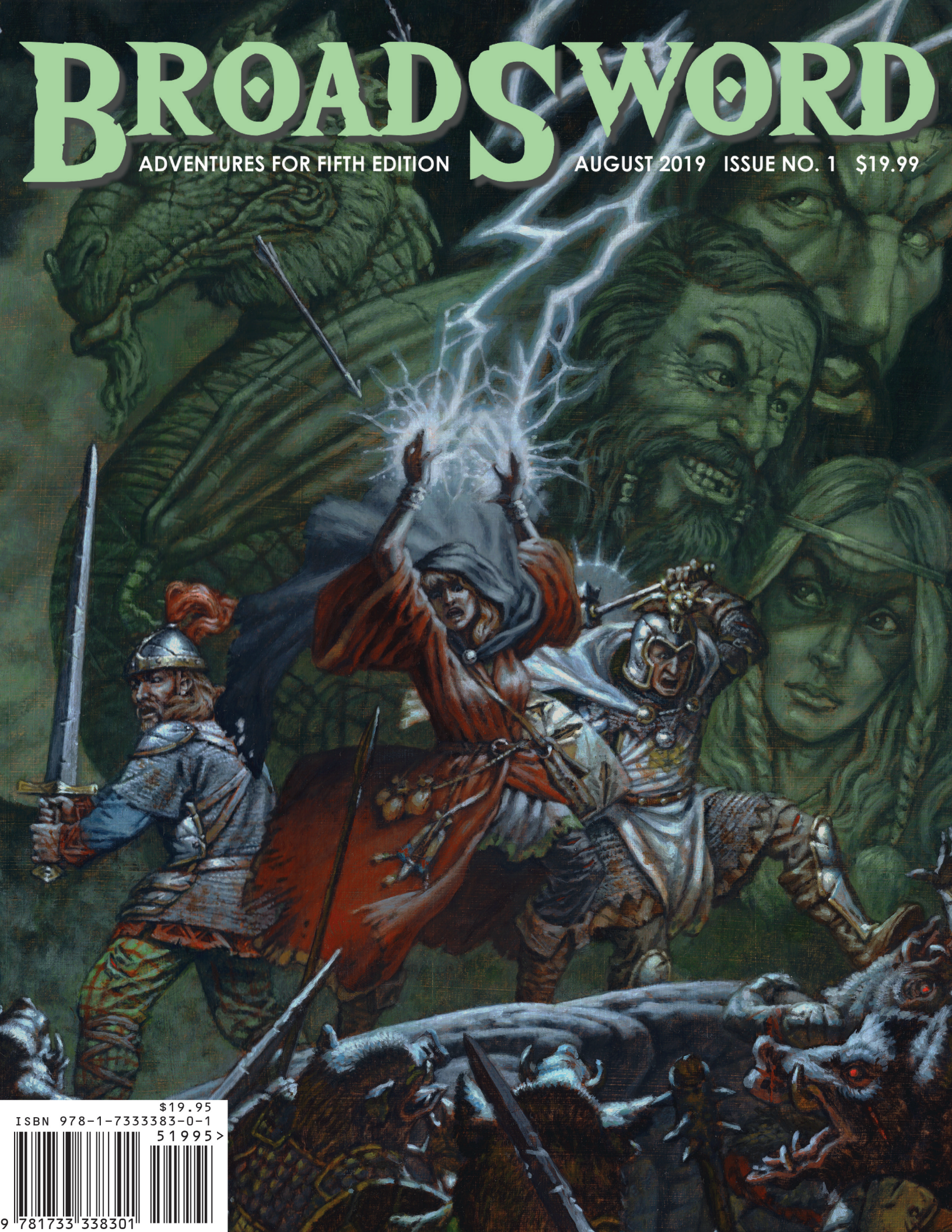


# BROADSWORD

ADVENTURES FOR FIFTH EDITION

AUGUST 2019 ISSUE NO. 1 \$19.99



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# MONSTERS OF MURKA



Created by  
Jaron R. M. Johnson

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**ON KICKSTARTER**



# BROADSWORD

ADVENTURES FOR FIFTH EDITION

AUGUST 2019 ISSUE 1 Monthly



**COVER:** JD Russell brings to life the first chapter of *The Secret of Forsaken Peak*, *BroadSword Monthly's* first on-going adventure path.



## Oh shit, I just created a Fifth Edition magazine...

Okay, yeah. I'm crude AF. But I always told myself that one day if I ever created a magazine I'd put "oh shit" as the first words in the book. And here it is.

I don't know what possessed me to do this. Sometime around early 2018, I got back into roleplaying games after an eight year hiatus. Last I checked, 3.5 was the talk of the town. I totally skipped 4e (which, I'm told, I didn't miss much) and landed in the world of 5e.

Obviously, I feel in love immediately. Despite the criticisms of "over-simplistic", it truly is a clean, balanced design. And while it may have a few funky design flaws, overall it is the best version of the game that the folks in Portland have put out so far.

I want to thank everyone that helped in creating this monster. Thanks to JD Russell, the cover artist and cartographer, for riding the wave that got us here. And thanks to Scott Craig who jumped in after-the-fact to organize and format the first issue--and beyond, I hope!

Thanks to all the incredible backers on Kickstarter who brought this project to life, as well to all the awesome people that follow me on the various social media platforms.

Finally, thanks to my super supportive wife, Tracy, and the coolest kid I know, my son, Jack. Ya'll helped me through this and dealt with all my cranky shit.

Love ya!

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Kevin Hamrick	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>2</b>
Dave Hamrick	<b>BEHIND THE SCREEN</b>	<b>4</b>
<hr/>		
<i>PART I: SWORD &amp; SORCERY</i>		<b>5</b>
<i>Low-magic/low-fantasy campaign settings.</i>		
Dave Hamrick JD Russell	<b>THE EASTERN BORDERLANDS</b> (5E campaign setting, level 5)	<b>7</b>
Dave Hamrick JD Russell	<b>THE SECRET OF FORSAKEN PEAK PART 1</b> (5E adventure, level 5)	<b>13</b>
<hr/>		
<i>PART II: MASS COMBAT</i>		<b>27</b>
<i>New mass combat rules and adventures.</i>		
Dave Hamrick JD Russell	<b>THE BATTLE OF DRAGARD MINE</b> (5E adventure, level 11)	<b>30</b>
<hr/>		
<i>PART III: THE TRIAL OF HEROES</i>		<b>43</b>
<i>Character-level independent adventures.</i>		
Dave Hamrick	<b>THE TRIAL OF HEROES</b> (5E adventure, any levels)	<b>44</b>
<hr/>		
<i>PART IV: 0 LEVEL ADVENTURES</i>		<b>69</b>
<i>New rules and adventures for 0 level characters.</i>		
Dave Hamrick JD Russell	<b>EVADIMUS' SCHOOL FOR GIFTED SPELLCASTERS</b> (5E campaign setting, level 0)	<b>70</b>
<hr/>		
<i>ARTICLE SUBMISSION GUIDELINES FOR BROADSWORD MAGAZINE &amp; OPEN GAMING LICENSE</i>		<b>98</b>

*Perfection is achieved, not when there is nothing more to add, but when there is nothing left to take away.*  
 Antoine de Saint-Exupery



# INTRODUCTION

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When my brother asked me to write the intro to the very first issue of his successfully Kickstarted magazine, *BroadSword*, I was a bit surprised to be honest. I also wasn't sure what to write at first, but then I figured why not simply start at the beginning.

Back in the 90s, my brother and I got a copy of *Dungeons & Dragons*, the big black box basic set that said something along the lines of the "The NEW Easy to Master Dungeons & Dragons". I honestly don't remember much about our time spent with it other than I remember we laid out the mat and I had a thief character who snuck into a dragon's lair, stole some gold, and left.

The memory stuck with me though because it would be the seed to a life long love of tabletop gaming and roleplaying in general. I would continue to play in my brother's campaigns and though he would tell you he was a terrible dungeon master back then it created in my mind what a roleplaying game should be like. A shared experience of storytelling. It was never about getting total party kills or the PCs vs the DM, instead, it was about telling the best story and all of us having fun. To this day I still don't look at roleplaying so much as a game but as a shared narrative experience where everyone wins.

Throughout the years I'd get into other gaming, much of it again introduced to me by my brother, from the *Choose Your Own Adventure* novels to my brother bringing over some new friends so they could introduce us to a game called *Warhammer 40k*. Years (and perhaps thousands of dollars) later I've got stacks of board games and hundreds of miniatures all fighting for space in my game room. Yet it still all goes back to those fond memories of playing *Dungeons*

& *Dragons* with my brother.

So when my brother started doing his blog *DMDave*, I was happy to see him putting his considerable talents towards something he had a passion for. Don't tell him I said so but I've always thought of my brother as very talented and intelligent, but I've also felt that for a large part of his life he was wasting those talents. Be it on not doing anything at all or using them on something he wasn't truly passionate about. Now that passion and hard work have paid off not only in the form of a rather successful blog but this awesome magazine you have before you. To say I'm proud of his accomplishments is a bit of an understatement. I'm not only proud but I'm overwhelmed with joy for him. I know that you dear reader will get much enjoyment out of this magazine, so I leave you with this.

Remember at the end of the day *Dungeons & Dragons* is about sharing experiences with the people you love and care for and if you play it with that in mind the positive impact it can have on your life is measurable.

Best of luck to you in your adventures!

- Kevin Hamrick





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# BEHIND THE SCREEN

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## HOW TO GET YOUR PLAYERS TO ENGAGE

By Dave Hamrick

Cell phones, laptops, and off-color jokes, oh my!

Anyone that's been a GM before—no matter how good you are—probably knows that getting players to engage is one of the toughest parts of being a game master. Even I sometimes fail to impress, watching my sessions devolve into total chaos.

So how do you get your players to actively participate and cling on to every word of your story? This article offers up a few tips for keeping your players engaged.

### Ask them what they like!

This one probably seems like a no-brainer, but it's probably the biggest problem that GMs have—even experienced ones! The easiest way to get your players engaged in your game is to (duh) figure out what they like. And the easiest way to do that is simply asking them. Do they like combat? Do they like roleplaying? Do they like hex-crawling? Maybe a mix of all, especially if you have a big group. Once you know what grabs their attention, add that into the mix.

### Cut the crap!

Sure, you're building an awesome world and you're totally in love with it. But there comes a point when you don't need to describe every single little detail. Buying a mundane dagger at the local smith doesn't need a play-by-play description. If your players aren't interested in travel (and you know this because you surveyed them), you don't need to describe the entire journey from Point A to Point B. In fact, think of your sessions like a movie. Just keep the scenes that matter and use a broad brush to paint everything else.

### Use props and visual aids!

You might not be a great storyteller. And that's fine. Just be sure to lean on the skills that you do have. If you love painting minis, get some minis and make sure they're used. If you're an awesome cartographer, make sure your maps are seen. Or, if you and your players like puzzles and riddles, come up with nifty handouts. Slideshows, visual presentations, and even music all help grab player attention.



### Play somewhere free of distractions!

I started my game at the back of my local gaming store. Unfortunately, the nights we played were contest nights for a certain “magical” card game. This was a huge distraction. Not to mention we'd sometimes get the oddball who'd wander into the room and stare at us (of course, some of those oddballs later joined my group, but I digress). If you're playing your game in a place that's loaded with distractions, you should probably consider moving it. These days, I run my game in an attorney's office. There's no toys, books, games, or TVs to distract my guys. Even if you don't have the luxury of having a massive boardroom table to play on, try playing in a room of your house that's low on distractions.

### Boot toxic players!

Time for a little controversy. I get a lot of folks on social media asking me how to deal with troublesome players. A troublesome player is one that, no matter what you do, just won't get involved in the game and does

everything they can to disrupt the setting. They argue rules, split the party, and distract others. When you've got a player like this, the best thing to do is to pull them aside and ask what's up. If it's something you're doing, you can probably fix it. But if it's all on them, it's best just to ask to part ways. Toxic players derail games fast. Remember: being a GM is a hobby, not a job. Boot 'em!

### Don't penalize for inattentiveness!

Beyond booting toxic players, I recommend that you don't penalize your players for failing to pay attention. First of all, it's a game. And if they're not invested in the game, then they're probably not having fun. It's your job to correct that. Docking experience, ending games early, and being meta are poor ways to address the issue, and can lead to problems. I believe that even banning cell phones can be seen as a negative move. Fix what you can, address the rest. Ω



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# PART I

## SWORD & SORCERY



# ***SWORD & SORCERY***

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## **LOW-MAGIC/LOW-FANTASY CAMPAIGN SETTINGS**

By Dave Hamrick

Long before gleaming suits of armor, everyday magic, and the worlds where anything is possible, there was classic fantasy or Sword & Sorcery. Conan the Barbarian, Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser, and to an extent, Game of Thrones all exemplify these environments.

Steeped a little further into medieval history than high-fantasy counterparts, Sword & Sorcery saw a lot less magic. Those who wield magic usually symbolized decadence and corruption; more often than not, wizards, warlocks, and sorcerers were the villains in these settings. And heroes were closer to anti-heroes, often motivated by greed and self-interest than altruistic virtue.

The adventure path that takes place in *BroadSword Magazine*, *The Secret of Forsaken Peak*, is set in a Sword & Sorcery world. You're free to play *Forsaken Peak* any way that you like. However, if you'd like to stay "true" to the classic feel of Sword & Sorcery, I recommend making the following changes:

### **Races**

Humans dominate Sword & Sorcery settings. There are other races—sometimes referred to as "demihumans"—but these races tend to be the classic races such as elf, dwarf, and halfling. Tieflings, gnomes, dragonborn are unlikely options; even if they were a part of the campaign, their appearance would certainly cause fear and prejudice. Regardless, non-human races are rare in Sword & Sorcery, and often, the cultures are quite divided with very little intermingling.

### **Classes**

Rogues, fighters, and barbarians are the most common classes in Sword & Sorcery settings. Rangers and druids may be present but are mysterious

loners and uncommon. Clerics and paladins might exist, but the gods are strange, petty, and distant, and this is reflected in their cult-like practices. Bards share more in common with rogues than they do spellcasters and rarely have magic powers.

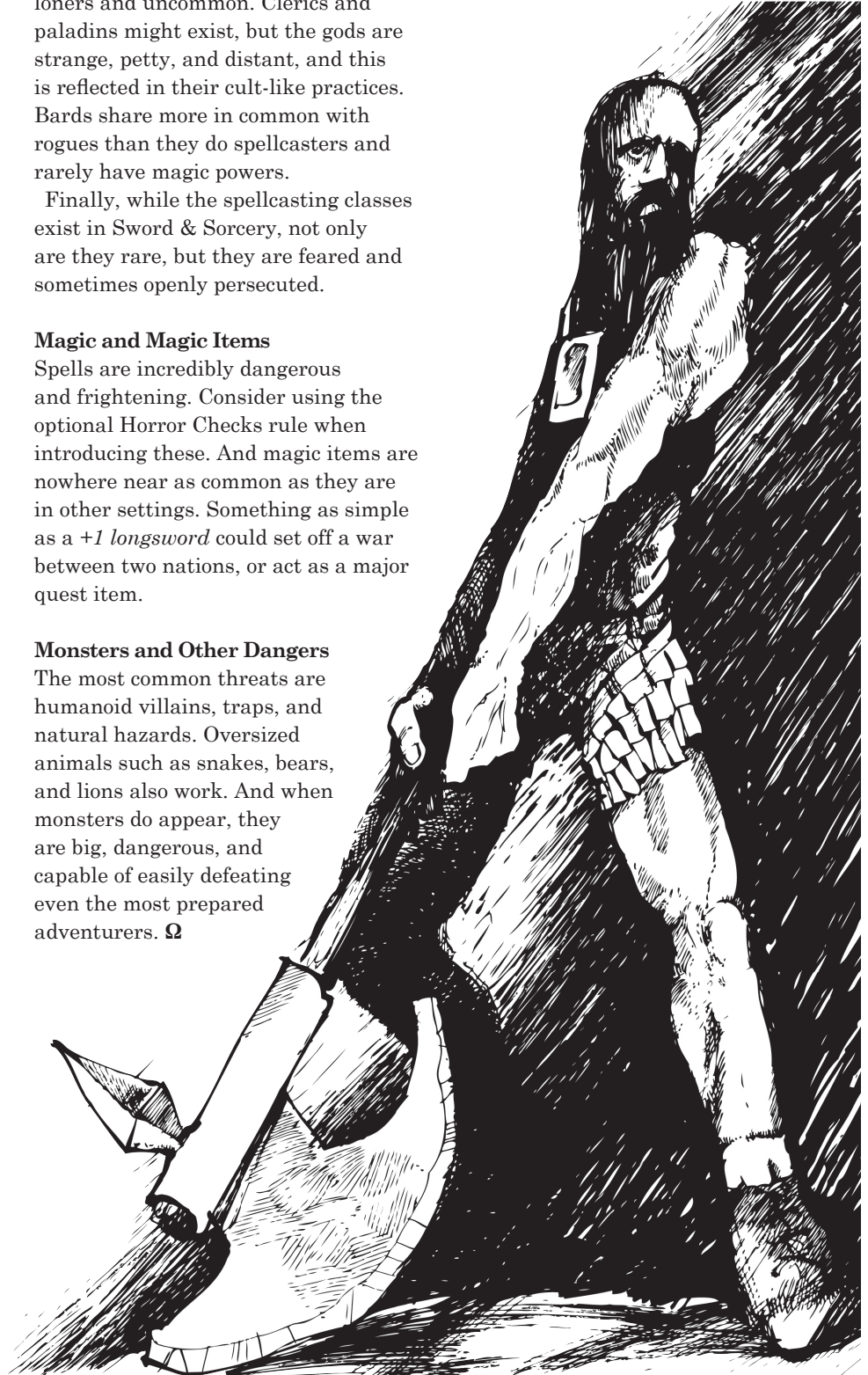
Finally, while the spellcasting classes exist in Sword & Sorcery, not only are they rare, but they are feared and sometimes openly persecuted.

