

Mord Mar:
Goblins of the Citadel
by
Jayson “Rocky” Gardner



A Swords and Wizardry adventure for 3-6 characters
of 1st or 2nd level



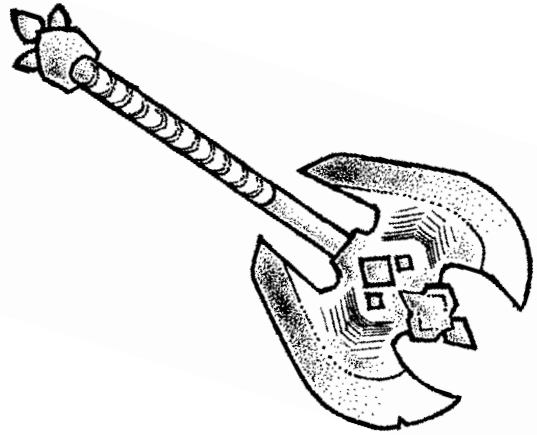
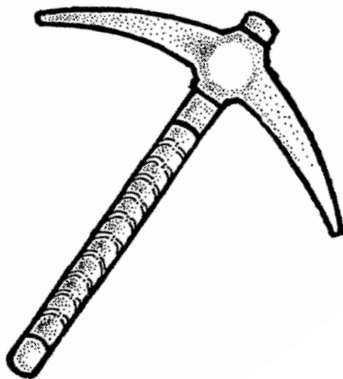
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BACKGROUND

In ages past, the dwarves of Mord Mar laid claim to the largest hold ever known. This fabulous city was immense in size and scope. Through the eras, great kings ruled benevolently over dwarves, men, elves and other fair races. Then one day, the very mountain turned against the dwarves and their friends. Seemingly from nowhere, a great army appeared and drove the peace loving peoples of Mord Mar from their homes. Many were slain in a losing effort to keep their city in the true ruler's hands, and the king too was slain.

The handful of survivors retreated to the entrance city of the mountain, and the evil, unknown army did not follow. Excursions were made to retake the illustrious city, but none returned. Some time passed, and the dwarves and their allies created a guild of adventurers to return to the lost city, with the goals of recovering lost dwarven artifacts. The guild did its job well, eventually becoming the heartbeat of the city's economy. Innumerable adventurers of many races heard the call of riches from the depths of the deadly mountain. Many adventurers never return, but those who do, usually emerge wealthy.

Does your group of adventurers have the mettle to tackle the dangers of the lost city and reclaim its wealth for yourselves?



INTRODUCTION

Your party has been assigned by the Guild Headmaster, Tammerick Alebeard. Each of you were chosen by the Headmaster to bolster each other's strengths and cover weaknesses. After finding your bunk room, unpacking and getting acquainted, you hear a knock on your door.

(Allow the party to do what they wish, but if the knock is ignored, the person knocking will barge in)

As the door is opened, you see an old human standing in the doorway. He is well into his middle years, bald, with a salt-and-pepper goatee. He wears the traditional robes of a divining mage, and has a slight crazy look to him.

"Most call me the Old Man. Tammerick has asked me here to direct you on a quest into the Old City. You are charged with finding the goblin warrens inside of the fallen king's citadel, and figuring out how they reinforce their numbers so quickly."

He pauses, almost daring you to ask questions.

Allow the party to ask questions of the Old Man. Most he will answer with cryptic clues or dismiss outright (Why are you asking me what you will need? You are adventurers. I am only an old man). When the Q & A gets to finding the 'fallen king's citadel' his tone changes:

"Here is a map that will guide you to the citadel. Be quiet, as noise attracts monsters of many foul shapes inside the Old City. Keep to your map, for if you get lost you will die. I wish you the best of luck. Make the Adventurer's Guild proud!" With this last well wishing, the Old Man turns on his heels, leaving you to determine your own fate.

Give the players time to make a plan then read Encounter 0.

