

CHUCK'S DRAGONS

A SPECIAL RELEASE BY FROG GOD GAMES



BY
BILL WEBB AND MATT FINCH



Frog God Games



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*All profits from the sale of this adventure will be used to help pay the medical expenses of Chuck Wright.
Chuck is a life long-long gamer and a founding member of Frog God Games.*

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INTRODUCTION

Thank you all for supporting our wounded Frog Chuck Wright with his rehabilitation and recovery. All of us at Frog God Games thank you, our loyal fans and philanthropists for doing what you can to make the world a better place through charity and by helping us get our beloved and talented layout and design artist back to work as soon as possible.

The vast outpouring of support from our friends in the RPG industry has been overwhelmingly positive, and it just goes to show that when one member of the RPG family is down, we all rally around to protect our own. That being said, enough with the "I love you man" rhetoric, and on with the adventure!

—BW 25 APR 16



Summary of this Book

Dragons...ah, yes, the stuff of which legends are made, and perhaps the most famous of all monsters. Dragons are the zenith of high adventure—they represent the pinnacle of fantasy adventuring. These mythical creatures are the bringers of vast wealth—as well as the slayers of player characters. High risk/high reward is the name of this game.

This theme presents 6 detailed dragon-based short adventures into your world. Complete mini-adventures based on dragons are found herein—lair, treasure hoards and settings for their use.

The treasures are tailored for both high fantasy and low fantasy. In a low fantasy world, the dragons represent one of the most powerful magical elements of the world. Of course, the GM is welcome to tone down the magical powers and treasures if appropriate to fit their campaign.

This module is designed with a series of 6 unrelated dragon lairs. Many of the dragons are an unusual twist on the standard, and not everyone is “as you would expect.” Also included are a series of adventure hooks that can be used by the GM to draw his or her suckers...I mean players, into these encounters. I have written this in my usual style of trickery and treachery, and have done my best to make the encounters both playable and interesting. Many thanks to my dear friend Vicky Potter, who once scribed the *Mother of All Treasure Tables* for me: I have lifted bits of that book for the wondrous hordes of these beasts, with some modification of course.

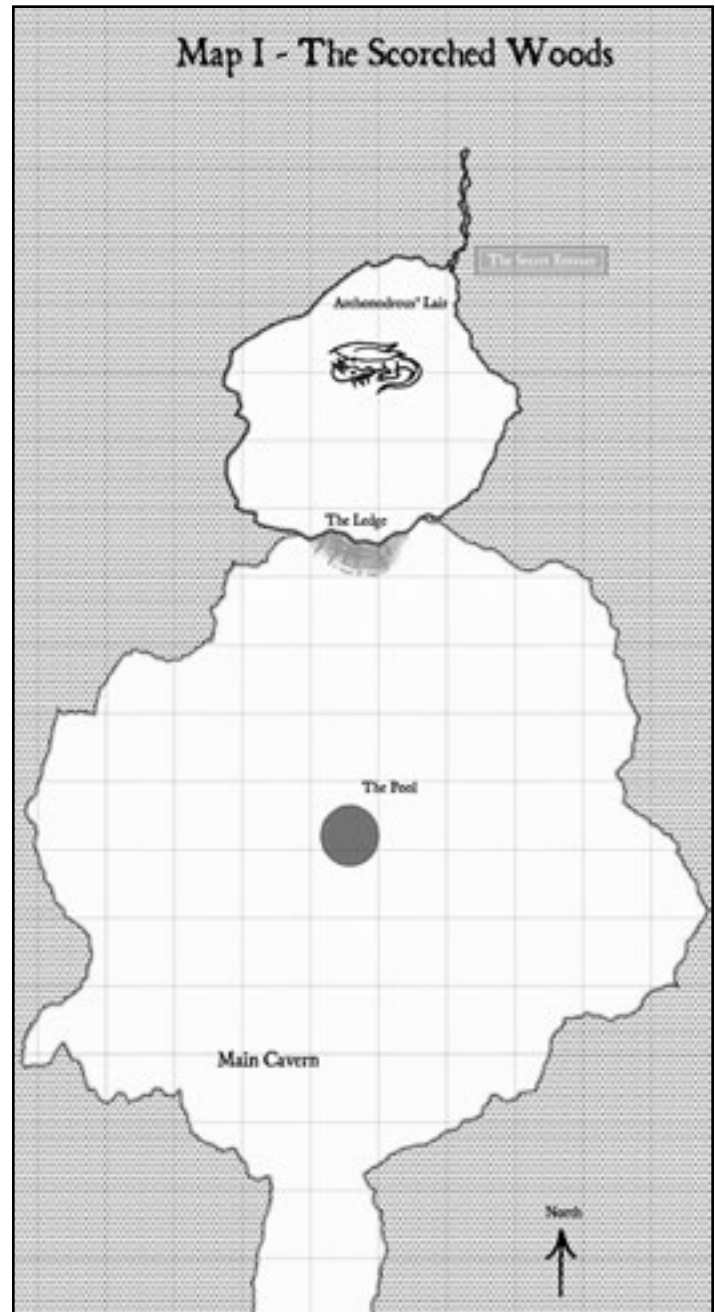
I do always like to keep the treasures interesting, as well as difficult to take home.

The Lairs

I. The Scorched Woods

Short description and background setting:

This is the lair of the great fire wyrm, Archonodrous. The surrounding area (50 miles) should be populated, but lack major cities with armies powerful enough to destroy a large dragon. There should be farmland and small settlements within the vicinity. The climate should be temperate or warm, and forests and hills should be present. This encounter should occur in any temperate or subtropical location. Fire dragons do not love the cold, so arctic locations could be used, but do not really make sense. Specific terrain types that make sense include any except desert or ocean. Hills and forested areas, as well as mountains, all make sense for this encounter. Population density for this encounter can be anything except dense (e.g. not a city) or non-existent. Dragons like Archonodrous need prey and treasure—that means they need people to steal from and eat.



Long description:

A burned wasteland surrounds a heavily wooded hill four hundred feet tall. Numerous small caves and rock outcroppings dot its sides. Most of the caves lead in only a few yards. Nothing of value is in these smaller caves, although a few contain bird's nests or the remains of some small animal. The trees along the one side of the hill's base are now nothing but toothpicks, and all greenery within a hundred yards is gone. The whole area smells foul, as if some giant cat or other predator had marked it.

Investigation of the vicinity reveals a large cave entrance on the hillside about two hundred yards from the burn site, partially hidden behind a grove of oak trees. Bones litter the entrance: deer, elk, bear and even human bones. The cave entrance is sixty feet across, with moss hanging from the roof edges and tree roots protruding through the soil and



rock several yards in. It presents the image of a large, toothy maw, ready to devour all who enter. While the cave is made of limestone, no stalactites or stalagmites are present except as broken off and shattered nubs that litter the ground. This litter of broken rock bits is interspersed with hundreds of bones, ranging from dry to fresh and bloody. Between the gore and the smell, nothing willingly enters this place.

There is a 25% chance per day anyone wandering here is noticed by the dragon, who comes outside to investigate trespassers on his hill. Without a guide, there is only a 10% chance per day of exploration locating the secret entrance or the ceiling hole described below.

The entrance leads back 120 feet into a large cavern, fully four hundred feet in diameter and 120 feet high. Bats flutter about, and the occasional rat can be spotted scurrying past, often carrying a bone with some meat left attached. The floor of the cavern is relatively flat, except at the center, where a thirty-foot diameter pool of water bubbles and flows from some unseen underground spring. The area around the pool is clear of the bones and foul dragon emissions that befoul the rest of the place.

Light can be seen shining through the cavern ceiling, and a forty by thirty foot hole is present three hundred feet into the cavern. Careful inspection (by a flying character or someone entering from above) reveals that the hole has been scratched and torn from the native rock by something with *very* large claws.

The Ledge and Lair

At the far end of the cavern, thirty feet above the cavern floor, is an eighty-foot wide ledge. The upper cave/ledge cave runs back another two hundred feet, although the ceiling is limited to sixty feet here. In its center is a large horde of treasure (see below).

At any given time, there is a 75% chance that Archonodrous is present on the ledge, asleep on his hoard (50%) or lazily tinkering with some item from it (25%).

The Secret Entrance

One weakness of being a huge dragon is that one does not always notice the small things. In the back of the lair is a small entrance, about two feet wide and less than four feet tall, tight enough that any full-sized man cannot navigate it in heavy armor, and anything larger than a man cannot pass through. This crack leads through a winding tunnel to a small cave about 500 yards from the main entrance. Archonodrous neither guards this passage nor even really knows where it leads. He falsely assumes that nothing more than bats and small animals can access his lair via this passage. Should this entrance be discovered, the dragon can be surprised asleep most of the time, simply by investigating and remaining stealthy while waiting for him to take a nap.

Archonodrous

Archonodrous Ancient Red Dragon: HD 11 (88 hp); AC 2 [17]; Atk 2 claws (1d8), bite (3d10); Move 9 (fly 24); Save 4; AL C; CL/XP 24/5600; **Special:** breathes fire, speaks, spells (1st—*protection from good, shield, sleep*; 2nd—*invisibility, web*; 3rd—*haste, protection from normal missiles*).

Archonodrous is a fierce and foul ancient red dragon of gigantic proportions, stretching ninety feet from nose to tail. His golden-red body is covered in gemstones and flakes of silver and gold. The mere sight of him paralyzes anyone lacking heroic courage. As a fire wrym, not only does he breathe flame, he is also immune to its effects. Nor can he be harmed by any non-magical weapons. This is an evil beast who slays all who get in his way.

Long ago, he left the tropics to seek greater wealth and population. As lazy as he is fierce, the dragon located himself near - but not too near - farms and villages that he could raid. This makes meals easier to get (maidens and cattle being his favorites) without incurring the wrath of armies sent to slay him. Recently, Archonodrous waylaid a caravan carrying a large hoard of gold and silver. Finding a large cave near some hills, he took up residence there.

When not perched on his hoard, Archonodrous is likely out hunting and terrorizing the local area, and returns in 1d12-1 hours (if 0 is the result, he returns in 1d6 x 10 minutes). Should anything be stolen while he is away, his rage is terrible. Not only is he likely to track down anyone that has stolen from him (his powers of flight and his eyesight are amazing), but he also destroys all remaining human habitation within 50 miles as retribution. This in itself could make the region a very hot one for the thieves: anyone who realizes who the thieves are goes immediately for their pitchforks and torches, blaming them for the loss of "Uncle Harry and Aunt Sally", even turning them in to the dragon or local authorities to avoid further destruction.

If Archonodrous is asleep, he can be surprised by stealthy individuals and attacked to his disadvantage. He will not breathe fire on his treasure unless the battle is going poorly for him.

If it comes to battle, the dragon attempts to slay any that are present. He typically leads his attack with a breath of fire, then flies up and to grab a piece of ceiling to survey what is left after the first fire blast. He then uses a second breath attack before closing for close combat.