### **Magic and Magic Items**

Spells are incredibly dangerous and frightening. Consider using the optional Horror Checks rule when introducing these. And magic items are nowhere near as common as they are in other settings. Something as simple as a +1 longsword could set off a war between two nations, or act as a major quest item.

### **Monsters and Other Dangers**

The most common threats are humanoid villains, traps, and natural hazards. Oversized animals such as snakes, bears, and lions also work. And when monsters do appear, they are big, dangerous, and capable of easily defeating even the most prepared adventurers. Ω







# THE EASTERN BORDERLANDS

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BY DAVE HAMRICK & JD RUSSELL

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## A New Campaign Setting for Fifth Edition

Cartography by Justin David Russell

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*This article introduces a Sword & Sorcery campaign sandbox for you to set your adventures in. The ongoing adventure series, *The Secret Forsaken Peak* is set here.*

### Locations in the Eastern Borderlands

This section describes the key locations in the Eastern Borderlands, which are presented in alphabetical order for ease of reference. The Eastern Borderlands can easily exist in the Sword and Sorcery world presented in this issue, or it can fit into any existing Fifth Edition campaign world or even a world of your own design. Feel free to modify any of the locations as you see fit.

#### **Abandoned Stronghold**

This stronghold was once an operation center for the Chaosmen. Since the founding of the Castle of Chaos on the Forsaken Peak, it has been abandoned and left to ruin. Numerous bandit groups, adventuring parties, and even the odd cult have used this stronghold as a base of operations over the last few decades.

#### **Ancient Hills**

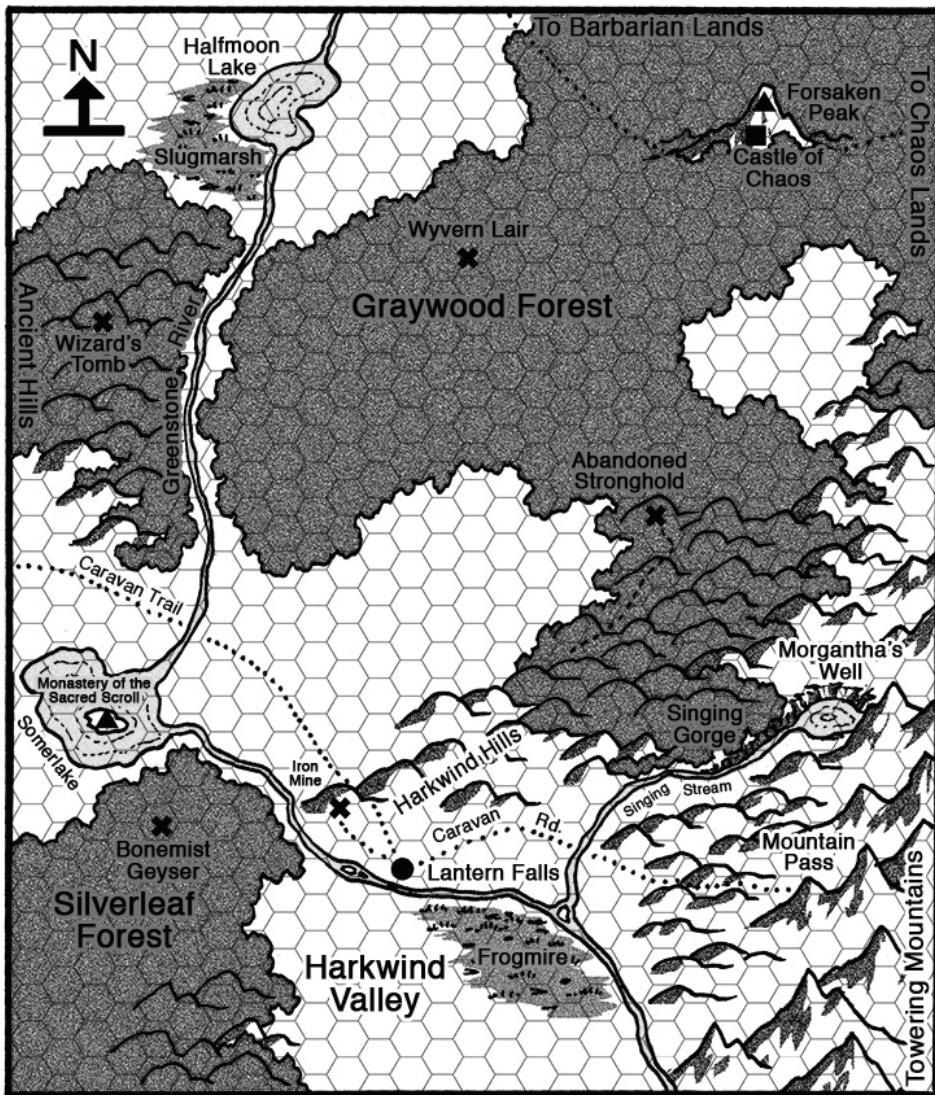
It's said that everything west of the Greenstone River is best left to the druids and rangers. The ancient hills are no exception. Filled with all manner of strange and deadly beasts, these hills are home to ancient ruins, abandoned mines, and monstrous lairs. The mysterious Wizard's Tomb is carved into the heart of the hills.

#### **Bonemist Geyser**

Powered by ancient magma tubes far beneath the surface of the western portion of the Eastern Borderlands, the Bonemist Geyser erupts scalding hot water 75 to 200 feet in the air once every 30 minutes to an hour. The



**Eastern Borderlands**  
1 Square = 1 Mile



© JUSTIN DAVID RUSSELL / EPIC WERKES STUDIO

elves of the Silverwood once called the Bonemist a place of worship. Now, it is the domain of foul undead and wicked forest spirits. The strange Geyser Glass may be found by determined searchers.

**Caravan Trail/Road**

Once, this route was a poorly maintained road that wound through the mountain pass east of Lantern Falls. Then, it was little more than a cart path that lead into the Central Borderlands. A few years ago, the merchant lords operating in the

Harkwind Hills took control of the road. Now, these wealthy traders hire mercenaries to patrol the area, collect Tolls (qv.) and clear it of troublemakers.

**Castle of Chaos**

The Castle of Chaos is the base of operations for Chaosmen in The Forsaken Peak. A future issue of BroadSword Magazine will detail this important location.

**Forsaken Peak**

The Forsaken Peak is described in the Forsaken Peak article in this issue.

**Frogmire**

Named for its nearly deafening chorus of frogs, the Frogmire grasps the bend in the Greenstone and Singing Stream. Rumors of massive frogs and lizardmen living in the swamps persist, but so far no proof has been seen. Of course, that could be because all who have witnessed such monstrosities are dead.

Thankfully, with the Knights of Lantern Falls making regular patrols along the Caravan routes, demihumans dare not push north beyond the river.

**Graywood Forest**

The ancient, coniferous Graywood Forest swallows the majority of the Eastern Borderlands. The forest provides ample resources for neighboring villages and farms. Naturally, lumber is its biggest offering. But the prickberries that dot the ground cover are necessary for antitoxins and other potent alchemical concoctions, too. Deer are common, as are rabbits and plenty of game fowl. And the ponds and lakes spread throughout the Graywood are fat with fish.

Unfortunately, bandits call the Graywood home, too, terrorizing, pillaging, and robbing the homesteaders living and working among the trees. Sadly, the Chaosmen aren't much better in their attitude towards those who reside in the forest, either. Bored from their endless missions along the Forsaken Peak in their Castle of Chaos, these grimy warriors descend into the forest to raise hell on all they come across.

Some believe that the Forsaken Peak's curse bleeds into the forestry; the closer one gets to the Peak, the darker the forest grows. Ghosts and other horrors stalk the woodlands, vanishing those unlucky enough to be lost after dark. Now, rumors persist



of slugmen pouring from lost tunnels, emerging from the bowels of that horrible mountain.

**Greenstone River**

As the longest river in the Eastern Borderlands, the Greenstone descends from the Mountains of Rime to the North and bleeds south towards the Ruined Sea. Along the way, it slinks past Lantern Falls, granting the city its moniker.

Travel by river is difficult, but not impossible. Guides are recommended, as the river is known for its chaotic bent. Many unprepared adventurers have met their fates at the hands of steep waterfalls, jagged rocks, and other dangers of the swift and angry Greenstone and its rapids (qv.).

**Halfmoon Lake**

Then Greenstone’s second major stop is the murky Halfmoon Lake at the edge of the Chaosmen’s Lands. Half-sunk by the black waters rests an old, nameless village. Anyone who sets about on raft via the Greenstone can see the old village peaking up from the mud, swarmed by mosquitos, biting flies, and disease-carrying rats.

**Harkwind Hills**

Once, the Harkwind Hills north of Lantern Falls were abundant with iron. Of course, the wealthy merchants operating the caravan trails grew keen on this. Thousands of hard hands were put to work in the hills, stripping the land of its bounty. In time, the iron dried up. Only a few mines still operate in the Harkwind Hills, but most are long abandoned.

**Harkwind Valley**

Named for the white eagles (large hawks) that live in the nearby hills and hunt in the valley. On one side of the Valley stands the Towering Mountains and on the other the Ancient Hills.

Centuries ago, the Church of Law took to the valley, attracted by the assets provided by the might Greenstone and

**Hazards of The Eastern Borderlands**

**Aug the Croc, Terror of Halfmoon Lake**  
A giant crocodile named Aug calls the village ruins home. Aug’s grown fat over the years thanks to countless, careless treasure seekers who dive into the ruins searching for lost loot and baubles. In addition to Aug, swarms of quippers hunt the ruins, eating anything the old croc misses.

**Bonemist Geyser Glass**  
A rare material known as geyser glass collects around the bonemist geyser. Geyser glass looks like a cross between obsidian and quartz. When used to make weapons, it can punch through the defenses of creatures with resistance to fire damage. However, it is weak and hard to work with; attack and damage rolls made with geyser glass weapons are made with a -1 penalty.  
Of course, getting a hold of the glass isn’t easy. Skeletons and scalded zombies rise from the acidic mud, dragging unsuspecting creatures to their deaths in the mud and boiling water.

**Caravan Tolls**  
Reasonable tolls (typically 2 sp) at 10-mile intervals pay for the operation. Some grumble about the cost but know that it’s a small price to pay for the safety of cargo transportation through the Borderlands. The merchant tolls are manned by 2d6 guards lead by a veteran at all hours. Most of the tolls’ guards are lawful neutral, although a corrupt official isn’t totally unheard of.

**Greenstone River Rapids**  
When traveling by the Greenstone River or through the Singing Gorge by raft or canoe (larger boats can’t move through the waterways due to the rapids), have the characters make DC 12 Strength checks using their proficiency in vehicles (water). The greenstone requires checks once every 5 miles and the Singing Gorge requires checks once every 1 mile. A failed check results in the vessel capsizing in the water.  
*Capsizing Boats* - At the start of his or her turn, a character is pushed 30 feet downstream and must make a DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check. On a failed check, the character is restrained, pulled underwater (and starts to drown), and takes 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage as they are dashed against the rocks. On a successful check, a character only takes half damage but isn’t restrained or drowning. A restrained character can use their action to make another DC 17 Strength (Athletics) check to surface the water, ending the restrained condition on a success.

**Singing Gorge Harpies**  
The voices are actually those of harpies. The harpies specifically target raft passengers attempting to navigate the falls. Using their song, they lure travelers from their boats and into the water. From there, the crushing rocks and swirling waters do the rest of the work for them (see Greenstone River Rapids above).

the Harkwind Hills to the north. Soon, Lantern Falls sprung up and formed a major trade center.

These days, the natural geography of the valley is one of Lantern’s Falls greatest blessings, especially with the incursion of the Chaosmen to the north. With the assistance of the

Merchant Lords’ mercenary companies, Lantern Falls knights keep the valley safe. Hundreds of farms and a handful of villages stay safe under their watched. Of course, the looming shadows and chill air sweeping off the Forsaken Peak have started to worry the Harkwinders.



### Lantern Falls

Lantern Falls is an independent mining town sandwiched between the Central Borderlands to the west, the very northwestern edge of the Towering Mountains to the east, the elven woods to the south, and the barbarians and Kingdom of Chaos to the north. It's a sleepy town comprised of hard-working farmers, craftsmen, miners, and fishermen, though there are some merchants and traders that operate within the town walls. A large waterfall thunders down several cataracts to the north of the settlement.

Those few caravans that end up in Lantern Falls arrive in the summer months when the passes and Borderlands are free of harsh weather. The most common traders include merchants from the Valley of Haven in the mountains to the east, or free farmers from the Ancient Hills and lands surrounding the town.

Historically, the town was a simple village comprised only of miners. But as harsh northern weather began taking its toll, marauding barbarians and monsters harried the miners, and passing caravans of merchants and guardsmen wintering with the laborers eventually became farmers, it became clear that more protection was necessary. Walls were slowly built. Mercenaries were paid to watch the town and protect its inhabitants. These soldiers became the town's first men-at-arms. Eventually, one of these men, Durwin, took power, focusing construction and military efforts for the first time for the beleaguered inhabitants.

A traveling cleric of Law settled in the town 100 years afterward, bringing with him spiritual guidance and offering his god's protection to travelers heading east or west.

Soon, Lantern Falls, or Iron Falls, as it was called until 70 years ago, became known as the 'Merchant's Lantern.' It offered those few travelers that made the harrowing journey through the Borderlands or the Towering Mountains

a safe haven from the hazardous northern realms. Though not bustling, commerce is greater now than it has previously been.

Lantern Falls's denizens are mostly lawful. Laws and punishments are strict but fair, and rarely resulting in execution.

### A Base of Operations

Lantern Falls makes an excellent place for the party to rest and relax in between adventures, especially as part of the ongoing Forsaken Peak adventure series. All of the equipment listed in the Fifth Edition PHB are available for purchase in Lantern Falls. Being a Sword and Sorcery setting, magic items are much more difficult to locate. In addition, Lantern Falls makes a good place to introduce side quests and other plot developments.

Below are details of some of the more important places found in the town, as well as its notable denizens.

#### The Lonely Delver Inn

The Lonely Delver Inn is one of the oldest establishments in Lantern Falls. Its current innkeeper is Forthwind (LN male human **commoner**), an argumentative and somewhat harsh man. Miners visiting from the camp to the north are treated exceptionally well by Forthwind, often given discounts on their meals, if not given them for free. The miners fill the common room's tables where they carouse away the aches and pains brought on by backbreaking labor. Many only visit when delivering shipments of ore, though some visit family and friends they have in town. The cost to stay the night at the Lonely Delver is 1 gp per day and includes three modest meals.

#### Slinker's Tavern

If there is information to be had in Lantern Falls, it can be found in Slinker's Tavern. The halfling, Slinker (N male halfling **commoner**) makes it his business to know the gossip and rumors in town. He often likes to bother new arrivals with incessant, but kindly, conversation. Often, he is amiable enough that people end up

opening up to him and saying more than they intended, which is just what Slinker wants.

#### Lorden's Keep

Lorden, the Steward of Lantern Falls, is descended from the mercenaries that were hired to protect the developing town. Lord (LN male human **veteran**) is short, stout, and red-faced. He is a combative fellow that loves being involved in forays into the surrounding hills to deal with any threats that might arise. Lately, though, his wife, the Stewardess Gwendolina (LG female human noble), and Lorden's advancing age, have kept the man upon his carved throne much more often than he would like. Lorden is prone to exploding into fits of rage, though such bouts are mostly bluster, as his wife will be quick to point out. Lorden's son, Uthric (LN male human veteran), is his pride and joy. He is tall like his grandfather, fierce like his father, and acting constable for the town.

The Lorden family lives in the large keep on the western part of the town. There are old passages beneath the Keep, and many mysteries surrounding them.

#### The Temple of Law

The Temple of Law is the spiritual center of the town and a resource for those looking for divine protection along the caravan routes east and west. Fenric the Pure (LG male human **priest**) is the town's priest. He is a stick of a man, with a head that bobs around on his bony shoulders, like a scarecrow with no support, when he gets excited or angered. Many say the priest is a boring, fussy, and fastidious fellow, and they are right. Most of the temple's acolytes and the less pious townsfolk make fun of him for his no-nonsense personality. Despite his conservatism, the man is good of heart, aids the traveling and local poor, and is quick to lend a hand when the moment calls for it, though he might try and control the whole affair. Lorden and Fenric are constantly at odds, though they hold a grudging respect for one another.





