

DEEP DELVING



BY KEN ST. ANDRE



Deep Delving

By Ken St. Andre

Art by David Ullery

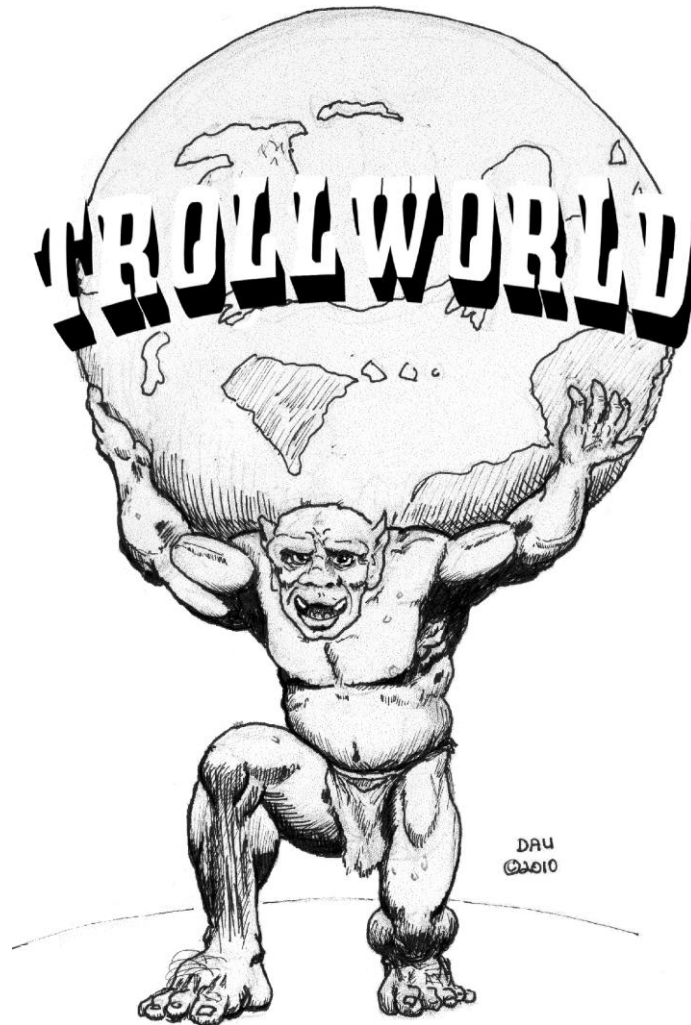


Trollhalla Press

Deep Delving is a mini-solo adventure written expressly for play with the Tunnels and Trolls 7.5th roleplaying game system.

Text copyright January 2011 by Ken St. Andre

Art copyright January 2011 by David Ullery



A Trollhalla Press publication

Foreword

This is a short adventure for trolls. It takes place more than a mile beneath the surface of Trollworld, and it is part of the secret war between Trolls and Dwarves that is completely unknown to dwellers of the surface world. Your character must be a rock troll, and it should be a powerful one—or your adventure will be very short indeed. To play Deep Delving, you should either make a character using the T & T 7.5 rules or look at the appendix and choose one of the sample trolls included. When you've got rules, dice, and character sheet ready to go, turn to Paragraph <1>.



<1> You are a mighty rock troll, and you have wandered away from the surface of Trollworld. You are on a Walkdown trek—your goal is to go as deep under the surface as you possibly can and try to find one of the Great Old Ones—those trolls who have lived since the beginning and have grown to gigantic size. It is said that when the Great Old Ones walk, the world trembles and the mountains shake.

You have been walking for months now, always working your way deeper underground. When you couldn't find a passage, you dug. You dug by shapeshifting your hands into a pick and a hammer. You have long since discarded any unnatural tools or clothing or armor—at these depths it is just you and the world. And the occasional enemy . . . You have reached a place where Men couldn't live at all—a place where the rocks are warm to the touch and glow dimly, a place where the air is hot, searing, and poisonous. But that doesn't bother you—rock trolls don't have to breathe. The spaces down here are not like the Upper Caverns. These spaces are cracks and crevices and gaps in the stone, made by the shifting of the planet itself. Sometimes they are so narrow you can barely squeeze into them—sometimes they are so vast you cannot see the other side.

You are deep beneath a volcano. There are a lot of volcanoes on Trollworld. This means there are great lava tubes and underground rivers of magma. You like these places—you were born in such a place long ago. As this adventure begins you are following a river of lava on a winding downward slope, and you are hungry. There isn't much food for a rock troll where the stones are mostly volcanic in nature.

You come to a small side passage, one that is barely large enough for you to squeeze into it, but one that carries a faint aroma of aluminum. If you could find a vein of the light mineral, it could provide you with the food you are starting to need. But the passage is narrow and could be dangerous, and it leads you away from your downward destination. If you choose to explore the side passage, go to Paragraph <13>; if you decide to stay with the river of lava, go to Paragraph <22>.



<2> As you make your way back to the River of Lava you see a raw diamond glittering in the ceiling of the shaft. Although you have no use

for the gem, you know it could be valuable on the surface. Do you wish to reach up and tear it from the stone, or will you simply continue your journey? If you take the gem, go to Paragraph <25>. If you continue your journey, you soon reach the tunnel beside the river of lava, and continue walking downhill—go to Paragraph <22>.

<3> Slowly and with great difficulty you make out the message on the monolith. It says: RIDE THE RIVER OF LAVA TO THE HOME OF THE GREAT OLD ONE. What a strange message! What can it mean? As you ponder this enigma, you accidentally kick a small chunk of rock off the path and into the current of slow moving stone. You notice that it does not sink, but is carried along on the surface. Could that be the meaning? You should create some kind of stony boat and use it to ride downstream on the river of lava? The more you think about it, the more you think that may be the answer. If you decide to make a boat and try a hot river ride, go to Paragraph <10>. If you don't like that idea and you think it will get you killed, go to Paragraph <22> and just follow the trail.