Archonodrous only retreats (through the ceiling hole or the cave mouth) if he is wounded over 75% of his health. He then flies off to heal, keeping a close watch from on high as to the location of his assailants, then attacking the locals as described above.

Archonodrous' Hoard

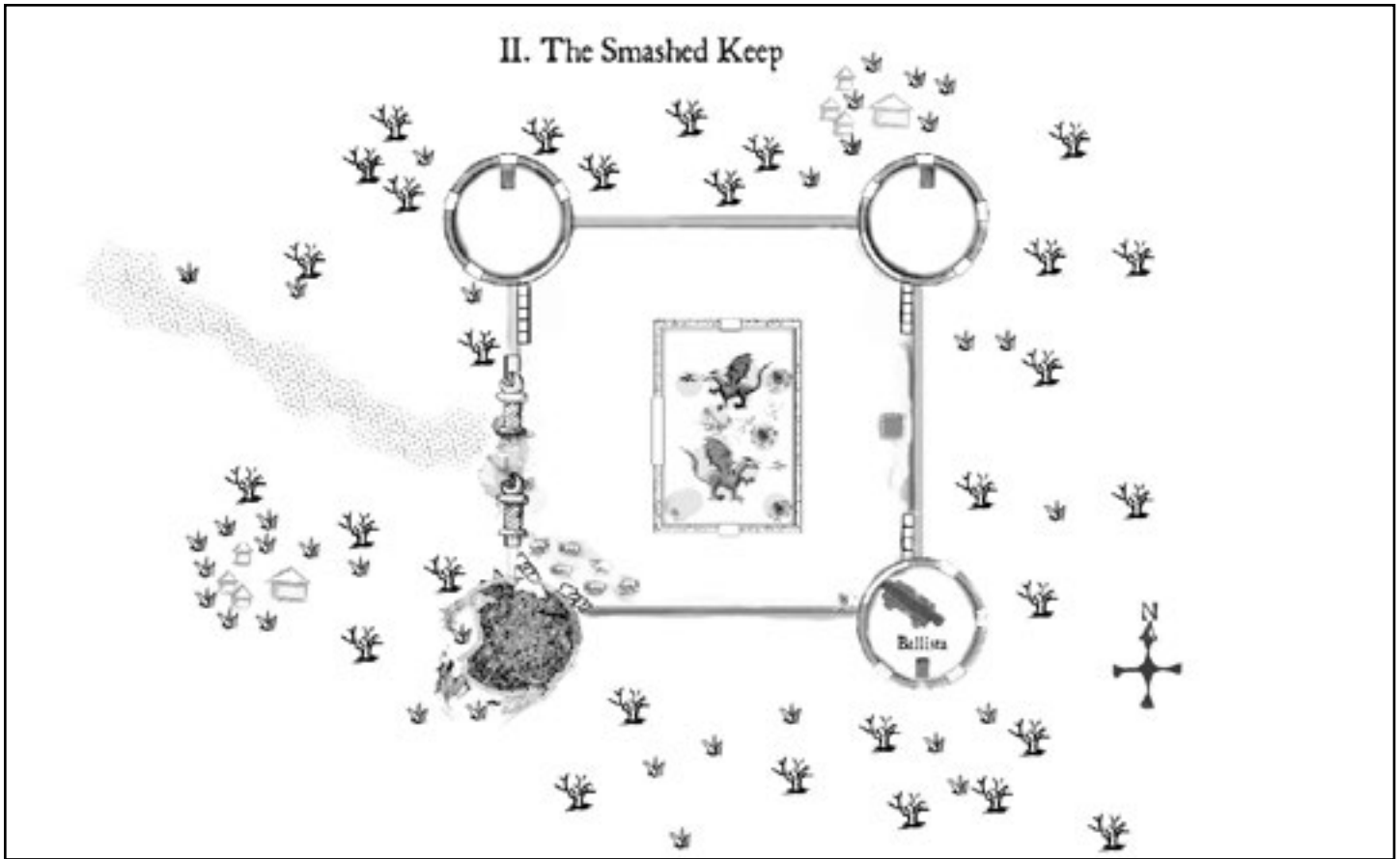
The dragon's hoard is breathtaking, a mountain of copper and silver coins tipped with platinum and gold (736 pp; 6,943 gp; 28,407 sp; 29,650 cp). Although some coins show their age, stamped with the crests of families long since

gone, others are newly made. An additional 50 pp, 370 gp and 800 sp are stuck in the dragon's hide, as well as several dozen crushed and scratched gemstones (worth 200 gp total). If crafted into armor by an extremely skilled leather worker, the hide could be made into 3 suits of man-sized leather armor, with a full set making the wearer nearly immune to fire-based attacks.

Beside this is an old chest whose lock broke a long time ago. The chest contains bolts of silk in gleaming ivory, pale pink and peacock blue (3 bolts, 20 square yards each; 200 gp per bolt) cushioning jewels that sparkle and shine with color. The most stunning is a large emerald, the size of an egg, cut into a multifaceted rhombus (7,000 gp). Nestled next to the emerald lies a set of five rubies identically cut into cubes (1,300 gp each). The neighboring topaz is the size of a large coin cut as a faceted triangle (1,000 gp).

Resting in between the top two bolts of silk is a jeweled sword in its scabbard. The scabbard is platinum-plated leather with engraved swirls flowing up from the tip toward the middle where they form the head of a snake (3,000 gp). The ruby eyes of the snake's head seems to look back and move as the light hits it at different angles. The artwork crawls up toward the top as the snake becomes many once again. The longsword in this sheath is worthy of its scabbard. Its crosspiece is worked steel and each end curves up to form an open-mouthed snake. The hilt, in keeping with the craftsman's theme, is a snake whose mouth clasps the spotless blade. The scaled handgrip is made of wrapped cords of some exotic hide. Balancing the blade is a pommel with a circular-cut emerald (5,000 gp). This sword is the magical **Sword of the Wrym**, once carried by Magnir the Slayer. When wielded in combat, it is considered a +1 longsword, +5 vs. reptiles, that confers complete protection from all forms of poison upon its bearer. In addition, the sword inflicts double-damage against true dragons of all types.

Beside the chest is a short stand with three drawers (200 gp). The stand itself is beautiful and probably belonged to a noblewoman if not a queen. The pale wood has been stained white and then polished and carved with a pattern of roses. The top drawer holds a necklace of matching black pearls (900 gp) and an elaborate gold signet ring with the same crest as most of the older coins (50 gp). The second drawer contains a ring in the shape of a rose in full bloom made entirely of a pinkish-tinted ruby (1,500 gp), and also contains three magical vials. The first is a swirling blue substance that glows slightly in the dark. This liquid heals anyone drinking it of all diseases, poisons and wounds. It can be used 3 times before its contents are exhausted. The second vial contains a reddish-brown substance that bolsters a warrior (a potion of heroism). The vial contains five such doses. The third vial contains a smoky substance. If unstoppered, the vial emits a smoky haze, completely filling an area 100 feet in diameter within one minute. The smoke is non-toxic, but obscures vision completely (nothing can be seen from 5 feet away within the smoke cloud). The third drawer is empty.



II. The Smashed Keep

Short description and background setting: Within an abandoned and partially destroyed castle there is a nest of a mated pair of green dragons, Holgrax and Helegrax. This encounter should occur in a warm or temperate rural area. An old castle is needed for the lair itself. Any terrain types work but forested areas are preferred. The population density should be fairly sparse, perhaps feudal, and rural countryside is assumed.

Long Description: An old stone keep stands out like a broken tooth. Dead trees surround it, and the two or three cottages around the place look abandoned. The whole area smells of an unpleasant mixture of bleach and decay, as if everything within a mile of the place was some horrible morgue out of Hell. Even the grasses and shrubs are brittle and dry, with green patches only present here and there.

This is a shell keep: four walls around one large stone building, with an open courtyard. The gates are broken open, and the castle's ruin, when seen up close, is much more recent than one might think. The walls themselves, as well as a large gatehouse and three round towers, all stand completely intact. Massive holes have been torn away from the wood shingles of the roof of the Great Hall, leaving at least half of the building open to the rain. The dragon's nest is in this hall. The only way into the place, except through the main gate or from the air, is to scale the walls.

On top of one tower sits an unusually powerful ballista, sturdy enough to avoid destruction in the battle when the

dragons took this keep. Four spear-like bolts wrapped in oily cloth lie next to it. Should this tower be scaled or entered and the top level accessed, this could be used as a formidable weapon against the dragons. Each ballista bolt inflicts 1d10+1 point of damage on a successful hit.

Inside the towers lie an assortment of dead skeletons and rusty equipment, all apparently eaten by acid, the breastplates of the dead etched and pitted. The wood and steel that once formed weapons of the men who defended this place are broken and brittle, and completely unusable with one exception. Taking shelter seemed like a good idea, however the gaseous breath of the dragons permeated the arrow slits and grates of the tower, killing all within.

Inside the great hall, the broken wood from the torn-out roof has been gathered underneath the shelter of the intact part, and used to form a massive nest, together with scraps of cloth and several whitish sticks that look unpleasantly like bones, as well as a substantial treasure.

Holgrax and Helegrax

Holgrax and Helegrax, Adult Green Dragon: HD 7 (28 hp); AC 2[17]; Atk 2 claws (1d6), bite (2d10); Move 9 (fly 24); Save 9; AL C; CL/XP 9/1100; **Special:** Breathes poison gas, speaks.

Holgrax is a long, thin dragon (70 feet head to tail-tip) with green skin and a yellow underbelly. Helegrax is shorter (50 feet) and more powerfully built, with an unusual crest of long scales sweeping out from the back of her head like feathers. The most feared ability of these green dragons is their vomiting forth a cloud of caustic chlorine gas eighty feet across.

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Holgrax and Helegrax are a mated pair known as the “castle-breakers.” They are not particularly large, nor are they particularly strong, nor can they cast spells. But what they lack in actual abilities, they make up for with an aggressive way of dealing with their prey. Whenever they move to a new location - and they are still young enough to move frequently - they capture a peasant to send a message to the local lords. If lords keep the dragons supplied with cattle, the dragons will leave the local population alone, preferring a temporary truce while they wait for their eggs to hatch.

If, on the other hand, the nobles send knights and heroes after them, Holgrax and Helegrax will not settle for a cat and mouse game of raiding farms and dodging knights in shining armor. Rather, they will attack the nobles in their homes, winging in by the dead of night to breathe searing gas into the castles before bleary-eyed sentries can even draw breath to scream. The strategy has resulted in two castles massacred by surprise attack. The dragons have now settled in to hatch some eggs, however, due to their evil nature, it is only a matter of time before they decide to attack the human settlements in the vicinity.

They feel quite secure in their lodgings, and thus, leave the area around their nest unguarded. There is only a 25% chance that the dragons notice anything quietly entering the place, as long as the Great Hall is undisturbed. At any given time, there is a 65% chance that either dragon is asleep, and a further 20% chance that either dragon is away hunting, which they do separately.