ENCOUNTER #0: THE GUARD TOWER

As you approach the exit of the city into the mountain, you round the corner to find the guardhouses that protect the remnants of the dwarven city. Each is 40' tall and have arrow slits facing the passage out every 10'. As you make your way past, a dwarf wearing the city standard, and dressed in chain armor approaches you. He wears a horned helmet and wears an axe on a loop at his hip.

"Hail, adventurers. Entering the Old City, are ye?" He waits for a response.

"Excellent. While you are in there, if you see a statue of Blain Oreweaver, would you make a note of it for me? I cannot pay you, but it is important to the city."

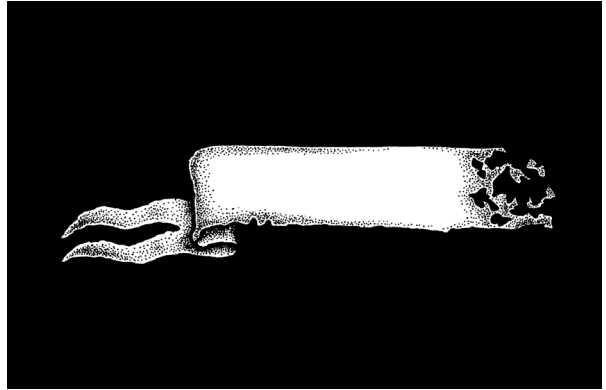
Allow them to converse, and then head down into the dungeon.

The passage leading into the Old City is immense. It is easily 30' wide and continues for what seems like forever. Fortunately, the globes of enchanted light that hang every 10' still work. They turn on when 30' away, and turn off when the group is 30' past them. At even intervals are alcoves that can easily fit a mule and cart, each with a rune or mark of some sort. (Detect Magic will reveal the runes as magical.)

After following the tunnel for what seems like hours, it turns a sharp left. There are no more globes or alcoves. You have finally reached the Old City! The road here was once paved in gold, but now is pocked stone. Along both sides are abandoned stone houses. Above you in the high ceiling of this huge, abandoned city is a Dwarven Rune. It glows enough to see it, but not really give light.

(Any character that speaks Dwarven, casts Read Magic or Comprehend Languages will know that this is the Rune for Home.)

Somewhere up ahead on this road is the Citadel. As the walk drums into boredom, you hear squeaking...



ENCOUNTER #1: RATS MUST EAT TOO

Encounter Setup:

Listening closely will reveal the sound to be giant rats. They are coming for the party. If any party members are separated by more than 30 feet, that party member is the target of the rat's pack attack. The rats use small holes in the walls to move around the party. If nobody separates by more than 30', the rats will attack whoever is in the front. The rats will use pack tactics to drop 1 person, and then move on to the next threat. If 2 are killed, they flee.

RAT, GIANT (8)

Hit Dice: 1d4 hit points (4,3,3,3,2,2,2,1)

Armor Class: 7[12]

Attacks: Bite [1d3]

Save: 18

Special: Disease

Alignment: Neutral

These rats carry a disease called Bon crack. Any character bitten by a rat needs to make a save at +2. Any who fail contract Bon crack. They lose 1 point of Constitution immediately. For each day that passes without spending 20 or more hours in bed, that character loses 1 point of Constitution. If the character spends 20 hours in bed, they regain 1 point of Constitution. The disease is cured when the Constitution score is at its starting point.

The rats flee before your combined might. After taking a moment to recover, you continue to follow your map. It leads you past several more buildings, and eventually you can see the Citadel to your left.

Encounter #2 :These Are The Goblins You Are Looking For

The enemies in this section will largely react to what the characters do. The GM must adjudicate the actions of the goblins based on the actions of the party.

You arrive at the edge of the Citadel. An alleyway runs alongside it into the darkness. Ahead, on your left you can just make out the huge doors that were once glittering gold and the entrance to the home of dwarven power. Those mammoth doors are ajar just enough to allow entrance. As you approach the famed citadel of Mord Mar, you think you saw a small creature scurry into the open portal.