<4> You back off and get as big a running start as you can. Then you start a lumbering run, shaking the cavern, picking up speed with every

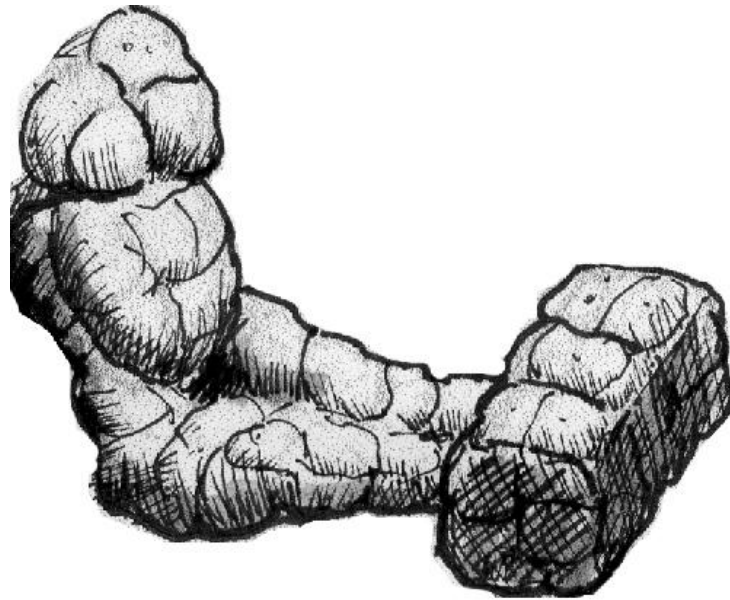
step. The end of the path comes closer and closer, and finally you take that last step and hurtle yourself into space. You use all your strength, but did the rock crumble slightly beneath you as you leaped. Make a L10SR on STR. (65 - STR). If you made it, turn to paragraph <23>; if you missed it, turn to paragraph <15>.



<5> The boat floats on down the river of lava. With some difficulty you keep your balance, but when it enters a narrow tunnel, there is no longer room to stand up in it. You have to crouch, and then lie flat on your stony platform. The heat is incredible. If you had to breathe, the poisonous fumes would certainly kill you, but rock trolls don't have to breathe. Go now to paragraph <18>.



<6> You just haven't been getting enough iron and magnesium in your diet. The lava is too much for you. You melt. You liquefy and become part of the stream. You lose consciousness and never regain it. The End.



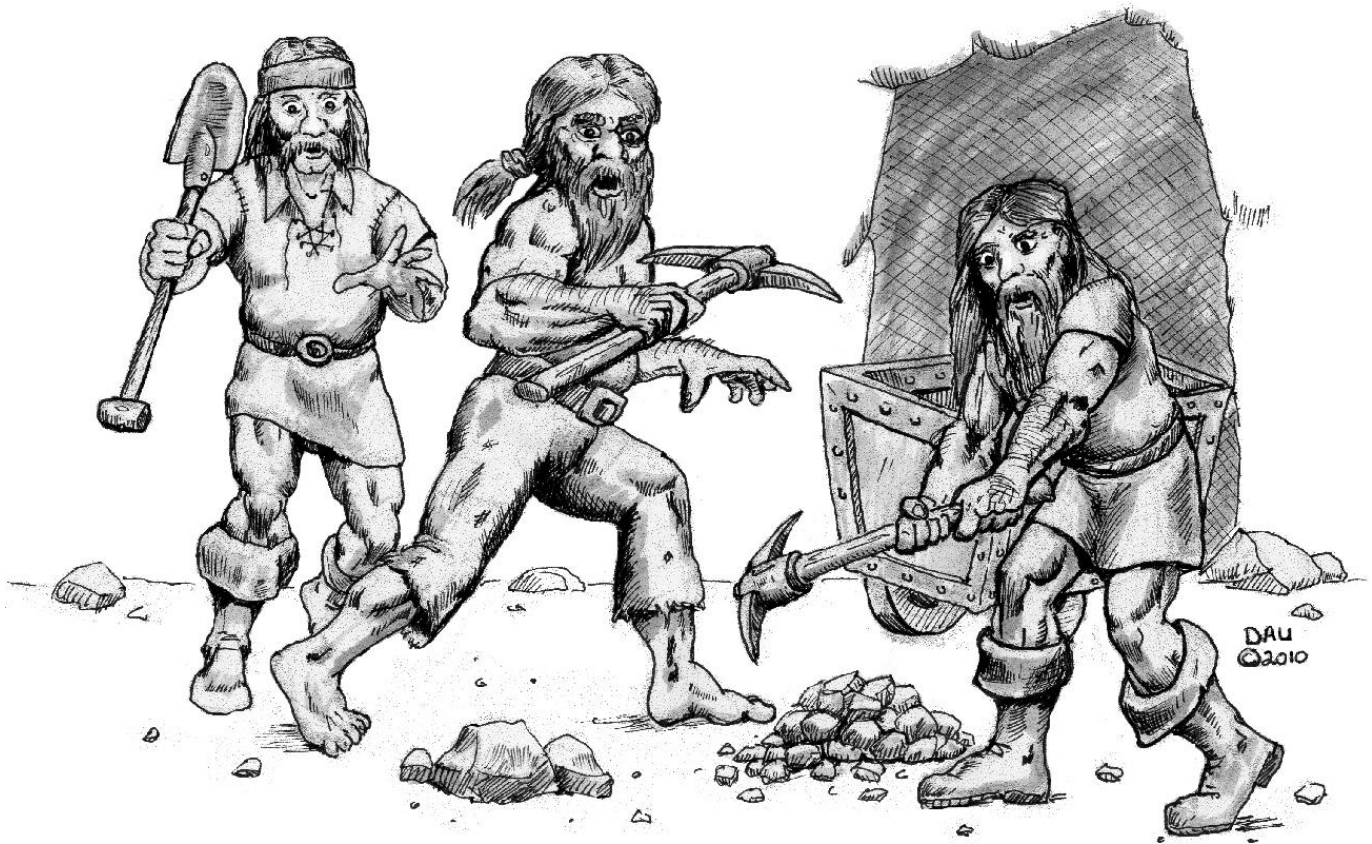
<7> The rock rumbles and a little dust gets in your eyes, but the gap you are wedged into does not close on you. When the shaking stops, you edge your way deeper and deeper into this lightless passage, but you don't really need light here. Your rock sense shows you the rock in different colors and smells. You are getting close to the aluminum and you find it in a grotto at the end of the passage. It takes a while, but you shapeshift your hands into digging tools, and a bit later you are happily munching on the light ore. You can feel yourself gaining mass and