That being said, these dragons know it is only a matter of time before the locals tire of their tax. In response, they have retained a half dozen young lambs that they keep tied up and in a constant state of hunger in the courtyard of the castle. These animals bleat and squeal if they see any non-dragon intruders (assume line of sight at less than 60 feet), seeking to be fed. This makes quite a lot of noise.

If alerted by noise, the dragons are likely to attack intruders by flying from the huge openings in the roof of the Great Hall rather than being caught inside. If they are surprised inside, their first response to an attack will be to take to the air. Once airborne, they each use their corrosive breath immediately. If encountered inside the hall, they only do so if they can avoid hitting their hoard.

If the ballista has been armed and can fire, the dragons are completely exposed during the first two rounds after they take flight. After one breath each, they both engage in close combat, with Holgrax seeking armored opponents and Helegrax attacking softer foes. If one dragon is damaged over half their health, it shrieks, grabs the dragon eggs and flies up, a cue to the other that “more gas is needed” (meaning to use another breath weapon attack). If both are reduced to a quarter of their health, they take to the air and flee, seeking revenge later. Should either be slain, the other remains and fights to the death to avenge its fallen mate.

The Hoard

Atop a heap of smashed chests and coins stands a life-sized lion made of brass. Maneuvering the lion down from

the top of the pile is no mean feat, as it weighs 500 pounds. The beast is masterfully carved, every detail breathing life into the figure. Its mane is swept back as if the lion were in mid-stride, its eyes glint menacingly, and the countless individual strands of hair in its coat can be made out. A small iron spike is embedded in the lion's left front paw. Should this spike be removed, the lion animates into a live beast.

This lion is a **magical statue**. It serves whoever removes the spike from its paw, protecting its master to the death if needed. It is immune to mind affecting magic, and is totally fearless as it is a statue, not a lion. The lion-statue can follow simple commands given by its master. Should the lion be slain, it reforms into a statue and shatters into a million brass fragments, losing its magical properties forever. The lion can return to statue form by inserting the iron spike back into its paw, after which it will not reanimate for a day but will be restored to full vitality and health when it is.

Lion Statue: HD 7; HP 22; AC 2[17]; Atk 2 claws (1d6), bite (1d10); Move 12; Save 9; AL N; CL/ XP 8/800; **Special:** Immune to mind-affecting magic.

Spilling from smashed remnants of at least six large chests, which look as though they were chopped apart with axes, are mounds of mixed coins (6,500 gp, 24,540 sp, 18,000 cp). Buried among them are a dozen silver candlesticks shaped like slender castle towers (20 gp each), two marble goblets with translucent quartz stems (35 gp each), three silver combs (40 gp each), a wooden statue of a graceful fawn, with one of its legs broken off (7 gp), a large bronze bowl, the rim of which is studded with lapis lazuli (300 gp), a gold-decorated hunting horn carved from a single large piece of bone (200 gp), a bejeweled longsword, and a marble sphere the size of a small barrel of ale.

Three large gems of an unidentifiable make can be found in the bowl. They are whitish-blue, and somewhat translucent. Their surface is completely smooth. They are unlike any gems most have encountered before, and are in fact dragon eggs. If removed from the lair, there is a 25% chance that each will hatch a baby dragon within sixty days. Unhatched dragon eggs sell for up to 2,000 gp in a large city. A baby dragon is almost without price.

The longsword is finely made, with a tapered point and a long groove down the center of the blade. Its handle is made of horn covered in tiny brass studs, while its crosspiece is a thick wedge of steel; the pommel stone is an irregular chunk of red-veined marble. Just at the point where the hilt joins the crosspiece, it is set with two blazing fire opals. When drawn from its sheath, the opals glow with an unearthly fire in a 30 foot radius. This is a **magical sword** that grants its wielder +2 to hit on all attacks, and is worth 2600 gp in precious materials alone.

Equally interesting is the large marble sphere, which is covered with carvings of demonic heads leering from flaming doorways, devils dragging pegasi from the sky with long, barbed chains and fiends with forked tongues impaling elves on wooden stakes. It is worth 5,000 gp and weighs 900 pounds.

III. The Desert Oasis

Short description and background setting: A desert oasis is the abode of the blue dragon "Smiling Juaraz." Juaraz is a fan of the arts, and can make a powerful ally to the clever, while the foolish likely perish here. He is highly intelligent, and not particularly evil. This encounter should occur in a warm or temperate remote area. Deserts or other waterless wastelands are the best areas to place this encounter. It should be no closer than 100 miles from any large settlement. The climate should be warm and any terrain will work, but desert or warm mountains or hills are best. The population density should be low to non-existent.

Long Description: A large expanse of hot green space lies near this oasis in the desert. The area is covered with palm, date, and olive trees, as well as a mixture of large grasses around its edge. In the center of the oasis is a quarter mile long, 300 foot wide pool of fresh flowing water. It is clean and clear, and quite safe, containing small invertebrates, insects and fish. The lake is spring-fed, and the water is cool (60 degrees Fahrenheit) even in the desert heat. Camels and other desert creatures use this place to drink.

Approaching the oasis, one first notes a few wild dromedaries. At night, faint music and singing can be heard in the distance, although the echo effects of the sandstone wall and the water makes it difficult to pinpoint.

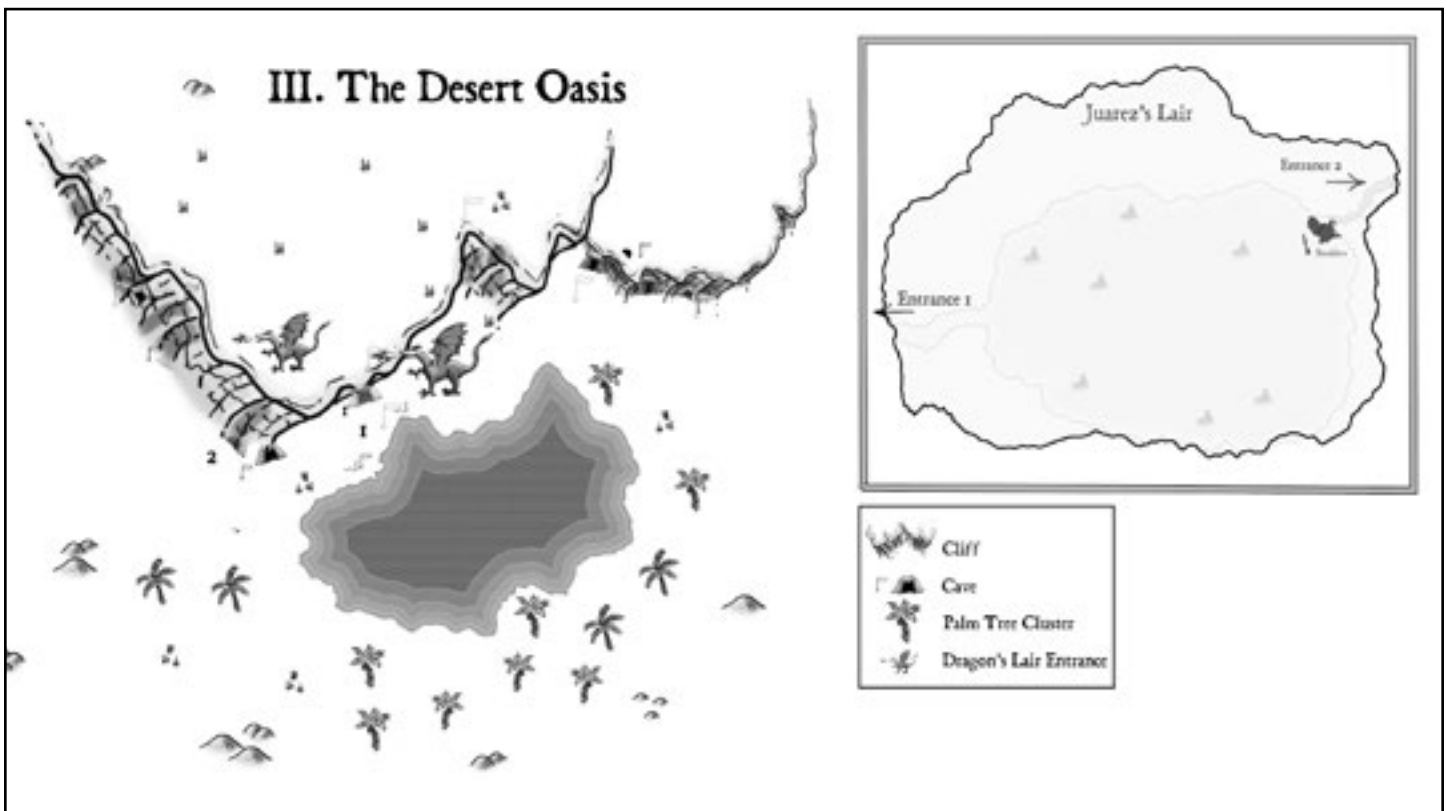
A large sandstone cliff rises over 200 feet above the lake. It is pockmarked with ten cave entrances. Most of these lead nowhere, although three are quite large. The right and center large cave entrances are accessible from two of the smaller caves entrances as well as the main entrance. Each of the large caves is trapped with a pile of loose rock at the top (not

immediately notable unless someone has highly trained trap detection or rock climbing skills). The right side cave is sixty feet above the lake, the center cave twenty feet higher still. Climbing into either main cave entrance creates a rock fall, doing falling damage and making a very loud series of splashes as the climber and rocks fall into the lake below.

Juaraz's lair is an almost-circular cave chamber in the left side of a sandstone cliff wall, accessible by 2 of 10 cave entrances in the sheer cliff side. The chamber has a diameter of 160 feet, and is supported by natural pillars of rock. The ceiling is dome-like, with a height at the top of 30 feet and a height of only 10 feet closer to the edges. Of the two entrances, one is Juaraz's normal entrance, and the other is his escape tunnel. The escape tunnel is blocked by two sandstone boulders that can be shifted sideways into dug-out holes, if one happens to have the strength of a dragon. The normal entrance is not blocked, but the tunnel descends 20 feet in an almost sheer drop before leveling out into the lair. It is not possible to simply charge in. Getting to either of the cave entrances requires either climbing or flying.

Juaraz has a 35% chance of being asleep at any given time, but is always awake and active should the rock fall traps be sprung, or if a large amount of noise is made. Otherwise, he is hunting (35% chance, returning in 1d8-1 hours, or 1d6x10 minutes if 0 is indicated) or reading/playing music (30% chance). Unless the rock falls are disturbed, Juaraz tends to cautiously ignore intruders stopping at the lake to obtain water. He only bothers those that bother him, desiring to keep a low profile.

Intruders who enter his cave are greeted by a booming, musical and melodic voice out of the darkness if Juaraz is awake. Any theft while he is away, of course, incurs his



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hatred and immediate retribution as he hunts down the thieves. If attacked in his sleep, he flies out of the cave and uses his breath weapon from the air in an attempt to trap the invaders in a cave (and wall them in).

