

HackMaster



The Temple of Unrelenting Despair

by Kurt Evans

The Temple of Unrelenting Despair is a HackMaster adventure designed for five player characters of 5th level (less experienced parties should either be more numerous or particularly capable while more experienced groups should be limited to four party members). The group should ideally contain a thief, cleric and at least two competent fighting men. If one of these three roles is not filled by a player, then it is advisable for the GM to offer the services of an NPC with the missing skill set! (Or, you could let your sniveling players ignore this suggestion and skip off to a bloody demise.)

The specific location is set in the wild borderlands of P'Bapar, but the GM may choose to place the temple at the outskirts of almost any region where human settlements can be found.

Adventure Summary

The PCs encounter a tortured, pregnant woman with a horrible tale. She directs them to the place of her captivity, where they find an underground complex with a strange mixture of humans and orcs, all members of a cult of the Overlord. The players learn that the human cultists have been overwhelmed by the orcs, who capture prisoners while on raids, eating those they desire and letting the humans sacrifice the remainder to the Overlord.

Making their way through the temple, the PCs finally encounter its most powerful cultists, as well as the great lizards they hope to someday unleash upon the outside world.

Background

The complex was not always a Temple of the Overlord (E'Patali in the Kalamaran tongue, or Vraol in Orcish). The origins of the underground temple have been lost to the ages, although in the corners and along the walls, close inspection may reveal the defaced forms of dwarven frescos and other telltale signs of their keen architecture. The original builders of the underground complex matter not to those who reside there freely for they are focused on a different purpose, while those who reside there by force have little to

inspect, save their own filth and the brutalized bodies of their comrade slaves. Otherwise, few know of the Temple's existence.

What is more commonly known is this – northeast of Frandor's Keep, in the mountainous expanse between the village of Vew and the so-called Duchy of Bandran, dwell unknown numbers of orcs. These monstrous humanoids are notorious for their brutal methods of abducting humans, turning women into breeder-slaves and for slaughtering any who serve no immediate purpose in their goal of expansion and regional domination.

Yet, in one area close to Frandor's Keep, these beasts have not killed all who cross their paths. Instead, they are abducting everyone they encounter – man, woman and child – and disappearing into the mountains. None know why this is occurring, and none have had the courage to find out – until now.

The Hook

Encounter: Dalara (0 EPs)

Potential Story Awards:

Bringing Dalara back to safety (10 EP)

This 'hook' encounter should ideally occur as the PCs are traveling alone. Alternatively, you may stage it to occur at one of the way stations on the borderland road that connects Frandor's Keep to Vew or at some other settled venue. In the latter case, there should be some contingency made to permit the players to be the first individuals Dalara encounters. Read or paraphrase the following text upon their initial with the woman.

A visibly pregnant woman suddenly stumbles into your line of sight. Between you and what was likely a once-comely face is a layer of caked-on blood and filth – and yet, her expression of despair is still easy to identify. She is dressed in dirty, bloody rags and her bare feet are split and bleeding. She looks desperately toward you, but says nothing. Instead, she loudly moans, stumbles, and faints!

The woman is suffering from physical abuse compounded by exposure, malnutrition and dehydration as the result of her flight from captivity. None of these maladies are critical. If treated by an individual with Novice or better mastery of First Aid, she recovers quickly. Failing that, she regains consciousness in fifteen minutes. When she finally speaks, the first words out of her mouth are as disturbing as the players' first glimpse of the woman!

Her tortured eyes stare deep into yours as she cradles her swollen stomach in her arms.

"When it comes, you must kill it."

This is all she says, but by the way that she holds her belly closely, it is obvious what she means. She begins crying again.

Note: Some parties are, to be frank, "hack happy." They wield a blade without care or thought. If they don't kill the woman when they find her, then they may certainly be inclined to slaughter her when they learn she will bear a half-orc child in three or four months. Therefore, use your judgment – if she is about to be killed, and you wish to deliver the hook, you may choose to step up the rate in which she reveals her information! (Don't be afraid to point out the following fact to your players: she is a beaten and bloody woman who clearly carries no weapons. They should know better!)

During questioning, the woman reveals her name – Dalara – and delivers some essential information to the group. She informs them that she – along with her husband and several other traveling merchants – was abducted in an orkin raid five or six months previous. She isn't sure of what happened to her husband, but guesses that he is dead.

They kept Dalara in an "underground building", she says, located in the mountains north of where the PCs are now. Several days previous – Dalara's not sure about how many, as her sense of time has deteriorated since her imprisonment began – a man in a hooded

robe retrieved her from the pen where she'd been held with the other breeders, and took her into his private quarters. From there, he opened a hidden compartment and dragged her into a cavernous area. His intentions were never revealed, however, as the rage from her long imprisonment finally overwhelmed her. She was able to fight him off and flee out of the cavern. To her surprise, she exited into broad daylight, on a cliff face several hundred feet above ground.

Against all odds, with only her bare hands and feet, Dalara was able to climb down the cliff without losing her footing. She then proceeded to flee southwards, which eventually led to her encounter with the PCs.

She can provide the players with the direction she came from and sufficient landmarks including the unique and easily distinguishable cliff face to permit them to reach the temple after a day's march.

▶ Those thinking of employing the Interrogation skill (automatic success as Dalara is a willing subject) should be rewarded with the following itemized list of salient points:

- It is not common for orcs to dwell in an underground "building," rather than underground caverns, apart from those rare instances when they are able to overrun and successfully occupy a dwarven hall.
- The presence of a "man in a hooded robe" is bizarre, especially because it was a tribe of orcs that captured Dalara.
- His transportation of her into a cavernous area (apparently on the sly) continues the confounding nature of her strange tale.

Start

The PCs have learned of the temple and have been given adequate directions to seek it out.

Read or paraphrase any boxed text aloud to the players when they enter a new area.

From a distance, you see only a jagged cliff face with strange shadows that dance in the sunset. Could there really be an intricate complex cut into the rock, accessible by scaling that 200-foot high wall?

▶ The cliff face is by no means smooth and climbing may be attempted by anyone with Novice or better mastery in Climbing/Rappelling. Utilizing pitons (i.e. iron spikes) makes this an average skill check whereas a bare climb requires a difficult skill check. A successful check allows the climber to scale the cliff face while a failed check means he encounters difficulty around the fifty-foot mark. He may press on but a second skill check is required and failing this results in the character plummeting to the ground (from a height of $d12 \times 10 + 50$ feet - almost certainly resulting in death.) Thieves may naturally employ their luck points to prevent such a catastrophe (assuming they haven't expended them all avoiding *mêlée* hits - after all, scenarios such as this are their intended use!)

▶ Subsequent climbers may make use of knotted rope to assist their climb provided the party has sufficient stores. (The Rope Use skill is required to transform ordinary rope to knotted rope. Novice mastery permits conversion with a 50% loss in overall length meaning 400 feet of raw rope is required to dangle a knotted rope from the top. Each step in mastery improves efficiency by 10% such that an expert can make a knotted rope that is 80% efficient and requires just 250 feet of raw rope). Scaling the cliff with a knotted rope is an easy difficulty check while raw rope requires an average check.

As a last resort, a character may tie a rope around himself* and be hauled upwards. Those at the top must be able to Lift** twice the character's weight in order to pull him safely to the top.

* Unless the character tying the knots has an average or better Rope Use mastery, make an

average rope use skill check as the character is halfway up. Failure means the shoddy knots loosen and the character tumbles to his death.

** See Strength ability score chart on p. 11 of the *HackMaster Player's Handbook*.

▶ Characters may wonder how the bedraggled woman was able to scale down this cliff. She did not. By acting on this knowledge, they may scour the area looking for an easier avenue of approach. For every fifteen minutes spent searching, permit anyone doing so a [Difficult] Observation check. Success reveals an overgrown switchback path that leads to Room 10.

1) Cliff Entrance

Encounter: Hippogriff (492 EP)

Potential Yield: feathers (for spell components), head (for trophy), jeweled hair comb (180 sp)

Potential Story Awards:

Identifying that the corpses here were tortured and ritualistically sacrificed (10 EP)

This room is open from the cliff face and may only be entered by either scaling the cliff or finding the secret path and fighting back through the temple.

When the players reach the entrance, read or paraphrase the following.

As you finally reach the opening, you are greeted by a horrific sight. Before you is an expansive and intricately cut room with 10 ornate - but severely desecrated - pillars supporting the complex. Toward the back of the room is a bizarre marble statue that appears to depict some kind of horrendous fiend, which the floor seems to gently slope down toward.

You also see ten naked figures attached to chains that dangle from hooks on the ceiling!

To make matters worse, a large monstrous quadruped, seemingly the offspring of an eagle and a horse, is using its great hooked beak to rip flesh off one of the nearest bodies in a savage feast.

▶ A successful Observation check (Average) reveals that none of the bodies are moving and that they appear bloodied and bruised.

The hippogriff eyes any observer warily as it dines. If they do not approach or attack it from afar, it feeds for another ten minutes then, sated, flies away.

Examining the bodies reveals that nine are male and one female and that all are human. Each has been stabbed a single time in the chest.

▶ If the PCs carefully examine the corpse of the lone female, a successful Observation check (Average) notices the glint of metal buried deep in her long hair. The item, somehow missed by her captors, is a small silver comb with a lapis lazuli handle. It is worth 180 sp.

Hippogriff (492 EP): HP 44; Init -1; Spd 3; Rch short; Atk +9; Dmg 2d6p x2 (2 claw attacks) or 2d10p (beak); Def +2; DR 3; Saves p9/m8/d11; ToP 17/7; FF -2; Move 10 ft./sec (fly 40 ft)

2) Foyer

This square room contains four more of the columns you saw outside, while the walls seem to be naught but doors. The entrance door lies to the south, with another door in the northern wall. Four further doors, two in the western wall and two in the eastern wall, also wait to be explored.

Kruush, the Orc Chieftain who runs the temple holds a superstitious belief that “right” is evil and “left” is good. Thus, the Temple is divided in such a way that the “inferior” things – such as the cultists, the slaves, and so on – are usually kept on the right-hand side,

while “superior” objects (such as orcs) are predominantly on the left. Orcs encountered in the right side of the temple or a room on the right side of a corridor are typically the lowest in the hierarchy, while any human cultists found on the left side are usually the highest-ranking humans.

Hallway 1 (H1)

Encounter: The Heel Impaler Trap

Potential Story Awards:

□ Identifying the Heel Impaler traps (200 EP for the first one found before any injuries occur, 10 EP for each subsequent trap found without accidentally triggering it)

This corridor contains eight “Heel Impaler” traps (see *Deadly Trappings* on page 26 for details).

If the PCs enter, read or paraphrase the following:

The hallway, which appears to be approximately 12 feet in length, is empty of decoration save for its tiled floor. It appears only to serve as a passageway between rooms.