power. (Regenerate to your maximum attribute values at this time, then roll 1D6 and add that number to both STR and CON to get new max scores.) After your meal, you lie down to rest and digest for a bit, and it is while your ear is pressed against the stone that you hear the strange noise—a kind of rhythmic clanking. If you would like to investigate the noise, go to <20>. If you'd rather just return to the river of lava, go to <2>.

<8> The rock rumbles and groans, and then slowly the crevice that you are in closes. You are very tough, but you are not tougher than millions of tons of rock in motion. The walls slowly close and compress you into a darker stain on the bedrock. Your trollish hearts are the strongest part of your body. Perhaps some day the very earth will split and release them into the air once more, and you will regenerate, but right now, you are dead, dead, dead. What rotten luck! The End.

<9> The Dwarves reel back from the unexpected fury of your attack. One of them has lost his pickaxe. (If you do enough damage to the party to actually slay any of the Dwarves, you may kill one or more outright, and thus take their weapons and adds out of the following rounds of combat, Example: There are 6 Dwarves in the

squad, and you manage to beat their combat total by 65 points. Dwarf 1 has a CON of 30—he's dead. Dwarf 2 has a CON of 31—he's also dead. Dwarf 3 has a CON of 32—he has taken 4 hits of damage. Dwarves 4, 5, and 6 are untouched.)



But Dwarves are fearless warriors and they rally. All surviving Dwarves get into the combat on the second round and all subsequent rounds. With battle cries of “Bharoo Kharrrg!” (roughly translated as “Pulverize the troll!”) they swarm to the attack. On this round and all following rounds, the Dwarves get to use both weapons at

the same time. Starting with this round, and for all following combat rounds, you get to regenerate in combat—that is you will get one tenth of your current CON back each round after all the damage has been assigned. Dwarves don't regenerate—at least not swiftly. If you ever lose a round of combat, go to paragraph <12>. Keep track of how many rounds of combat there are. If you get to round 7, turn to paragraph <11>. If you slay them all before round 7, turn to paragraph <27>.

<10> Working volcanic stone without any form of tools is not an easy thing to do, but you can do it. It takes a long time and great concentration, but you morph one of your arms into a cutting tool. Working slowly and carefully, you etch an oval pattern into a flat rock floor. Then you make yourself bleed into the gouged lines and your acidic blood softens the stone beneath it. Then you use the blade that used to be your hand to chisel out more stone and throw it aside. Then you use your blood to soften the rock again, and you dig out more hardened lava. And so forth. Roll 2D6. This is how many days it takes to pull a boat of stone out of the floor. Give yourself 100 times your dice roll in adventure points. Once your stony boat has been extracted from the floor, you hollow it out, and balance it so that you will



have a place to stand inside it. Having now created a boat that might ride the lava river, you slowly bring yourself back into your own proper form. You realize that it has been days since you've last eaten, and that you've used a lot of

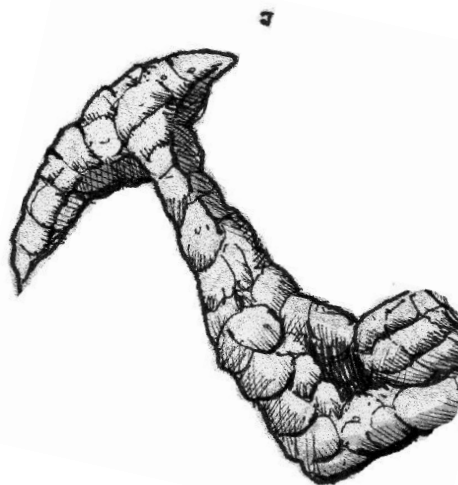
your own essence in fashioning this stony coracle. (Roll 2D6, doubles add and roll over, and subtract that number (temporarily) from both your STR and CON attributes. It occurs to you that perhaps you should get some food before starting your lava ride. If you decide to go look for food, turn to paragraph <14>. If you throw the boat down onto the lava and get ready to jump into it, go to paragraph <24>.

<11> After a long hard fight, the noise of the battle has attracted reinforcements for the Dwarves. The mining cart that has blocked their retreat is suddenly pulled out of the way, and a stream of Dwarven warriors pours into the battle. These are dwarves in full battle armor—steel and mithril that will take 20 hits of damage for them. They are armed with Dwarven great axes, and each one gets 30 adds in combat. Their CON ratings are 40 apiece. 1D6 of them pours into the battle each combat round. This is a battle that you cannot win. If you decide to run, make a L4SR on SPD (35 – SPD). If you make it, go to <28>. If you miss it, you will die here under an ever increasing horde of Dwarves.