If Juaraz meets intruders who are not immediately hostile, he begins the interaction in a friendly fashion. *"You should not have found me, for I cannot abide by men knowing where I live, your kind are far too dangerous and avaricious to let live with this knowledge"*.

What comes next depends on the intruders. If they immediately run away, he pursues and attacks unless they literally leap off the cliff without ever having seen him, in which case they are left alone to run away. If, on the other hand, they respond with flattery about the lovely music they heard, or something equally brave, Juaraz steps forth and demands they drop all their weapons. If they comply, he is willing to converse with them.

Unless the intruders are musical, poetic or particularly good storytellers, Juaraz decides rather rapidly that they are just greedy treasure seekers and have too much information to let live. Should they impress him with poetry, prose or verse, it is possible they gain a powerful friend—assuming they can convince him they are more interested in the arts and not in gold (he tests this by offering bribe to keep his lair secret, attacking if they accept the bribe and especially if they try to raise the price).

Juaraz

Juaraz, Adult Blue Dragon: HD 9 (36 hp); AC 2[17]; Atk 2 claws (1d6), bite (3d8); Move 9 (fly 24); Save 6; AL C; CL/XP 11/1700; **Special:** speaks, spits lightning.

"Smiling Juaraz" is a fully-grown **adult blue dragon** stretching fifty feet long, and is covered with unusually pale blue scales that shimmer in sunlight. His greatest power is to his ability to blast lightning in a line 120 feet long, doing great damage to anything and anyone in its path.

Juaraz' odd nickname is due to his lopsided "smile," actually a scar that pulls up the left side of his mouth to reveal dagger-sharp teeth. Not many people have seen the smile and lived to tell of it, but the minstrel Brail the Troubadour claims to have traded a magical cloak for the story of how Juaraz got the scar. As a young dragon, his parents' lair was invaded by adventurers in quest of gold. They killed his entire family and left him with a nasty cut along his mouth, leaving him for dead.

Unlike many of his kind, this dragon is not particularly evil. He still views mankind as we view a cow or sheep, but it is possible that he views them as a particularly "cute" sheep and does not attack. He always attacks if he feels his security is threatened or if a trespasser is a treasure hunter.

Juaraz is incredibly intelligent, smarter than nearly all of the people he meets, and despite his quirks he is a survivor first and foremost. Unlike many dragons, Juaraz takes great pains to remain hidden. He does not mark his territory with musk, and even the desert animals feel safe watering here, as he only hunts far afield so as to convey that his lair and

the surrounding area are "safe". Nothing could be further from the truth.

His tactics are always to kill as rapidly as possible, and he takes great pains to leave no survivors. Juaraz always breathes lightning twice before closing for melee, and will trap and starve any invaders inside a cave, even placing huge rocks over entrances to wall them in, rather than pursue foes into closed spaces. He prefers to fight from the air using his breath weapon. If a battle goes poorly for him, he'll quickly retreat and plan on revenge later.

Juaraz has an unusual weakness. He is fond of music and poetry, and it is possible that a well-played riddler or musician could be spared or could even trick him into lowering his guard. He is also charismatic and egotistical, and this could be used against him.

Juaraz's Hoard

A large golden chest rests on a raised platform against the wall (the chest weighs 50 pounds empty and is worth 2800 gp). It is filled with coins (9800 gp and 4500 sp), but what catches one's eye is what rests on the top. A goblet made of pure platinum lies on its side, resting atop the coins (850 gp).

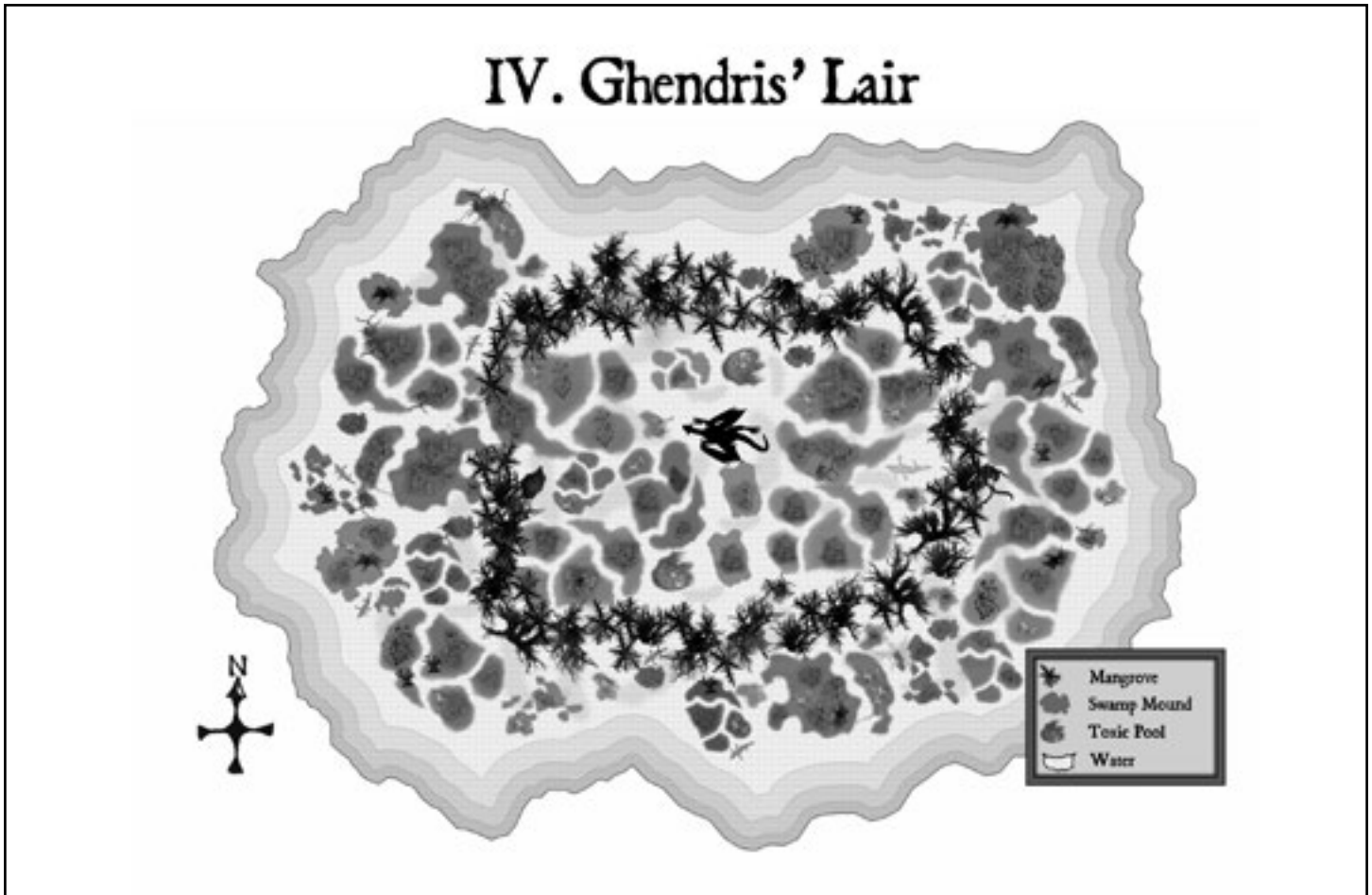
Inside the goblet is a small crystal sphere. It is bright green in color, and fairly transparent, with subtle swirls of green running through it (made of bright green emerald; 8,000 gp). If the gem is dropped from one's hand, it begins to orbit around the character's head. This **magical gem** imparts a minor force field around the owner, granting the equivalent of a 20% bonus to their armor as long as it circles the character.

Moving the chest reveals a hole in the dais. Inside the hole is a pile of gold and silver coins (2359 gp; 17,800 sp) and a life-sized marble statue of an Elven wizard leaning against a low shelf of books (4200 gp). The front half of the shelf is clearly hinged, and is slightly ajar. Both the wizard and shelf are hollow. The books are not special, but worth 20 gp each nonetheless (there are 10 books).

The statue is lifelike to the last detail, and has been carved out of a single massive piece of red and dark green veined marble. Every fold of the wizard's voluminous robe drapes as if it were real, and his expression is one of deep thought mixed with mild surprise. One hand is raised to cup his chin, and the other hand sports two rings, both made of platinum, each bearing the device of a different Elven family. The wizard's eyes glint with a mix of tiny sparkling emeralds and deep red star rubies (7 of each). If the platinum rings, emeralds or star rubies are removed from the statue, each could be sold for 200 gp. However, the value of the statue would be reduced to 100 gp. The platinum rings are also magical. Each ring grants a 50% bonus to resisting electrical effects. Note that the benefits stack — if both are worn, the wearer gains a 75% resistance.

The statue wears a midnight blue silk and ermine cloak draped over its back. This **magical cloak** makes the wearer completely immune to non-magical cold, and grants a 50%

IV. Ghendris' Lair



resistance even to magical cold attacks. A trio of intricate sunburst designs is emblazoned on the cloak in gold thread.

Beneath the cloak is a quiver and bow hung around the statue's neck, hidden from view. The **magical composite shortbow** is made of many layers of horn and wood, and adds +2 to hit. A red leather quiver that holds twenty arrows is tied to the bow by the leather thongs that would attach it to an archer's waist. The quiver is etched with delicate leaf designs, and the fletching on the arrows is bright blue. The **magical blue arrows** are +1, +2 vs. undead. They each break on a successful hit on a target. Further, against any undead creature, these arrows do double normal damage.

Elsewhere in the lair there are also over 300 books of poetry and musical writings (worth 3d6 gp each), as well as a lacquered harp engraved with images of golden fish and stars and strung with blonde hair (500 gp).

IV. Ghendris Mangrove Trees

Short description and background setting: Several villagers and numerous livestock have disappeared lately. They have been eaten by a foul and vicious beast—Ghendris the black dragon. This encounter should occur in a forested or swamp area. The area should be populated, even densely so, within a few miles of the encounter area. The climate should be warm or temperate, and the terrain a swamp or forest. The population density is any, as his lair is isolated but can be near even a large population center.

Long Description: Large mangrove trees spread their branches overhead, turning the sunlight green and giving the surface of the swamp water a strangely golden hue. Long fronds of grass and fern arch upward from scattered patches of dry land, and the smell of rotting leaves makes the air heavy. In the distance birds cry, but this area is deadly quiet. No birds twitter, no frogs croak. Several trees are grown close together, their massive trunks several feet in diameter, enough to make what almost looks like a fortress rising from the swamp water. The branches above hang heavy with moss, a curtain that blocks the sun entirely and wraps the cluster of giant trees in an impenetrable cloak.