**KEY:**

- |                          |                           |                          |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. FISHMONGERS/DOCKS     | 6. DELGAR THE TRADER      | 11. MARKET SQUARE        |
| 2. GRAVEYARD             | 7. THOM THE LEATHERWORKER | 12. LORDEN'S KEEP        |
| 3. EAST GATE             | 8. BELDOR THE BLACKSMITH  | 13. BEZZWIC'S TOWER      |
| 4. TEMPLE OF LAW         | 9. STORN THE ARMOURER     | 14. WEST GATE            |
| 5. THE LONELY DELVER INN | 10. SLINKER'S TAVERN      | 15. TEG THE HORSE TRADER |



### Iron Mine

One last iron mine dots the Harkwind Hills and its rights are fiercely contested. No less than three Merchant Lords have died laying claim to the operation, poisoned, stabbed, and drowned by “bandits.”

Currently, Marlowe the Rusted (LE male human **noble**) manages the mine and keeps a small mercenary company on hand to see that it stays that way. The mercenary company consists of 20 guards and 2 veterans.

### Monastery of the Sacred Scroll

The old monastery is locally known, but seldom interacted with. This sect of the Church of Law is dedicated to Saint Merek of the Sacred Scroll. The monks continue the work Merek started, studying an obscure text from the ‘Book of Law and Light.’

### Morgantha’s Well

Wrapped by 50-foot cliffs on all sides, Morgantha’s Well is a clear lake hidden among the foothills of the Towering Mountains. **Water weirds** live here. They are prone to drowning adventurers that ignore the warnings of local hunters.

### Silverleaf Forest

Once, the elves of the Eastern Borderlands ruled the entire expanse. It is believed that the Silverleaf and the Graywood were also part of the same forest. Then, the curse of the Forsaken Peak swept over the land. The elves retreated from the Graywood and across the Greenstone, reestablishing their domain in the western woodlands. Now, the elves rarely emerge from their homes in the trees. And outsiders are quite unwelcome.

### Singing Gorge

Those that brave this winding, cataract-filled gorge swear they hear the faint, alluring song of female voices over the tumbling of the stream that runs through it.

### Singing Stream

An extension of the Greenstone River, the singing stream takes its name from the famous Gorge it runs through.

### Somerlake

Somerlake is a lake northeast of Lantern Falls. Somer Isle is an island at the heart of the lake on which the Monastery of the Sacred Scroll is built.

### Slugmarsh

The dismal, black swamp that consumes the Halfmoon Lake is home to Zargol, the slug demon. There, he lives here with a collection of zealous cultists. Not even the Chaosmen dare set foot in the marsh, for fear of capture, torture, or possession (or all three) by the slug demon and its insane minions.

### Towering Mountains

This snow-capped range juts from the landscape like a wolf’s teeth, separating the Eastern Borderlands from the remainder of the continent. Were it not for the Caravan Road that cuts through the mountains, travel would be nigh impossible.

The greatest danger of the mountains are the drakes whose eyries pock its peaks. The drakes are known to fly north towards the Harkwind Valley during the Cold Months, lifting livestock – and the odd farmer – to return to their young. For this reason, Drakehunt is a popular festival, arriving the second week of autumn. Each year, young knights and thrillseekers arrive to the mountains ready to test their new swords on the mighty lizards’ scales. Those who survive consider it a rite of passage.

### Wizard’s Tomb

The trap-laden tomb of a lich known as the Stargazer, who once terrorized the Southern Kingdoms, lies hidden within the crags of the Ancient Hills. Word ’round the Harkwind is that the lich’s second phylactery is kept within the hills.

### Wyvern’s Lair

Worse than all the bandits, Chaosmen, and wolves of the Graywood Forest are the malicious wyverns. These thorny, flying reptiles live in a sinkhole at the center of the wood. Thousands of skulls and bones—an equal mix of humanoid and animal—litter the surrounding area.

The wyverns of the Graywood forest are vicious and much more cunning than normal. They rarely hunt alone, preferring to travel in packs of three or four. Often, one will pretend to be feasting on a fresh kill in an open area, attracting hunters and would-be adventurers. Meanwhile, 2-3 more hide among the trees. The wyverns then cut off all exits, attacking hard and fast.

Five **wyverns** live in the burrows pocking the 60-foot deep sinkhole.

### Shock, Wyvern Matriarch

The matriarch of the wyverns is a heavily-scarred beast known as Shock, the smartest and deadliest of the group. She uses the normal **wyvern** stat block except with the following changes:

- Shock’s alignment is neutral evil.
- Shock has 247 hit points and her AC is 15 (natural armor).
- Her Dexterity score is 14 (+2) and her Intelligence score is 8 (-1)
- Shock has proficiency in Stealth checks (+6).
- Using her Multiattack, Shock can attack once with her bite and once with her claws. While flying, she can use her claws in place of one other attack.
- Shock’s CR is 10, increasing her proficiency bonus to +4 (this gives her a +1 bonus to her Perception skill and attack rolls).Ω





# THE SECRET OF FORSAKEN PEAK PART 1

BY DAVE HAMRICK & JD RUSSELL

## Goblin Enemy Mine

Cartography by Justin David Russell

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*This first installment of the ongoing Secret of Forsaken Peak series is intended for a party of 4-6 5th-level characters who should reach 6th-level by the adventure's end. The adventure is set in the Eastern Borderlands described earlier in this issue, but can be easily inserted into an existing campaign setting. Certain sections of the dungeon map may lead to areas not yet published. You are free to change the dynamics of these locations to better suit your campaign, or remove them entirely.*

### Adventure Hook

This adventure assumes that the players have already arrived in Lantern Falls. However, any small-to-medium settlement near a major mountain range will do.

The characters are called to the town of Lantern Falls by Bezzwic Greencloak (LG male human **mage**). Recently, a group of Greencloak's students disappeared while performing research north of the Greenstone River, in the Graywood Forest. Rangers combing the area discovered goblin tracks leading back to the Forsaken Peak. Greencloak fears that none of his disciples survived, but remains optimistic. He hopes that the characters can either a) find proof that his students were all killed in the raid or b) rescue any survivors captured by the Peak's goblins.

Greencloak knows that the goblins operate out of a mine located on the northern face of the mountain and offers detailed directions for the characters.

**Roleplaying Bezzwic Greencloak**  
Greencloak is the town's most extraordinary feature. He is the Steward's counselor and a wizard of middling power. He lives in a tower near the Keep. Bezzwic is proud, forgetful, and quick to please the Steward with simple cantrips and stories. The wizard is venerable, but not ancient. He is tall, with meaty hands and a wide girth.



His greying black hair and beard are wild about his face and protrude from his voluminous green cloak. Bezzwick thoroughly enjoys scaring the town youth with threats of true and awesome power. He does not brook fools but will bend over backward for the Steward of Lantern Falls.

If the characters ask more questions to Greencloak, he shares what he knows about The Forsaken Peak and the goblins:

“The Forsaken Peak is a cursed area. Only the Chaosmen are foolish enough to build a permanent base of operations there, and from what my resources tell me, even they’ve had a hard time there.”

“The goblins are known slavers and cannibals. If any of my students are still alive, it won’t be for much longer, I’m afraid.”

“Careful in the Graywood Forest. It is full of wolves, bandits, and other unspeakable horrors.”

“The Chaosmen of the Peak aren’t aggressive, but they also don’t like others sniffing around their Castle on the Peak. If you absolutely must approach the Castle of Chaos, I recommend doing so under the disguise of merchants whom they accept without too many questions.”

The characters should be somewhat experienced by this point and their deeds may be known even to those living on the edge of civilization, such as those of Lantern Falls. Greencloak is confident in the party’s ability to rescue his students. Greencloak explains that he would offer his support, but the town’s defenses are limited, especially where magic is concerned.

## General Features of the Goblin Mine

### Ceilings

Goblins average 3 to 4 feet in height. As such, many of the chamber ceilings are shorter than normal. Ceilings in chambers and constructed tunnels are 8 feet high unless otherwise noted.

### Floors

The floors in tunnels and chambers are made from smooth, hewn stone. In natural caverns (areas #A15 and #A20) the floors are stone, but vary in smoothness and may have loose gravel and rocks.

### Walls

Lacking the engineering sensibilities of dwarves, most of the walls in the tunnels and chambers are crudely hewn stone and rough cut blocks, sometimes with support beams to carry the load of the peak above it.

### Light

A majority of the mine is without a light source since goblins do not require light to see in the dark. The area description text blocks assume that the characters are able to see in the dark or have light sources of their own.

### Non-Cell Doors

Most of the doors are sturdy wooden doors measuring 3 feet by 6 feet high (causing most non-goblins to have to bend down) that are 3 inches thick. The hinges and locking mechanisms are made of cast iron. Most of the doors remain unlocked unless the alarms have been raised. Locked doors require DC 15 checks with lockpicking tools to open, or DC 17 Strength checks to break down. Each door has an Armor Class of 15 and 15 hit points.

### Cell Bars and Doors

The cell bars are made of thick, wrought iron, each spaced 5 inches apart. It re-

quires a DC 21 Strength check to pry the bars apart. Cell doors also require DC 15 checks with lockpicking tools to open, or DC 19 Strength checks to break down.

### Keys

There are a handful of goblins and servants in the mine that carry keys on them. Rolfin (area #A9) and Tuuk (area #A26) have keys to every door in the complex.

Lamarr (area #A10), Linandra (area #A13), one of the hobgoblins in area #A21, and one of the bugbears in area #A23 have keys to every door in the complex except for the strong room (area #A5).

### Alarms

The goblins are very conscious of their proximity to the other factions in the mountain. As such, they’ve created an alarm system using bells that can reverberate through the tunnels. The goblins are trained to raise the alarm immediately upon the site of unwelcome guests. In any area that is designated as having an alarm and an encounter occurs, at least one goblin or hobgoblin will attempt to use its action to sound the alarm. If the alarm is sounded, 2d6 + 2 **goblins** with 1d4 + 1 **wolves** will arrive in 1d4 turns and the entire mine will go on full alert (see below).

### Full Alert

When the mine is on full alert, the following occurs unless it is impossible for the goblins to do so (GM’s judgment):

1. All slaves are returned to their holding cells in area A23.
2. All doors are locked.
3. The chance of a random encounter increases to 16-20 on a roll of a d20.
4. Rolfin is ushered back to his chambers in area A9 and guarded by two **ogres** and four **goblins**.

## The Reward

Greencloak promises the characters 300 gp apiece if they return with irrefutable evidence that his students were killed by the goblins. He will pay an additional 200 gp each if they find survivors and bring them back alive.

If the character press for coin upfront, Greencloak gives each character 100 gp upfront, with the remainder distributed upon completion of the mission.





## Adventure Background

Below the first level of the Forsaken Peak is a large, central, water-filled cavern around which are several smaller caves and tunnels inhabited by a myriad of denizens. In the northern caves are goblins. They serve the aging dragon, Orithranx, who lives on one of the isolated islands in the underground lake. The goblins have hewn their home, crudely, from the very mountain.

Slaves work the mines and serve the goblins as food. The Chaosmen are eager to ally themselves with the goblins, but the chaotic creatures have not yet committed. The dragon believes it can harness the power of Gorgolog, the sleeping slug god imprisoned in the roots of the Forsaken Peak.

## Goblin Mine Encounters

### A1 – Main Entry

After the long, arduous hike following the directions Gleencoak gave you, the tree cover breaks just enough for you to make out the entrance to the goblin mine. Two large wooden doors bar entry and exit into the mine. Guarding these doors are a pair of ogres. To the right side of the lumbering giants, you can make out a pair of crude arrow slits.

Getting in won't be easy.

This is the only exterior entrance into the mine and it's guarded by two **ogres**. In addition, two **goblins** keep a keen watch from the arrow slits (see area #A2). If the characters learned from Greencloak that the goblins use an alarm system to warn the others of intruders, they may try to draw the ogres away to deal with them. Or, at the very least, deal with the goblin archers before they can pull the alarm.

### Mine Entry Doors

*Large object*

**Armor Class** 15

**Hit Points** 44 (8d10)

**Damage Vulnerabilities**  
fire, lightning

**Damage Immunities**  
poison, psychic

**Entry Methods.** The door is barred from the inside. Beyond destroying the door (which would draw attention and raise the alarm), here are some ways the players could get inside:

**Persuasion.** The characters could convince the ogres and goblins that they need entry. A successful Charisma (Persuasion or Deception) check contested by the goblins' Wisdom (Insight) could work. The goblins are well-trained, however, and make all their Insight checks with advantage. If the goblins pass their check, they give the characters 2 rounds to leave before they open fire and raise the alarm. Intimidation causes the goblins to immediately attack and raise the alarm, even with a success.

**Break Down the Door.** A successful DC 23 Strength check might open the door, but it's very difficult. In addition, the noise draws the attention of the goblins and ogres inside, who will raise the alarm.

**Use Leverage on the Bar.** A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that the door is locked from within by a huge, wooden bar. Using a narrow enough item such as a greatsword or spear and a fulcrum such as a rock (or, you know, a dead ogre), the bar can be shifted out of place with a successful DC 15 Strength check.

Once through the mine entry doors, a set of crude steps leads up to another set of double doors with the same statistics, except the entry methods change as follows:

**Persuasion.** There is a small window in the left door for the ogres to communicate with the worg-riders in area #A3. The characters could convince the worg-riders that they need entry into the mine. A successful Charisma (Persuasion or Deception) check contested by the goblins' Wisdom (Insight) would work. The goblins are well-trained, however, and make all their Insight checks with advantage. If the goblins pass their check, they raise the alarm and ready an attack action for any intruder that comes through the door. An attempt at Intimidation causes the worg-riders to immediately raise the alarm and ready an attack, even with a success.

**Break Down the Door.** A successful DC 23 Strength check might open the door, but it's very difficult. In addition, the noise draws the attention of the worg-riders inside, who raise the alarm.

**Use Leverage on the Bar.** A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that the door is locked from within by a huge, wooden bar. Using a narrow enough item such as a greatsword or spear and a fulcrum such as a rock (or, you know, a dead ogre), the bar can be shifted out of place with a successful DC 15 Strength check. If the characters fail or pass the check by more than 5, it draws the attention of the worg-riders who raise the alarm and ready an attack action.

This second set of doors is guarded by a third **ogre**.

**Treasure.** Other than the items listed on their stat block, the ogres carry nothing of value.



## A2 – Entry Guard Post

Two **goblins** are stationed in this lookout at all times. They have been trained to regard nearly any sort of intrusion by outsiders as a full-scale attack. For this reason, one of the goblins will immediately raise the alarm before attacking through the arrow slits. The goblins are very proficient tacticians, using their Nimble Escape feature to duck between shots, effectively giving them full cover between their turns and potential advantage from hiding.

**Treasure.** Other than the items listed on their stat block, the goblins carry nothing of value. They do have some food stuff of questionable quality (poor quality rations for 1 character) and a wineskin.

## A3 – Entry Hall

Once the characters make it past the second set of doors, read the following text block:

The doors open into a dimly lit hallway, its walls barren and undecorated. Mine tracks cut through the center of the hallway, eventually leading up to your position where the tracks curve into the alcove to your immediate right. An empty cart rests there. The smell of goblin musk is strong in the air. In the distance, you can hear the clangs of picks and shovels on stone, the crack of whips, the screams of slaves, and the laughter of the wicked goblinoids.

This hallway is patrolled by three **goblins** each riding a **worg**.

**Secret Door.** The secret door leading to area #A20b can be detected with a successful DC 13 Perception (Wisdom) check. A successful DC 11 Intelligence (Investigation) reveals the door opens with just a push. There is a latch on the other side, but it is left in an upward position unless the mine is on high alert.

## A4 – Strong Room Guards

The door into this room is always kept locked by the guards inside. When the characters enter this chamber from area #A3 for the first time, read:

This room has slightly higher ceilings than the other parts of the mine you've seen so far, held up by four, thick columns. Broken arrows litter the floor by the door you just came through. In fact, there are a few arrows still lodged in the wood.

There are six **hobgoblins** in this room, each working in groups of three around two **rapid-fire arrow machines**. Both machines are positioned at the opposite end of the room facing the door entering from area #A3.

### Rapid-Fire Arrow Machine

*Large object*

**Armor Class** 15

**Hit Points** 50

**Damage Immunities**  
poison, psychic

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

The rapid-fire arrow machine fires nearly two arrows per second thanks to a clever crank device. The rapid-fire arrow machine has a shield at the front of it that offers three-quarters cover to the weapons team that operates it. Before it can be fired, a special container holding the arrows must be loaded and the machine must be aimed. It takes one action to load the weapon, one action to aim it, and one action to fire it. In addition, a creature can use its action to push the machine 10 feet forward on its wheels.