If a PC activates a trap, continue:

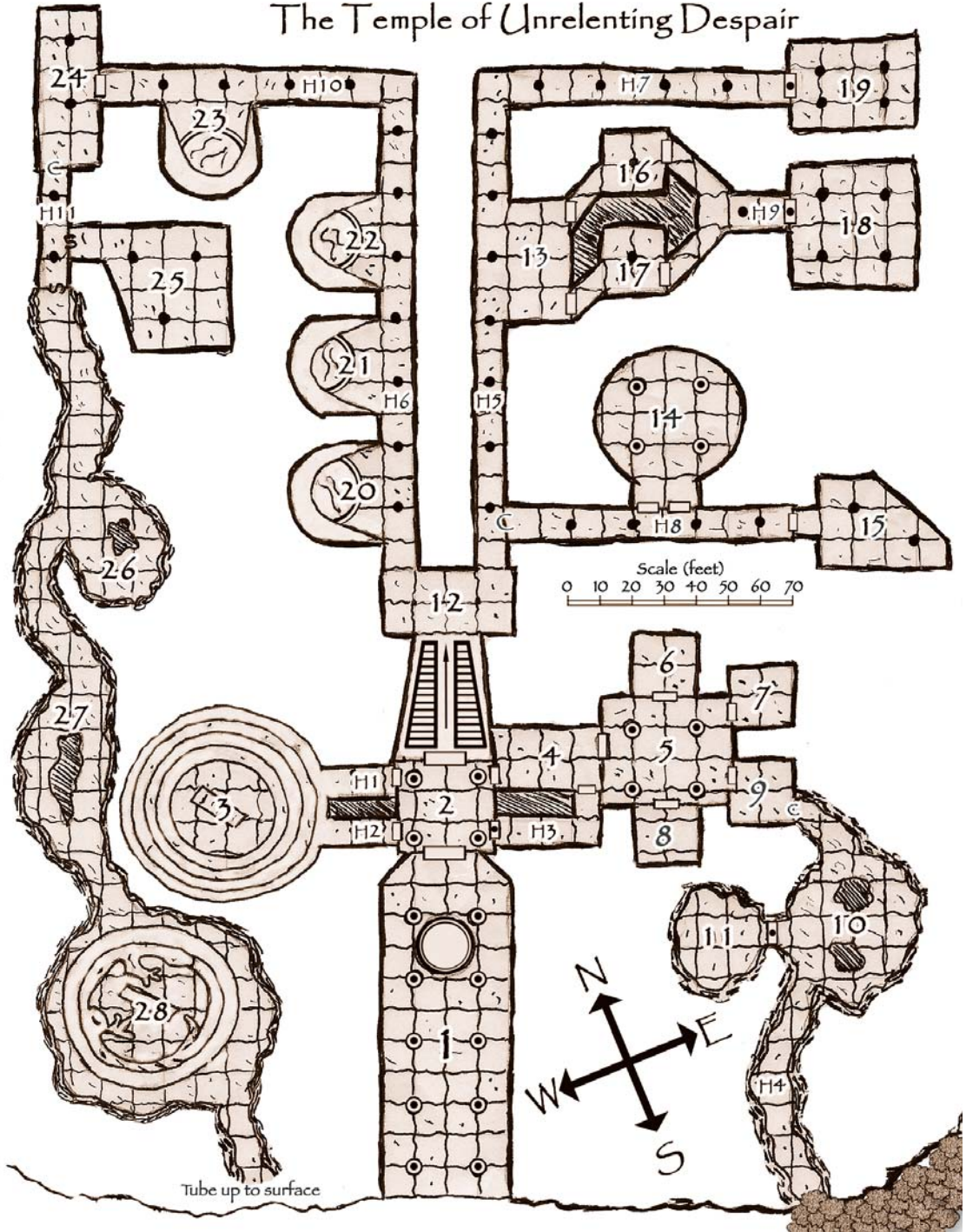
As you walk, you hear a distinct snapping sound, as the floor beneath your foot gives way. A sharp iron spike penetrates your boot, driving into the sole of your foot and through to the other side!

Hallway 1 is filled with ‘heel impaler’ traps. Hallway 2 is identical to Hallway 1, but untrapped.

Hallway 3 is accessible from Room 2 via a locked door, and provides safe passage to the back part of Room 4.

The remaining door in Room 2 also leads into Room 4.

The Temple of Unrelenting Despair



3) The Grand Altar

Encounter: 4 human cultists (100 EP)

Potential Yield: sacrificial dagger (300 sp)

Potential Story Awards:

- Surmizing that this altar is used exclusively for animal sacrifice (25 EP)
- Using robes as a disguise (variable EPs)

This room is reminiscent of certain temples of The Theater of the Arts, with a circular stage lower than the terraced seating that rings it. Yet, this room boasts not even the crudest or simplest of chairs, merely stone levels where one might sit or kneel. Furthermore, in the center is no farce or comedy being enacted before your eyes, but a stone altar covered with rust-brown stains.

Treasure Notes: If this adventure is being played in its default location (i.e. north of Frandor's Keep), the Bounty Master Kip (see location M9a in *Frandor's Keep*) will pay a 1 sp bounty for every humanoid head delivered to him. Any orcs in the Temple of Unrelenting Despair are fair game to be decapitated and their heads exchanged for this bounty.

All of the temple faithful (orcs and humans alike) wear thick robes. These differentiate their rank with minions wearing orange garments and the clergy dressed as appropriate to their rank within the order. Except as specifically noted, no one wears body armor or utilizes shields (the statistics blocks reflect this). The orcs wield crudely manufactured scimitars (of no value) while the humans employ scourges (the latter possible to resell to an arms merchant [see M10: Dasas' Goods if using Frandor's Keep as a 'home base'] – though no one is likely to purchase more than a few of these weapons as demand is rather limited.) All adherents of the Overlord also wear a divine icon of some sort but no buyers for such evil paraphernalia will be found in the civilized world.

Numerous tapestries are found throughout the complex. Anyone with even novice mastery in Appraisal: Textiles will know that the subject matter (adoration for The Overlord) renders them valueless except to a very specific clientele that would be extremely unlikely to purchase these openly.

Orc and human minions do not carry 'pocket change' as coinage has no intrinsic value to them with no means of spending it.

Used clothing (to include any minion's robes) is difficult to resell and utterly valueless if bloodied and torn as the result of combat. If the 'heroes' are insistent upon squeezing out every copper piece, apparel and footwear (once cleaned) may possibly garner 25% of book price but this will entail the characters setting up a 'flea market' stall and hawking the goods personally *and watching their Honor plummet on a daily basis as they do so...*

Prostrated around this altar are several figures in orange robes. The only lighting here comes from the torch sconces set upon the wall, alternating with many tapestries, each of a deep red and woven with the symbol of a mailed fist.

Suddenly, the meditative moods of the figures change as, one by one, they turn to see you, hatred on their faces.

Beneath the altar is a secret compartment that contains a sacrificial dagger with a silvered blade and an intricate handle bejeweled with four bloodstones (worth 300 sp). This compartment is not trapped, but it is well concealed and requires a "find secret door" check (a 1 in 6 chance for a PC to find it, or a 1 in 3 chance for a thief).

▶ Additionally, a successful Observation check (Difficult) notices tufts of animal fur scattered near the altar, and a few pieces of scat that do not appear human (or orkin) in nature.

4 Human Cultists (100 EP): HP 26; Init 2; Spd 9; Rch 1½'; Atk +2; Dmg 2d4p; Def 0; DR 1; Saves p0/m0/d0; ToP 10/6; FF -2; Move 10 ft./sec; Skills listening 11, observation 11, resist persuasion 11

Equipment: scourge, thick robes, divine icon

If the players strip the cultists of their robes, thinking that they may wear them and move more easily throughout the temple, they should receive a Story Award for such cleverness (see below). However, the actual utility of this action varies. Merely wearing the robes while retaining shields and standard weaponry is less likely to be effective.

▶ To utilize the robes effectively, a PC must be human, or have such a mastery of the Disguise skill that he can alter his apparent race. He also must also not bear a shield nor any weapon other than a scourge (though size M weapons other than bows and crossbows may be concealed under the robes). This disguise will fool any orc cultist as they are rather dumb and cannot tell humans apart. It will not fool any human cultist though for they are few enough in number to know each other by name. Human cultists will certainly inquire who they are. A successful Fast Talking (Average) or Intimidation skill check will suffice to end their questioning.

In the case of PCs wearing robes improperly (e.g. along with shields and swords) or the ruse of a few party members in robes 'escorting' armed 'prisoners', orcs will hesi-

tate in their attacks sufficiently for the use of the Intimidation skill (which if successfully employed will allow them to pass). Note that the presence of elves, half-elves, dwarves, gnomes or halflings negates any such advantage and the orcs will attack immediately. Human cultists will never be duped by this ruse.

Suggested Story Awards:

Award 500 EPs if one or more PCs dons the orange robes and attempts to blend in by holding a scourge, not using a shield and concealing their other weaponry. If they merely don the robes but retain their standard adventuring gear, lower this to 200 EPs. Subsequently award full combat EPs for any encounter the disguises permit them to avoid.

4) Asp Room

Encounter: 2 asps (266 EP)

Potential Story Award:

❑ Finding and disarming the Venomous Visitors trap (242 EP to identify, 67 to disarm)

This room exists for one purpose alone – to serve as entertainment for the cultists. If they have too many prisoners, or are simply bored, they may grab a slave, take him to the entrance to this room and promise him that freedom is on the other side. Little does the poor fool realize that his only freedom is a painful death!

Each of the chamber's doors swing outwards. A taut wire is stretched across each door's threshold at a height of nine inches. The first person to enter the room will trigger this trap unless the wire is found.

▶ Attempting to Identify Traps prior to opening the door is fruitless. Once opened, the wire may be found with a successful skill check (Average). It may be disarmed by simply cutting it as the trap is dependent on the wire being pulled. As such, a Disarm Trap check is Trivial (assume for simplicity's sake that the standard set of thieves tool contains a wire cutter).

The wires are connected to a ceramic pot balanced precariously atop a shelf in the middle of the southern wall. Pulling the wire topples the pot thus freeing the two asps contained within. The fall makes them very agitated and they strike out at whomever stands closest to them!

2 Asps (266 EP): HP 5 each; Init -2; Spd 10; Rch short; Atk +6; Dmg 1 (+VF9 poison); Def +4; DR 0; Saves p1/m1/d6; ToP 2/4; FF 2; Move 5 ft./sec

Notes: Failed saves vs poison cause -2 to Atk, Def and Dmg for 2d12 hours ('nat 1' is instant death); may spit venom up to 5 ft at eyes (save or make CON check to avoid Trauma check and temporary blindness)

5) Empty Room

Four columns support this rectangular stone room. Five doors exit it – one to the west, one each to the north and south, and two on the easternmost wall.

GM Note:

Rooms 6,7,and 8 should be considered a single encounter. Depending on the time of day (daytime or nighttime), either the orcs of human cultists will be awake. They should be entitled a listening check (Average difficulty barring any unusual and noisy actions taken by the PCs in Room 5) to hear the intruders unless all such are employing the sneaking skill. If they are alerted, they will noisily exit their room and permit the occupants of the other rooms to join the fracas after a 60 second delay to prepare themselves for battle.