Ghendris' lair is in this circle of vast trees, the gaps between them obscured and overgrown by weeds and tall grass, with a pool in its center thirty feet across and ten feet deep. It is difficult to climb the knotted roots and slimy mud that leads up to the gap in the trees. The beast sleeps, and waits, like a vast python in the giant branches of the trees, draped and coiled, and waiting to spit acid on anyone who dares intrude upon him.

There is a good chance that Ghendris will attack if he perceives intruders to be vulnerable when they first approach the ring of trees. If he allows anyone to enter his lair, it is not to talk to them (he doesn't speak), it is to ambush them. The young dragon is an instinctive hunter, and very few people look up when they are trying not to slip.

Ghendris

Ghendris, Young Black Dragon: HD 6 (12 hp); AC 2[17]; Atk 2 claws (1d4), bite (3d6); Move 9 (fly 24); Save 11; AL C; CL/XP 5/240; **Special:** Spits acid.

Ghendris' is a fairly **young black dragon**. His body is ten feet long; his neck and tail add another ten feet to what is not a particularly large specimen of black dragon. His coloring is pale, and his scales are rippled with old scars running the entire length of his body. His left rear foot is misshapen. Thrice daily he can vomit a gout of acid.

Ghendris has spent most of his life in captivity. He was bought as an egg by a traveling alchemist, who kept him as a source of potion ingredients, clipping away claws and other pieces when needed. Once the small dragon was able to break from the cage he had weakened with acid spittle and kill his former owner, he began a campaign of vengeance against the weak little beings that had dared to enslave him. He is not just a greedy predator; he is filled with hate and purposefully wreaks as much destruction as he can manage.

Ghendris' Hoard

Three chests are sunk into the pool in the center of the tree grove, identical in size and construction. They are unusual in that the bands which hold the water-warped wood together are forged gold (75 gp each).

Inside the chest to the far left is a stack of scroll tubes. There are a total of twenty empty tubes suitable for holding scrolls or maps. Each tube is carved out of ivory, and they all seem to be in good condition (35 gp each). The chest in the middle is filled with silver (6,399 sp).

The chest on the right contains an alchemist's lab, complete with everything one would need to perform alchemical experiments (500 gp). Also in the chest are rare ingredients, which could be used with the lab. A vial marked "dragon's blood", a small container marked "demon brain sample", a glass bottle that looks empty with a label reading "essence of ghost", a tiny box marked "sprite wings", and a bottle marked "fire giant heart" (120 gp). The vials of components are really magical potions. The "dragons blood" potion allows for control of a certain type of dragon (a *potion of dragon control*) for ten minutes (worth 155 gp), the "demon brain sample" provides the user a bonus to their intelligence of 20% for 1 hour (135 gp), the "essence of ghost" allows a user to become invisible for a day or until he attacks (a *potion of invisibility*, 250 gp), the "sprite wings" allow the user to fly for 4 hours (*potion of flying*, 35 gp), and the "fire giant's heart" grants the user the strength of a fire giant for 1 hour (as a potion of giant strength; +4 to hit and +8 points of damage to all hits).

Finally in the corner of the last chest is a heavy platinum flask (960 gp) containing a **magical potion** that allows the imbiber to breathe water as if it were air (as the magic-user spell *water breathing*; 6 doses).

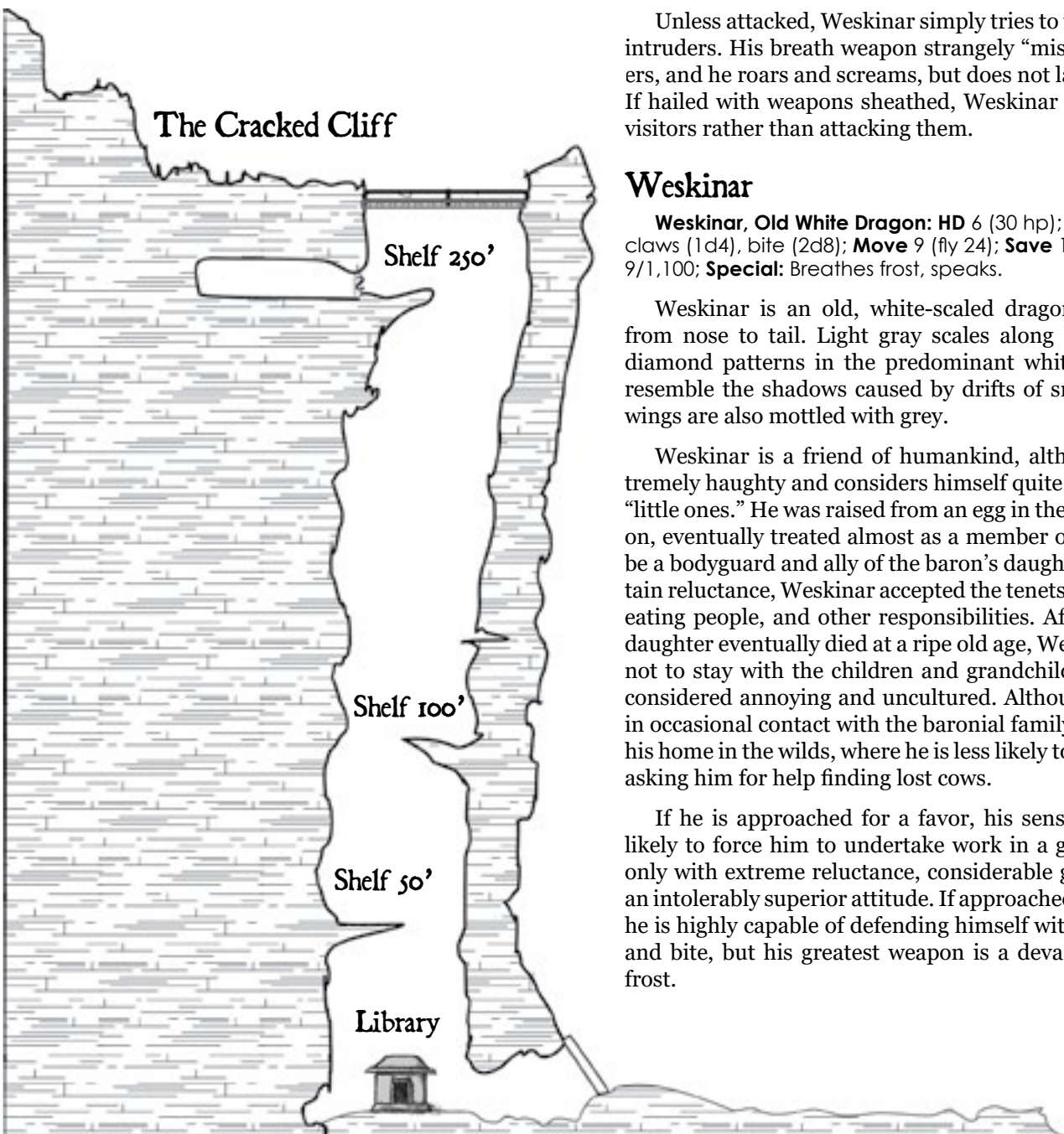


V. The Cracked Cliff

Short description and background setting: Raised from an egg by men, Weskinar the white dragon is relatively peaceful, only slaying those who threaten him or steal from him. Great knowledge can be found here by the wise.

The climate can be anywhere it snows in winter. The population density can be any, as long as it is near a barony or castle.

Long Description: A wide, vertical rift cuts through the side of a rocky cliff, creating a cave entrance at the bottom and also a wide opening near the top of the fissure. The cave entrance at the bottom offers a strange sight, for it is covered by a strong-looking set of wooden double doors, barred from the inside. Should the door be knocked on, Weskinar flies up and addresses the visitors from the cliff top.



Weskinar's lair is mostly vertical. Whatever cracked this hill open in the distant past created a cavern that stretches from the top of the hill all the way down to the base, a distance of 300 feet. There are 3 ledges of dragon size at various heights (50 feet, 100 feet, and 250 feet), and the cavern floor is roughly 80 feet by 100 feet. Weskinar has had massive wooden shutters installed to block the top of his lair from bats and rainfall; they can be unbarred from the inside by a dragon's strength, and opened to allow for a hasty exit by air, if need be. Anyone trying to get into the lair from the top would need to break through the shutters, and they are every bit as sturdy as a locked door. Hammering and chopping at them will certainly alert Weskinar that his lair is under attack.

On the floor of the crevasse is an old stone building. This building is an ancient library. Weskinar's hoard sits on its roof.

Unless attacked, Weskinar simply tries to frighten off any intruders. His breath weapon strangely "misses" the invaders, and he roars and screams, but does not land and attack. If hailed with weapons sheathed, Weskinar converses with visitors rather than attacking them.

Weskinar

Weskinar, Old White Dragon: HD 6 (30 hp); AC 2[17]; Atk 2 claws (1d4), bite (2d8); Move 9 (fly 24); Save 11; AL C; CL/XP 9/1,100; **Special:** Breathes frost, speaks.

Weskinar is an old, white-scaled dragon, seventy feet from nose to tail. Light gray scales along his back make diamond patterns in the predominant white color, which resemble the shadows caused by drifts of snow. His white wings are also mottled with grey.

Weskinar is a friend of humankind, although he is extremely haughty and considers himself quite superior to the "little ones." He was raised from an egg in the castle of a baron, eventually treated almost as a member of the family, to be a bodyguard and ally of the baron's daughter. With a certain reluctance, Weskinar accepted the tenets of nobility, not eating people, and other responsibilities. After the baron's daughter eventually died at a ripe old age, Weskinar decided not to stay with the children and grandchildren, whom he considered annoying and uncultured. Although he remains in occasional contact with the baronial family, he maintains his home in the wilds, where he is less likely to have peasants asking him for help finding lost cows.

If he is approached for a favor, his sense of nobility is likely to force him to undertake work in a good cause, but only with extreme reluctance, considerable grumbling, and an intolerably superior attitude. If approached with hostility, he is highly capable of defending himself with mighty claws and bite, but his greatest weapon is a devastating cone of frost.

Weskinar's Hoard

Weskinar's treasure is concealed on one of the large ledges in his lair, in a hidden room behind what looks like part of the cave wall. The door's handle is ten feet high in the rock: convenient for a dragon's use, not so much for a human's. Turning the handle moves the false wall sideways, and reveals the forty foot square treasure room beyond. The room contains four iron-bound wooden treasure chests and a painting. The painting is a picture of the former baron's daughter, Weskinar's lifelong companion. It is worth 500gp, but any attempt to sell it in this area will immediately bring attention from the authorities (this is an exquisitely-painted picture of the current baron's beloved late aunt, not the sort of thing one finds on the open market).

In the first chest is a pile of gold coins (6,640 gp) and on the huge mass of coins lie a gold and jet bracer with a falcon design (3,060 gp), a belt and various leather items. The belt is made of oval brass links, hung across the front with a chain of faceted beads of glass in a variety of colors, sizes and shapes, interspersed with decorative metal beads, and further hung with dangling metal disks in various sizes of silver, copper and brass (150 gp). Near it are three strips of leather with silver studs (50 gp each), long enough to stretch from the wrist to fingertips, which seem to have been cut from horse bridles of black, red, and green leather. Five gleaming, sharp daggers in leather scabbards (three red, one black, and one green), also sit upon the pile of coins. All the daggers are of fine make, but the black dagger is **magical**, and grants its wielder a +1 bonus to all attack rolls and a +2 bonus on damage inflicted.