<12> You are surprised by the fighting power of these small miners. Realizing that more of them will be attacking soon (combat round two), you think you may have made a mistake. You must choose now whether to stay and fight on, or if you wish to run away. Live or die? The choice is up to you. If you decide to fight on, turn to paragraph <9>. If you decide to run away, make a L2SR on SPD. (25 - SPD). If you succeed, you escape back down the tunnel that brought you here—go to <28>. If you fail, you are cut off and must keep fighting—go to <9>.

<13> You squeeze your way into the narrow passage. The going is very slow. You advance by millimeters at times, but you make your way deeper into the rock. The aroma of aluminum is stronger now, and you begin to salivate as you think of the delicious meal that will soon be yours. Suddenly, the rock begins to shake—such tremors are not uncommon in volcanic regions. They open and close hundreds of narrow cracks in the stone just like the one you're currently in every year. You are in danger. Make a L1SR (Level 1 Saving Roll) on Luck. If you make it, go to Paragraph <7>; if you miss it, go to Paragraph <8>.



<14> On your search for food, you find a side passage that you somehow missed before. Venturing down it, you find a twisty crevice of a path that leads back toward the surface. After a while you begin to faintly hear a strange ringing

noise—could it be the sound of metal striking stone, coming to you as vibrations in the rock. The further you go, the louder it gets. You think you know what is causing the strange noise—it's the sound of food and also of enemies. You think you hear some Dwarves at work. Louder and louder grows the tapping, the clanking, and then it begins to fade away. You have passed the closest approach. You backtrack until you reach the optimum point. Whatever is making the noise is just beyond this rock wall. Turn to paragraph <20>.

<15> Your leap falls short. Whatever you missed the saving roll by is how many feet you missed the jump by. Now you plummet down into the blazing lava below. Roll 3D6 (triples add and roll over) and take that much damage on your CON. If it kills you, it's the end. If not, you are definitely feeling the heat. You have never been so hot in your life. Make a L20SR on CON (115 – CON). If you make it, go to paragraph <18>; if you miss it, go to paragraph <6>.

<16> The wall of stone crumbles under your relentless attack, and you break into another cavern. You smash through and discover that the clinking noise is indeed caused by a squad of Dwarven miners. They have been following a

rich vein of true silver (mithril), and have also been creating a Dwarven tunnel behind them. It's about eight feet square, and has a mine cart behind them blocking their escape. Roll 1D6 and add 2. That is how many Dwarves are in this mining squad. Then just roll 1D6. If that second number is higher than the total number of Dwarves rolled, then you have to fight all of them. That's how many are in position to fight you on the first combat round. On the following rounds, they will all be able to fight. [You will have to take a moment now and create your Dwarven foes. Each Dwarf in the squad is 1 point stronger, and 1 CON point tougher than the previous one. The first Dwarf has STR of 18 and CON of 30 and 17 combat adds. That would give the second Dwarf a STR of 19, CON of 31, and 18 combat adds. And so forth.. They are armed with Dwarven pickaxes (3D6) and Dwarven scoop daggers (2d6 + 7). They have neither shields nor armor—why would they need that way down here? On the second round of combat the Dwarves can fight two-handed using both weapons (total of 5D6 + 7).]

Time now for elemental combat. Trolls and Dwarves really hate each other, and you can only think of how satisfying it will be to slay them and feast on their rocky bodies. No magic. Your arms are the equivalent of weapons—one is

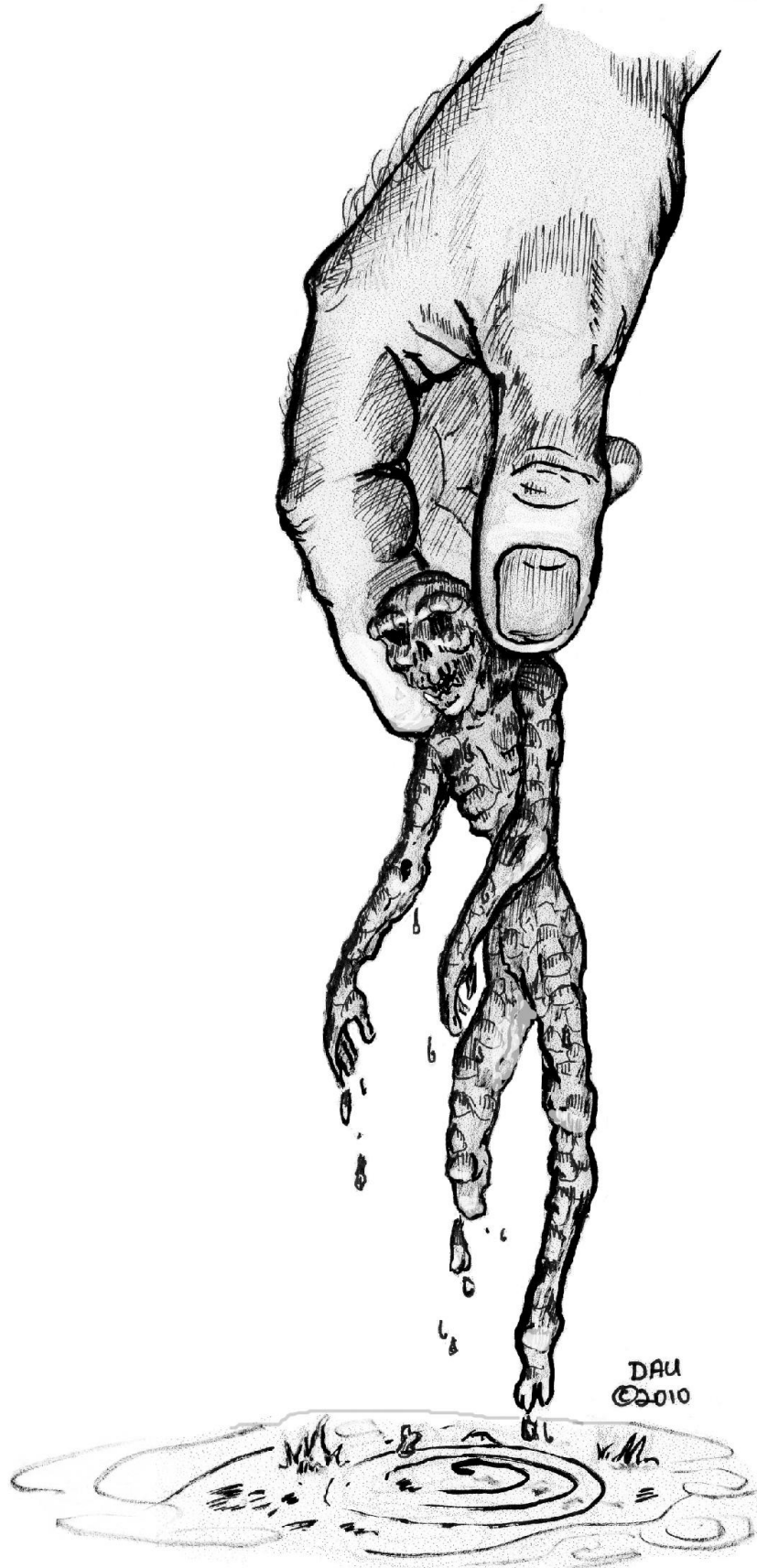
a war hammer and the other is a kind of sword. These are weapons made for Trolls, and you are a troll four times the size of dwarves. Your right hand is worth $15D6 + 6$; your left hand is $15D6 + 3$ for a total of $30D6 + 9$ and your combat adds. Dwarven pickaxes and scoop daggers are made to cut stone—that means you have no armor against them either. FIGHT! Be sure to count spite damage for both sides. If you are winning after combat round 1, turn to paragraph <9>; if you are losing, go to paragraph <12>. If you are dead, close the book because it's the end.