**Arrows.** The rapid-fire arrow machine fires a blast of arrows in a 90-foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in that area must make a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw, taking 19 (4d8 + 1) damage on a failed saving throw or half as much damage on a successful one.

**Treasure.** Between the six hobgoblins, the characters will find 15 gp, 23 sp, 8 cp and a platinum ring worth 10 gp.

## A5 – Strong Room

Both doors into this room are locked and trigger the poison trap (see below for details). The doors are strong iron doors.

### Strong Iron Door

*Medium object*

**Armor Class** 19

**Hit Points** 45 (10d8)

**Damage Threshold** 5

**Damage Resistances**  
fire

**Damage Immunities**  
poison, psychic

**Entry Methods.** The door is locked with a key which only Rolfin (see area #A9) and Tuuk (see area #A25) carry.

**Break Down the Door.** A successful DC 25 Strength check might open the door, but it's very difficult.

**Pick the Lock.** A successful DC 18 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check can pick the lock.

**Trap Trigger.** The door triggers a trap within the strong room.

**Notice the Trap.** Noticing the trap requires a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check.

**Disarm the Trap.** A successful DC 18 Dexterity check using thieves' tools will disarm the trigger to the poison gas.

Once past the doors, read the following:

You can see the sparkling blue gems from where you stand. Beyond two thick columns and up a short flight of steps, there are bags of coins, weapons, jewelry, art objects, and trinkets. It might be the biggest treasure hoard you have ever seen.



Rolfin keeps all the valuable gems discovered in the lode as well as the possessions of adventurers who thought the goblin mine was an easy target. In addition to the strong doors protecting the room, there is a poison gas trap that kills anyone that enters the room without the correct key.

**Poison Gas Trap**

*Simple trap, (level 1-4, dangerous)*

**Trigger.** Unless the characters use the key found on Rolfin (area #A9) or Tuuk (area #A26) to open one of the doors into the strong room, it arms the pressure plates in the stairs leading up to the treasure platform. Once a Small or larger creature sets foot on any of the steps, the full poison trap is triggered.

**Effect.** On initiative count 20, both doors into the chamber shut and lock (unless one has been broken down) and the room begins to fill with gas from vents in the walls piped in from a cavern below the room. A creature in the room must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw at the start of each of its turns, taking 5 (1d10) poison damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one. Each turn at initiative count 20 this damage increases by 5 (1d10) to a maximum of 27 (5d10).

**Countermeasures.** A creature can willingly hold its breath each round to avoid taking poison damage. The vents can be blocked with thick fabric, wood, or anything else that measures 1' x 2'. There are seven vents total. A DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals how the trap works, and a DC 20 Dexterity check using thieves' tools disables it. If either of the doors are opened (or cannot shut) the trap automatically disarms itself.

**Challenge.** 8 (3,900 XP)

**Adventure Hook.** There is a ring bearing the sigil of Lorden Keep amongst the treasure. Any character with even a passing knowledge of Lantern Falls will recognize its importance.

The ring once belonged to Jerick of Lantern Falls, one of Lorden's cousins. He had traveled to the Forsaken Peak to seek an audience with Golebruk but was attacked by the goblins. Horribly, Jerick was cooked by Lamarr (area #A10) and fed to the goblins of the mine. Now, his ghost haunts the cold storage near the cistern (area #A12). Showing Jerick his ring calms him and reminds him who he is, even if the moment is brief.

**Treasure.** The characters find the following treasure in this room: 307 pp, 1,305 gp, 22,780 sp, 520 ep, and 134,300 cp; a carved ivory statue worth 250 gp; 2 silver necklaces with gemstone pendants worth 250 gp each; 530 blue quartz gems worth 10 gp each; 12 long swords; 8 short swords; 2 shields; and a suit of chainmail with chaosmen markings.

In addition, the room has nearly 4,300 lbs of raw iron ore kept in the southern end of the room just by the smithy door (area #A6). It is worth 1 sp per pound.

**A6 – Smithy**

It feels like the inside of an oven in this room. A massive furnace at the center belches flames where a man whose skin looks as if it is made of bronze stands. Incredibly, the man's hair and beard are made of fire. He hammers a rod of redhot steel, shaping it into some sort of weapon. To his right, seemingly assisting the strange, bronze man, stands a creature made of pure fire.

The smith's name is Roez (LE male **azer**) and his assistant is Fszzh, a **fire elemental**. While the pair does not appreciate being disturbed, they will not attack unless provoked, if the charac-

ters attempt to go into the strong room, or if the mine is on high alert.

Because Roez and Fszzh are immune to fire, this room is kept extremely hot at all times. Any metal objects in the room for more than 3 rounds, including worn armor and carried weapons or shields, suffer the effects of a heat metal spell. The effect ends once the item has been removed from the room, or if the furnace is shut off.

**Treasure.** Many of the weapons that Roez and Fszzh have worked to create are goblin-sized. Regardless, there are 30 scimitars and 8 shields here. In addition, Roez recently created a suit of half-plate for Rolfin. A Small humanoid can wear the armor no problem, but a Medium or larger humanoid will need to spend 375 gp to have the armor resized.

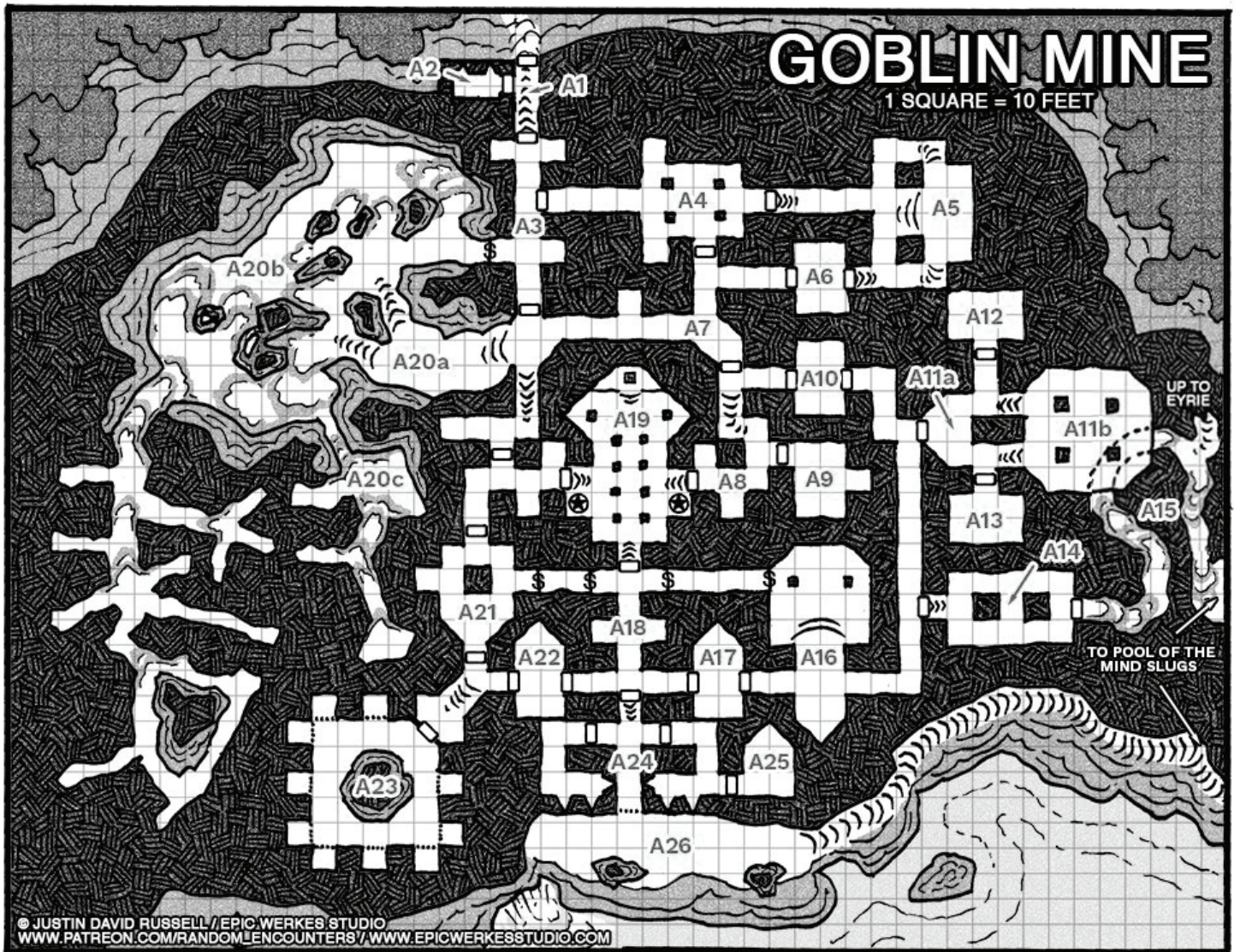


**A7 – Main Hall**

This hallway connecting many of the main areas has a pair of **hobgoblins** stationed at each of the doors leading to areas #A4, #A6, and #A8. In addition, two **goblins** riding **worgs** stand guard at the top of the stairs leading down into area #A20. Each set of guards has access to an alarm if needed. Half of the guards from #A20a will respond to any combats that occur in this hallway, arriving in 1d4 rounds.

**Treasure.** The guards have 93 sp and 13 gp among them.





**A8 – East Temple Hall**

It's quiet here. Red tapestries depicting a dragon's head hang on the walls every five feet.

A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals chanting coming from area #A9. The door to the temple (area #A19) is always kept locked.

**A9 – Rolfin's Chambers**

If the alarm has not been raised, Rolfin can be found here in his chambers alone, praying to Alzerax, God of Red Dragons.

This large bedroom is lavishly decorated with scarlet accents. Kneeling in front of a bronze shrine in the shape of a dragon is a man in long red robes. He looks like he could be a goblin, but the red scales covering his face and neck tell you otherwise. "Oh good. My prayers have been answered," he hisses at you, drawing a knife fashioned from a large tooth from his belt.

Rolfin (NE male goblin **mage**) fears very little and won't hesitate to attack intruders. He believes he is a demi-god and cannot be killed, thus, he will fight to the death.

If the mine's on high alert, he's guarded by two **ogres** and four **goblins**.

**Adventure Hook.** A note sits on Rolfin's desk. It is addressed to "Whoever You Are" and reads:

*What leverage do you think you have over me? And what purpose does it serve us to fight against your enemy? Enemy of my enemy you say! No, it is you who are an enemy, Chaosman. I will not help you overthrow your lord no matter what pathetic offers you make.*  
*This is our last correspondence.*  
*-Rolfin, Highest Servant of His Malignance Alzerak the Terror*



The letter is in response to a letter Rolfin received from Aliq the Chaosmagi. Rolfin burned the letter out of frustration (the ashes are still on Rolfin's desk). Aliq has been trying to recruit Rolfin and the goblins to help him overthrow Golebruk and Golebruk's allies.

**Treasure.** Rolfin has the Dragon's Tooth on his person, gold vestments worth 250 gp, and a key ring with keys to all the doors in the Goblin Mine. Searching his chambers, the characters will also find an iron lockbox (DC 15 Dexterity check with thieves' tools to open) containing 115 platinum pieces, 11 sardonyx gems worth 50 gp each, and a small gold idol carved in the shape of a dragon worth 750 gp. There are also scrolls tucked away between the pages of his books: *animate dead*, *dispel magic*, *fireball*, *gentle repose*, and *revivify*. Finally, he has a small collection of healing potions: 3 *potions of lesser healing* and 1 *potion of greater healing*.

#### A10 – Kitchen

Even if the mine is on high alert, Lamarr the Necrochef is found here cooking.

Dirty pots, pans, cleavers, and spoons, thrown haphazardly on grime covered countertops: you've just walked into a disgusting kitchen. Your nostrils fill with the aroma of cooking meat, which would almost smell delicious were it not for its source. On a spit over a crackling fire is the carcass of something that almost looks humanoid. Bits of offal, entrails, and even blood cover the floors.

A filthy, gluttonous man wearing a black apron stands at one of the counters chopping roots. It's clear that he can see you, but it doesn't stop his work. He just winks at you and whistles before scraping the chopped vegetables into a nearby pot.

A killer and a cannibal, Lamarr is evil personified. Oh, and if that wasn't bad

enough, he's an aspiring necromancer, too. "Never make waste!" he's usually heard bragging to his mindless zombious chefs. Lamar is a CE male human **berserker**, but with the following changes:

- Lamarr has the Multiattack action, allowing him to make two attacks with his cleaver as a melee weapon.
- In place of the greataxe attack, Lamar is armed with a cleaver. The cleaver has the same statistics as a handaxe.

Lamarr combines his "passion" for cooking with necromancy. Nearly all of his dishes have some sort of zing to them that many don't recognize. However, those who've seen him working in the kitchen realize it's just humanoid body parts.

Knowing the danger the characters represent, Lamarr hopes to size them up a little and enchant them somewhat before engaging. Should a fight break out, in addition to the two **zombies** assisting him, Lamarr has hidden undead servants all over the kitchen inside cabinets and pantries: a pair of **crawling claws** and an unarmed **skeleton** (the skeleton's armor class is 12 and in place of its shortbow and scimitar it has a slam attack that deals 1d4 + 2 slashing damage on a successful hit).

**Adventure Hook.** A successful Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals that the zombies and claws are the remains of Chaosmen (they have the Mark of Chaos tattoos). They were messengers sent by Aliq to deliver the note to Rolfin (see area #A9).

**Treasure.** Lamarr keeps a *Necromancer's Cookbook* in his apron and he has keys to all of the doors in the goblin mine except for the strong room (area #A5).

#### A11 – Storage

The only door into this room is kept locked and trapped to keep the other goblins out.

This large room is divided into two main areas: a cistern where the clean

water supply is kept and dry food storage.

#### A11a – Food Storage

Barrels and crates fill this portion of the room. Your hunch tells you it's probably food stored by the goblins; the smell of grain and pickled mackerel is strong.

**Trap.** Tuuk doesn't want the other goblins of the mine pilfering the food in this room. Unless a key is used to enter it (Lamar, Tuuk, Rolfin, and Linandra all carry keys) it sets off a poison needle trap. The poison needle trap is detailed on page 123 of the *DMG*.

**Treasure.** There are approximately 500 lbs worth of grain, root vegetables, and other food commodities in this storage room (each pound is worth 1 cp in the open market).

#### A11b – Mine Cisterns

Four evenly spaced pools of clear water dominate this room sandwiched between massive stone columns supporting the lower-than-usual ceiling.

The ceilings here are 6 feet high. Most of the room is covered in water.

#### A12 – Cold Storage

The door handle leading into this room is cold to the touch.

Once the door opens, a rush of cold air sends chills down your spine. Frost clings to from the barrels and crates that fill this room. Hanging from hooks are three skinned carcasses. Much to your horror, the shape and length of the carcasses' chests reveal that the meat was actually once a person.

From the tops of the crates just past the dead humanoids, you hear cackling. Four, sneering, winged creatures made of solid ice grin at you from their perches.



Four **ice mephits** keep the room cold for the goblins. They are not outwardly hostile but will attack if they see something gained by it (such as a character has its back turned to them while the others are away).

**Adventure Hook.** Should any of the characters speak the mephits' language, they can learn that a ghost sometimes appears at night.

If the characters wait long enough for the **ghost** to appear, Sir Jerick arrives, weeping of the loss of his wife and child (they're fine, he just knows he will never be able to see them again). Any character with a passing knowledge of Lantern Falls can tell that he is originally from there by the way he once dressed.

After a few rounds of this, he flies into a rage and attacks the characters. His goal will be to possess one of them so he can leave the mine and return to his wife and children in Lantern Falls. Seeing the ghost attack as the perfect opportunity for mischief, the mephits will join in against the characters.

Jerick's ring was cut from his finger and put into the strong room (area #A5). If the characters have his ring and show it to him, he will calm down and speak reasonably, revealing what he knows of the mine:

- The mine's leader is a goblin mage named Rolfin.
- Jerick believes that his niece, Laren, is still alive somewhere in the mine.
- Anybody that the goblins capture are either enslaved or eaten. Stronger humanoids are put to work in the lode.
- The goblins worship an ancient red dragon that lives at the center of a massive underground lake. Some of the slaves are given to the dragon as an offering.

Jerick requests that the characters bring his ring to his wife and children in Lantern Falls. Doing so will free him of his undead state.

## A13 – Servants Quarters

Five ramshackle beds cobbled together from hay, burlap sacks, and broken crate bits are the only thing of interest in this room.

Some of the slaves of the mine have earned the right to live outside of the prison (area #A23). Lead by a stone-faced half-elven woman named Linandra (LE female half-elf **commoner**), the four servants (N female human **commoners**) live in this small, cramped room.

Once the characters enter, roll:

d6 Roll	Encounter
0-3	None
4-5	1d4 servants (50% chance Linandra is among them)
6 or high alert	Linandra and all 4 servants

If Linandra is with the servants, she will immediately raise the alarm. Although she doesn't enjoy being a slave to the goblins, she's learned the hard way more than once that adventurers only bring false hope. Nothing or no one can persuade her otherwise. At most, she will promise not to interfere in their plans.