In addition there are three pairs of gloves. One is a pair of worn green gloves while another is a fine black pair with a red leather falcon upon the broad cuffs. An exquisite pair of small red gloves is the last set. The **Magical Red Gloves** allow the wearer to manipulate fine objects very easily. For example, threading a needle becomes very easy. Delicate Tasks attempts are granted a 25% bonus to the chances for success. The bonuses only apply to fine manipulation tasks, but allow the wearer to be extremely precise. The gloves were created for a surgenon, who dyed them red to hide blood stains.

The second chest also holds gold (7,200 gp), and two belt pouches. One is black leather with a buttoned flap that has a red falcon upon it. This pouch contains a pearl necklace (2,500 gp) and a silver necklace of twisted chain (25 gp). The other contains a bracelet: a ruby-eyed silver fox design on a flat band of gold is joined into a bracelet by a fine gold chain (250 gp) which has four charms on it—a silver tree, a piece of amber etched with a falcon, and a silver disk bearing a "T" rune and a gold disk bearing a lion (charms, 25 gp each).

There are three plain gold rings, and two matching gold bands which appear to be a set for a male and female (5 rings, 50 gp each). There is also a ring in this pouch with a black onyx stone in it supported by a swirling gold wire design (1,200 gp), and 24 gold coins. The other pouch is of a fine green-dyed calf hide and is well-oiled (2 gp). It appears to be a type of pouch which lies flat to have items placed in it and is then rolled up and bound with a cord. When the

pouch is unrolled it is found to contain a set of well-made thieves' tools with each tool in its own pocket. Two of the other chests contain silver coins, and two contain copper (6,610 sp, 6,680 sp, 6,725 cp, 7,172 cp).

The true treasure lies inside the library building. Designed as a repository by some ancient culture, the building is made of solid granite, with only one sealed entrance. Opening the door without magic requires, well, the strength of a dragon, as one must move a 12 ton block of stone to gain entrance, and the walls are 6 feet thick. Once opened, the library contains shelves of books and clay tablets in some ancient language. The good news is that some of the works act as Rosetta Stones, and are written in both the ancient language and newer, translatable, prose. The library's contents are priceless to a sage.

VI. Abandoned Monastery

Short description and background setting: One of the most powerful wyrms in the land, Tevirax the dragon appears to be something other than what he is. Avaricious and evil, Tevirax is a true terror, seeking to slay and devour all he encounters. His lair is an abandoned temple. The only setting information needed to make this encounter make sense is that it needs to be located near a sea coast where ships travel nearby. Tevirax says "arrghh me matey!"

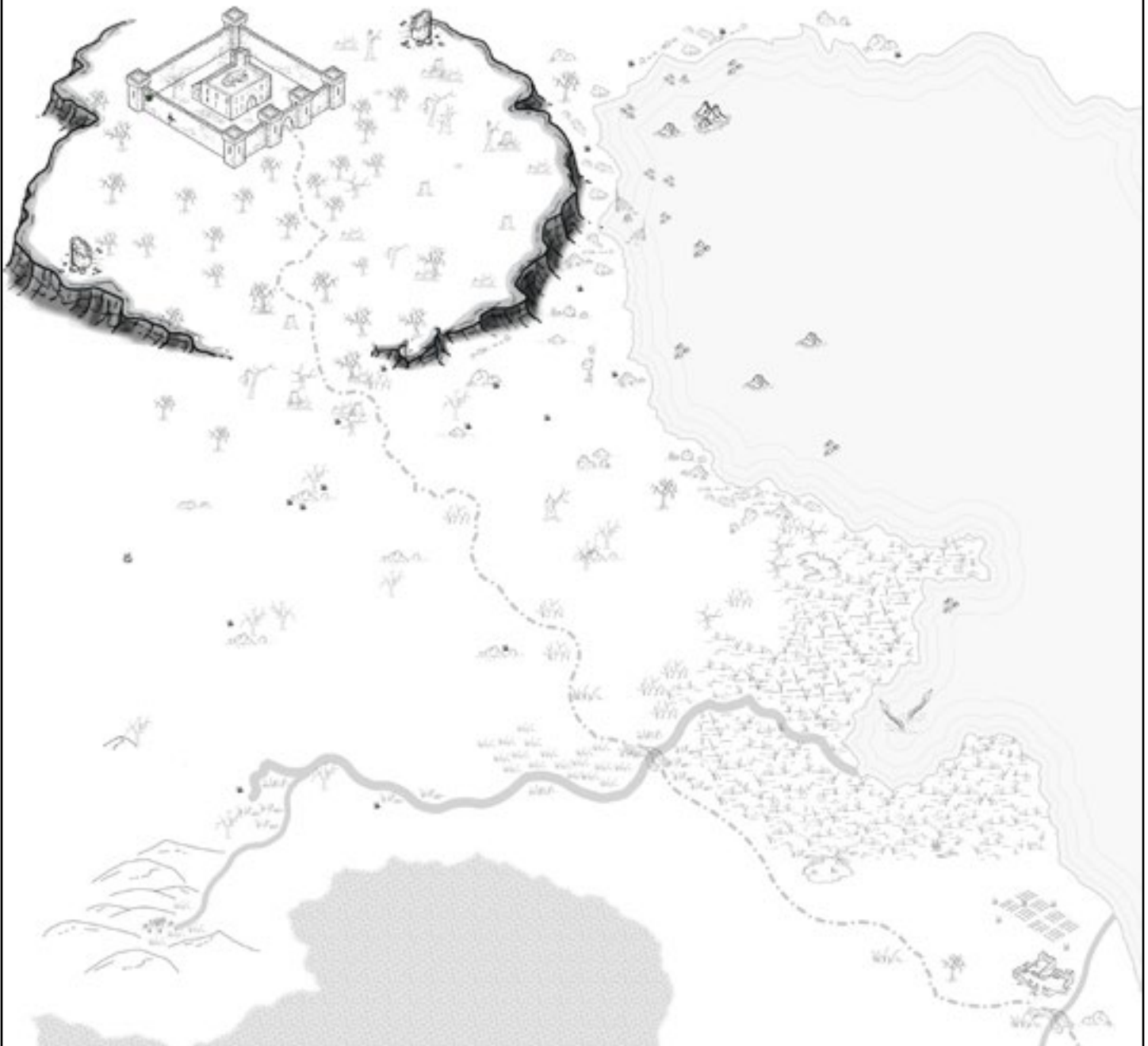
Long Description: The walls of the abandoned monastery have crumbled and broken to a height of 3 or 4 feet, and they are covered with greenery and blooming flowers, the legacy of the monks' gardens. These gardens were famed for the intense perfumes of the flowers, bred for centuries by the monks, and now the flowers have taken over the entire area. Anyone moving around in the monastery complex will be brushing against all kinds of plants unless extreme care is taken. The flowers and their scents do not represent a direct danger, but the dragon who makes his home here can tell when the plants are being disturbed by the sudden increase in the fragrance of the air. Tevirax has specifically cultivated these highly aromatic plants as an olfactory alarm system. It is virtually impossible to enter the place without treading on (and thus disturbing) the plants and releasing wafts of pollen and scent.

The underground chapel where Tevirax makes his lair has a high ceiling and a broad stairway leading to the surface. The temple's central chamber, where the dragon sleeps, has several smaller side chambers where he keeps treasure and the occasional prisoner. The main temple contains five large statues of gods, carved in white stone. Tevirax considers it an amusing jest to pose as the "sixth" of the large, white statues before disposing of unwelcome intruders.

Tevirax

Tevirax, Very Old Red Dragon: HD 9 (54 hp); AC 2[17]; Atk 2 claws (1d8), bite (3d10); Move 9 (fly 24); Save 6; AL C; CL/XP 15/1700; **Special:** +1 to hit and damage, albino, breathes fire, speaks.

VI. Abandoned Monastery (Exterior)



Tevirax the White is actually a very old **red dragon**, but his scales are completely devoid of color, the absolute white of albino. His eyes are black, not the red one might expect in a human albino. He measures 80 feet from his nose to the tip of his tail. He carries a deep scar across his left breast, a remnant of his fight against the warrior Rommel, who wounded him deeply before escaping his clutches.

When he moves into new hunting grounds he is generally assumed to be a white dragon, which tends to mislead his foes to prepare themselves against cold only to be broiled alive instead. An expert on dragons might, if given a peaceful couple of minutes to observe this one, notice that other than his color the dragon's physical characteristics all resemble

those of an ancient red dragon. Tevirax has not, so far, allowed any human a peaceful couple of minutes to observe him.

Tevirax is aggressive and considerably stronger than an ordinary red dragon of his age and size. Whether this is the result of whatever caused his albinism is unknown. His flaming breath is hot enough to melt lead.

Tevirax's Hoard

A bed of glittering and sparkling coins is strewn rather haphazardly across the floor in a sea of gold and silver, copper and platinum (148 pp, 12,317 gp, 21,042 sp, 18,914

CHUCK'S DRAGONS

cp—all minted from the same kingdom). Tossed upon these odd waters is a large seaman's chest, made from strong dark wood banded in gold and silver and sparkled with a variety of gemstones (5 amber, 5 red garnet, and a single black pearl; worth 1,600 gp). There are also eight barrels and a sturdy sack, lying on a pile of colorful cloth.