There are a total of 10 goblins near the entrance, two at the door, and eight more in the alley. The eight hope to maneuver in behind the adventurers after they pass. Depending on what the party does, the goblins will react accordingly. If the adventurers chase after the goblins at the doors, the group in the alley will attempt to stay hidden until the trap is sprung, then will attack after. The alley goblins will attack with their shortbows at max range and again at 30'. They will then move into melee, and run when 5 total goblins are dead.

If the door goblins are chased, they will first activate a pit trap when the 1st person moves over it (save, or 1d6 falling damage). They will then stand on the far side of the pit, raining arrows down on the party from range. They will also run when a total of 5 goblins are dead. Any goblins that escape will attempt rally with the Goblin King, Mucksnort. Note, the goblins do NOT know of the secret door.

If the adventurers turn on the alley goblins, the goblins at the door will head further inside to prepare the warren for the attackers. If this happens, all non-combatant goblins will have gone through the mirror by the time the party makes it inside (as the module is written). If the party makes it inside without alerting the goblins, add a couple non-combat goblins where you feel it is appropriate.

GOBLIN

Hit Dice: 1d6 hit points (3 hit points each)

Armor Class: 6 [13]

Attacks: by weapon (bow or short sword) 1d6

Save: 18

Special: -1 to hit in sunlight

Move: 9

Alignment: Chaotic

TREASURE: Each goblin carries a short sword, a bow, and 20 arrows. In addition, each has 1d4 gp, 1d10 sp, and 1d20 cp in a coin pouch. They were wearing leather armor, but it is too poorly made, and smells too much of goblin to be of value.