Players may attempt to bar the doors to prevent exit but success requires a competing Feat of Strength check versus the occupant (Orcs having 15 Strength and the human cultists 11).

6) Orc Sleeping Quarters

Encounter: 2 orc cultists (68 EP) per room

This room contains four simple wooden bunkbeds, each three beds high and covered with rumpled bedding. A red and brown tapestry with the symbol of a mailed fist adorns one wall.

Searching beneath the straw mats and bedding (the clothing of captured victims) finds nothing of value.

2 Orc Cultists (68 EP): HP 29, 28, 27 x2; Init 4; Spd 9; Rch 3'; Atk +3; Dmg 2d8p+2; Def -2; DR 1; Saves p4/m1/d3; ToP 12/6; FF -1/0; Move 10 ft./sec; Skills listening 25, observation 25, resist persuasion 5

Equipment: crude scimitar, thick robes (soiled), divine icon

7) Orc Sleeping Quarters

Encounter: 2 orc cultists (68 EP)

This room is so similar to Room 6 as to be almost identical.

2 Orc Cultists (68 EP): HP 29, 28, 27 x2; Init 4; Spd 9; Rch 3'; Atk +3; Dmg 2d8p+2; Def -2; DR 1; Saves p4/m1/d3; ToP 12/6; FF -1/0; Move 10 ft./sec; Skills listening 25, observation 25, resist persuasion 5

Equipment: crude scimitar, thick robes (soiled), divine icon

8) Sleeping Quarters

Encounter: 2 human cultists (50 EP)

The floor of this room is almost completely obscured by articles of clothing, arranged into perhaps a dozen roughly rectangular patterns about the height of a man.

The growing power of the orcs, and the dwindling numbers of the human cultists, forced the remaining humans to band together. The orcs have even begun to expand their presence into what once were the cultists' living quarters. Most of the human cultists now

spend their sleeping hours cramped in this one tiny room. Like the orcs, they use the clothing of their victims as bedding.

2 Human Cultists (50 EP): HP 26; Init 2; Spd 9; Rch 1½'; Atk +2; Dmg 2d4p; Def 0; DR 1; Saves p0/m0/d0; ToP 10/6; FF -2; Move 10 ft./sec; Skills listening 11, observation 11, resist persuasion 11

Equipment: scourge, thick robes, divine icon

9) Storeroom

Potential Yield: 400 ft of hemp rope (32 cp), 2 sheets vellum (4 sp), 3 short bows (90 sp), 1 sling (½ cp), 4 sling stones, 22 crude scimitars (worthless), 6 knives (3 sp), 21 torches (3½ cp), piles of old clothing

This room contains a jumble of items piled into the corners, hanging from pegs in the walls, and hooks in the ceiling.

Many of the items are mismatched, broken and useless, but others (noted under yield) may be potentially useful. *All monetary values listed are for new items - resale value may be significantly lower.*

▶ The concealed door is located behind a mound of old clothing piled against the wall. If the clothing is moved away, the door is clearly evident.

10) Minodar's Madness

Encounter: Minodar, the Mad Cultist (133 EP)

Potential Yield: Longsword +1

Potential Story Awards:

Recruiting Minodar as an ally (75 EP)

If the PCs find the hidden door, or enter the temple through the tunnel, read or paraphrase the following text.

As you pry open the door, you discover that the finely crafted architecture immediately gives way to the rocky walls of an untouched subterranean lair. There are no natural lights in this place, but your own light source reveals that somebody – or something – has been using this cavern as a place of residence. Scattered all across the dirty ground are various pieces of junk – backpacks that have been torn asunder; torches that have been burned to a nub, armor that appears rusted or damaged beyond repair, swords that are broken or have loose hilts – in other words, little that is of use.

Beyond, you see a robed human male clambering over the junk – seemingly to evade you. The noises of shifting junk and his wheezing breath echo through the room.

When he spots the PCs, he grabs a sword from the floor, moves to the door in the western wall and blocks it with his body. If the PCs approach the cultist, he waves his wicked-looking longsword and screams “You can’t take them!” in the Kalamaran tongue. However, he does not attack first. If the PCs attempt to talk with him, they discover that Minodar is a very simple man, though somewhat deranged. If questioned about what lies within the room beyond (Room 11), he responds in a very ‘Gollum-like’ fashion, “My loves, my loves.”

Once he has been either dispatched or recruited (perhaps by Intimidation or Recruiting, or promising him all the female slaves), the PCs may search the chamber without incident. They may find any number of items which are available in *Chapter Six: Armor, Weapons and Equipment (HackMaster Basic)* or *Chapter 12: Goods, Services and Equipment (HackMaster Player’s Handbook)*, but none of which are of serviceable use. It appears as though the cultist was a tremendous pack rat!

At the opposite end from the secret door is a narrow tunnel that, if followed, eventually leads to a large pile of dry brush that conceals an exit (as noted at the beginning of this adventure).

Behind a pile of rotted or damaged leather armor (there are at least 20 non-usable pieces of armor in this heap) and other junk is a locked door (to Room 11).

In the southern part of the room is Hallway 4, leading to the hidden entrance.

Minodar (133 EP): see “*Casting Call*” on page 57

11) Minodar’s Harem

Encounter: 3 slave women (0 EP)

Potential Story Awards:

☐ Bringing the slaves to safety (25 EP awarded when they reach civilization - *if simply set free they perish in the wilderness*)

This small chamber contains three half-starved slaves, as well as the remains of a half-dozen more. These women were at one point in the orkin breeding pens, but have since then been secreted away by the mad cultist. Two women are visibly pregnant.

All three suffer from “Stockholm Syndrome” and resist being rescued unless Minodar goes with them. If the PCs killed Minodar, the women begin crying and lamenting.

▶ The slaves can be moved by force or a successful skill check (such as Diplomacy, Intimidation or Seduction).

3 Female Slaves (0 EP): N Baparan human; HP 2 (normally 19); Init +3; Def +1; DR 0; ToP 6/ 4

Notable Skills: language (Baparan 75, resist persuasion 12)

12) Stairway

Encounter: orc cultist (34 EP), 2 human cultists (50 EP)

Beyond is a stairway, descending approximately 20 feet. On either side of the stairway are long red and brown wool tapestries. These intricate items artistically show a number of, frankly, frightening acts, including a powerful-looking orc overwhelming a human in battle, another human being crushed in a giant mailed fist, and so-on.

At the bottom of stairs stand three robed figures.

Opening the door from Area 2 and entering the stairwell with lit torches will automatically alert the guards. Roll for initiative at this point.

If a lone scout sneaks ahead, he may have greater success for the guards are not particularly observant. Have him make both a Hiding and Sneaking check (no adjustments) versus each guard using the latter's Observation mastery. Success on the six checks means the thief has slinked past the guards and may proceed with other actions.

Reinforcements:

⇒ 30 seconds after combat is initiated with the cultists in Area 12, the two orc cultist guards in Hallway 5 (H5) will react and begin moving towards the battle.

⇒ After 60 seconds, both the orc cultist and his orkin wardog standing guard at the Cleansing Chambers Foyer (Area 13) as well as the 4 orc cultists in Hallway 6 (H6) react and being moving to investigate the sounds of mêlée in Area 12 (the latter leave the two human cultists in charge of the slave). If the battle has already been concluded, these new arrivals will immediately launch an assault unless a majority of the PCs are all garbed in orange robes. In the latter instance, the players are given an opportunity to bluff their way out of the situation or at least buy a few seconds of time as they attempt to explain who they are.

⇒ 90 seconds after combat began, the three orc cultists in Hallway 7 will react and move towards Area 12. If mêlée is still occurring, they will reinforce any cultists there. If not, they may be encountered heading south along Hallway 5.

No other cultists will investigate a commotion in this area.

Subsequent "read aloud" text may have to be altered if the area's occupants responded to a battle in this area and are no longer encountered at their initial positions.

Orc Cultist (34 EP): HP 28; Init 4; Spd 9; Rch 3'; Atk +3; Dmg 2d8p+2; Def -2; DR 1; Saves p4/m1/d3; ToP 12/6; FF -1/0; Move 10 ft./sec; Skills listening 25, observation 25, resist persuasion 5

Equipment: crude scimitar, thick robes (soiled), divine icon

2 Human Cultists (50 EP): HP 26; Init 2; Spd 9; Rch 1½'; Atk +2; Dmg 2d4p; Def 0; DR 1; Saves p0/m0/d0; ToP 10/6; FF -2; Move 10 ft./sec; Skills listening 11, observation 11, resist persuasion 11

Equipment: scourge, thick robes, divine icon

Hallway 5

Encounter: 2 orc cultists (68 EP)

This leads to rooms that are occupied by cultists, orkin slaves and breeders. Lining this hallway are more tapestries. Approximately 8 feet into Hallway 5 is a concealed door that leads to Hallway 8. This door is simply hidden behind one of the tapestries.

2 Orc Cultists (68 EP): HP 28, 27; Init 4; Spd 9; Rch 3'; Atk +3; Dmg 2d8p+2; Def -2; DR 1; Saves p4/m1/d3; ToP 12/6; FF -1/0; Move 10 ft./sec; Skills listening 25, observation 25, resist persuasion 5

Equipment: crude scimitar, thick robes (soiled), divine icon, 2 sp and 15 cp each

Hallway 6

Encounter: 4 orc cultists (136 EP), 2 human cultists (50 EP), slave (0 EP)

This long hallway is on the western side of Room 12 and connects many of the cleansing pools. Within the hallway itself are a handful of orcs and cultists, although none may be aware of the PCs' presence. In fact, these orcs are heavily pre-occupied terrorizing one or more slaves.

Once the PCs enter, read or paraphrase the following.

As you enter another long hallway, your attention is immediately directed toward activity located off to the left of the hallway in a circular, open chamber. You see several robed figures pummeling a naked man about the stomach, and dipping his head repeatedly beneath a shimmering, clean pool.

His cries of anguish are nearly drowned out by the gruff laughter of his oppressors. They are so focused on the beating that they fail to notice you as you step toward them!

Once the battle starts, all the enemies currently in this hall move to attack.

► If a battle ensues in this hallway, roll a Listening skill check (Very Difficult; +10%) for each individual foe in the adjoining Hallway 10. If successful, that foe arrives within 6+d12 seconds.

4 Orc Cultists (136 EP): HP 28 x2, 27; Init 4; Spd 9; Rch 3'; Atk +3; Dmg 2d8p+2; Def -2; DR 1; Saves p4/m1/d3; ToP 12/6; FF -1/0; Move 10 ft./sec; Skills listening 25, observation 25, resist persuasion 5

Equipment: crude scimitar, thick robes (soiled), divine icon

2 Human Cultists (50 EP): HP 26; Init 2; Spd 9; Rch 1½'; Atk +2; Dmg 2d4p; Def 0; DR 1; Saves p0/m0/d0; ToP 10/6; FF -2; Move 10 ft./sec; Skills listening 11, observation 11, resist persuasion 11

Equipment: scourge, thick robes, divine icon

Male Slave (0 EP): N Baparan human; HP 2 (normally 20); Init +2; Def +2; DR 0; ToP 6/5
Notable Skills: language (Baparan) 74, resist persuasion 11

13) Cleansing Chambers Foyer

Encounter: orc cultist (34 EP); orkin wardawg (122 EP)

This room contains an orc and a lesser orkin wardawg, assuming that they did not hear the battle in Area 12. If they were aware of the battle, and engaged the PCs, then this room is empty.