The other servants will at least give the characters a chance to make their case. But without a successful Charisma (Persuasion) roll contested by their Wisdom (Insight), they, too, will raise the alarm.

**Treasure.** The five servants keep nothing of value in these quarters.

**Adventure Hook.** If the characters can convince the servants that they can save them, the servants will travel with them. All of them originally come from Lantern Falls, therefore, escorting them out of the peak will be treacherous. After all, they could end up in the hands of the Chaosmen which may prove even worse for them.

## A14 – Storage

If the characters enter from the door to the west, read the following:

Crates, barrels, rolled up tapestries, shovels, pickaxes; this must be some sort of storage room. The place is a complete mess, too—you can't even see the walls! From a desk to the right of you comes a sigh.

"Oh, no, not adventurers," says a squeaky, grizzled voice.

The voice comes from Gum-Gum, a half-blind, grumpy old **goblin**. Gum-Gum was put in this position to guard the door leading to the slug tunnels buried behind all the old junk. Knowing that Gum-Gum isn't the fighter he used to be, Rolfin tasked Gum-Gum's with raising the alarm should anything he see anything out of the ordinary in the old storage room. Gum-Gum knows his strength and will gladly allow the adventurers to continue on their way without raising the alarm if they promise to spare his life.

Of course, Gum-Gum is no good guy. Once the adventurers leave the room, he will lock the door behind them and raise the alarm, laughing as he does so.

**Passage to the Pool of the Mind Slugs.** Years ago, when Rolfin and Tuuk first started building the mine, they discovered an old, natural cavern that leads deeper into the mountain. Early expeditions proved fruitless, however, as the pairs' goblins either never returned or came back haunted by what they had seen. Not wanting to waste any more of their men, the mine's co-founders decided to seal up the door and guard it while the rest of the mine was built. Eventually, the old door was forgotten about, buried behind decades worth of junk.

Noticing the old door without moving any of the junk requires a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check.

Should the characters take the time to uncover the old door, they will discover that it is a sturdy wooden door similar to the ones in area #A1. In addition to a large bar put across it (facing the inside of the room), the door has been chained in place and bound with a padlock. The

chains and padlock have AC 19 and 10 hit points. The padlock can be picked with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools.

**Resting Place.** Other than Gum-Gum, the rest of the goblins avoid the old storage room. This is a good place for characters to take a short or long rest.

**A15 – Hidden Tunnel**

If the characters enter this tunnel from the hidden door in area A14, read the following text block:

A narrow, natural cavern with low ceilings dives into the darkness beyond. It's eerily quiet here. What could have made the goblins seal this tunnel off?

No humanoid has laid eyes on these tunnels in years. Walk far enough, and the characters will travel to The Pool of the Mind Slugs. There is also a natural staircase leading up *The Eyries* on Level 1. These locations are detailed in later issues of *BroadSword Monthly*.

**A16 – Feast Hall**

This huge room is the goblin feast hall. If the mine is on high alert, this room is completely deserted. All of their plates were left on the tables. Only a pair of **wolves** remains, eating the dishes on the table. Distracted by the food, they won't attack unless provoked.

If the characters have managed to avoid high alert this entire time, then there will be seven **goblins**, two **ogres**, and two **wolves** here, easily heard from the hallways leading in or the eastern barracks (area #A17). Distracted by their eating, drinking, and bickering, all of their passive Perception checks suffer a -5 penalty. Once they notice the characters, however, they will immediately attack and raise the alarm.

**Treasure.** Between all of the goblins and ogres, the characters will find 75 sp and 103 cp.

**A17 – Barracks East**

Bunk beds stacked floor to ceiling, footlockers, and hooks for weapons: this must be the goblins' barracks.

At any given time, there are 1d6 + 2 **goblins** and 1d4 **hobgoblins** found here (half as much if the mine is on high alert).

**Treasure.** A thorough search of the room reveals 45 silver pieces, 250 copper plus 2 blue quartzes worth 10 gp each hidden among the footlockers.



**A18 – South Temple Hall**

If the mine is on high alert, many of the goblins and ogres from the barracks and feast hall are here: fifteen **goblins**, four **ogres**, and four **wolves**. During high alert status, these guards will defend the main entrance to the temple with their lives.

**Secret Doors.** The secret doors connecting A16, A18, and A21 are all made of heavy stone blocks that can be pushed aside. Noticing their presence requires a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check.

**A19 – Temple of Alzerak**

The doors to the west and east leading into the temple are always kept locked.

Of all the chambers in the mine, this is one of the few that has art and decorations. Poorly drawn and sculpted frescoes, reliefs, murals, and elaborate tile mosaics depict images of fierce red dragons turning humanoids to ash or standing upon massive treasure hoards. The thick stone columns are carved to look like blocky red dragons, too, their backs and wings holding up the room's 20-foot high ceilings. At the head of the temple is probably the largest stone dragon of them all, painted dark red. Its mouth is agape and arms outstretched as if daring any who enter this temple unwelcome to approach it.

Before the statue, curled on the steps, are the pitch black bones of a what was once a huge dragon. Although dead, it is not without sentience; it lifts its skull and releases a hiss, then stands, demonstrating the full might of its undead, draconic nature.

This **red dragon skeleton** (see the Appendix) guards the temple against anyone (including goblins) who would dare enter without Rolfin present. The red dragon skeleton also rests atop a pressure plate. Once it stands, the fire trap goes off (see overleaf).

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## Fire Trap

*Simple trap, (level 1-4, moderate threat)*  
The columns supporting the ceiling of the temple are rigged to shoot jets of fire, covering every square in the temple.

**Trigger.** Once the red dragon skeleton stands up, its weight is lifted from the pressure plate. Until the trap is reset using a switch hidden behind the statue of Alzerak (the topmost column in the temple), the pressure plate will not work. Finding the reset switch requires a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) near that particular column.

**Active Elements.** Jets of fire leap from the mouths of every dragon statue in the place. No square is spared. In addition, the alarm is automatically raised (if it hasn't been already).

**Flame Jets (Initiative 20).** Each creature in the temple must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the creature takes 11 (2d10) fire damage or half as much damage on a successful saving throw.

**Countermeasures.** A character can disable or avoid the flame jets of one part of the temple or they can escape through one of the three sets of doors.

**Flame Jets.** A character must choose a 10' x 10' square (there are 25 total squares not counting the larger statues to the south and the stairs in front of the east and west doors), then perform one of the following actions:

**Intelligence (Investigation), DC 15.** As an action, a creature that can see the dragon heads shooting flames can attempt an Intelligence (Investigation) check. A successful check means that the character has learned how to anticipate the dragon heads' movements and flames. The character now only takes half damage on a failed saving throw to avoid the flame or no damage on a successful saving throw. Characters with the Uncanny Dodge feature that succeed on the Intelligence (Investigation) check automatically pass their saving throws.

**Attack.** A creature in the area can attack the dragon heads affecting the square. Each dragon head has AC 17 and 20 hit points. Destroying the dragon heads means that flames no longer affect that square.

**Dexterity check using thieves' tools, DC 15.** Creatures can use thieves' tools in the area roasted by the flame jets to foil the mechanism. A successful check means that the flames no longer affect that square.

**Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)**

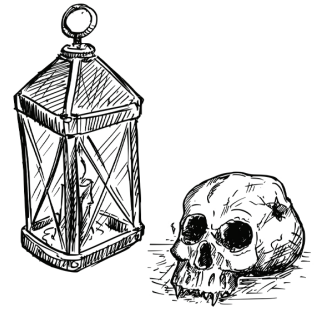
The trap and red dragon skeleton are meant to scare those who intrude more than anything.

**Adventure Hooks.** The red dragon whose skeleton has been reanimated was actually Orithranx's eldest wrymling, Rodalranx. One hundred years ago, Rodalranx was mortally wounded while fighting knights south of the Forsaken Peak. Following the battle, Orithranx brought his son back to the mountain where the enchanted poison in the knight's lances eventually finished him off. Orithranx, saddened by the passing of the last of his children, interred Rodalranx in an old cave, then made his home within the walls of the dwarven outpost across the lake.

80 years later, Rolfin discovered the remains of Rodalranx, which eventually lead him to Orithranx. Rolfin believed that he was actually the bastard son of Rodalranx and that Orithranx was his grandfather. Whether or not this was true, Rolfin used this potential relationship to persuade Orithranx to allow him to build the temple to Alzerak and the mine surrounding it. Orithranx agreed. Out of respect for Rodalranx, the temple's art tells the story of the dead dragon (even if the goblin art isn't that great). Pleased with Rolfin's efforts, Orithranx gave Rolfin the black opal (see below) to reanimate Rodalranx's bones so those who enter the temple would remember Rodalranx even better.

Orithranx can sense the opal whenever it is within 500 feet of him. Should the characters take the opal away from the temple and out of range, Orithranx will know something is amiss and send his minions to investigate (explained in the "Orithranx's Minions" chapter of Castle of Chaos portion of this adventure series detailed in a future installment of BroadSword Magazine).

**Treasure.** The red dragon skeleton is powered by a large black opal found within its skull. The opal is worth 2,500 gp. However, removing it from the temple could lead to trouble (see above).



## A20 – The Lode

The heart of the goblins' mine is here, the lode, where the goblinoids drive the slaves to dig for iron ore and precious blue quartz.

This must be the heart of the mine. The hewn stone gives way for natural rock, heavily picked at by picks and shovels. Mine tracks spill into the lode curling around titanic columns made of pocked stone.

If the mine is not on high alert:

The crack of goblin whips followed by the screams of humanoids tells you all you need to know about this operation: slave labor. All around you see the sullen, emaciated faces of workers pushed to pry treasure from the mine's jagged, black walls.

Massive, armadillo-like beasts chained to a railing along the walls moan as goblins cruelly jab at their hind quarters with spears.

**Slaves.** Unless the mine is on high alert, there are 54 slaves located throughout the entire lode, all **commoners** of different races and backgrounds. The slaves are all non-combatants, although they will arm themselves and fight if necessary. Unfortunately, they all have one level of exhaustion.

If the mine is on high alert, the goblins will return the slaves to the prison (area #A23). It is possible that the characters will catch the goblins in the process of ushering the slaves back, especially if the alarm was first sounded by the guards in area #A7.

**Iron and Quartz.** The goblin mine is thick with iron ore and blue quartz. For each hour a character spends digging anywhere in area #A20, there is a chance that they discover something of value. Roll a d20:

d20 Roll	Discovery
1-16	Nothing
17-19	1 lb of iron ore (1 sp)
20	1 blue quartz gem (10 gp)

Once a character discovers something in the walls and spends another hour digging in the same spot, they make their next d20 roll with advantage. If nothing is found on the second roll, they do not have advantage on any subsequent rolls until they find more ore or quartz.

**Adventure Hook.** Getting the slaves out of the mine is no easy task. Most are malnourished, exhausted, and suffer from severe post-traumatic stress. If any character tries to give an order to one of the slaves, the character must make a DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check contested by the slaves' Wisdom (Insight) (you can roll for them all as one). On a failed contest, 3d6 slaves revolt, and run away screaming.

Many of the slaves have been locked in the mine for years. Some won't even remember their original homes.

However, one slave, a man named Mikel of Smalltown, claims he knows the secret of The Forsaken Peak. In exchange for getting him out of the mine, he will tell the characters all he knows. Mikel knows it's the only card he has to play and will take what he knows to the grave with him; no amount of nonmagical persuasion or intimidation will work on him.

Once freed, Mikel explains that he was captured while on a mission for Prince Golebruk in the old dwarven outpost across the lake. Within its passages, he discovered a mural depicting the Lost Temple. Before he was able to decipher the dwarven runes, he and his men were attacked by the gargantuan red dragon that lives there (Orithranx).

Mikel escaped death by jumping into the lake but was eventually caught by the goblins on the opposite shore. Mikel believes that the key to opening the main gate of the Lost Temple can be found within the old outpost ruins.

**A20a – Mine Entrance/Tool Storage**

Three **goblins** each on a **worg** and four **hobgoblins** guard this entrance. If combat occurs in area #A7, half of these guards will respond to the fighting; the rest will stay to guard the slaves. Mine tracks lead out of the entrance into the hallway through A3.

**Mine Carts.** All throughout the mine, there are mine carts on tracks. A character can push a mine cart as part of their move, but they must spend 2 feet for every 1 foot they push the cart. Standing or sitting inside the cart offers half cover.

**Treasure.** Among the guards, the characters can find 72 cp and 4 gp.

**A20b – The Pit**

Most of the digging in the mine occurs in the pit where most of the lode is found. In addition to the slaves, the goblins employ two **bulettes** chained to a railing along the wall to dig. There are three **goblins** for each bulette, each armed with a spear (in place of their scimitar and shield). If the goblins are distracted by combat, the

bulettes use the fight as an opportunity to break free of their chains. Each round, roll a d20 for each bulette. On a roll of 12-20, the bulette breaks its chain and attacks the closest creature it sees (slave, goblin, or character). In fact, if any creature gets within the bulette's range, it will attack it. Even on high alert, the bulettes and their assigned goblin teams remain.

In addition to the bulette teams, there are eleven more **goblins** armed with whips (in place of scimitars and shields). The slaves are submissive and won't join into the fray until it's clear that the characters have the upper hand.

Finally, at least one of the goblins (from either the bulette or slave teams, GM's choice) will take the opportunity to run into area #A20c to call the worgs away from their den. The worgs arrive in 1d4 rounds.

**Treasure.** Amongst the guards can be found 153 sp, 7 gp, and 3 ep.

**A20c – Worg Den**

The worgs that are not currently in rotation rest in this retired branch of the mine. There are six **worgs** here. The alpha of the worgs is named Rukz; she has 44 hit points, can make two bites per attack action, and has a CR of 1. If a fight breaks out in the pit, chances are Rukz and the worgs will respond,





especially if a goblin alerts them or the alarm has been sounded.

**Treasure.** There is nothing of value in the worg den.

### A21 – Guard Room

There are two **hobgoblins** in this room.

**Treasure.** There is 6 sp between the two hobgoblins. One of the hobgoblins has a key ring with keys to every door in the mine except for the doors leading into area #A5

### A22 – Barracks West

The floors of this room are covered in loose hay topped with pillows made of burlap sacks and dirty feathers. And the entire place stinks.

Along with a few of the wolves, this is where the ogres of the mine sleep. At any given time there are 1d4 **ogres** and 2d4 **wolves** found in this room.

**Treasure.** The ogres keep nothing of value here

### A23 – Prison

The door leading into the prison is locked.

If the prison is on high alert, read the following text block. Otherwise, the prison cells are empty.

Sobbing and groaning is the first thing you hear as you step into this large room. To your left and right you see small cells, each with a half dozen humanoids locked inside. These poor souls stare at you through tear-wrapped eyes, filthy, scarred hands trembling on the bars.

Three **bugbears** work as the jailers here and remain even when the slaves are working. If they hear the characters coming, they hide behind the natural column with hopes of catching the characters by surprise.

**Slaves.** If the prison is on high alert, the slaves described in area #20b are found locked up here, six to a cell, including Mikel of Small Town.

**Treasure.** There are 15 sp and 8 gp between the three bugbears. One of the bugbears has a key ring with keys to every door in the mine except for the doors leading into area #A5. The keys can set the slaves free.

### A24 – Guard Posts, Rear Exit

The wide hallway splits at a T-junction then ends at a large, barred-gate where two hobgoblins stand. Against the wall, bound and gagged is a dark haired human in torn, black and red robes. His defeated look turns to hopeful one once he sees you.

The two **hobgoblins** are guarding Alzon (LE human **mage**), one of Aliq's chaosmagi. In addition to the hobgoblins, there is one **goblin** in each of the arrow posts to either side of the hallway. However, they can only see the 10 foot x 10 foot square directly in front of the barred door leading to area #A26. Should combat break out between the characters and the hobgoblins, these goblins will raise the alarm (round 1), lock the doors leading into their posts (round 2), then man the slits, firing from cover (round 3). In addition, the goblin on the right side will alert Tuuk who is in his chambers studying with Laren.

The barred door leading to area #A26 is a portcullis. It can be opened from either of the guard posts on either side. Otherwise, it requires a DC 20 Strength check to lift and has the same stats a cell door.

**Adventure Hook.** Alzon was sent by Aliq to infiltrate the mine but was caught by surprise by Rolfin and his guards. Since Alzon is a wizard, Rolfin believes that the chaosmagi is more valuable as a sacrifice to Orithranx than as a slave or food. He is scheduled to be tossed over the cliffs into the lake (area #A26) the following morning.

If the characters save Alzon, he lies and explains that he was sent on a reconnaissance mission by Aliq to learn the location of the goblins' treasure

hoard. The truth is that Aliq sent Alzon to learn more about Rolfin and to learn out what it would take to persuade him to join forces against Golebruk.