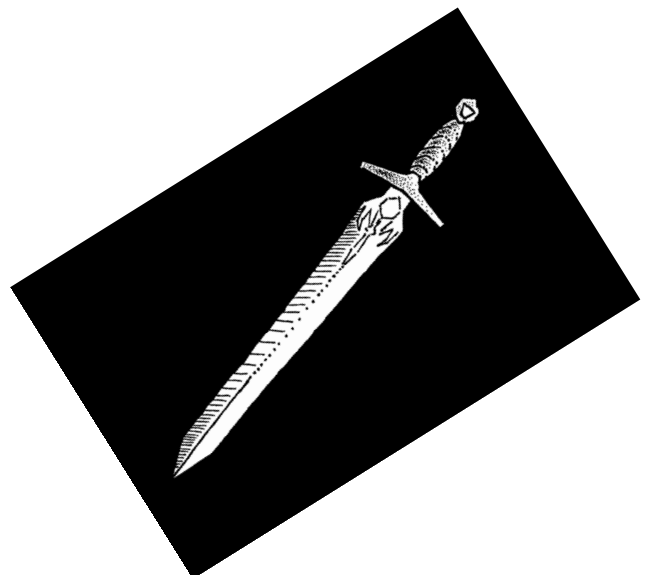


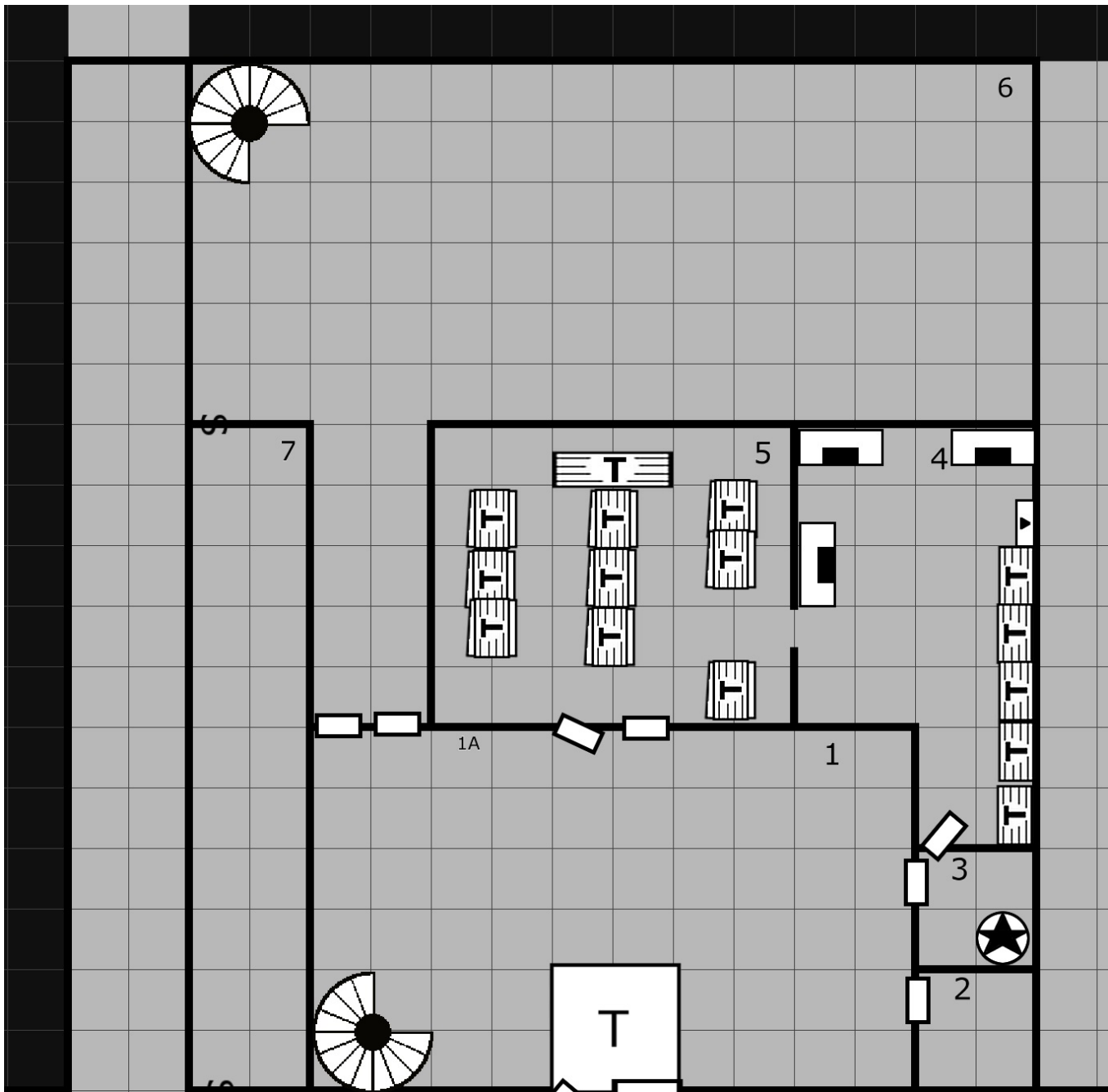
THE SECRET DOOR

If the party notices the secret door, they will see several faded runes on its face: King, Queen, Champion, Enemy, and Child.

On the ground in front of the door, they will also notice the stone also has runes carved in it: Destroy, Protect, Serve, Love, Rule, and Save.

In order to open the secret door, the phrase "King protect home" must be spoken aloud in dwarven. This will cause the door to swing inward, revealing room #7.





Encounter #2

INSIDE THE CITADEL

Room #1: Entrance

Now that you have had a moment to catch your breath, you have a moment to see how large the Dwarven Citadel actually is. The main entry doors are a huge 10' x 10' square, with the one on the right cocked open. It would take more manpower than your small group could muster to open either of these immense doors any further. The doors appear to be made of solid gold, and you would guess there is some enchantment at work, otherwise that much gold would have been carted off long ago.

Read the following only if the goblins were able to spring the pit trap.