<17> The runes are just so many weird scratchings to you. You keep walking beside the river until the trail comes to an end. You can see that it continues deeper and downer into the

rock on the other side of the river of lava. There is no way to get there except by making a mighty jump. The distance is twice your height, and Trolls are not known for their jumping ability. If you dare the feat, go to Paragraph <4>; if you turn back, go to Paragraph <26>.

<18> Agony! The river of lava carries you into a tunnel that bores through solid rock. It turns downward and slowly takes you beyond agony into a changed mental state where you are at one with the universe—i.e. you're dead, but you don't know it, so it doesn't count, and what is death to a rock troll anyway? Mere words are inadequate to convey the transcendence of being melted into slag by molten lava. Some time later a gigantic hand plucks what's left of you out of the lava and carries you like a baby through a vast dim cavern. Then you are deposited in a warm, comfortable pool of limestone rich water. Fed by rich rocky nutrients, your body begins to heal. When your eyes are healed you see a gigantic troll sitting beside you, dangling his foot in this immense pool of water. It must be at least 300 feet tall, and it glows with an inner



light that illuminates the cavern. When you can think and behave normally, you feel/hear the giant troll welcoming you to the true Trollheim. You have made it to the legendary Troll Haven. Your trollish childhood has now come to an end. If you ever bring this troll out to adventure on the surface again, you may double all its beginning attributes and its size. You're a real monster now, baby! The End.

<19> As you make your way back toward the surface, you reach a point where you hear a kind of clinking—like metal beating on stone. If you decide to investigate it, go to paragraph <20>. If you ignore it and continue your journey, go to paragraph <21>.

<20> The clinking sounds like metal striking stone. It has a rhythmic pattern. By pressing your ear to the stony walls in various places, you locate a spot where the noise is the loudest, and the rock is the thinnest. You are going to have to make a passage through this stone, but that's not really a problem. You have made such passages before. With a mental effort that seems to get a little easier each time you do it, you concentrate mass into your arms, and form one hand into a large chisel, and the other into a hammer. Attempt some saving rolls on STR.

You have ten tries to make 3 L5SRs on STR. If you make the three saving rolls, turn to paragraph <16>; if you fail, then you will give up, change back into your normal shape and move on to paragraph <2>.

<21> You make it safely to the upper caverns and the surface of Trollworld. Your adventure is now over. Take 300 adventure points for all your exploits. You may continue to use this character in other adventures. The End.

<22> The heat increases and the path you are following gets narrower and narrower and you follow it deeper into the earth. You can see perfectly well here, as the lava exudes a fiery glow. There is a monolith ahead of you that seems a bit strange. You stop and take a look at



it. Yes, there are trollish runes—borrowed from the Dwarves but in Khargish, not Rocktongue. The question is, can you read them? Make a L3SR on INT to attempt their translation. If you make it, go to Paragraph <3>. If you fail, go to Paragraph <17>.

<23> That was one great leap. You didn't make it all the way across in the air—trolls can't (usually) fly, but you did crash into the opposite wall of the chasm quite close to the top. As you



start to slide down the wall, one hand reaches out and catches the edge of the trail, and one foot finds a knob of rock that will bear your weight. That's all you need. You quickly scramble up and find yourself at the beginning of a tunnel that slopes steeply downward into the darkness away from the river of lava. Undaunted, you forge your way onward. Soon you are in pitch darkness. The rock around you has cooled so that it is no warmer than you are. As good as your darkness vision is, there doesn't

seem to be much to see. You grope your way forward and down with one hand in front of you. Is that a sort of strange, concentric pattern on the rocks ahead of you? Does the tunnel dead-end here? Attempt a L7SR on INT (50 – INT). If you succeed, turn to paragraph <30>; if you fail, turn to paragraph <31>.