Alzon offers the characters 100 gp if they will return him to the chaosmagi camp in the Castle of Chaos. In addition, he promises to put in a good word with Aliq, which could potentially earn them a favor. The Chaosmagi faction will be detailed in the Castle of Chaos section of *BroadSword Monthly* #2

**Treasure.** All of Aliq's weapons and possessions were taken off him and Rolfin burned his spellbook. The hobgoblin guards have 20 cp between the two of them.

### A25 – Tuuk's Chambers

This room smells like a goblin's chambers but hardly looks like a goblin's chambers. Books clutter desks and shelves all around. Maps of the continent hang from the walls and doors of a tall wardrobe. Even the small, goblin-sized bed in the center of the room is neatly made with what appears to be a spellbook resting on the covers.

Regardless of the state of the alarm, Tuuk (NE male goblin **gladiator**) is always found here. However, if the mine is on high alert, he will keep Laren (NG female human **mage**) hidden in his wardrobe. Otherwise, the two are found studying together on his bed.

**Adventure Hook.** Tuuk, like many of the goblins of the mine, is a rotten, grumpy bastard. As captain of the mine's guard, Tuuk rules his crummy coterie with nothing more than his spear and sneer.

However, Tuuk's not completely evil. For starters, he's a vegetarian; meat (and especially Lamarr's cooking) never really sat right in his stomach. And second, he has an interest in magic. Seeing as most goblins shy away from the arcane arts, it's something he's kept a secret, even from Rolfin.

After a recent raid on a group of magic

students from Lantern Falls, Tuuk kidnapped an apprentice mage named Laren riding with the group. He covertly whisked Laren away to his office, where he keeps her hidden and fed. In exchange for keeping her alive, she's worked with Tuuk to teach him magic. While she hasn't exactly "fallen in love" with her captor, she has developed a bond with the brutish gobbo.

Should the characters initiate combat with Tuuk, Laren will come to his aid, begging the characters to spare his life. She will make the case for Tuuk, saying that he wishes to change in his heart and leave his old life behind. Of course, that is easier said than done. There is no love for goblins in the Kingdoms, especially not those originally of cannibalistic, mountain-dwelling tribes.

Laren will eventually make the suggestion that the characters save her and take Tuuk with them. She wishes to return to her home in Lantern Falls, where she can be reunited with her family and Greencloak. Returning her to her people will earn the characters a favor from the Temple of Law.

**Treasure.** If the characters kill Tuuk (or even Laren) and search the room, they will find a small, locked chest (DC 15 Dexterity check with thieves' tools to open) with 175 gp and 8 blue quartz gemstones (10 gp each) inside and Laren's spellbook (contains all the spells on the mage spell list). On Tuuk, they can find a key ring with keys to all the doors in the Goblin Mine, including the strong room (area #A5). Finally, there is a crude map of the second level hanging on the wall. It shows the locations of the mine, the Dwarven Outpost, the Pool of the Mind Slugs, and the Labyrinth of Yuul relative to the large lake in the center of the level. Tuuk has notes regarding The Eyries, as well.

These are his notes:

- Tuuk believes that The Creature of the Eyries is ancient and may have been living in the peak for thousands of years. It is not a dragon, though,

but something new, never recorded.

- The Creature of the Eyries seems to be indestructible. However, Tuuk theorizes that it fears the light of the righteous.
- A number of beasts in the Eyries have evolved to avoid the presence of The Creature. As such, they can take on the appearance of the natural structures within.
- One note reads "The Lost Expedition?"

#### A26 – Sacrificial Cliffs

If this is the first time the characters have seen the underground lake, read the following text aloud:

Before your very eyes is an underground lake of immense proportions. So large, in fact, that in any direction you look its edges disappear into the darkness. The ceilings over the lake are easily 50 to 100 feet high at certain parts, rough with stalactites. Winged, subterranean creatures—something like bats, but not quite bats—flutter between perches, their chirps drowned out by the sound of the powerful waterfall to your right that thunders into the water below.

To your left, a stairway descends down the edge of the cliff, vanishing out of sight.

This area is nearly 30 feet above the lake's water.

These cliffs are used to sacrifice slaves or goblins that Rolfin dislikes to Orithranx, the ancient red dragon that lives in the dwarven outpost across the lake. No one has ever survived being pushed into the waters below. They are either dashed against the rocks and die, drowning, their bones resting at the bottom of the lake. Or they are scooped up by the old wyrm and promptly eaten to the cheers of its goblinoid worshippers.

The staircase leads to the Pool of the Mind Slugs to the east of the mine.

**Treasure.** All of the bodies were stripped of valuables before they were tossed into the waters below. So, it's just bones down there.

#### Concluding the Adventure

By the end of the adventure, the player characters should have stumbled upon a variety of adventure hooks to lead them to other parts of the dungeon. In addition, the PCs should have reached level 6 when all is said and done.

Further adventures under Forsaken Peak will appear in future issues of *BroadSword Magazine!* Until then, the PCs can head back to Lantern Falls for some well earned rest and relaxation. Ω

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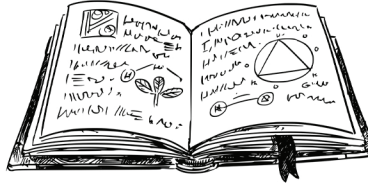
# FORSAKEN PEAK APPENDIX

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## NEW MONSTERS AND MAGIC ITEMS

BY DAVE HAMRICK

The preceding Goblin Mine adventure in this issue of *BroadSword Monthly* references an adult red dragon skeleton and two new magic items.

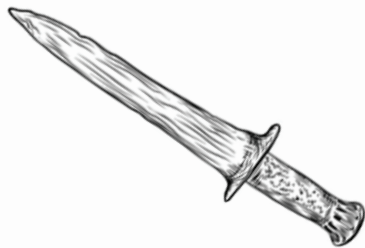


### Necrochef's Cookbook

*Wondrous item, very rare*

This book contains instructions and recipes for preparing and cooking humanoids, and its words are charged with magic. If you spend 48 hours over a period of 6 days or fewer studying the book's contents and practicing its guidelines, your moral alignment shifts to evil (your ethical alignment stays the same) and you gain the ability to use your sense of taste to discover a creature's flaws.

Once per day after you finish a long rest, you can lick a creature or its freshly spilled blood as a bonus action. Afterward, your attacks against that creature are made with advantage and the creature has disadvantage on its saving throws against your spells (if any) for 1 minute. The cookbook then loses its magic but regains it in a century.



### New Magic Items

#### Dragon's Tooth

*Weapon (dagger), uncommon (requires attunement)*

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon.

In addition, when you hit a creature with this weapon you deal an additional 1d10 fire damage.

### New Monster

The Temple of Alzerak is guarded by the undead remains of an adult, red dragon named Rodalranx.

#### ADULT RED DRAGON SKELETON

*Huge undead, lawful evil*

**Armor Class** 19 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 161 (19d12 + 38)

**Speed** 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

**STR** 27 (+8) **INT** 6 (-2)

**DEX** 10 (+0) **WIS** 8 (-1)

**CON** 15 (+2) **CHA** 5 (-3)

**Damage Vulnerabilities** bludgeoning

**Damage Immunities** poison, fire

**Condition Immunities** exhaustion, poisoned

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 23

**Languages** understands Common and Draconic but can't speak

**Challenge** 11 (7200 XP)

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The skeleton makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (2d10 + 8) piercing damage.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d6 + 8) slashing damage.

**Tail.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d8 + 8) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed a DC 18 Strength saving throw or be knocked back 10 feet, falling prone in its space.  $\Omega$

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# PART II

## MASS COMBAT



# MASS COMBAT BASICS

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## OPTIONAL RULES FOR FIFTH EDITION

BY DAVE HAMRICK

### Optional Mass Combat Rules

*The Battle of Dragard Mine* introduces new rules for mass combat in Fifth Edition. These rules can be added into your game with very little modification on your part.

This system doesn't change how combat works with the exception of adding two new actions, **Command** and **Rally**. The **Command** action allows **Leaders** (described below) to use their action to direct units in combat and the **Rally** action allows a leader to stop broken units from fleeing.

**Morale**, an optional rule in Fifth Edition, is also implemented in this system to add a necessary dynamic to large scale battles.

In addition to commands and morale, the system introduces **units**, which act similar to the same way that swarms do with a few additional mechanics. Units make it easier for the GM to manage multiple enemies and NPCs at once.

### Leaders

A leader is any non-unit creature that can command a unit. Typically, leaders are the players' characters plus any important NPCs that the GM has deemed worthy of leading. A leader can join a unit by moving into the same space as the unit. Once the leader joins a unit, it cannot move or take actions of its own unless it chooses to remove itself from the unit by moving out of the unit's space. However, it can move the unit and have the unit take actions on the leader's initiative count without the unit counting towards the total number of units that it can command. The unit uses the leader's Wisdom saving throw for morale checks in place of its own. A leader that is part of a unit cannot be directly targeted by attacks, spells, or other effects that target one target or one creature.

### Units

A unit is a single, cohesive group of soldiers or monsters comprised of 5-10 creatures of Large size or smaller.

Units function similarly to swarms in that they move and attack as one, and are immune to conditions that would otherwise affect an individual creature. If a unit is hit by an area of effect spell or effect that completely envelops the unit, such as a *fireball* spell or a white dragon's ice breath, the unit takes double the normal damage if it has more than half

its hit points remaining. In addition, a unit that has more than half of its hit points that misses a creature with a melee attack still deals half damage against the target.

A unit obeys the commands of a leader as best as it can. It takes its turn on its leader's initiative, though it does not move or take an action unless commanded to (see **Commands** below). On its turn, a leader can verbally command the unit where to move (no action required by the leader). A leader can use its action to command it to take the **Attack**, **Dash**, **Disengage**, **Dodge**, or **Help** action. Once a unit follows the commands of one leader it cannot be commanded again until the next round begins.

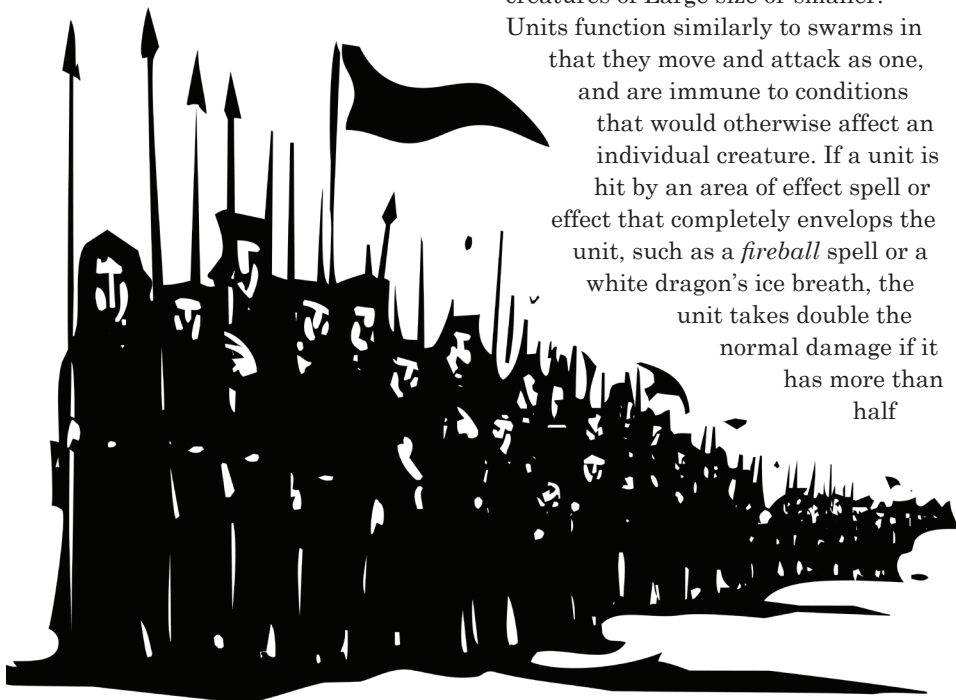
In the absence of commands, the unit acts on its own, focusing on protecting itself. The unit never requires a leader's command to use its reaction, such as when making an opportunity attack.

### New Actions

The two actions described below are available to leaders to use during combat in addition to those normally offered.

**Command Action.** In combat, a character or leader NPC can use its action to command a number of units equal to its proficiency bonus within 30 feet of it. With this action, the leader commands the unit to take the **Attack**, **Dash**, **Disengage**, **Dodge**, or **Help** action.

**Rally Action.** When a unit flees due to a failed morale check (see **Morale** below), a leader can use its action to **Rally** the unit. The unit makes another DC 10 Wisdom saving throw but adds the leader's Charisma modifier to the saving throw.



**Mass Combat Feats**

If your campaign focuses heavily only on battles and wars, you may wish to include new options for characters.

These feat options are available to characters if you are using the optional feat rules.

**Charge Leader**

When a unit that you are a part of uses its action to Dash, the unit can use its bonus action to make one melee weapon attack. If the unit moves at least 10 feet in a straight line immediately before taking this bonus action and the attack hits, the unit scores a critical hit against the target.

**Mounted Leader**

*Prerequisite: Mounted Combatant feat.*

When you are mounted and part of a mounted unit, you and the unit gain the following advantages:

- You and the unit’s speed increases by 10 feet.

- You and your unit have advantage on melee attack rolls against any unmounted creature or unit that is smaller than the unit.
- When the unit makes a melee attack against a creature or unit, it doesn’t provoke opportunity attacks from that creature for the rest of the turn, whether the unit hit or not.

**Commander**

*Prerequisite: Charisma 13 or higher.*

You have the ability to inspire and lead great throngs of soldiers into combat. You gain the following benefits:

- Increase your Charisma score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- Units within 30 feet of you automatically pass Wisdom saving throws to check for morale when surprised.
- Units within 30 feet of you gain a bonus to their Wisdom saving throws equal to your Charisma modifier.

**Morale**

Units might run away when a fight turns against them. The following circumstances trigger a morale check:

- The unit is surprised.
- The unit is reduced to half its hit points or fewer for the first time in the battle.
- The unit has no way to harm the opposing side on its turn.
- A leader within 30 feet of the unit is reduced to 0 hit points, incapacitated, taken prisoner, or removed from battle and there are no other leaders within 30 feet.

To determine whether the unit flees, make a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw for the unit or the unit’s leader. On a failed save, the unit flees by the most expeditious route, using the Dash action if possible, at the end of each round of combat. If escape is

impossible, the unit surrenders. If a unit that surrenders is attacked by its conquerors, the battle might resume, and it’s unlikely that further attempts to flee or surrender will be made.

If a leader is part of a unit that is fleeing, the leader can decide to stay with the unit and flee with them or leave the unit. Otherwise, a leader cannot join a unit that is fleeing.

A leader can use the Rally action to force a unit to make another DC 10 Wisdom saving throw.

**Optional Rule.** If a unit flees from the edge of the map or battlefield, the unit is considered “destroyed” and cannot be rallied.

**Sample Unit**

**ZOMBIE UNIT**

*Huge unit of Medium undead, neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 8

**Hit Points** 220

**Speed** 30 ft.

**STR** 21 (+5) **INT** 3 (-4)

**DEX** 6 (-2) **WIS** 6 (-2)

**CON** 16 (+3) **CHA** 5 (-3)

**Saving Throws** Wis +1

**Skills** Perception +4

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, stunned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

**Languages** understands the languages it knew in life but can’t speak

**Challenge** 7 (2,900 XP)

**Unit.** The unit can occupy a Medium or smaller creature’s space and vice versa, and the unit can move through any opening large enough for a Medium zombie. If the unit is targeted by an area of effect spell or effect that completely encloses the unit and the unit has more than half its hit points remaining, the unit takes double damage from the effect. The unit can’t regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

**Undead Fortitude.** Whenever the zombie unit takes damage, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the unit does not take damage.

**ACTIONS**

**Slams.** *Melee Weapon Attacks:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target within reach or one target in the same space as the unit. *Hit:* 27 (6d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage, or half as much damage on a miss. Or, the unit deals 15 (3d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage on a hit and no damage on a miss if the unit has half its hit points or fewer.

**REACTIONS**

**Rend.** If a Medium or smaller creature ends its turn in the same space as the zombie unit, the zombie unit can use its reaction to make a slams attack against the creature. **Ω**





# THE BATTLE OF DRAGARD MINE

BY DAVE HAMRICK AND JD RUSSELL

## A Mass Combat Adventure for Fifth Edition

Cartography and primary art by Justin David Russel

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*The Battle of Dragard Mine is intended for a party of 4-6 11th-level characters. It uses the mass combat rules detailed earlier in this issue of **BroadSword Monthly**. You will need to learn the rules before running this campaign in order to teach it to your players and run the adventure as it is intended.*

The dwarves digging in Dragard were quite surprised to discover an ancient temple within the gold-bearing mines. However, their lust for wealth urged them forward, and instead of retreating as they should have, they placed themselves in even greater danger. The body of a long-dead demi-goddess rests in the ancient prison, and there are many who hope to bring her back to the world. Such an event could cast darkness over the entire land.