The pit was obviously not of dwarven craftsmanship, and you must wonder if goblins could pull off an engineering feat of that type. It is actually two 5' x 10' slabs that were controlled by a mechanism of some sort. Whoever made this trap knew enough of engineering to keep the slabs thick enough to not be weak enough to fall through.

The following should be read to all who can see inside.

This entryway was once a regal place indeed. The ceiling measures out somewhere around 15' tall, and the room itself is probably 20' x 40'. There are 2 metal doors in the right wall, and a set of double doors opposite the ones you stand near. Those other double doors would appear to have the same enchantment, as well. They appear to be made of silver. They are ajar similar to the gold doors. To the left of the doors you entered, there is a destroyed circular staircase, which would have given access to the upper levels. At the top, there appears to be an immense stone slab covering the opening.

At this point, if the pit trap is opened, have the party figure a way across.

As you make your way into this room, you notice two levers to the right of the 'silver' doors. Both look like circular black steel rods.

If the pit trap was opened:

The lever to the right is in the down position, and the lever to the left is in the up position.

If the pit trap was not opened, both are in the up position.

The lever on the left is actually a dummy lever, that if activated will cut the character's hand who attempts it. They will take 2 damage and have a -1 to attack until magical healing is applied. (Do not tell them about the attack loss).

Room #2: Cloak Room

This 10' x 10' room has pegs lining the walls, in 3 rows, at 3 feet, 4.5 feet and 6 feet. There are the remains of 5 broken chests on the ground. There are still some rotting cloaks on a few of the pegs. It smells of mold and decay. There is a buzzing sound coming from above. It sounds like mosquitos -- a large swarm of them.

The buzzing sound is a pack of stirges. There is one more stirges than members of the party. The stirges are nesting inside holes in the ceiling, and will be drawn to the blood of the party.

STIRGE

Hit Dice: 1+1

Armor Class: 7 [12]

Attacks: "Sting" (1d3 + blood drain)

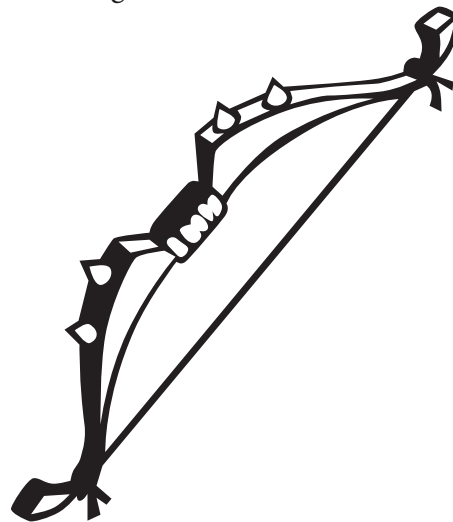
Save: 17

Special: Drain blood 1d4/round, +2 to hit

Move: 3/18 (flying)

Alignment: Neutral

Challenge level/XP: 1/15



TREASURE: A small alcove next to the door is covered with a false stone. Inside the alcove is a glowing dagger (Continual Light is cast on it, otherwise it is non-magical), 2 bloodstones (worth 50 gp each), and a potion of cure disease in a stone vial.

Room #3: Statue

The second metal door (closer to the silver double doors) leads to a 10' x 10' room.

This 10' x 10' room is completely demolished. The stone furniture that was once here is smashed into pieces. From the fragments that are left, you can tell that it was once regal, with beautiful carvings. There is a pedestal with a defaced dwarf statue on it. On the far side of the room is an open door.

(If the party inquires, let them know it appears to be a kitchen through the door.)

If the group investigates the statue, let them know that it has a very faded inscription at the base. It reads: King Orric 'Ironbrow' Greybeard.

There is no danger or treasure in this room.