Orc Cultist (34 EP): HP 26; Init 4; Spd 9; Rch 3'; Atk +3; Dmg 2d8p+2; Def -2; DR 1; Saves p4/m1/d3; ToP 12/6; FF -1/0; Move 10 ft./sec; Skills listening 25, observation 25, resist persuasion 5

Equipment: crude scimitar, thick robes (soiled), divine icon, 7 sp

Lesser Orkin Wardawg (122 EP): HP 45; Init 0; Spd 9; Rch short; Atk +7; Dmg 4d4p+1; Def +3; DR 4; Saves p7/m5/d7; ToP 18/8; FF 2; Move 20 ft./sec; Skills listening 70, tracking 70

Hallway 7

Encounter: 3 orc cultists (102 EP)

This long hallway leads to the breeding pens. It is commonly patrolled by orcs, assuming that they did not respond to a commotion elsewhere in the lair. If they were aware of such a battle, and engaged the PCs, then this hallway is empty.

3 Orc Cultists (102 EP): HP 28 x2, 27; Init 4; Spd 9; Rch 3'; Atk +3; Dmg 2d8p+2; Def -2; DR 1; Saves p4/m1/d3; ToP 12/6; FF -1/0; Move 10 ft./sec; Skills listening 25, observation 25, resist persuasion 5

Equipment: crude scimitar, thick robes (soiled), divine icon

Hallway 8

Encounter: orc cultist (34 EP)

This hallway is approximately 45 feet long. There are no tapestries or other items of note along this path.

Battle with this sentry will alter the occupants of Areas 14 and 15 affording them a d4 Initiative die.

Orc Cultist (34 EP): HP 26; Init 4; Spd 9; Rch 3'; Atk +3; Dmg 2d8p+2; Def -2; DR 1; Saves p4/m1/d3; ToP 12/6; FF -1/0; Move 10 ft./sec; Skills listening 25, observation 25, resist persuasion 5

Equipment: crude scimitar, thick robes (soiled), divine icon

14) Prayer Chamber

Encounter: Domir Ranacren (242 EP), 4 human cultists (100 EP), 12 slaves (0 EP)

Potential Yield: Scimitar +1, Ringmail +1, keys to the slave and breeding pens, 44 sp, 22 cp

Potential Story Awards:

- Discovering the foul purpose of Ranacren's sacrifice rituals (400 EP)
- Nursing prisoners and returning them to civilization (20 EP per individual)

As you open the door, you discover a large, circular room with four pillars. Three naked, visibly malnourished humans are chained to each pillar.

In the center are four robed men, plus another wearing ringmail armor and wielding a scimitar. They look up toward you not with fear but anticipation! The man in the center, wielding a shining blade, laughs and says, "It is as the Great One foretold. You bring more flesh to feed our destiny!"

► If the PCs manage to avoid killing Ranacren, a successful Intimidation or Interrogation check is necessary to get the cultist to talk. If they succeed, Ranacren informs them of his background and his foul plot (as is also revealed in his journal, which may be found in Room 15).

The twelve humans who are chained to the pillars are weakened and near death. Even if released from their chains, they cannot walk

or aid themselves. If not given medical attention, they will die of starvation and torture within 24 hours.

► These captives must be nursed (i.e. tended to by an individual with at least Novice mastery of First Aid) for at least three days before they may travel. Three weeks care is required for them to recover fully.

Domir Ranacren: see "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly (p. 23)"

4 Human Cultists (100 EP): HP 26; Init 2; Spd 9; Rch 1½'; Atk +2; Dmg 2d4p; Def 0; DR 1; Saves p0/m0/d0; ToP 10/6; FF -2; Move 10 ft./sec; Skills listening 11, observation 11, resist persuasion 11

Equipment: scourge, thick robes, divine icon

12 Male Slaves (0 EP): N Baparan human; HP 1 (normally 20); Init +3; Def +1; DR 0; ToP 6/5

Notable Skills: language (Baparan 73, Merchant's Tongue 16), resist persuasion 10

15) Domir's Inner Sanctum

Encounter: 3 human cultists (75 EP)

Potential Story Awards:

- Reading the journal of Domir Ranacren (400 EP) (note; this Story Award is not available if the PCs torture the information out of Ranacren)

Beyond the door to this room you see what appears to be a simple bedchamber for a single occupant, its three larger walls decorated with reddish-brown tapestries bearing the symbol of a mailed fist. On the bare stone floor stand three human males dressed only in loincloths, using scourges to draw blood from their own backs, arms and legs. They turn to stare at you in surprise.

This room is the inner sanctum of Domir Ranacren. Within this room are three cultists, who are in the process of undergoing a trial by self-torture. Any cultist encountered in this room is brandishing a scourge, whipping his own body. In this case, the cultists are per-

forming self-flagellation (because they have somehow disappointed the order or failed to properly adhere to their duties).

- ▶ A Lock Picking check (Average) will open the locked chest to reveal Domir's Journal.

Written in Kalamaran, this journal reflects his plans, background and the reasons he is working with the Orcs. Should the PCs enquire as to what the journal says, inform them that most of it is a mundane droning on about Ranacren's philosophy of faith, while he also records in "epic detail" his longings for a third cousin whom he spent a drunken evening with some years previous.

- ▶ A character with Literacy (Kalamaran) can read the relevant passages.

...at last, our bond is complete. I have long sought to worship Vraol, whom is known in the human tongue as the Overlord! Sadly, most other humans who worship the Bringer of the New Order believe that they are superior to the orc. Oh, how wrong they are, to think that we, of weak flesh, could ever surpass the orkin warrior in sheer brute strength and power! I have long known that the orc was superior, ever since I witnessed firsthand their slaughter of that pathetic family near Vew...

(Several entries later)

We have found an empty lair that once seemed to have served as a temple. Through my strong faith, we shall establish a true church to the Overlord! We shall bring our terrible light to this entire pathetic region! With my faith as the Overlord's fist, and with these fierce orkin allies behind me, we shall soon run rampant over Frandor's Keep as the orc spreads again throughout the region like a dark plague! It will be most glorious!

(An entry dated six months later)

...it has gone wrong, so terribly wrong. The orkin leader Kruush, how he dogs me! He treats me like I am but a pet, a toy to play with! Almost every week, he and his warriors bully the pathetic human members of our order! If we are lucky, they only kick or punch! Many have died from their wounds, and Kindor does naught to help. He believes himself Kruush's equal in the divine hierarchy, though all can see he is a mere whipping boy to the orc priest.

(Later still)

...we continue to help round up deplorable human males and females to become sacrifices, slaves or breeders. The orkin numbers grow, even as my own diminish. My only hope now is that our blood-letting is not in vain, and that SHE will relinquish her children to us. Once they grow, they will see us as their true parents and follow our commands. Then the orcs will fall before us and we will reclaim our temple just as we will reclaim the region!

3 Human Cultists (75 EP): HP 12 (normally 26); Init 2; Spd 9; Rch 1½'; Atk +2; Dmg 2d4p; Def 0; DR 0; Saves p0/m0/d0; ToP 10/6; FF -2; Move 10 ft./sec; Skills listening 11, observation 11, resist persuasion 11

Equipment: scourge, divine icon

GM Note:

Rooms 16, 17 and H9 should be considered as a single encounter.

Reinforcements:

30 seconds after combat is initiated with the orc cultists in either Room 16 or 17, the orcs in the other Cleansing Chamber and those guarding the Slave Pens (in Hallway 9) will begin moving to investigate the commotion. If battle occurs in Room 16, the Orcs from Room 17 will enter from the western door and the two guards from the eastern door. If responding to a melee in

Area 17, both pairs of orcs will enter from the western door but the guards from H9 will be delayed 10 seconds.

16) Cleansing Chamber

Encounter: 2 orc cultists (68 EP); 4 slaves (0 EP)

Potential Yield: 4 buckets (5 gal each; 12 cp)

Potential Story Awards:

Bringing the slaves to civilization (10 EP per slave)

This square room holds no items other than buckets of water, rags and loincloths, all relatively clean.

Here, slaves who have been held in Room 23 are cleaned up and groomed for the first phase of their eventual sacrifice to Bugdush. (To outsiders, this may appear pointless as they are quickly taken to Room 14, where they are tortured until they are coated in their own blood, after which they are taken to the “cleansing pools” (Rooms 16-17, 24) to be cleaned again, and then sacrificed. At all times, the male sacrifices are bound in iron chains.

2 Orc Cultists (68 EP): HP 28, 27; Init 4; Spd 9; Rch 3'; Atk +3; Dmg 2d8p+2; Def -2; DR 1; Saves p4/m1/d3; ToP 12/6; FF -1/0; Move 10 ft./sec; Skills listening 25, observation 25, resist persuasion 5

Equipment: crude scimitar, thick robes (soiled), divine icon

4 Male Slaves (0 EP): N Baparan human; HP 3 (normally 21); Init +2; Def +2; DR 0; ToP 6/4

Notable Skills: language (Baparan) 75

17) Cleansing Chamber

Encounter: 2 orc cultists (68 EP); 4 slaves (0 EP)

Potential Story Awards:

Bringing the slaves to civilization (10 EP per slave)

This room is very similar in appearance to Room 16.

2 Orc Cultists (68 EP): HP 28, 27; Init 4; Spd 9; Rch 3'; Atk +3; Dmg 2d8p+2; Def -2; DR 1; Saves p4/m1/d3; ToP 12/6; FF -1/0; Move 10 ft./sec; Skills listening 25, observation 25, resist persuasion 5

Equipment: crude scimitar, thick robes (soiled), divine icon

4 Male Slaves (0 EP): N Baparan human; HP 3 (normally 21); Init +3; Def +1; DR 0; ToP 6/5

Notable Skills: language (Baparan) 74

Hallway 9

Encounter: 2 orc cultists (68 EP)

Potential Story Award:

Diffusing the trap (34 EP for identifying the trap; 33 EP for disarming it)

This forked hallway may be entered from either Room 16 or Room 17, where it combines into a single hallway leading toward Room 18, the slave pens. However, PCs should choose carefully, as the right-handed hallway (connecting to Room 17) has a painful – but not likely deadly – trap called “The Stone Fall.”

On either end of the southern hallway, before the fork connects, are wide panels in the floor that (when triggered) cause a panel in the ceiling to give way. Thereupon, the PCs are best by a rain of 4-pound bricks (d4p bricks per 5 foot square; dealing d4p damage with each impact). For each brick, the GM must roll a d20 to hit, while the PCs with shields need only roll a single Defense check to evade. PCs without shields must attempt to roll against each brick in their area.