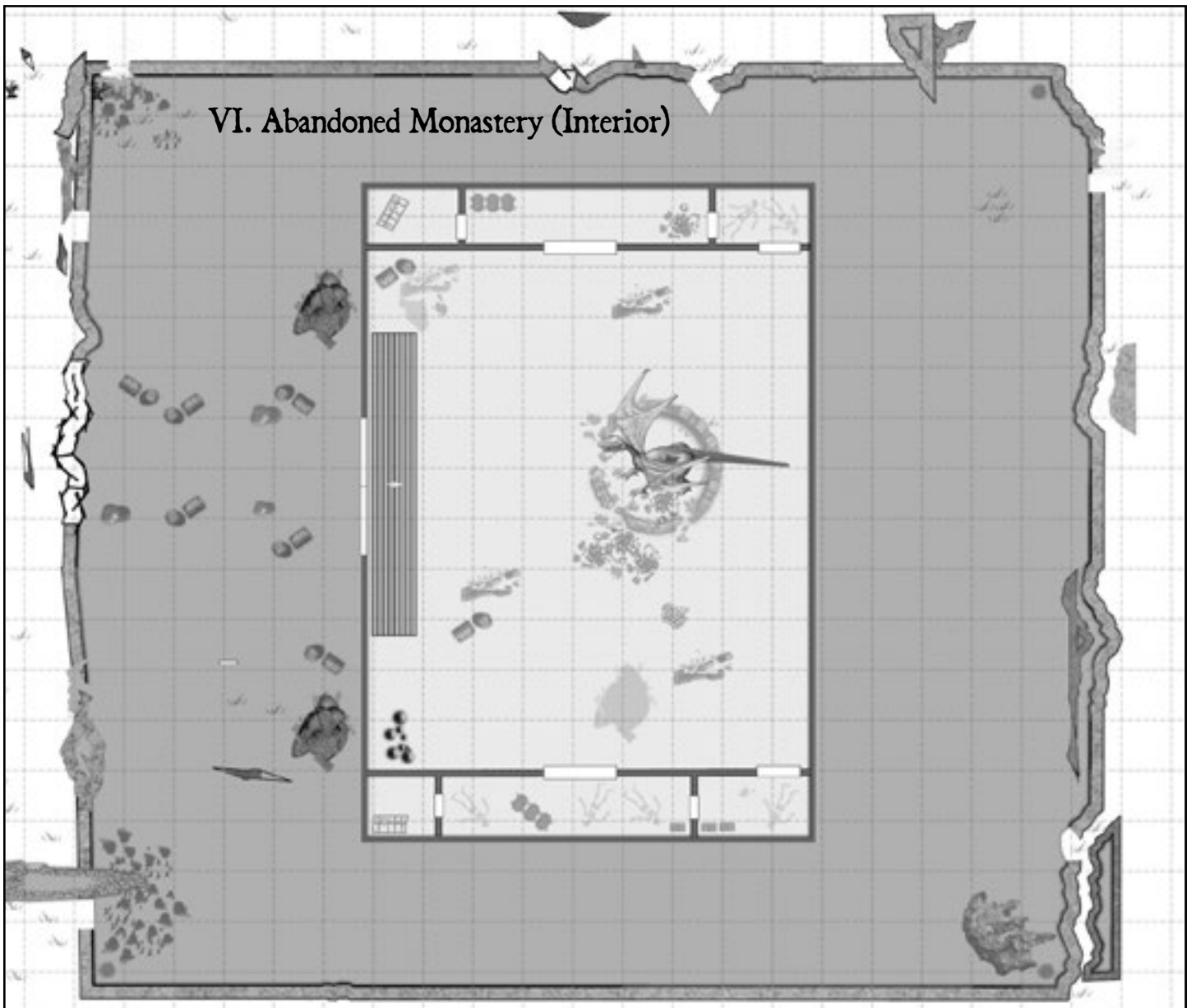
The front of the chest has a visage carved into it, that of an older, serene male. (This can be any figure the Referee decides or just a random carving.) Within the chest is an exquisitely crafted dinner set of six plates, knives, forks and spoons fit for a king. Each one is covered with gold and the pieces of cutlery are each ornamented with a deep blue gem (blue spinels; set 1,400 gp).

There are four barrels of fine red wine (200 gp each; equal to twenty bottles). Four similar barrels are packed with straw and contain a table setting for 24 people. Two barrels hold the plates: they are gold-plated, with enameled pictures, each with different scenes of people and animals in the countryside (10 gp each), and there are three smaller

matching plates for each set, with the pictures related but not identical (72 plates, 7 gp each).

The next barrel holds cut crystal goblets set with rings of gold, top and bottom (24 of each; large goblet, 50 gp; small, 20 gp). In the final barrel are 24 ebony-handled steel eating knives, set with smoky or rose quartz (5 gp each), 24 two-tined gold forks, each with smoky quartz or star rose quartz in the handles (5 gp each) and 24 golden soup spoons with small alexandrite or aquamarines in the handles (50 gp each). Also rolled up in the barrel are 24 pure white silk napkins, each elaborately embroidered in white silk (3 gp each) and 24 plain gold napkin rings (3 gp each).

A woolen sack beside the barrel holds eight jeweled daggers, identical except for the gem in the hilt: two each of bloodstone, moonstone, onyx, and violet-blue iolite (50 gp each). Under the sack is a stack of woven cloth (silk, 13 various colors and patterns, 5 yards each; 10 gp per yard) and a gold statue of a fertility goddess, taller than your outstretched hand, with fine golden gems for eyes (topaz; statue 2,000 gp). A heavy mace, a well-made pair of arm-length



shears for pruning trees, four horseman's composite shortbows and four score arrows in four quivers are in the shadows behind the barrels.

There are also two large spheres of a blue-white crystal (blue quartz, 1,000gp each). Each sphere could be grasped with one hand, but they are heavy enough to be awkward to hold in this manner. One is carved with iconic images of sea battles and shows a fleet of ships (corsair or pirate vessels) fighting. The second sphere is carved with a series of continents and land masses, and there are smaller lines that run all over the globe. Upon closer inspection you see the sphere even has the cardinal points of a compass carved into it, along with bearings and other nautical markings. These are trade routes that show safe passage through a very rocky part of the sea, including shallow points, sand bars and the best currents through the area, and the value to a merchant or sailor is infinite.

Finally, lying partially submerged in the mass of coinage outside of the chest is a two-handed, broad bladed sword of fine and robust construction, polished to a mirror-bright sheen. The centerpiece of this weapon seems to be the finely detailed hilt made from gold carved in the shape of a dragon with wings outstretched. The head's open jaws disgorge the blade, with a small amount of detail near the mouth inscribed in a flame-like pattern, and two blue gemstones (sapphires) for its eyes. This sword is the magical *Sword of the Zephyr*, once carried by Rommel, a scrappy, reckless fighter who always chose action over idleness. His speed and his wits allowed him to escape with his life, but left his sword imbedded in the body of the dragon. This magic sword has several interesting properties. First, it grants +3 bonus to attack rolls, and +4 on damage rolls. It also doubles the number attacks that its wielder may take—causing him to move at superhuman speed while fighting. Finally, the sword causes an intimidation effect if strongly presented, causing fear in normal creatures, and giving anyone fighting in hand to hand combat with its wielder a -2 penalty on all attack rolls.

Adventure Hooks

Now that I have detailed the lairs, I wish to provide you, gentle reader, with 13 adventure plot hooks that you can mix and match to bring your players into the adventure. Certainly these plot hooks can be modified and used as you desire, but hopefully they provide you with some clever ideas and “dirty tricks” to get your players involved with finding and hopefully defeating, the beasts described in the prior section.

These are just ideas, and certainly the lairs section can be used without them, perhaps even as random, wandering encounters, but I hope you find some inspiration from these thoughts.

1. The Ravaged Farm

Dead bodies and ruined crops and burned out buildings are everywhere. Obviously something or someone wanted these people dead. Several partially burned bodies of men,

women, children and livestock lie strewn about. Nothing of value remains here.

Requirements: within 20 miles of Archonodrous' or Terivax's Lair

2. Castle

A castle sits atop a hill, banners of the local lord flapping in the wind from its towers. This place is the home of a local knight or noble family. Typical castles are inhabited by 50+ 1d100 peasants, 20+ 1d100 men at arms (L male or female human warrior 1), and 1d6 knights (L male or female human fighter 4). There is an 80% chance that the populace here is friendly if approached, and it is possible that any visitor here would be offered positions as mercenaries of offered gold to complete some mission. The mission is to slay a dragon 80% of the time, or to deliver tribute to the dragon (the lord has cut a protection deal with the dragon) 20% of the time. The remaining 20% of the time, the lord and his minions are hostile—attacking or driving off any that trespass on their land. In this case, the lord is looking to hire “suckers” to send to the dragon's lair as tribute! If the mercenaries succeed in killing the dragon, the evil knight simply kills them and steals the treasure for himself.

Requirements: None, other than in an inhabited land.

3. Save us from the Dragon!

A young peasant girl approaches and begs for help. “Please help us kind sir, the dragon demands my sister be fed to him, and with my mum and dada dead, who will provide for me?”

A terrifying dragon descended on their town two weeks ago, demanding the sacrifice of one of their number each month at the full moon. The dragon told them that unless it was fed a human once a month, it would descend on them and destroy them all. It slew the lord of the town with a single bite when he defied the demands, and then burned the blacksmith's shop to the ground with a single breath to make the threat clear. A village elder can lead the party to the dragon's lair, and is willing to do so.

The manor of the town lord lies empty. The villagers offer the manor and its accompanying title to anyone who can save them. The position comes with a tithe of 10% of their annual income (approximately 200 gp/year total in free labor, trade goods and livestock, not coin). The town artisans and craftsmen will repair and make ready the manor house should the party succeed in slaying or driving away the beast.

This manor house was once owned by the noble lord who ruled over the area. The lord and all his retinue were slain by a dragon, and the place abandoned. The local villagers and farmers greatly desire a new lord and protector to move into the place, if only one were to prove themselves worthy. The manor consists of 30 separate rooms, including a great hall, a large kitchen, an armory, twin archer towers and a blacksmith forge. Most of the roofs have caved in, and the whole is inhabited by rats, mice and insects. The entire place

is over 20,000 square feet, and is walled with a broken down 10 foot high wall encircling it. An overgrown orchard of 200 fruit trees abuts the manor on one side. The place is falling apart, but could be restored for half the cost of building a similar compound.

Requirements: A village of 200-1000 people within 20 miles of Archonodrous', Holgrax and Helegrax's or Terivax's Lair, has an abandoned manor house.

4. Burned farm

A few chickens and sheep wander about the burned out remains of a farm. The partially devoured carcasses of several cattle and pigs lie here and there, along with the crow-pecked skeletal remains of what was probably the farmers. The main house, the barn and the grain silo all stand in smoldering ruin, with only an outhouse standing untouched. Hiding in the outhouse is a small boy (age 7), named Ryan, the sole survivor of the dragon attack. The young man immediately bursts into tears and hugs the closest person, obviously in immense fear and emotional pain. Drying his eyes, he says "I know where the beast lives that did this. He is in those hills, he is, and I know when he sleeps!" If questioned, the boy knows where the dragon lives. In addition, he knows of a secret entrance to the dragon's lair located in a cave complex a few miles from the farm. This entrance allows the party to gain access to the lair and potentially surprise the dragon.

Requirement: Farmland, inhabited area, preferably rural, and within 10 miles of Archonodrous' lair.

5. Dragon Sighting!

A giant, flying creature is spotted overhead. The villagers speak of seeing a large dragon flying with two cattle in its claws. Careful questioning allows one to locate the general area of the lair. The dragon has already caught its dinner, and thus has no hunger for a few days.

Requirements: Near a dragon lair.

6. The Usual Dragon Quest

A local Lord requests assistance to investigate the disappearance of several of his knights. All had ridden on patrol for bandits. The Lord will pay a 100 gp reward to find these "deserters" or, gods forbid, to find out if they were slain by the bandits. In the latter case he will pay 50 gp per head of any bandits brought in with proof they had dispatched his men. Assuming the mission is accepted, after a half day travel a scorched battlefield containing the charred remains of three knights and their horses is found. The grass and foliage is burned in a large area, and the knights and mounts are all dead. Even the knight's armor is melted, as if left in a forge fire too long. At this point, one could choose to return to the Lord with the knight's bodies (and collect 100 gp) or continue on. Should they return with the bodies, the Lord offers 1,000 gp to locate and slay whatever killed his men. He offers 6 of his fighting men to assist.