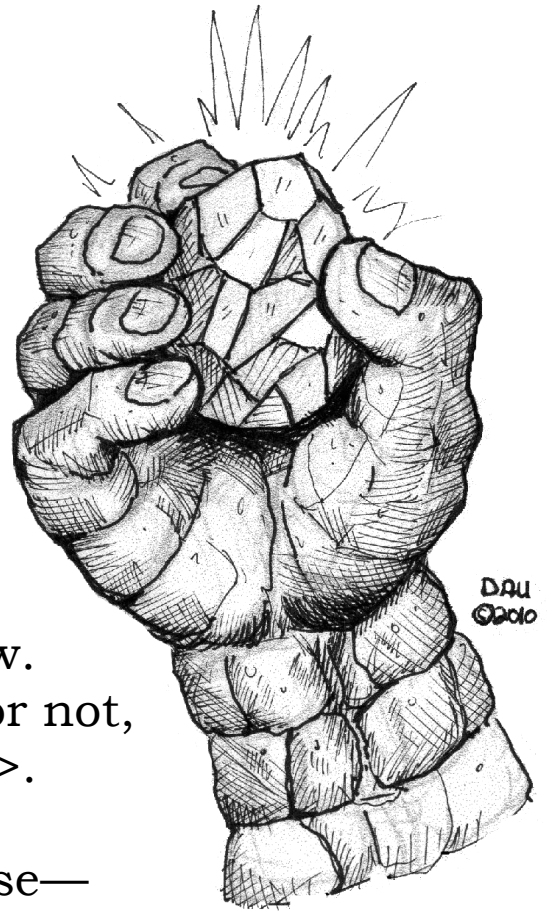
<24> As carefully as you can, you lower your boat into the lava. There really isn't a launching point around here, so you have to drop it about 10 feet. Make a L5SR on Luck. (40 – LK). If you make the saving roll, the boat lands well, floats, and is ready for you to leap down into it. If you missed the saving roll, the boat is poorly made, and it cracks apart when it hits the molten lava. It breaks into pieces and floats away. You can return to paragraph <10> and try again if you wish, or you could make another choice.



If the boat is intact, you can try jumping into it. Leaping into a crude boat of stone slowly moving along a river of molten lava is a difficult feat, but you're willing to try it. You get slightly ahead of the boat on the path above it, calculate your flight path, and jump! You may rely on either your Dexterity or Luck to succeed. Attempt either a L10SR on DEX (65 – DEX) or a L12SR on Luck (75 – LK). If you have a Talent such as Leap, Dodge, Balance, or something of a similar nature based on your DEX, you may use it for the saving roll at level 8. (55 – TAL) [Note to players who haven't tried Talents. If you haven't given your character any Talents, and you wish to improve your chances of making this saving roll, then give your troll the Talent of Balance. Write it on your Character sheet like this Talent: Balance = DEX + 1D6—roll 1D6 and substitute whatever you rolled; example: Balance = DEX + 3. Talents are best used for attempting unusual feats—sort of like jumping successfully into a moving boat on a river of lava.—grin.] If you make the saving roll, turn to paragraph <5>; if you miss it, then you missed the boat—you fall into the river of lava—turn to paragraph <15>

<25> Make a L10SR on STR. (65 – STR). If you made it, you got the gem, a raw, uncut diamond that is the size of a small egg. It would be worth 2D6 times 1000 gold pieces on the

surface world—here it's just a pretty rock. If you missed the saving roll, you hurt yourself and were unable to get the rock. There is now a cut in your rocky hand oozing your own volcanic blood. This will heal soon, but for the next 5 paragraphs, your DEX is 5 points lower than it is right now. Whether you get the diamond or not, continue down the path to <22>.



<26> A troll with common sense—what will we see next? You seem to have reached the end of your trek into the bowels of Trollworld. Reluctantly, you turn around and begin the long walk up to the upper caverns and the world of kindreds. Make a L3SR on Luck. (30 - LK). If you make it, turn to paragraph <21>; if you miss it, go to paragraph <19>.



<27> After a while you realize that your small foes aren't fighting back any longer. You have won. Each Dwarf slain is worth 50 a.p. For winning the battle against the odds, you get 500 a.p. The scoop dagger is a new weapon for you. Scoop daggers are made of mithril, and their edges are so fine, hard, and sharp that they can punch into and cut stone itself. Such weapons are reserved for the Dwarves who work far underground and have never been seen on the surface of Trollworld. You may take them if you wish—they would be worth 1000 gold pieces each to buyers in cities like Khazan. The mining cart contains 5D6 rough gems—a fortune on the surface—just so many pretty rocks down here.

Gathering what loot you wish to take, including a carcass or two for a feast later on, you leave by the same way that you entered. The Dwarven tunnel is really too small for you. Luckily they were working in a larger space when you attacked them. Turn to paragraph <29>.

<28> The Dwarves are brave, but not foolish enough to pursue you into your own troll tunnels where they can't bring superior numbers to bear. They heave a sigh of relief and watch you leave. Then they call for reinforcements. Meanwhile you get away. Take

200 adventure points as you leave. Turn to paragraph <29>.