This hallway is typically reserved for the most contentious slaves who are being prepped for sacrifice. Chuckling guards push these slaves down the trapped hallway, where the humans either trigger the trap or have the trap triggered for them by zealous orcs.

- ▶ An Identify Trap check (Average difficulty) locates the trap.
- ▶ Once identified, simply marking the triggering panel with chalk is an easy way to identify its location to others.

2 Orc Cultists (68 EP): HP 28, 27; Init 4; Spd 9; Rch 3'; Atk +3; Dmg 2d8p+2; Def -2; DR 1; Saves p4/m1/d3; ToP 12/6; FF -1/0; Move 10 ft./sec; Skills listening 25, observation 25, resist persuasion 5

Equipment: crude scimitar, thick robes (soiled), divine icon

18) Slave Pens

Encounter: Brendol Torist (67 EP), 15 male slaves

Potential Story Awards:

- Enlisting the aid of Brendol Torist (100 EP)
- Bringing the slaves to civilization (10 EP per slave)

A bolted metal door protects the pens. To open, the party needs the keys (which may be found on the person of Domir Ranacren or Kruush), or the lock needs to be picked.

- ▶ Opening the door requires an Open Locks check (Average difficulty); alternatively it may be bashed open with a Feat of Strength (with the door receiving d20+14)

Once the door is open, read or paraphrase the following.

As the door swings open, you are assaulted by the rank smell of filth and feces. In the darkness of the room, your light reveals at least a dozen male slaves who have, by all accounts, been there for too long. These sickly-looking males shield their eyes from your light source, and it takes them several moments to recognize that you are not the slavers who have kept them at bay, but before long one gruff voice mutters.

"This be our chance for freedom, boys! RUN!"

The slaves all bolt for freedom; if the PCs attack, the slave takes the hit and keeps running for the entrance.

- ▶ With a quick shout and a successful Intimidation or Diplomacy check, the PCs

are able to stop Brendol from fleeing, but the other slaves fail to heed the call.

If healed and supplied with equipment, Brendol can accompany the PCs, or aid them in rescuing any other slaves from the temple.

Brendol Torist, see "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly" (p. 22)

15 Male Slaves (0 EP): N Baparan human; HP 3 (normally 21); Init +2; Def +2; DR 0; ToP 6/5

Notable Skills: language (Baparan) 75, resist persuasion 11

19) Breeding Pens

Encounter: 12 female slaves (0 EP)

Potential Story Award:

- Bringing the slaves to civilization (10 EP per slave)

This locked, unlit room holds a number of women who serve as breeders for the orcs. Like the slave pens, the breeding pen only has a single lock, but it is a good one.

- ▶ An Open Locks check (Difficult; +0%) disengages the lock. Otherwise, the door can be kicked open with a Feat of Strength (vs. d20p+14).

Females selected as orc breeders typically have a short lifespan and are naked and half-starved. Several women are clearly pregnant.

Once the PCs open the door, read or paraphrase the following text.

Behind the door is a large, unlit room. There are perhaps a dozen dirty, naked, starving females here. The moment the door opens, they all fall to the ground and prostrate themselves before you. Some begin to quietly weep. Others are visibly pregnant, presumably with the spawn of their captors.

If the PCs already freed the males and allied themselves with Brendol (see Room 18), then he immediately rushes to comfort

the women. If not, then the women soon identify that the PCs are not orcs – but this realization does not give them comfort. Instead, they hold their positions of prostration while weeping and wailing loudly. These females are traumatically scarred by their interment with the orcs – some have been there for so long that they seem no longer remember their own names or where they come from!

In any case, for many women in this room, the trauma of their imprisonment is too strong for them to overcome. They prefer not to follow the PCs out into the hallway, but they will follow Brendol – if he is there. Alternatively, Brendol may insist on remaining to care for the females until the PCs return.

These slaves can be moved by force or other means of persuasion, such as skill checks.

12 Female Slaves (0 EP): N Baparan human; HP 4 (normally 19); Init +3; Def +1; DR 0; ToP 6/4

Notable Skills: language (Baparan) 72, resist persuasion 12

20-23) Pools

Potential Story Award:

❑ Discovering the magical nature of the pools (50 EP)

These rooms open to the hallways that connect them, and are empty save for surprisingly clean water. If a PC chooses to test the water, then he may be shocked to discover how cool and refreshing it is to the touch.

The pools themselves are specifically used to cleanse sacrifices immediately before they are slaughtered and “displayed” in the Grand Entrance.

They also seem to hold some kind of mystical energy. Should any PC immerse himself in a pool, read or paraphrase the following text and heal d6 points of damage from wound(s) of the GM’s choice. This restoration may only occur once per character, regardless of how many pools the PCs immerse themselves into.

As you immerse yourself in the pool, you feel a surge of energy! It is almost as though the burdens on your shoulders have been lifted! Soon, recent aches and pains begin to fade away and you feel healthy – almost as if you’ve been resting and have just awoken from a great slumber!

Hallway 10

Encounter: 3 orc cultists (102 EP), human cultist (25 EP)

This hallway also contains several orcs and a few cultists. Their mission is to act as a first line of defense for the important personages of the temple and thus will not be drawn into any encounters best handled by the temple’s other guards. When encountered, read or paraphrase the following text.

The hallway is empty, save for another pool located on your left, about midway down the corridor. At the far end is a closed door.

3 Orc Cultists (102 EP): HP 28 x2, 27; Init 4; Spd 9; Rch 3'; Atk +3; Dmg 2d8p+2; Def -2; DR 1; Saves p4/m1/d3; ToP 12/6; FF -1/0; Move 10 ft./sec; Skills listening 25, observation 25, resist persuasion 5

Equipment: crude scimitar, thick robes (soiled), divine icon

Human Cultist (25 EP): HP 26; Init 2; Spd 9; Rch 1½'; Atk +2; Dmg 2d4p; Def 0; DR 1; Saves p0/m0/d0; ToP 10/6; FF -2; Move 10 ft./sec; Skills listening 11, observation 11, resist persuasion 11

Equipment: scourge, thick robes, divine icon

24) Armory

Encounter: 4 orc cultists (136 EP), 2 lesser orkin wardawgs (244 EP)

This wide room contains piles of discarded weapons and armor strewn about the corners of the room, while the center is messy with grime and the shed fur of the orkin wardawgs, who have apparently “nested” there.

A worn and dirty tapestry, bearing the symbol of a mailed fist, hangs on the southernmost wall. The other walls are bare, save for dirt and crudely pornographic graffiti.

The tapestry conceals the presence of a door that leads further into the temple. Looking behind the tapestry immediately reveals its presence.

4 Orc Cultists (136 EP): HP 28 x2, 27; Init 4; Spd 9; Rch 3'; Atk +3; Dmg 2d8p+2; Def -2; DR 1; Saves p4/m1/d3; ToP 12/6; FF -1/0; Move 10 ft./sec; Skills listening 25, observation 25, resist persuasion 5

Equipment: crude scimitar, thick robes (soiled), divine icon

2 Lesser Orkin Wardawgs (244 EP): HP 45; Init 0; Spd 9; Rch short; Atk +7; Dmg 4d4p+1; Def +3; DR 4; Saves p7/m5/d7; ToP 18/8; FF 2; Move 20 ft./sec; Skills listening 70, tracking 70

Hallway 11

This hallway is barren of any items and the torches in the wall sconces burn poorly. Oddly, the corridor appears to simply end, as if the individuals who constructed the Temple merely ran out of funds or interest to continue.

However, in reality there are two separate secret doors here – one at the south end of the hallway; the other off to the east side.

▶ Characters actively searching in the proper location must succeed at a average Scrutiny skill check to locate each of the secret doors in this room.

25) Kruush's Quarters

Encounter: Kruush (85 EP), 6 orc cultists (204 EP), lesser orkin wardawg (122 EP), 3 slaves (0 EP)

Potential Yield: Scimitar +1, 4 gp, 59 sp, 13 cp, fancy bracers (200 sp)

Potential Story Awards:

□ Bringing the slaves to civilization (10 EP per slave)

This large room is the living area for Kruush and his lieutenants. They bed here primarily on the floor, and consider it little more than a lounging area where they occupy their time between raids. For the purposes of distraction (and entertainment), the orcs keep one-or more breeders in the room.

At the time the PCs enter, the breeders are curled together in a corner, as the orcs presently have no interest in them. They are instead focused on the male human slave in the room, whom they are brutally beating. He is the focus of all orcs within the room, save Kruush, who is merely sitting back and watching.

Beyond the secret entrance is a large room. It appears to have been, at one point, a beautifully designed piece of architecture – there are ornate carvings of dwarf, elf, man and halfling in every piece of stone. In other circumstances, the design of the room would inspire awe!

However, these are not “other circumstances.” Every inch of the room has been desecrated, the carved faces smashed by hammers, and every beautiful figure covered in blood, feces or worse.

In the center of the room, a group of orcs are preoccupied with their brutal harassment of a male human, who lies naked, beaten and bleeding on the floor.

In a corner are two human females, prostrate and ignored by the orkin crowd. Off to the opposite side is a relaxing wardawg.

Only one notices you as you enter – the largest of the group, a black-skinned orc sitting in what once was a beautiful stone throne located in the back of the room. Rather than appear surprised or concerned by your entrance, he instead slowly grins, then yells an order in his twisted speech. His allies turn to look at you, then ready themselves to attack.

Kruush the Black Orc (85 EP): see “The Good, the Bad and **the Ugly** (p. 24)

6 Orc Cultists (204 EP): HP 28 x3, 27 x2, 25; Init 4; Spd 9; Rch 3'; Atk +3; Dmg 2d8p+2; Def -2; DR 1; Saves p4/m1/d3; ToP 12/6; FF -1/0; Move 10 ft./sec; Skills listening 25, observation 25, resist persuasion 5

Equipment: crude scimitar, thick robes, divine icon

Lesser Orkin Wardawg (122 EP): HP 52; Init 0; Spd 9; Rch short; Atk +7; Dmg 4d4p+1; Def +3; DR 4; Saves p7/m5/d7; ToP 18/8; FF 2; Move 20 ft./sec; Skills listening 70, tracking 70

3 Male Slaves (0 EP): N Baparan human; HP 4 (normally 19); Init +2; Def +2; DR 0; ToP 5/5

Notable Skills: language (Baparan) 73, resist persuasion 10

26) Temple Cavern

Encounter: 2 orc cultists (68 EP), 2 lesser orkin wardawgs (244 EP)

This room is connected to Hallway 11 via a secret door. It is evident to any PC that this tunnel is not originally a part of the temple, as it is hastily constructed and lacks any of the architecture of the terrible structure.

Located within this room are orcs and wardawgs who are actively guarding whatever lies beyond them. Any PC who enters this room must contend with them if he wishes to advance further into the cavern.