### Adventure Background

Before Dragard was a gold mining operation for one of the Southern Kingdoms, it was a lucrative resource for an ancient people that occupied the land long ago. They worshipped a creature with devastating power; the Medusa Queen. For many years, the chieftains of the ancient people sacrificed their own to the Medusa Queen and made her beautiful treasures from the nearby mine. Eventually, the people became tired of the monster's demands, tired of living in fear and pain.

They rebelled against her, sealed her behind the halls she forced them to build. They did not kill her, for they still held a place of reverence for their former queen. When they were done, the chieftain ordered a long, pillared, decorative hall made so they could remember their history and their mistake. When that chieftain died, his body was interred in a chamber hidden behind a statue of the Queen in the hall. His tomb was then sealed. The people collapsed the mine and abandoned it, leaving only carvings to warn off visitors.

Eventually, the monster queen was forgotten. A new mine was opened after the old tunnels were rediscovered. However, continued mining revealed the sealed tomb and prison of the monster queen. Once rumors got out that the ancient temple was discovered, all manner of dark forces turned their attention to the small mining town. In fact, the horrid beastmen of the north have sent a sizeable army south to forcibly take the mine.

## Events Summary

The dwarves and the troops defending the mine estimate that the beastman force will arrive at the mine within the next 48 hours. And since they are beastmen, they suspect that the force will attack at night. Thanks to dwarven ingenuity (and paranoia) Dragard Mine is fairly well-defended. And it quickly becomes obvious that standing ground at the Mine is a better bet than meeting them in the forests.

While the militia prepares for the coming battle, the characters are free to assist or explore the surrounding area. They may even attempt to enter the temple and discover the Medusa Queen's petrified remains.

On the second day, the beastmen attack. Joined by only five units of trained soldiers and six units of dwarven miners armed with pickaxes, the characters must fend off the beastmen. If they succeed, the beastmen retreat to the hills. But should they fail, the resurrected demi-goddess could spell doom for all of mankind.

## Adventure Hooks

Once word that the beastmen were marching on Dragard Mine, the dwarves sent out their fastest runners to secure help. This adventure assumes that the characters are in a large town or small city roughly 25 miles from Dragard Mine when the runners arrive. A call to arms mobilizes roughly 40 troops, enough to help defend the

mine until additional reinforcements can arrive.

### The Fight Against Evil

The leader of the mobilized militia, Omar Goldwind (LN male human **vet-eran**), approaches the characters and asks them for assistance. He tries to appeal to their better natures. Should that fail, he offers an official favor to the characters within what's possible, perhaps information on a future quest, the rites to land near the city, or some other manageable request.

### Thar's Gold In Them Hills

In addition, the dwarven runners are offering every person that can help 500 gp worth of nuggets taken directly from the lode. If the characters present themselves as particularly useful, the dwarves may offer even more gold for them to fill their bags with.

## Dragard Mine

Dragard Mine is a well-fortified mining town. Its defenses were further improved by the dwarves once they took possession of it. They rebuilt its towers and walls and established new buildings necessary for the operation.

### Traveling to the Mine

The mine is just a day's ride from where the characters were approached. The terrain surrounding the mine is quiet, lacking settlements and farmsteads. While traveling, the characters might engage Omar and his troops in conversation to learn a little more about them.

Eventually, felled trees and wagon tracks offer the first clues to the mine's presence in the hills. Soon, the tall walls and babbling moat surrounding most of the mine come into view.

### Mine Exterior

Normally, the mine would be alive with the sounds of the dwarven workers toiling inside. However, the coming beastmen forces have cast an aura of

gloom over the town. Now, the dwarves wait for outside assistance, hoping they can hold onto their tenuous stake in the gold mine.

The dwarves did an exceptional job returning the old mining site to its former glory. The 60-foot stone walls are fully repaired. At the eastern edge of the mining town, a watermill churns the water pouring from the falls down the face of the mountain, powering the grain mill. From there, the river splits away into a wide creek heading east, then around the front of the mine acting as a moat.

### The Moat

A 50-foot wide moat surrounds the entirety of the mine save for the cliff face at the northern end. The moat is 20-feet deep at its lowest point. Two drawbridges offer the only way over the moat, one at the western edge of Dragard and another at the south. Any dangerous creatures that once swam in its waters are long gone.

When the characters arrive, the drawbridges descend to allow them and the troops access, then quickly rise once they're through.

### The Walls

The massive stone walls surrounding half the operation are close to 60-feet high all the way around, providing ample views of the valley before the mine. Each tower has enough room to support a full unit of archers or manned ballistas.

### The Pond

The most vulnerable side of the mine is the eastern approach near Dragard Pond. Although the moat provides plenty of coverage, a determined assault would undoubtedly approach from that angle. On arrival, Goldwind instructs the troops to assist the dwarves in planting sharpened wooden spikes in the water and on the moats banks.



## The Town

Like the walls, the town itself is in exceptional condition. Most of the brick buildings were in ruins when the dwarves reclaimed Dragard Mine. Then, they quickly rebuilt the town, using stone pulled from the mine itself. There is barely any hint at the mine's age save for a few foundation stones and ancient markings on the cliff face.

## Garrison

The town's garrison houses 10 **guards** lead by Tanner Faze (NE male human **veteran**). Faze took the job as the town's garrison captain in hopes of eventually overpowering the dwarves once the lode was clear. Then the dwarves discovered the Medusa Queen. Faze now waits for the beastmen to arrive in Dragard so he can turn the tables on the dwarves and their allies in exchange for ownership of the mine and its gold.

## Golden Flask Inn

The Golden Flask's owners—a pair of halfling brothers named Nobin and Hoevar (both N **commoners**)—are in a bit of a bad spot with their fellow townsmen and women. To drum up business, the brothers got the word out about the gold discovered in the mine. Naturally, a rush followed. Annoyed, Rogar brushed off the majority of the opportunists looking for jobs in the tunnels, although a few were given employment. Of course, that wasn't the issue. The real issue stemmed from the pair bragging about the “ancient snake

statue” the dwarves found in the sealed prison. Now, everyone in Dragard blames them for attracting the beastmen forces.

Glad to see business come through, the brothers will jump at the opportunity to cater to Omar, the troops, and the characters.

## Headman

The headman's office acts both as a home to the headman, Rogar Knocksull (LG male dwarf **noble**), and the administrative offices for the mine. Rogar is an amiable enough fellow, despite being somewhat short-tempered and grouchy, and is known for always chewing on tobacco leaves. He eagerly assists Omar and the characters. While the mine is important to him, he's more concerned about the livelihoods of his fellow miners. Before the mine, many of the dwarves were unemployed. Dragard gave them purpose.

After the dwarves cleared the mine, they stored their findings in the headman's office. 320 pounds (16,000 gp) of gold nuggets are stored there for safe keeping in the headman's vault. The vault itself is made of solid steel with an AC of 19 and 200 hp. A character can pick the lock with a successful DC 23 Dexterity check using thieves' tools.

## Miners Barracks

All 65 miners who work the mine live in the barracks at the mouth of the tunnels. While mostly clean, the unmistakable smell of ale, body odor, and dust from the tunnels cling to the bunks like shadows. The quarters' majordomo Hollee (NG female dwarf **veteran**) ensures that the miners have

everything they need. Hollee is friendly but sensible—if she believes the characters have no real business at the barracks, she'll shoo them off.

## Temple

Sister Grindstone (LG female dwarf **priestess**) manages a non-denominational temple in town. Many of the miners come from different backgrounds, therefore, it only made sense to keep things loose. She assists with the anxiety, stress, and other issues brought on from the toil. Grindstone is eager to help with healing and care when its needed.

## Trader

An elven merchant named Danick (N male elf **noble**) runs the trade shop. His business opens its doors two days out of the week, offering the dwarves essentials imported from the south. Just his luck that he arrived in Dragard right as the beastmen forces were approaching. Now he's trapped there like everyone else.

Danick is nervous and talkative, but not a complete coward. He is assisted by a half-hobgoblin bodyguard named Brock (CN male **hobgoblin**) who normally protects Danick on his supply runs. The bodyguard's thoughts are always with his family who lives to the east. Despite his considerable pay, Brock has no issue ditching Danick if the going gets tough.

Danick's trading post has most of the items detailed in the PHB (25 gp or less) available for purchase but does not trade in arms or armor.

## The Tunnels

Before the battle, the entrance to the mine is guarded by 5 of the garrison's guards. They are all loyal to Faze, but otherwise, remain impartial. They are under instructions not to let anyone into the tunnels. However, the characters should have no trouble convincing the guards that they should be allowed entry into the mine. Most are seasoned warriors who know trouble when they see it.

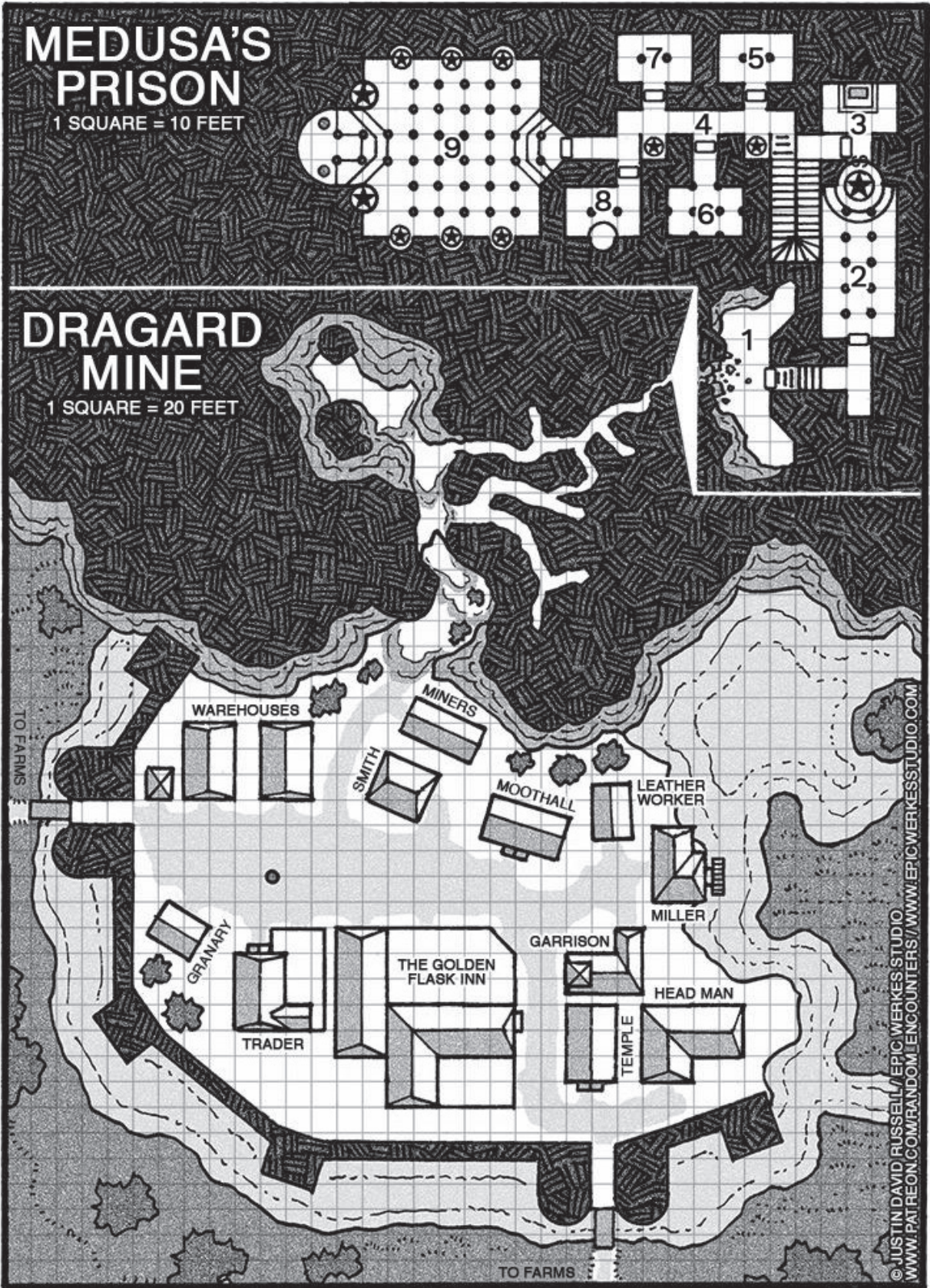
The dwarves did an exceptional job re-establishing the old tunnels. Once they learned of the approaching beastmen forces, the miners stopped production immediately. They removed the gold they had retrieved from the mountain, but a few bits and pieces still remain, locking it in Rogar's office. Regardless, a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the presence of roughly 1,000 gp worth of gold nuggets

littering the main lode at the north-western corner of the mine.

## The Narrow Passage

The entrance to the Medusa's Prison is a short, narrow tunnel pushing into the eastern rock. The tunnel is low. Any character that is Medium or larger and not a dwarf will have to crawl on his or her hands and knees.







## The Medusa's Prison

The long-dormant Medusa Queen rests in the hidden prison at Dragard. In addition to the hidden entrance, the creators of the prison placed dangerous traps and immortal sentries to prevent anyone from ever finding her.

### General Features

The Prison is grand in its design, demonstrating the respect its creators had for the Medusa Queen. Stonework decorated with inlaid mother of pearl, gold, and silver depicts the history of the people who came before the dwarves. Frescoes dominate the floors and ceilings, and all of the columns are carved in the form of great heroes of a long-forgotten age.

Ceilings in the halls and chambers are 20 feet high. All of the doors are made of heavy stone balanced on thick stone hinges. Most are barred from the side that the characters will approach. It should be clear by this design that there are things within that were not meant to be let out.

Below is a summary of the locations keyed to the Medusa's Prison map. The prison has no light sources, so it is assumed the characters have darkvision or another means of seeing in the dark.

### 1 – Landing

Finally, after crawling for a hundred feet or so, the tunnel opens into a large cavern. Here is where the dwarves discovered the old temple. The temple's facade juts from the stone wall; its antique architecture betrays its age. A massive stone door, likely opened by the dwarves, reveals stone stairs descending into darkness.

Written above the door are glyphs in an unrecognizable language.

A successful DC 15 Intelligence (History) check reveals the language to be Old Common. If the characters have

a way of deciphering the glyphs, they read: "Turn Away Now and Let The Queen Sleep."

### 2 – Main Temple

Over a dozen columns carved to look like great warriors, mages, and priests lift the detailed frescoed ceilings 20-feet above you. Inlaid mother-of-pearl, gold, and silver streak the walls. At the northern end, atop a stone dais, stands a huge, marble statue of a woman with snakes for hair offering a sword with both hands.

Her eyes appear to be made of green gems.

The statue is of the Medusa Queen. Behind the statue is a secret door leading further into the Prison. Beyond the main entrance, there are no other obvious exits.

A successful DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the presence of the secret door. Then, a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) shows how exactly to access the door. The sword the medusa holds works as a counterweight. Should it be removed, nothing happens. However, if the gems in the Medusa Queen's eyes are placed in her hands, it opens the secret door. If a character makes an Intelligence (Investigation) check and rolls a 15-19, they can tell that the puzzle has something to do with the sword and her arms, but not the gems.

**Trap.** If the gems are removed from the statue's eyes but not placed into her hands, all of the doors into and out of the chamber seal shut (DC 25 Strength check to break open) and a petrifying gas pours from the empty eye sockets. Have the characters roll initiative. On initiative count 20, each character in the temple must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the character begins to turn to stone and is restrained. On the next initiative count 20, the

restrained character must repeat the saving throw, becoming petrified on a failure or ending the effect on a success. The petrification lasts until the character is freed by the greater restoration spell or other magic.

Replacing the emeralds or stuffing the sockets with fabric, rocks, or something else will stop the gas from pouring out. Alternatively, the characters can remove the sword from her hands and place the gems in her hands. Doing this stops the trap and causes the statue and dais to rotate 90 degrees counterclockwise, revealing the entry to Area #2. The sealed doors also open.

The characters can attempt to open the secret door without using the statue. Doing so requires a successful DC 25 Strength check to rotate it.

**Treasure.** The emeralds are worth 1,000 gp each.

### 3 – Guardian's Tomb

Once the characters enter the guardian's tomb from the secret entrance in the temple, read the following.

A sarcophagus rests atop a simple, stone dais. To your right is a door barred from this side. Judging by the musty smell of the air and undisturbed, dust, no creature has set foot in this tomb for a very long time.

The second line of defense in the Medusa's Prison rests here in the guardian's tomb. It is the restless spirit of the chieftain.

**Creature.** The guardian is a **greater specter** (see its stats in the Appendix) and rises from its tomb the moment the characters enter. It first attempts to frighten the characters off, but then attacks should they try to remove the bar to the door leading deeper into the prison. Once activated, it fights until destroyed.

**Treasure.** Removing the lid to the sarcophagus requires a DC 16 Strength check. Within, lies the bones of the guardian and in its skeletal clutches is an ancient sword of sharpness.

4 – Prison

At the base of the stairs is the old prison. Here, the medusa’s minions were stored and locked away (in areas 5, 6, 7, and 8). Two **stone golems** carved to resemble the Medusa Queen stand guard in the two alcoves in the southern wall. Entering the Prison Hallway without speaking the Old Common phrase “regina velim visos” engages the golems and seals all exits into and out of the hall.