Room #4: The Kitchen

This 'L' shaped room is 10' wide at the doorway to the Statue. It goes in 10', then widens to 20'. Along the 35' long right wall is a huge 20 foot long counter, with cupboards above and below. At the far end of the counter is a sink basin. Two huge hearths dominate the far wall, each being about 7' wide and 3' deep. There is a third hearth the same size on the left wall, in the wider section of the room. Hung from the ceiling are a few dozen vermin, including giant ants, giant centipedes and rats. There is also a humanoid, probably an elf, that has been partially filleted.

Searching the cupboards will disturb the vermin that live within. For each cupboard searched roll a d6:

1. No vermin are disturbed.
2. 2 giant centipedes attack the person searching.
3. 1-2 giant spiders attack the person searching.
4. 1 giant tick attacks the person searching
5. 1d6 sp are found.
6. The person searching has stuck their hand in green slime!

TREASURE: Inside the sink trap is a diamond ring worth 1000 gp.

CENTIPEDE, GIANT (SMALL LETHAL)

Hit Dice: 1d2 hit points

Armor Class: 9 [10]

Attacks: Bite (deals 0 damage)

Save: 18

Special: Lethal poison (+4 save)

Move: 13

Alignment: Neutral

SPIDER, GIANT (SMALLER)

Hit Dice: 1+1

Armor Class: 8 [11]

Attacks: Bite (1 hp) + poison

Saving Throw: 17

Special: Lethal Poison (+2 to save)

Move: 9

Alignment: Neutral

TICK, GIANT

Hit Dice: 3

Armor Class: 4 [15]

Attacks: Bite (1d4)

Saving Throw: 14

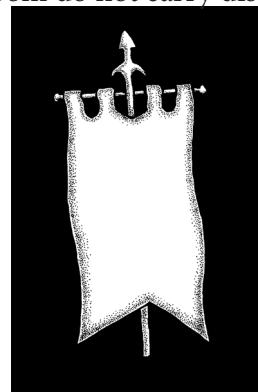
Special: drains blood

Move: 3

Alignment: Neutral

Challenge Level/XP: 3/60

Giant ticks drain blood at a rate of 4 hp/round after a successful attachment (hit). A giant tick will release if fire is held near it, or it can be killed. The ticks in this room do not carry disease.



GREEN SLIME

Green slime is more of a trap than a creature. Any who touch it begin to turn into the slime. Each round, a save must be made. For each failed save, another chunk turns into green slime. It can be destroyed with fire or extreme cold. A Cure Disease spell will also end the process (but any body parts lost are still gone.)

Room #5: The Feast Hall

This 30' by 25' room is dominated by three rows of stone tables. The center row has a table at the end of it that tees with the others. Upon the center row of tables is a meal of half-eaten rats, centipedes and other goblin delicacies. On the table to the far left of the room is a huge mirror, facing toward the center of the room. Its frame is covered in grotesque images of goblins. It is easily 5' wide, and 10' tall. It seems to hum and pulsate, as if active and alive.

The mirror is actually a magical portal, that can only be used by persons with goblin blood. Locating the Goblin Mirror is actually the goal of the quest. This is the primary way that goblins enter into the stronghold. For each 10 minutes spent here, 1d6 goblins will emerge from it, ready to attack the party.

GOBLIN

Hit Dice: 1d6 hit points (3 hit points each)

Armor Class: 6 [13]