2 Orc Cultists (68 EP): HP 28; Init 4; Spd 9; Rch 3'; Atk +3; Dmg 2d8p+2; Def -2; DR 1; Saves p4/m1/d3; ToP 12/6; FF -1/0; Move 10 ft./sec; Skills listening 25, observation 25, resist persuasion 5

Equipment: crude scimitar, thick robes (soiled), divine icon

2 Lesser Orkin Wardawgs (244 EP): HP 45; Init 0; Spd 9; Rch short; Atk +7; Dmg 4d4p+1; Def +3; DR 4; Saves p7/m5/d7; ToP 18/8; FF 2; Move 20 ft./sec; Skills listening 70, tracking 70

27) Ghaugh's Quarters

Encounter: Ghaugh (133 EP), 2 orc cultists (68 EP)

Potential Yield: staff (2 cp), **Scroll of Magic Projectile of Skewering**, spell component pouch, 33 sp

Once the PCs advance beyond the temple cavern, they enter a second cavernous room split into two by a natural stone pillar. Here they encounter a new threat: the orkin shaman Ghaugh! Read or paraphrase the following.

Standing toward the back of the room are two more orcs, along with another orc whose robes are decorated with strange symbols!

In broken Kalamaran he speaks:

“You come far only to die. But you are strong – your insides will feed the new ones!”

As Ghaugh finishes speaking, his subordinates attack.

Tactics: Ghaugh will use the orc cultists as shields to give him the unharried space and time to permit him to cast spells. In sequential order he employs *Pepper Spray* to debilitate a single enemy threatening his guards. He then casts an “amped up” *Magic Projectile* (allocating 90 SP to evoke 2 missiles targeted at what he deems the greatest threat). His last attempt at spell casting is to “amp up” a *Fire Finger* to 50 spell points (doing 1d3p+4 damage).

If his protective line collapses immediately,

he will flee to Area 28 and join forces with the clerics there.

Ghaugh, orc mage 2 (133 EP): HP 28; Init 5; Spd 9; Rch 3'; Atk +4; Dmg 2d8p+1; Def -1; DR 1; ToP 12/6; FF -1/0; Move 10 ft./sec;

Notable Skills: arcane lore 27, language (Baparan 44, Orcish 80), listening 26, observation 37, resist persuasion 23

Spells (190 SP; +1 save vs spells): (a) Fire Finger; (j) Perimeter Alarm; (1) Pepper Spray; (2) Magic Projectile

Equipment: scimitar, thick robes, Scroll of *Magic Projectile of Skewering*, pouch of spell components for listed spells x4, pouch with 19 sp, spellbook

2 Orc Cultists (68 EP): HP 28; Init 4; Spd 9; Rch 3'; Atk +3; Dmg 2d8p+2; Def -2; DR 1; Saves p4/m1/d3; ToP 12/6; FF -1/0; Move 10 ft./sec; Skills listening 25, observation 25, resist persuasion 5

Equipment: crude scimitar, thick robes (soiled), divine icon

28) Finale

Encounter: Khaug (133 EP), Kindor Brander (200 EP), Tetzylwurm (815 EP), Fhokki slave (0 EP)

Potential Yield: Scourge of the Overlord +2 (15 charges), ornate scourge (200 sp), ring (110 sp)

At long last, the PCs enter the final room of the Temple of Unrelenting Despair! As they enter, read or paraphrase the following.

This large cavern is well-lit, with blazing torches adorning the walls. It must certainly open up to the outside world for the air is brisk and fresh and the torch smoke swirls about in the breeze.

The room itself is nearly circular, with levels that serve as benches and prayer areas on which cultists no doubt prostrate themselves. On the lowest level, a burly loincloth-clad human is tied to a stone altar, his taut muscles straining against the shackles.

Littering the ground around the altar are several flayed corpses, lying face down in a growing pool of blood!

Two robed figures – a wicked-looking orc in white and an elderly human male in brown – stand behind the altar, with ornate scourges in their hands. They smile manically when you step into the room, with the human calling out to you.

"You're too late! Soon they will do our bidding, and all will fly from our might!"

Tactics: If alerted of the presence of intruders (a battle in Areas 26 or 27 will suffice), Kindor and Khaug each *Bless* themselves giving them a +1 bonus to Attack, Defense and Saving throws for 10 minutes. Upon sighting the PCs, Khaug casts *Moderate Emotion: Cause Fear* on the lead member while Kindor attempts to *Charm* a warrior type. If circumstances permit, Kindor will subsequently issue a *Cursing* that affects 4 of his enemies.

After this they may simply have to slug it out for they have nowhere to run. Each of these priests will attempt to use their *Inflict Trifling Wound* if faced with an "unhittable" opponent using a shield (scoring an automatic touch attack to inflict d4p damage unmitigated by DR). If Kindor can manage it, he will cast *Faith Shield (Unum)* to increase his Defense to +1.

Khaug, orc cleric of the Overlord 2 (133 EP): HP 28; Init 1; Spd 9; Rch 1½'; Atk +6; Dmg 2d4p+4 plus *Inflict Pain*; Def -1; DR 3; ToP 12/6; FF -1/0; Move 10 ft./sec;

Notable Skills: divine lore 32, listening 37, observation 35, resist persuasion 16;

Spells (+2 save vs charm): (1) *Moderate emotion: cause fear*, *Inflict trifling wound*; (2) *Bless*

Equipment: Scourge of the Overlord +2 [see [All Things Magic](#) on p. 25], thick white robes, orc body armor, divine icon, pouch with 29 sp

Kindor Brandren, LE Brandobian cleric of the Overlord 4 (200 EP): HP 35; Init 3; Spd 9; Rch 1½'; Atk +3; Dmg 2d4p+1; Def -1; DR 4; ToP 12/6; FF -2; Move 10 ft./sec;

Spells (+2 save vs charm): (1) Faith shield (unum), Inflict trifling wound (2) Bless, (3) Cursing (4) Charm

Quirk: needy

Notable Skills: divine lore 44, language (Baparan 27, Brandobian 79, Orcish 28), listening 28, observation 19, resist persuasion 16;

Equipment: pearl-handled scourge (200 sp), brown robe, ringmail, pouch with 22 sp, gold ring set with good quality brown jasper (110 sp)

Male Slave (0 EP): N Baparan human; HP 2 (normally 24); Init +2; Def +2; DR 0; ToP 7/7

Notable Skills: language (Baparan 33, Fhokki 72), resist persuasion 10

► If a PC succeeds at an Observation check (Easy) before or after the battle with the clerics, read or paraphrase the following.

A sudden movement at the rear of the cavern catches your eye. You see, coiling among the shadows, a great serpent dozens of feet long. A line of bony ridges pokes from its spine, while its upper back sports a pair of small, scaly wings. Worse, slithering among the larger creature are perhaps a dozen smaller serpents as long as a man's arm!

The larger creature – a female tetzylwyrms – came here to lay her eggs. Rather than doing so and then abandoning them, as is typical of her species, she remains for as long as the cultists supply her with food. The cultists hope to tame the young tetzylwyrms, or at least raise them to maturity and free them all into the wild. They believe that the tetzylwyrms will, now having a taste for human flesh, attack the human 'points of resistance' (in other words, the Keep and nearby settlements such as Vew). As the tetzylwyrms presence affects the Keep patrols and hinders their ability to protect outlying villages, the decreased security will allow the cultists greater freedom of movement to go about their nefarious work.

The tetzylwyrms resides in this chamber only because it is fed regular meals. It has no affinity for the cultists and cannot be considered an ally. It tolerates the cultists' presence because it has

grown accustomed to their scent (associating it with mealtime) and does not consider them a threat. When the PCs enter the room, their strange odor alerts the adult tetzylwyrms to danger and she scurries out through a six-foot wide fissure in the rear of the chamber that leads approximately 100 feet upwards before exiting the mountain.

At this stage of the adventure, battling the wyrms is almost a certain TPK. Yet there are players that cannot leave well enough alone. Should they act immediately to impede its retreat, they may be granted their deathwish and engage the terrible wyrms in mortal combat. Should this occur, do not pull any punches for the PCs have received exactly what they asked for. Injured or incapacitated PCs left behind by a fleeing party will certainly be eaten alive.

The offspring are noncombatants (0 EP), but will grow to maturity if the PCs fail to slaughter them all.

Tetzylwyrms (815 EP): HP 62; Init -4; Spd 10 (or 3 when close); Rch long; Atk +12 bite or +8 claw; Dmg 2d12p+4 bite or 4d4p+2 claw; Def +8 head, or +3 body; DR 10; Saves p10/m8/d11; ToP n/a; FF -4; Move 15 ft./sec

Notes: Tetzylwyrms prefer to maintain 10-foot distance and strike with darting head to bite; retreats to maintain distance; opponents can attack the body [Def +3] if they close in, but are then subject to the creature's two claw attacks.

Conclusion

Potential Story Award:

- Removing the tetzylwyrms threat by killing all the young (300 EP)
- Destroying the cult [must include killing the clerics Khaug and Kindor and at least 10 of the cultists] (1000 EP)
- Bringing the slaves to civilization (10-20 EP per slave). This award is only given in full to good-aligned parties and only when the slaves are repatriated (not merely freed). Neutral parties receive half and evil none.

If the PCs achieve the goal of defeating the cultists and killing tetzylwyrms young, they may continue to explore (or even occupy) the temple at their leisure. Of course, if they take the time to escort the slaves to safety, they may find that other creatures have moved in during their absence!

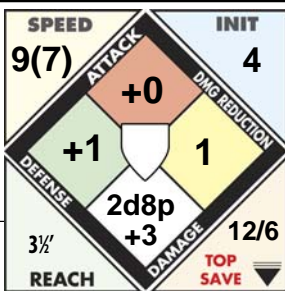
CASTING CALL



Minodar the Mad

Race: Human
Class: Fighter
Level: 2
Size: Medium
Movement: 10 ft/sec. (jog)
Alignment: N
Fatigue Factor:
Hit Points: 29

STR 13/92 INT 5/69 WIS 10/40
 DEX 11/10 CON 12/06 LKS 10/53
 CHA: 9/97 Honor: 15



Possessions: Longsword +1, divine icon, thick robes (soiled), key to room 11

Proficiencies: shields, armor, club, longsword (+1 specialization in all), scourge

Quirks: absent-minded, needy

Notable Skills

hiding 17
 intimidation 37
 language (Kalamaran) 51
 resist persuasion 22

BACKGROUND: In many ways, Minodar may be the victim of circumstance. He didn't wake up one day and decide that it'd be fun to capture and torture his fellow humans. In fact, were Minodar more in control of his own faculties, then he very well might work more efficiently to free the slaves.

That's the problem — Minodar isn't in control.

A decade previous, he was known — at least in some circles — as Minodar the Mighty, a reputation earned from the valorous act of killing an orkin wardawg single-handedly! The future looked bright for Minodar as he left his small village for the wider world.

For a time, Minodar the Mighty's reputation preceded him. Some of the most promising young mercenaries sought him out, from respected young mage Brenden the Bright to talented young cleric Cali the Nine Fingers, and together they formed a band known throughout P'Bapar. Then, it all went wrong.