<29> Such is life and death in the deep caverns far below the surface of Trollworld. You return to your wanderings. Do you return to the surface? You may if you wish by going to <21>. Or you can remain in the tunnels. If you do that, you will wander for a long time, always trying to make your way deeper into Trollworld. Make a L3SR on Luck (30 - LK). If you make it, go to <22>. If you fail, go to <31>



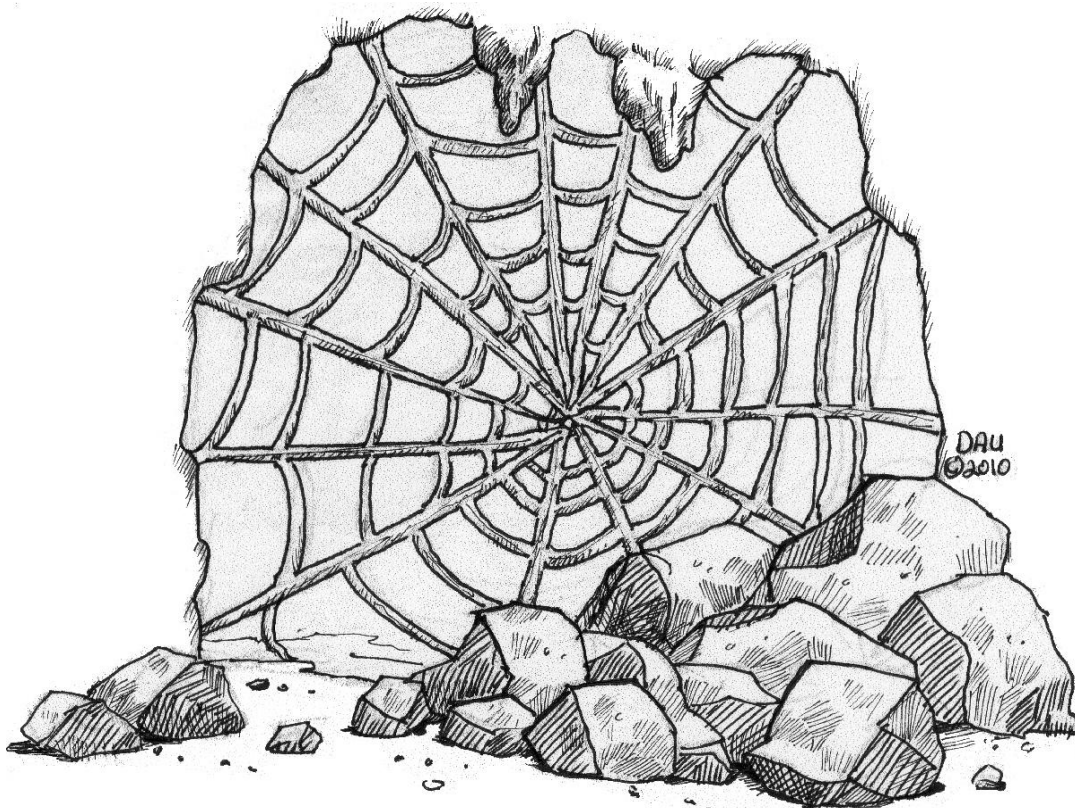
<30> You have seen this pattern before somewhere, and in darkness like this also. It takes a moment, but you remember, this is the web of a rock spider, one of the most feared predators of the deep trollworld caves. A fierce predator, but also good eating—you've been hungry for days now. It's a good thing you didn't blunder into that web—those strands are as strong as steel and would greatly reduce your ability to fight. You must decide whether to stay and tackle the rock spider by going to paragraph

<32>, or to turn back by going to paragraph <26> or to try and find a way to bypass the web and the spider by going to <33>.

<31> You have blundered into the web of a giant rock spider, one of the fiercest predators of the deep tunnels. The strands are sticky and strong as steel. In a few minutes you could tear yourself free, but the spider feels your thrashing and emerges from its lair and leaps upon you. The rock spider is like a creature of living obsidian, all sharp planes and angles. Its 16 legs are like spears, its mandibles are like clashing sabers, its body is like an avalanche. And it is fast. The spider has a monster rating of 200. (21D6 + 100). You can only fight at half strength because you're caught in the web (15D6 + Adds/2). If it kills you in a single combat round, then your adventure is over-- close the book. On the second combat round, you will be able to tear yourself free and use your full might. Turn to paragraph <34> for the battle.



<32> Realizing that you are going to be attacking a rock spider, you stop and take the time to turn your arms into fierce weapons. It is a creature of stone, so war hammers would be best against it. You also have to chip some boulders out of the walls or floor. You will use them to crash and break the web. When you are ready, you hurl a two hundred pound boulder into the webbing. It emits a twanging sound, and the boulder is caught in the web like an insect. A huge and hideous rock spider of living obsidian (monster rating 200—21D6 + 100 combat adds), all angles and facets, and stabbing legs rushes forward to see what prey has come to it, and when you see it clearly, you attack it . For the battle, turn to paragraph <34>.



<33> Searching carefully, you discover that the web doesn't quite reach the floor in one place. It might be possible for you to get down on your stomach and slither through like a snake. But if you failed, you would be helpless against a spider attack. If you decide to try and slide by, make a L6SR on either DEX or any Talent that might apply here. If you make the saving roll, go to paragraph <35>; if you miss it, you will get caught in the web and the spider will attack you at paragraph <31>. If you decide you'd rather fight your way through, then go to paragraph <32>.

<34> Now begins an epic battle between two primordial titans—you the mighty rock troll and the fierce obsidian rock spider. This will be a fight to the death. If you have had time to form your limbs into weapons—then each one is worth 15D6 and you get your combat adds. You regenerate one tenth of your current CON each combat round. So does the spider—it gets one tenth of its monster rating back each round. (It also gets 21D6 + 100 combat adds to start with.) Luckily, there is no poison to worry about. If you win the battle you get 200 adventure points and turn to paragraph <36>. If you lose, well, even rock trolls can be eaten by some things. That would be the end.



<35> You slither beneath the spider web and continue down the passage. You gain an extra 100 a.p. for being wise enough to avoid conflict. Go to paragraph <37>.

<36> Victorious, you smash open the obsidian carapace and feast on the softer, tastier, earthy parts inside the spider. This food is so nourishing and rich that you will have fully regenerated by the time you can turn to paragraph <37>.