Requirements: A castle and within 50 miles of Archonodrous, Holgrax and Helegrax or Terivax's Lair. If Holgrax and Helegrax are used, change "charred" remains to "corroded" and "fire" to "acid".

7. False Pretenses

A young, beautiful woman named Epiphany says that "her sister has gone missing in the forest, and that she is getting quite worried, as it has been 2 days since she has seen her". She begs them to help her find the lost girl, and offers her eternal thanks should they assist (though nothing that would impinge on her chastity). The girl is much more than she seems. In fact, she is a powerful and completely evil witch, whose only intent is to get someone to slay the dragon, and in doing so, become weak enough that she can slay them in turn.

The girl accompanies any would-be rescuers on their mission, until they come across the area described in the dragon's lair, at which time she cowers and claims to fear whatever might be in that cave, all-the-while begging the player characters to "go inside and rescue her sister." This situation is likely win/win for Epiphany—either her "rescuers" slay the dragon or the dragon slays them. In either case, she comes in and mops up the rest. If the players appear unwounded, she attempts to claim a valuable piece of treasure (the rose ring in the case of Archonodrous) as "the only thing left of her poor, eaten-by-the-dragon sister." Should this fail, she attacks anyway. The witch is a high-level wizard, and can cast spells that polymorph people into ducks, charm them (anyone charmed takes her side in a fight) and cast powerful sleep and paralysis spells. If pressed, the witch turns into her true form (hideous and causes magical fear). Harming her requires magical weapons or spells, although she takes extra damage from fire of all kinds. If she fears for her life, she turns into a large raven and flies off.

Requirements: Within 50 miles of Weskinar's lair is preferred (as the witch is evil), however, any village or town within 50 miles of Archonodrous, Holgrax and Helegrax, Weskinar or Terivax's lair will suffice. Change treasure accordingly. "Rose ring" could be "dragon eggs", "red gloves" or "crystal spheres" in the case of the evil dragons. If Weskinar is chosen, she may simply want to kill the good dragon.

Frequency: Unique

Epiphany the Witch: **HD** 7d4; **HP** 30; **AC** 5[14]; **Atk** 1 dagger (1d4); **Move** 12; **Save** 7; **AL** C; **CL/XP** 10/1400; **Special:** Transform to raven, Magical abilities (as per spells)

Equipment: Ordinary clothes, dagger, belt pouch containing gems totaling 3000gp in value.

Magic: *charm person* (3/day), *hold person* (3/day), *polymorph other* (2/day), *witch's sleep* (3/day)*

**witch's sleep* operates differently from the ordinary *sleep* spell. It can affect up to two people provided that they are standing within 10ft of each other, and it does not take effect automatically. Regardless of the hit dice of the targets, they must make a saving throw or fall into magical slumber identical to that caused by a *sleep* spell.

8. The Wandering Merchant

A wandering merchant caravan in town, providing a convenient buyer for loot. A merchant caravan consisting of 1d6 merchants (N male or female human expert 3), 3d6 wagons and carts and 2d6 hired mercenaries (N male or female human warrior 3) travels between towns and cities doing business, stopping in each inhabited place in turn. This is a great way to assist your players in disposing of too-heavy-to-carry-loot when their mounts are killed by dragon's breath or their carts and wagons get destroyed. The wandering merchant can be found throughout the land. The merchant travels with a caravan of wagons, including 40 men at arms. The merchants can buy items worth up to 5,000 gp, and pay 30-60% of the items true worth (1d4 x 10% +20%). Merchants typically carry normal goods, useful to farmers and villagers. They seek exotic goods to sell to nobility.

Requirements: Near inhabited lands.

9. The Bard's Song

A bard in the tavern sings a song of a great dragon he encountered, strangely, the landmarks he mentions sound familiar, as if he had actually been there. Brail the Troubadour (L male human thief 4) sings of his having traded a magical cloak for the story of how Juaraz got the scar. He is failing in his promise to not reveal the location of dragon's lair. He sings:

"Beyond the Dunes of Ashkahal, at the Oasis of the Cliff, lies the majesty of wyrmkind, Juaraz the Terrible, who sleeps upon a pile of gold...His great blue wings fill up the sky, and his song covers the night"

He sings this verse several times, and can be asked to "sing it again" if paid a few silver (he thinks that it's just a great song). If asked about the dragon, Brail gets extremely nervous and immediately shuts up and retires, realizing he has given away the location of the lair. His demeanor changes from frivolity to fear, and under most circumstances he will not discuss the matter further. His reaction should indicate that there is something to his story.

Inquiry about the Dunes of Ashkahal, at the Oasis of the Cliff locally begets their location, approximately 100 miles into the desert. No one has any knowledge of a dragon living there.

Requirements: An inn or tavern within 100 miles of Juaraz's lair. Near a desert or badlands, perhaps a last stop for travelers entering the wasteland.

10. The Noble Request

A wealthy nobleman approaches who wishes to engage mercenary services in retrieving long lost family heirlooms. The items in question were stolen by a dragon that ambushed a caravan. The nobleman wishes these items returned (they could optionally be proof that the noble is noble, or proof that he is in line for the throne, etc.), and is willing to pay 5,000 gp should they return them to him. Choose an item or



three of treasure from any dragon lair as the items in question. He offers a map showing the location the dragon's lair.

This plot can provide further adventure, one idea is to have the noble be a false king, desiring a king's signet ring or something similar to usurp the throne. Likewise, the noble could demand the whole treasure (claiming it was all his family's wealth) and bring the wrath of the kingdom on the "bandit's" heads. Where you take this is up to you,

Requirements: A city within 100 miles of dragon's lair (any).

11. The Treasure Map

An old, grizzled war veteran is rumored to have a treasure map for sale. Alternatively,--a treasure map is found in an old drawer, a pirate ship, or a treasure trove. The man named Griswold (L male human fighter 5) has a real treasure map that he offers to sell for either 10% of the take or 1,000 gp. He claims the map came from a treasure he found while he was young, and that he and his friends (after an unfortunate encounter with a group of trolls) never were able to use it. Investigation into Griswold's background (by talking with locals) reveals that he was once a famous explorer, and most believe what he says is true (he is known for being honest). Anyone cheating him (if the percentage deal is selected) would be considered outcast or criminals by the local populace.

Requirements: An inn or tavern, else a treasure hoard (the map is found instead of purchased). Within 500 miles of a dragon lair (any but Ghendris).

12. The Pirate's Tale

A gnarled old sailor sits drunk at the tavern, telling a tale involving...A DRAGON! Peg-legged and one-eyed, Old Joshua (N male human expert 3/rogue 2) was once a pirate, or "merchant" as he calls himself. He tells the tale of a "merchant ship" laden with a royal ransom that lay in a small harbor up the coast. The ship was attacked by a huge white dragon. Anyone who knows anything about dragons thinks this is nonsense, as white wyrms typically live in polar climes.

If questioned, and a few mugs of ale are exchanged, Joshua gives a fantastic description of the location. He further tells that the ship contained navigation charts in the form of two large gems allowing safe passage across the sea, and that the legendary **Sword of the Zephyr**, said to make a warrior as fast as the wind and once wielded by Charles the Swift, was kept by the captain of his ship. Investigation into these details with sailors in the region reveals the approximate location to be a real place, and that the sword was supposedly lost very near there to a pirate ship 20 years ago.

Requirements: A village or town near the sea coast within 100 miles of Tevirax's lair.

13. Strange Disappearances

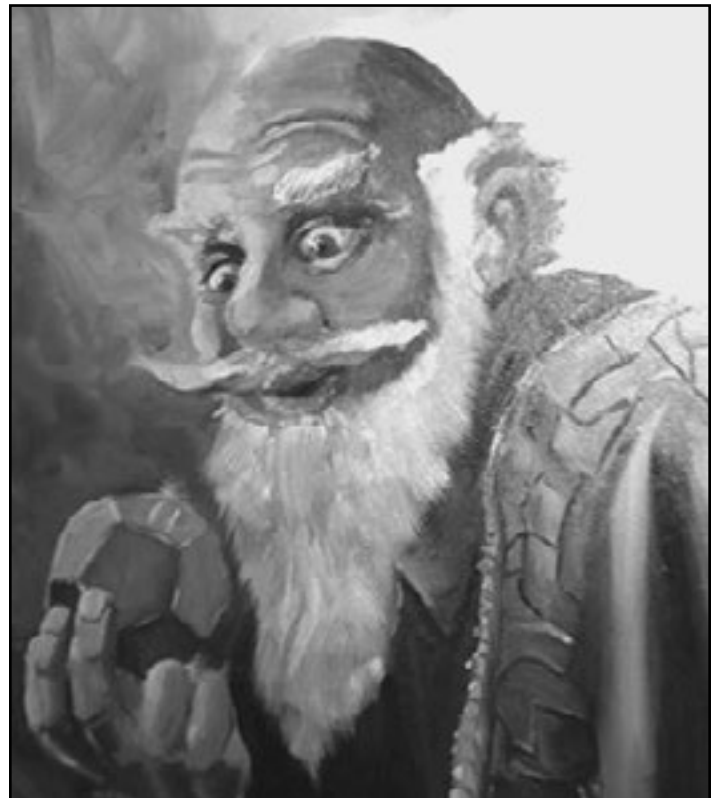
Cattle, sheep and even two people have gone missing near the forest recently. Over the past two months, dozens of livestock have disappeared near the local wood. Last week, two children also went missing. The local inhabitants fear that wolves, bandits, slavers or something worse has moved in to their forest. The local sheriff offers a 50 gp reward to anyone who can locate the culprits and bring them to justice. Safe return of the children nets an additional 50 gp per child.

Requirements: A village or town within 10 miles of Ghendris' lair.

14. Sage Advice

A kindly old man, dressed in robes of a scholar, approaches and asks for assistance. Sladdybaudfaust (N male human expert 4), an ancient Sage of the local college, needs assistance in solving an ancient riddle written in a long-lost tongue. He has heard that a huge trove of ancient writings are hidden in an ancient library on a mountain pass a few hundred miles away. "I am a poor man" he explains, "but I could offer the services of the college to provide information for you, should the need arise". The man is willing to offer 1 year of sage services (sages can research legends, divine magical properties of items found, and locate lost and hidden dungeons and artifacts, typically at a fee of 1,000 gp/month) for anyone who would find this place and retrieve books to allow translation of the riddle. The one catch, he explains, is that he has heard that a dragon may guard the old library. Sladdybaudfaust can draw a map to the ancient library's location.

Requirements: A city within 500 miles of Weskinar's lair.



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