It happened in a foray near Frandor's Keep. Minodar and his companions were hunting goblins when, by freak accident, a sliver of his own broken blade — which had just shattered on the helmet of an unfortunate torchbearer — rebounded off a cliff face and impacted into Minodar's skull, just beneath his helmet.

The result was a near-death experience that left Minodar with a dramatically diminished intelligence. Not even Cali the Nine Fingers was able to restore his intelligence, and in an instant Minodar's treasure-seeking career was over. He has since been called many things — "Minodar the Man Child" (for his wicked strength remains), or worst of all "Minodurrrr," for his tendency to speak in a purring or wheedling manner.

Minodar entered a dark period in his life — not that he realized it — as he lived on the streets of P'Bapar as a vagrant. Then, the Cult of the Overlord found him. Soon, Minodar was again 'safe,' under the thumb of Domir Ranacren.

Minodar now works for Domir, aiding in overpowering men and abducting women, all of whom face death or worse. Yet, he knows something is wrong. Minodar hates to kill the sacrifices, or even torture them. He never personally subjects the slaves to the cult's devious machinations, but Minodar doesn't stop them, either.

However, recently something clicked within his addled brain, and the former hero has begun 'helping' as many women as he can. The only problem — he transports them from the breeding pens to a small, hidden room within a cavern that adjoins the temple. In his own rudimentary impulses, Minodar is trying to help. If only he could help himself!

ADDITIONAL NOTES: Due to his low Intelligence and alignment, Minodar is completely self-centered and acts much on animal impulse, helping and aiding those whom he feels are helping him.



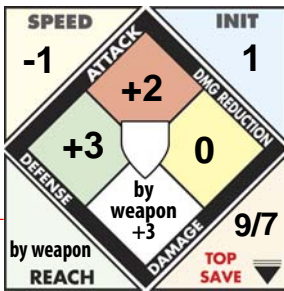
The GOOD The BAD and the UGLY



Brendol Torist

Race: Human
Class: Fighter
Level: 1
Size: Medium
Movement: 10 ft./sec (jog)
Alignment: LG
Fatigue Factor: 3
Hit Points: 3 (max 29)

STR 16/35 **INT** 11/56 **WIS** 11/79
DEX 15/54 **CON** 14/34 **LKS** 11/56
CHA: 13/59 **Honor:** 18



Possessions: None but the rags on his back. However, Brendol may be able to claim his inheritance if freed from slavery.

Proficiencies: shields, armor, club, dagger, mace, short sword (specialization +1 in all), longsword, scimitar

Talents: dodge

Quirk: none **Flaw:** hairy

Notable Skills

diplomacy 32
intimidation 48
language (Baparan) 81
language (Brandobian) 47
observation 31
resist persuasion 27

BACKGROUND: Brendol Torist is not a slave. At least, that's what he tells himself. After all, he was born a free man of noble lineage. Brendol is the oldest son – and heir – of Baron Lindomar Torist, whose progressive policies gave him great renown even beyond the barony (surrounding his home town of Koroliden).

Brendol, however, was never one to accept anything given to him. He instead wanted to “learn it and earn it,” as he used to say. Consequently, he refused the honorary title of knight, even after his father pulled numerous strings for the ceremony to occur. He instead insisted upon a long apprenticeship under a legendary sword-master, Sir Tomken the Bold – but only if he could do so not because of his father, but because of his own inner strength.

Unfortunately, he never had the chance. As Brendol traveled to the sword-master's home, he and his companions were ambushed. (Ironically, this ambush occurred because the Baron had cut back on the local patrols, due to his foolish insistence on “believing in people.” Apparently, the baron failed to consider that it wasn't only thieves and brigands that roamed the wilderness, but also the many foul monsters with no moral fiber of their own!)

However, despite the orcs who lead the attack, this was no simple ambush by brigands. This was an abduction committed by the Cult of The Overlord, led by Kruush and Domir Rancren with the intent of capturing victims for slavery and ritualistic sacrifice.

Since that time, Brendol has languished within the slave pens of Domir's temple, suffering one beating after another. The only time he leaves the pens is when his new “masters” have some laborious duty for him to perform. This work often leaves him drained of energy and riddled with even more scars across his back – the markings from Rancren's scourge.

Brendol has been enslaved for several long months. In that time, he's noticed the arrival and disappearance of numerous other males. He assumes that he has been kept as insurance (after all, ransoming a baron's son may lead to a boon of wealth) while the others have been sold or moved elsewhere. He does not realize that these men have been sacrificed by the cultists. He is also unaware of the one reason he has remained alive – not out of some hope of financial gain, but because his spirit has yet to be broken.

ADDITIONAL NOTES: Brendol can be a helpful ally should he be given a weapon and perhaps some armor. He has been observing everything he can while he's been a prisoner and can be a wealth of information.

The GOOD The BAD and the UGLY

BACKGROUND: Domir Ranacren is a charismatic man whose silky voice has gotten him into – and out of – more trouble than he'd care to admit. However, for many years it was not the strength of his tongue that he lived by; rather it was through the heft of his sword!

Ranacren was a simple Baparan soldier for many years, until the fateful day that scarred him forever. While on a simple patrol, Ranacren witnessed the sheer brutality of an orkin raid upon his unit and the villagers he had been sent to protect. The orcish assault cut through the front line – and the retreating villagers – within moments.

Their actions were brutal, and with his face covered in the blood of many soldiers and innocents, Domir Ranacren knew first hand that the war he'd sworn to fight was a lost cause. "Humans," his addled brain realized, "are too weak. Orcs are superior, and their power is awesome to behold."

As fate would have it, he did not die that day. The orcs' unerring death-dealing and his immaculate survival led Ranacren to believe a simple truth: it was meant to be.

Upon returning to civilization, he fled the military and immersed himself in orkin culture. He read what little was available, and spoke with numerous survivors of orc raids. Then, eventually, he met a man who led him to the light... and the faith of The Overlord.

Domir studied the religion for years, ascending in the ranks of the laity through the 'premature demise' of his supervisors. All they'd wanted was talk. Ranacren wanted action — and his first decisive move was to lead more than three dozen of his fellows away from the prying eyes of the city, into the mountainous terrain that so many orcs called home.

It has been years since their pilgrimage began, and months since they found a supposed ally in the orc leader Kruush (and a home in an abandoned dwarven fortress in the mountains near Frandor's Keep). Domir still believes, without a doubt, in the physical superiority of the orc, but he's no longer sure about their right to lead him and his followers... especially since so many of his followers have been mercilessly murdered by their orc "comrades." However, his hopes remain high, for he has discovered something within the mountain temple that he believes will leave a lasting mark on the region...



Domir Ranacren

Race: Human	Speed: 7	Init: 3
Class: Fighter	Attack: +8	DMG Reduction: 5
Level: 5	Defense: +1	Hit Points: 43
Size: Medium	Hit Points: 2d8p +5	Reach: 3'
Movement: 10' ft/sec. (jog)	STR: 14/91	INT: 12/69
Alignment: LE	CON: 16/78	WIS: 8/08
Fatigue Factor: -3	LKS: 11/37	CHA: 18/67
Hit Points: 43	Honor: 55	Top Save: 17/8

Possessions: Scimitar +1, Ringmail +1, divine icon of The Overlord, pouch with 35 silver coins and 22 copper coins

Proficiencies: shields, armor, dagger, mace, short sword, spear, scourge, halberd, longsword, scimitar (+2 specialization all)

Talents: fast healer

Quirk: racist (humans) **Flaw:** none

Notable Skills

fast talking 42
 intimidation 41
 language (Baparan) 82
 language (Orkin) 41
 literacy (Kalamaran) 41
 listening 23
 resist persuasion 27

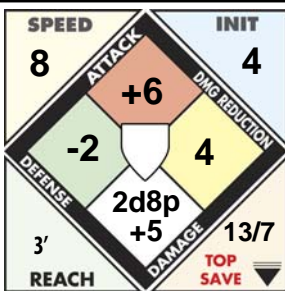
ADDITIONAL NOTES: Domir once hated to look in a mirror. He considered his human face to be repulsive and longed to look like the "strong, noble orc." After living amongst them and suffering their abuses, however, his opinions have begun to change...

The GOOD
The BAD
and the UGLY



Kruush

Race: Black Orc
Size: Medium
Tenacity: Fearless
Intelligence: Slow
Fatigue Factor: -1/0
Movement: 10 ft/sec. (jog)
Alignment: LE
Mental Save: +3
Physical Save: +6
Dodge Save: +5
Hit Points: 31



Possessions: Scimitar +1, light robes over ringmail, divine icon, pouch with 4 gold, 11 silver, 13 copper coins, bronze bracers set with an intricate pattern of dozens of small pieces of malachite (200 sp value)

Proficiencies: armor, shields, club, scimitar, scourge

Talents: none

Notable Skills

listening 29
 intimidation 28
 language (Orcish) 78
 observation 29
 resist persuasion 9
 torture 21

BACKGROUND: Cruelty and brutality – these are the tools Kruush uses to maintain control of his orcs. However, he also wields two more tools – cunning and fanaticism – that differentiates him from many who would seek to usurp him.

He has used this cunning well, robbing authority even from those orcs who created him so many years previous, in a birthing pool deep within the Legasa Peaks. Once he was strong enough – and it was almost in no time at all after his creation – Kruush fought and killed his former leader, hand-picked the mightiest of who remained after the power struggle, and embarked upon a campaign of enslavement.

Then, after years of successfully killing the weak and dominating even the strong, he met a fool of a human named Domir Ranacren. He almost killed him on the spot, but there was something about the maniacal glee in Domir’s eye that held Kruush’s sword-hand back.

“I worship The Overlord,” Domir told him, “and I have been sent to elevate you!” Kruush was amused just enough to play along.

However, in time he came to believe Domir’s claims, in part through the divine words of his own shaman and cleric allies. Believing that he has been infused with the will of a higher power, Kruush has dedicated the past months to hunting humans – some for sacrifice to the beasts that dwell deep in his hidden lair, and others to increase his tribe’s numbers and manifest his strength.

Yet, there is perhaps no mission more monotonous than one bestowed by a god. Lately, Kruush has found himself growing tired of the games. He no longer wants to abduct and enslave – he wants to destroy.

He continues to protect Ranacren’s priests and most holy men, who claim they know the necessary dark rituals needed to tame the monster – he has taken to “playing” with the other vermin human cultists who infest his home. Of course, he claims, it’s only through The Overlord’s divine will that so many of these “games” prove fatal – not the fault of Kruush or his orcs...

ADDITIONAL NOTES: It’s only a matter of time before Kruush decides to end the sport and initiate the spill... of human blood, all across P’Bapar.