Attacks: by weapon (bow or short sword) 1d6

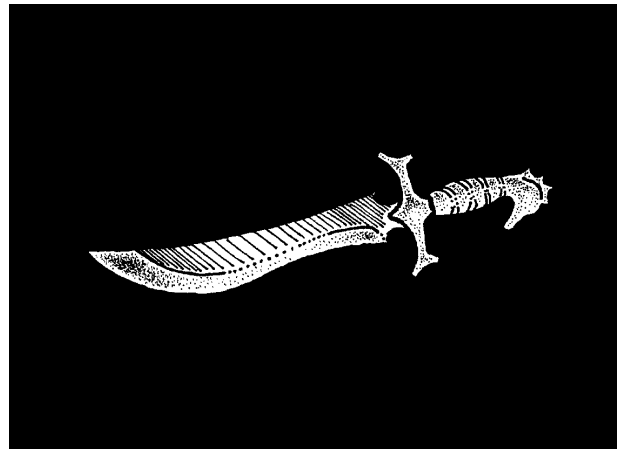
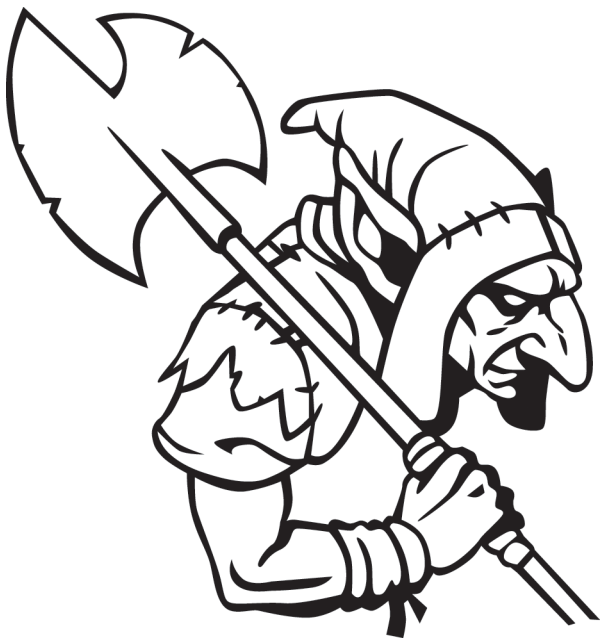
Save: 18

Special: -1 to hit in sunlight

Move: 9

Alignment: Chaotic

TREASURE: Each goblin carries a short sword, a bow, and 20 arrows. In addition, each has 1d4 gp, 1d10 sp, and 1d20 cp in a coin pouch. They were wearing leather armor, but it is too poorly made, and smells too much of goblin to be of value.



Room #6: The Throne Room

This room is massive, truly made to show the dwarves power and opulence. It is 70' wide and 35' deep, with 15' tall vaulted ceilings. There are remnants of once beautiful pieces of dwarven sculptures and paintings.

The room is dominated by two features: a massive stone throne that looks as if it were carved from a single block, with a back reaching some 8' into the air. Its carvings have been defaced, and its once vibrant colors have been muted. Sitting upon the throne is a particularly muscular goblinoid. His skin is a bright orange, unlike every goblin you have seen before. He has chain armor on, and a long sword that glows laying across his lap. He has a shield resting at his feet. Flanking both sides of "his" throne are 4 goblins, wearing finely crafted armor, and holding better bows than you would expect goblins to have. They have longspears near them.

The second feature that cannot be ignored is a spiral staircase. It is intact, if pocked and defaced, but the portal above is again sealed by a huge stone slab.

The orange skinned goblin begins speaking.

If the party doesn't have a person that speaks goblin, read the following:

The goblin king appears to be trying to converse. Although you cannot understand him, he is at the very least standoffish, and at worst threatening your group. The guards are leveling their bows at you. What do you do?

If they are able and willing to communicate, have a short RP discussion. Mucksnort will be generally standoffish, and is not willing to leave the citadel, and will not mention the Goblin Mirror. Eventually it will end in combat, regardless of character actions. Even Charm Person cannot convince him to leave. Mucksnort truly believes that the goblins cannot survive inside the mountain without a stronghold.

Hidden behind the throne is a teleport rune. When a character traces it with their finger, and say the meaning in Dwarven (Escape), they will be teleported back to the long tunnel with alcoves. This leads to the alcove closest to town, and only works one way.

GOBLIN

Hit Dice: 1d6 hit points (5 hit points each)

Armor Class: 6 [13]

Attacks: by weapon (bow or spear) 1d6

Save: 18

Special: -1 to hit in sunlight

Move: 9

Alignment: Chaotic

These goblins have bows that give +1 to hit. They will follow Mucksnort's orders without question.

