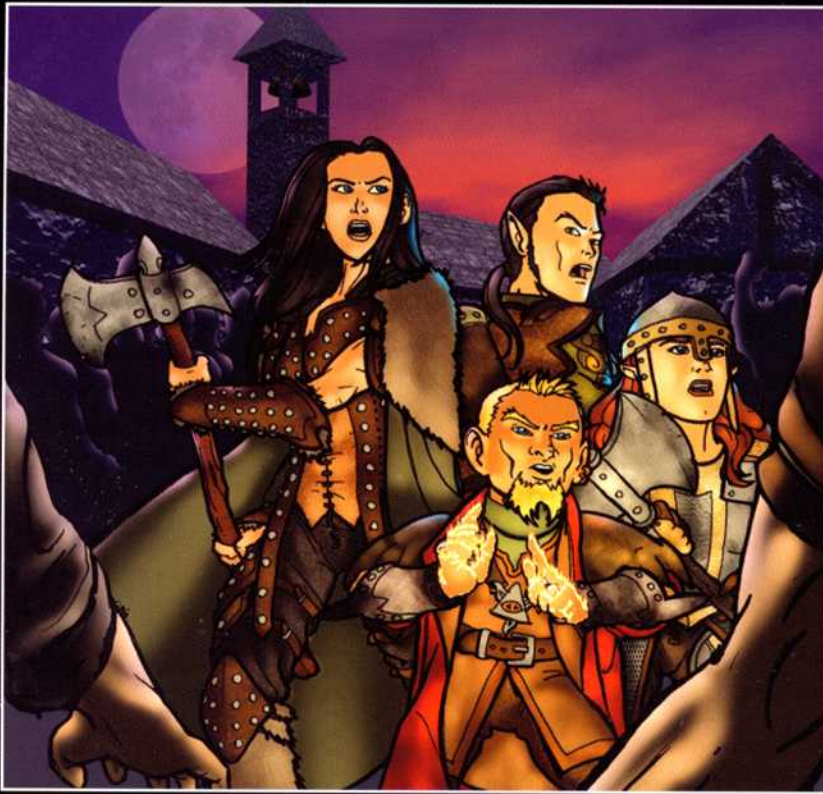
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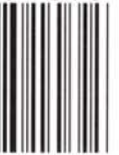
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