Scourge of Pain

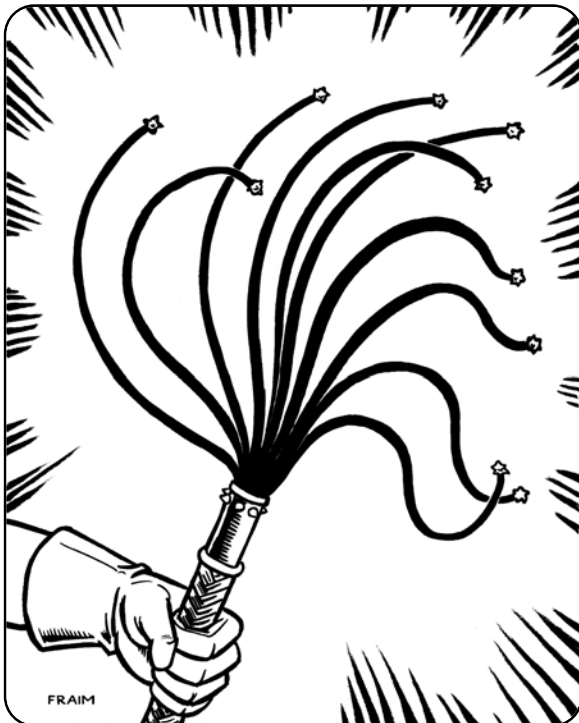
The scourge is the preferred weapon of any cleric of The Overlord. To the rapturous delight of many, one arcane member of this dark faith crafted a magical weapon that soon became known as the Scourge of Pain.

Most Scourges of Pain give the wielder a minimum of +2 to attack and damage rolls, due to its exquisite construction — made from strong horse-hide leather, with 10 leather thongs, each with a lead weight attached. Besides being more accurate and damage-inducing, the Scourge of Pain has a special power.

It has the ability to deal out severe pain to anyone struck with it. This produces an effect identical to that of the clerical spell *Inflict Pain*.

There are up to 25 charges in this magical weapon that will, if used correctly, deal out traumatic, wracking pain on an enemy.

In order to use this weapon most effectively, the wielder must make a successful attack roll, and, while in the act of



striking, boldly say the command word.

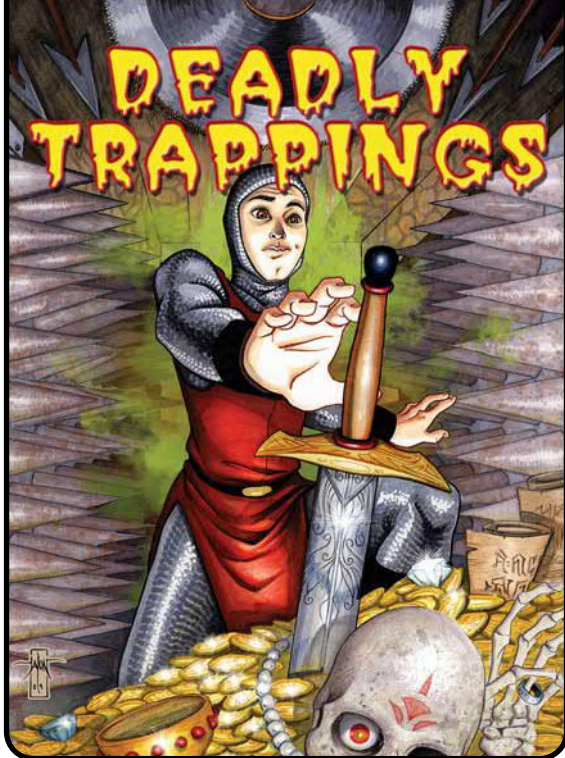
That word varies with each weapon, but usually are related to some aspect of the Overlord (“shackles” is fairly common). If the wielder strikes successfully, and if the scourge’s strike does any actual damage that is not negated by any sort of Damage Reduction due to armor or other means, then the scourge’s power is released successfully on the target. If that happens, the victim must immediately attempt a Constitution check (d20p vs. Constitution score).

Rolling his Constitution score or less permits the target to shrug off the pain. Rolling above causes him to collapse from the agony, becoming incapacitated for 5 seconds times the difference between his Constitution check and his Constitution score.

If the wielder of the scourge misses his target as he is pronouncing the command word, or if he fails to inflict any damage with the scourge, a charge is still burned up, essentially wasting a charge.

Once the charges have been used, the weapon continues to function as a Scourge +2.

It is thought that only a few of these special scourges exist on Tellene and that all of them are kept in temples dedicated to the worship of The Overlord.



Heel Impaler

INTENT: Injury/Slowed Movement

MECHANISM: Tiny spiked pit

LETHALITY: Minimal

SUGGESTED DAMAGE: 2d4p+1

ENGINEER: Kurt Evans

so that the trap remains useful and ready for any further intrusion.

Of course, each trap within the temple has been thoroughly tested on slaves, so Kruush is quite confident that they will stop intruders.

The traps are randomly scattered throughout the 25' hallway. Each PC traversing this hallway has a 40% chance of stepping on a Heel Impaler (-5% for every trap sprung or found). Following in the lead character's footsteps provides safe passage to all who come after him.

Not too far inside a certain underground temple of The Overlord is a pair of hallways designed by the orc leader Kruush. Down one particular corridor lies a gauntlet of eight traps known by slaves and cultists as 'Heel Impalers.' Their design is at once ingenious and diabolical, and anyone who has been a victim has suffered excruciating pain, as well as a loss of mobility.

Heel Impalers are extremely difficult to spot because they appear to be your average, run-of-the-mill floor tiles, no different to the eye than other floor tiles within the temple. Identifying them (i.e. using the Find Traps skill) is a Difficult check but they are Trivial to disarm once spotted.

When an unsuspecting person steps on one of these tiles, the tile gives way underneath their weight and triggers a spring loaded nasty, sharp iron spike that pierces the foot of anyone unlucky enough to have activated this trap.

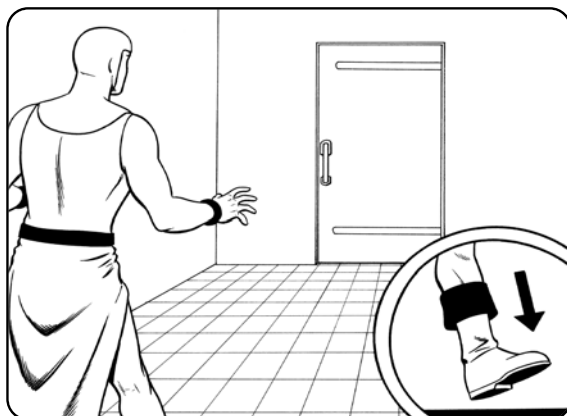
Any character whose foot is pierced by one of these spikes suffers 2d4p+1 points of damage. The spikes are sharp enough that they will pierce all types of hard or soft leather footwear. (Note that sandals provide DR1 & boots DR2 vs. this trap.)

If penetration damage occurs, the victim's foot has been so severely wounded that he loses mobility. He is slowed to half his normal speed until the wound heals.

If the trap is discovered before activation, they are easy to avoid by marking the danger zones with chalk (or some other visible substance). They may safely be disarmed by smashing the tile with a hammer or mace and harmlessly triggering the trap.

The tricky part is that there are eight of these traps down this corridor, so that those traversing it must be aware of and identify each of these traps.

Kruush has a group of slaves he uses to clean and repair the tiles



"Well, what do we have here? Must be where they keep the GOOD stuff.."



"GAAA!!! My new boots!!!"

Most cultists are religious zealots with novel rituals and practices that seem unusually abnormal, extremist or bizarre when compared to the predominant faith they sprang from. However, cultists may not always be an offshoot of an existing religion; instead, they may devote themselves to venerating a certain person, principle or object.

Cultists are usually encountered in groups of no more than a dozen individuals, though an authoritative, captivating leader may bring two or even three-dozen followers under his sway. For every group of cultists encountered, there will be a leader with some skill or ability that permits him to hold sway over the group. This may simply be Charisma but could be enhanced by technical knowledge as it relates to the cult's practice or interest. Rarely does the leader of a cult maintain his position through sheer force of arms.

If the cult has a religious orientation, the leader will always be a cleric who espouses the cult's doctrine. In general the size of the cult is proportional to the level this Patriarch possesses for a feedback loop takes place where more adherents provide their leader with greater esteem in the eyes of his god and thus permit him greater access to manifestations of divine power. There are certainly exceptions to this rule, particularly in a new cult formed under the auspices of a experienced leader having recently received some vision of truth.

Combat/Tactics:

Religious cultists prefer to work in secret, and so are fond of ambushing their victims from under cover of obstacles or darkness. Their lairs often include false or duplicate corridors lined with traps. They usually flee combat when outnumbered or if they lose their leader, though they may later regroup under the guidance of another charismatic cultist.

Secular cults may operate in a variety ways from dynamic evangelism of their beliefs to secretive and reclusive behaviors. It is difficult to categorize and largely follows the degree of acceptance (or revulsion) of their beliefs in society at large.

Habitat/Society:

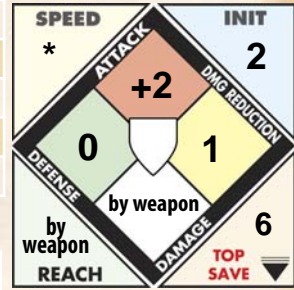
Cults are found mostly an urban phenomenon, though those with ties to the wilderness may have remote lairs or temples far from any settlements. Cultists rarely construct these lairs themselves, preferring to occupy abandoned structures or purchase buildings with the funds of their members.

Ecology:

Cultists live off the wealth of their members or the spoils from their victims. They may hold jobs and live openly among non-cultists while keeping their beliefs secret, or shun society entirely and live in near-total seclusion. Cultists are typical of humans in the area where they dwell.

Human: Cultist

HIT POINTS:	22+1d8
SIZE/WEIGHT:	M / 160 lb.
TENACITY:	Nervous
INTELLIGENCE:	Average
FATIGUE FACTOR:	n/a



MOVEMENT

CRAWL:	2½
WALK:	5
JOG:	10
RUN:	15
SPRINT:	20

SAVES

PHYSICAL:	0
MENTAL:	0
DODGE:	0

ATTACK: A cultist's aggressiveness depends on their beliefs. Those espousing doctrine inimical to public weal often arm themselves with small weapons (daggers or knives) or those favored by their clergy if religious. Weapon speed and damage are thus difficult to precisely define. Many members, especially religious orders, wear thick robes keyed somehow to their beliefs. Many other cults wear such garments as they facilitate concealment of identity.

GENERAL INFO

ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Usually crepuscular or nocturnal
NO. APPEARING:	2-8 (cell), 20+ (compound)
% CHANCE IN LAIR:	50%
FREQUENCY:	Infrequent
ALIGNMENT:	Any (though many tend towards evil)
VISION TYPE:	Standard
AWARENESS/SENSES:	Standard
HABITAT:	Any (though principally urban)
DIET:	Omnivore
ORGANIZATION:	small groups
CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Any

YIELD

MEDICINAL:	nil
SPELL COMPONENTS:	nil
HIDE/TROPHY:	nil
TREASURE:	possible though most held by leader
EDIBLE:	yes, if you do not object to cannibalism
OTHER:	may carry religious icons
EXPERIENCE POINT VALUE:	25