MUCKSNORT (HOBGOBLIN "KING")

Hit Dice: 3 (20 hit points)

Armor Class: 3 [16] Wearing chainmail +1

Attacks: Longsword +1 (1d8+1)

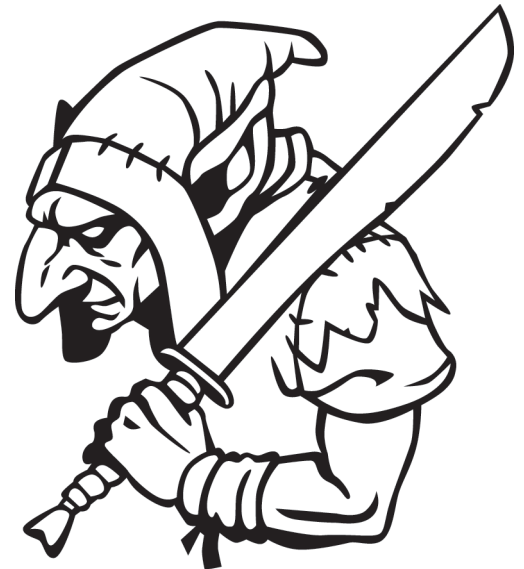
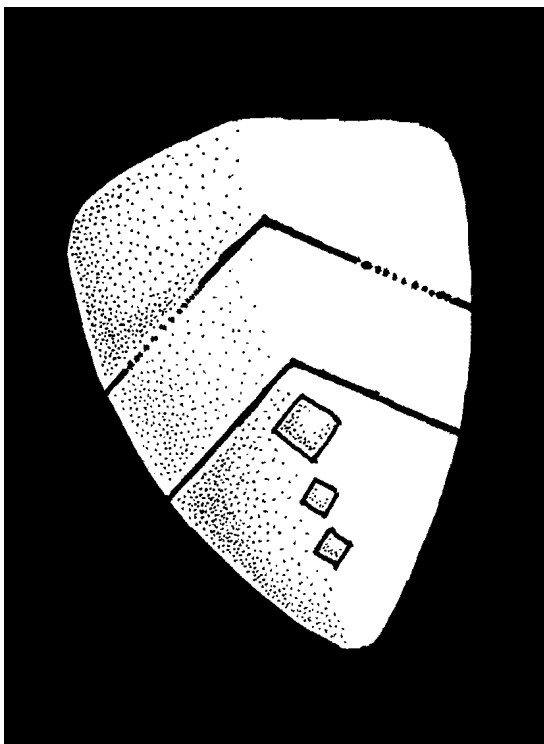
Save: 16

Special: none

Move: 9

Alignment: Chaotic

Mucksnort has chainmail +1, longsword +1, 2 healing potions (1d8), and a pouch containing 57 gp, 31 sp, 215 cp, and a pearl worth 350 gp.



Room #7: The Secret Passage

As the secret passage magically opens, you see a 55' long, 10' wide passage before you. It is covered in dust and cobwebs. At 3' intervals there are shields about 4' high. These kite shields are all identical, with the sigil of the Greybeard family. The corridor ends in another wall.

One of the shields is a +1 shield. It is not noticeable unless Detect Magic is cast. The secret door at the far end simply pivots, like a rotating door. When it is moved to the closed position, there is an audible hiss, as if it sealed.

EPILOGUE

As you trudge wearily into the common hall of the Adventurer's Guild, the Old Man excitedly approaches you. "Did you find how the goblins numbers grow so quickly?," he asks breathlessly.

Allow the party to give as much or as little information as they want.

If the party reveals the mirror's existence, read the following, if not ad lib:

This does not bode well for us. A goblin mirror in the Dwarves' own citadel? This mountain is cursed thrice! But you did your job well, adventurers! Take your rest, you have earned it!

So ends the first module of Mord Mar.

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