<37> The passage continues for a bit, and then turns steeply downward. You grope and slide your way along until it finally levels off and opens up into a huge cavern. This place is enormous. It's an underground world. In the distance you see gigantic glowing THINGS moving around. As one comes closer you realize that it is a tremendous troll, one over 100 feet high. It sees you, and a gigantic hand sweeps down to gather you up. It holds you up to its face, more than 100 feet off the cavern floor. It smiles and says, "Oh, look, one of our babies has come home." You feel like a baby inside its mighty paw.

The BIG troll carries you deeper into the cavern and sets you down in a warm and shallow pool of nutrient-laden water. It sits beside you and answers your questions, and you learn the true history of the trolls of Trollworld. You are congratulated for having found your way down so deep. And you learn that your childhood is now over, and you have finally attained trollish adulthood. You are still young compared to the ancient ones in this cavern, but when you return to the upper world you will be twice your current size and power (That is all of your attributes will double, but your weight will quadruple.) Congratulations on reaching Troll Haven.



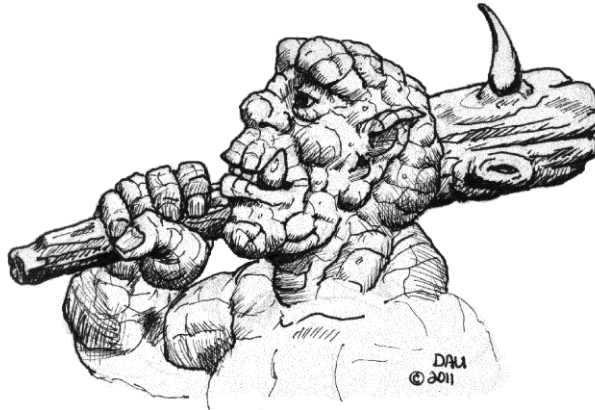
THE END

Trolls for the Delving

Just in case you don't have any big rock trolls for this adventure, I'm putting in the stats for a few of the champions of Trollhalla. You don't need weapons, armor, or money. This is all about your basic trollish self going way down deep.

--**Ken St. Andre** 1/12/2011

STR - 104
CON - 101
INT - 64
WIZ - 59
LK - 90
DEX - 90
CHR - 68
SPD - 83
Adds - 319



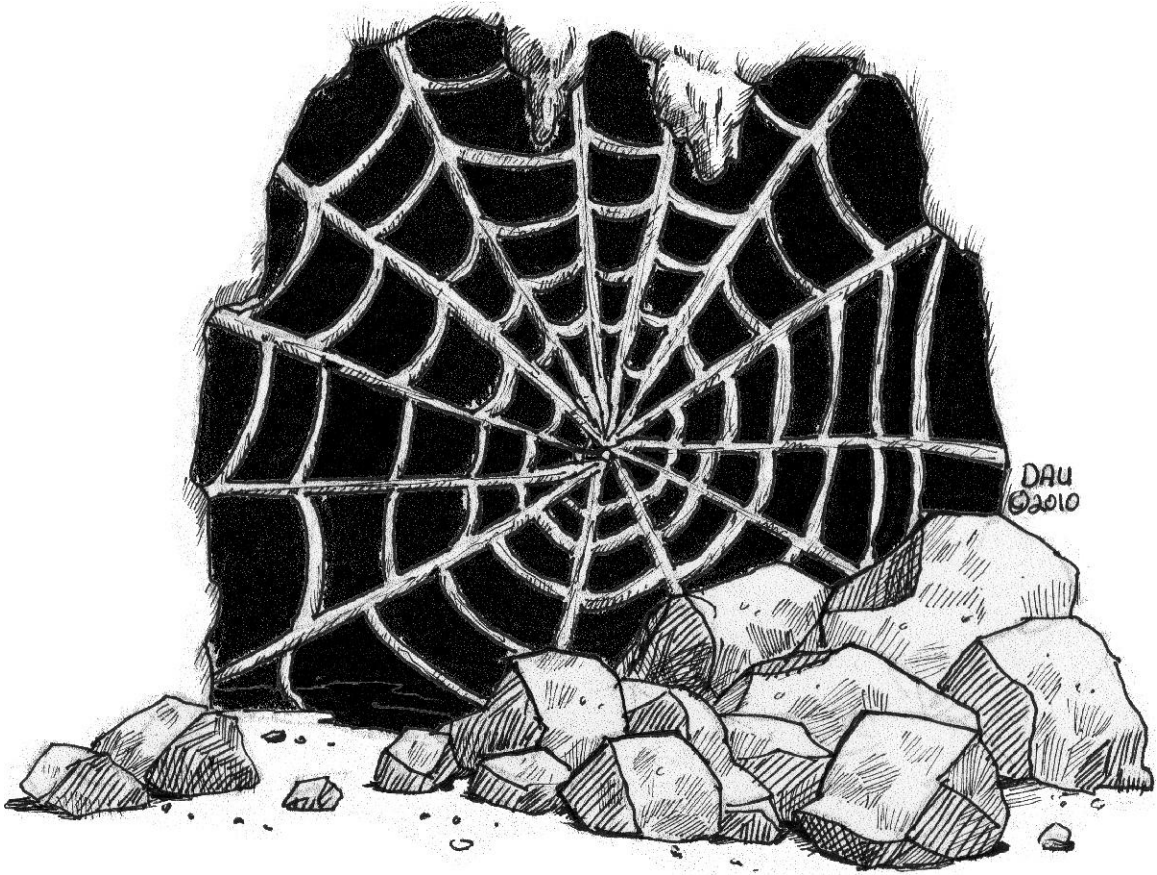
STR - 50
CON - 105
INT - 80
WIZ - 51
LK - 46
DEX - 54
CHR - 72
SPD - 45
Adds - 147



STR - 159
CON - 36
INT - 7
WIZ - 7
LK - 31
DEX - 9
CHR - 9
SPD - 7
Adds - 164







TROLLHALLA PRESS