**Creatures & Trap.** The stone golems are programmed for one thing: destroy all who enter. Unfortunately, they aren’t the only danger in the hallway. Once the doors are sealed, vents in the floors and ceilings begin to suck the breathable air out of the hallway. A successful DC 16 Dexterity check using thieves’ tools disables the trap. Until disabled, however, the character must hold their breath or begin to suffocate.

Even if the golems are destroyed, the hall remains sealed. The doors are difficult to open, requiring a DC 25 Strength check to break the deadbolts holding them in place. A character can make a successful DC 21 Dexterity check using thieves’ tools to unlock the doors as well. Once the door leading back to Area 3 is reopened, the room once again fills with breathable air.

5 – Gorgon’s Cell

This large room lacks the decorations present in the other parts of this underground temple. In fact, it almost looks like a prison cell. At the center of the room, lying motionless, is what appears to be a bull made of armored plates.

Once the Medusa Queen’s beloved pet, the gorgon in this chamber is long dead. However, its exoskeleton gives it a false semblance of life. A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals that it is dead.

6 – Anzerak’s Cell

As you open the door to this room, a whimpering, growling voice calls out in the darkness in a language you don’t understand. Suddenly, something leaps out at you!

Anzerak was the Medusa Queen’s greatest general. An immortal **vampire**, Anzerak stayed cruelly locked away in this cell for over a thousand years as the creators of the prison made it impossible for him to escape using his mist form. Eventually, the internment drove Anzerak insane.

Lacking a proper meal for all that time, Anzerak wastes no time attacking. He appears emaciated and ghoulish due to his long imprisonment. In fact, it may not be immediately obvious that he is a vampire.

**Creature.** Anzerak wants to draw blood as quickly as possible. Once he feeds, he attempts to revert to his mist form and escape. Should Anzerak find himself cornered, he will try to make a deal with the characters, promising them anything they want. He explains all he knows about the prison, its creators, and the Medusa Queen. He is desperate to leave and will fight to the death if threatened with reinternment.

7 – Nola’s Cell

A humanoid skeleton with the head of a wolf rests against the far wall. It looks like it may have been a prison cell at some point.

The Medusa Queen’s werewolf handmaiden, Nola died shortly after her imprisonment.

8 – Skeleton Room

Hundreds of bones litter the floor. Judging by their size and shape, these were the remains of humanoids.

The remaining humanoids working for the Medusa Queen were imprisoned in this room. Most died at the hands of the others, slain, cannibalized, and discarded.



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### 9 – Her Final Resting Place

The door leading into this area from Area #4 isn't just locked, it's been completely sealed. Only by completely destroying it can the characters enter. The vault door has an AC of 17 with 100 hp and a damage threshold of 5; it is immune to psychic and poison damage. In addition, the entire area and sealed door have a magic ward placed upon it. Divination spells do not work in the room, nor do spells or powers that allow characters to teleport or gate into or out of the chamber. In addition, the walls, door, columns, and other features have resistance to damage from spells and other magical effects.

Once they enter, read the following:

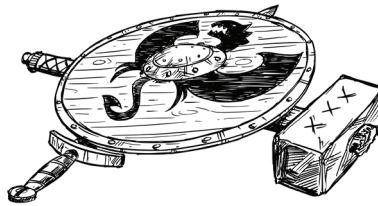
This massive chamber is quite the sight to behold. Much like the first temple at the head of this underground fortress, frescoes, reliefs, and carved statues decorate the entirety of the room. At the far side of the chamber atop a stone dais sits a stone figure. It looks similar to the first statue of the snake-haired woman in the temple but humanoid-sized... almost as if it had once been a real woman that was turned to stone. She holds a golden harp in her hands.

Knowing she had no way to escape, the Queen went into a dormant state, voluntarily turning herself to stone. Should a greater restoration spell or similar magic be cast upon her, the Medusa Queen immediately returns to life.

The Medusa Queen is an incredibly powerful creature. Hopefully, the warnings all throughout the temple dissuade the characters from reviving her. However, if they do revive her, she first tries to convince the characters to worship her as the goddess she considers herself. Failing that, she attacks and escapes. See the Appendix for her statistics.

**Treasure.** The only possession the Medusa Queen had to keep her mind

occupied was a small magic harp called the *Medusa's Melody*. Her stone form still clutches the harp. See the "Medusa's Melody" sidebar for details.



### The Battle of Dragard Mine

The beastman forces attack the second night that the characters are there. Scouts detect the presence of the beastmen an hour before they arrive. This will give the characters and Omar plenty of time to get the troops into position.

#### The Allies

Many of the NPCs mentioned in this adventure assist with the PCs including Omar, Tanner Fade, Sister Grindstone, Rogar, Danick, Hollee, and Brock. The Golden Flask Inn's brothers stay out of the combat.

The characters have the following troops at their disposal (see the Dragard Mine Appendix for statistics):

- 3 **guard** units
- 2 **archers** units
- 6 **miners** units

Unless a confrontation occurs between Omar and the characters beforehand, Omar trusts the characters with the battlefield strategies and tactics. The character may place Omar's units anywhere they like.

#### The Enemies

Once the characters and the troops are in position, the beastmen forces arrive.

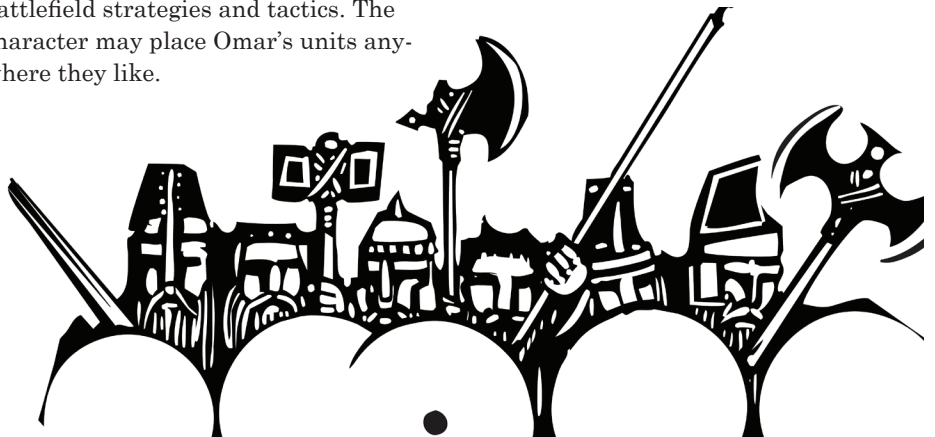
War horns disrupt the night sky. Hoots, howls, and growls pour from the woods to the south. With what little light is available to you, you see the beastmen emerge from the trees. They each stand 6-7 feet tall, and have the heads of goats, bulls, antelope, and other horned creatures. And there appears to be nearly two hundred of them of them, all armed and slaving.

The beastmen forces consists of:

- 15 **beastmen** hordes
- 4 **ogre** units
- 2 **hill giants**
- 4 **minotaurs**

The beastmen forces are 200 feet away from the south moat when they appear, taking only a single round to test the mettle of the dwarves and soldiers within the mine. Then, they charge, moving at their full speed and taking the Dash action until they reach the water.

**Tactics.** The beastmen forces lacks any form of strategy or tactics, nor do they use any ranged weapons. Only the hill giants have their rocks. However, the force does have superior numbers which they hope to whelm the mine's inhabitants with. One-quarter of the force attacks the western drawbridge, another quarter attacks the southern draw bridge and the remaining units attempt to cross the water to the east.



Once a beastman horde is within 40 feet of a raised drawbridge, they use their action to toss grappling hooks at it. On their next turn, they attempt to pull the drawbridge down. Doing so requires two successful DC 21 Strength checks. If a beastman horde rolls a 20 on the check, they get two successes. Forcing the drawbridge down breaks its gears, making it impossible to retract. While the beastmen attack the drawbridges, hill giants provide cover by tossing rocks at archers, spellcasters, and any others who could stop their progress.

With the drawbridges down, the beastmen and their companions are free to enter the mine and kill anything they come across.

Swimming across the moat is a dangerous affair for the remaining beastmen force. Each round a unit or creature is in the water, it must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 7 (3d6) piercing damage on a failed saving throw or half as much damage on a successful one. If a unit has half its hit points or more, it makes this saving throw with disadvantage.

**Morale Checks.** The beastmen are terrified of their superiors (the minotaurs) and automatically pass morale checks as long as at least one minotaur is within 30 feet of them.

**Special Events**

During the battle, special events can occur to spice things up a little. At the start of each round, you can choose one of the events on the table to the right, or roll 1d10 to see what happens.

**Concluding the Adventure**

If the characters successfully defeat the beastmen forces, the next day, the miners celebrate and hold a feast in their honor at the town’s moot hall. There and then, the characters are given the awards they were promised by the dwarves and/or Omar and his troops.

If Fade and his men turned on the miners, they are arrested by Omar and locked in the garrison until reinforcements arrive. Omar may seek the counsel of the characters what to do with the traitors.

**Further Developments**

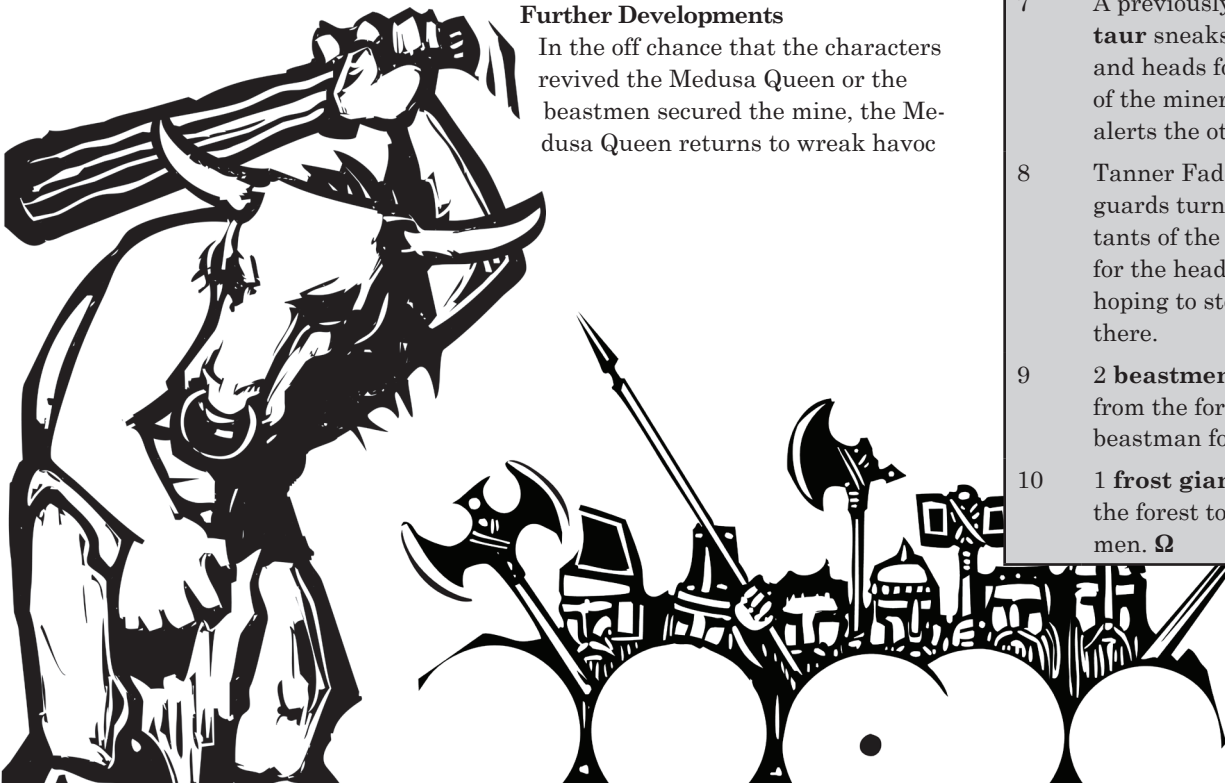
In the off chance that the characters revived the Medusa Queen or the beastmen secured the mine, the Medusa Queen returns to wreak havoc

on the world. She may even become a recurring villain for the characters, recruiting dark creatures—such as the beastmen—to do her bidding.

Even if the Medusa Queen didn’t return from her slumber, the character may consider holing up in Dragard Mine until the place can be properly secured.

After all, the beastmen were just the beginning...

d10	Battle Special Event
1-4	Nothing Happens
5	Brock retreats from combat, leaving Danick to fend for himself.
6	In the excitement, a fire breaks out in one of the buildings. At the start of each round of combat, it spreads, catching additional buildings on fire. A creature can use its action to put out a 5 x 5 square of fire, or a unit can use its action to put out a 15 x 15 area of fire.
7	A previously unseen <b>minotaur</b> sneaks into the mine and heads for the lode. One of the miners notices it and alerts the others.
8	Tanner Fade and a unit of guards turn on the inhabitants of the mine. They head for the headman’s offices, hoping to steal the gold stored there.
9	2 <b>beastmen</b> hordes emerge from the forest to join the beastman forces.
10	1 <b>frost giant</b> emerges from the forest to join the beastmen. Ω





# DRAGARD MINE APPENDIX

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## NEW MONSTERS AND MAGIC ITEMS

BY DAVID HAMRICK

### New Magic Item

#### Medusa's Melody

*Wondrous item, legendary (requires attunement)*

This harp is simple in its design, with no decorations to speak of. However, its strings have a curious silver sheen to them. A creature that attempts to play the instrument without being attuned to it must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or take 2d4 psychic damage.

You can use an action to play the instrument. While playing the instrument, all creatures within 30 feet of you that can hear the instrument must make a Wisdom saving throw against your spell save DC. On a failed saving throw, the creature has disadvantage on its saving throws and attack rolls until the end of your next turn.

On subsequent turns, you can use your action to maintain this effect, extending its duration until the end of your next turn. However, the effect ends if you move more than 60 feet away from a creature, if the creature can't hear you, or if the creature takes damage.

On its turn, an affected creature can use its action to make another Wisdom saving throw, ending the effect on itself with a success.

Once the effect ends for it, or if the creature succeeds on its initial saving throw against this effect, the creature is immune to this effect for 24 hours.

### New Monsters

#### The Medusa Queen

Once worshipped by the ancient people who lived and toiled in Dragard Mine, the Medusa Queen was a dangerous foe and curse on the land. Fortunately, the ancient people were able to lock her away in the temple they'd built for her. Since then, she has laid dormant for hundreds of years. Should she rise again, undoubtedly an unshakeable shadow would fall across the land.

#### The Medusa Queen's Lair

The Medusa Queen's lair is the prison that now holds her. Despite being trapped there and lying dormant within for hundreds of years, she still holds power over the location.

**Lair Actions.** On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the Medusa Queen takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects; she can't use the same effect two rounds in a row:

- The medusa casts the confusion spell on every creature of her choice within 60 feet of her. She must be able to see the creatures. Casting the spell using this ability does not cost her a spell slot, nor does it require components.
- The medusa animates a stone statue that she can see within 120 feet of her. As a bonus action on each of her turns, she can mentally command the animated statue she made with this lair action if the statue is within 500 feet of her. If she controls multiple statues, she can command any or all of them at the same time, issuing the same command to each one. She decides what action the statue will take and where it will move during its next turn, or she can issue a general command, such as to guard a particular chamber or corridor. If she issues no commands, the statue

only defends itself against hostile creatures. Once given an order, the stone statue continues to follow it until its task is complete. The statue has the same statistics as animated armor. The medusa can have up to three statues created by this ability at a time.

- The medusa targets one creature she can see within 60 feet of her. Until the start of that creature's next turn, it has disadvantage on Constitution saving throws.

**Regional Effects.** The region containing the Medusa Queen's lair is warped by her magic, creating one or more of the following effects:

- If a humanoid spends at least 1 hour within 1 mile of the lair, that creature must succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw or go mad. It gains a character flaw which lasts until cured: "I will do anything I can to get my hands on more wealth and power."
- Stone statues, reliefs, and other works of art within 1 mile of the lair bleed from their eyes during the light of a full moon.
- Snakes within 6 miles of the lair become unusually savage, killing far more than what they need for food, traveling in huge swarms.



**Medusa Queen**

*Medium monstrosity, lawful evil*

**Armor Class** 17 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 252 (24d8 + 144)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	18 (+4)	22 (+6)	22 (+6)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)

**Saving Throws** Dex +10, Con +12, Int +10, Wis +9

**Skills** Arcana +10, Deception +10, Insight +9, Perception +9, Stealth +9

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 19

**Languages** Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Infernal

**Challenge** 20 (25000 XP)

**Special Equipment.** *Medusa's Melody* (see description on facing page)

**Petrifying Gaze.** When a creature that can see the medusa's eyes starts its turn within 30 feet of the medusa, the medusa can force it to make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw, if the medusa isn't incapacitated and can see the creature. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the creature is instantly petrified. Otherwise, a creature that fails the save begins to turn to stone and is restrained. The restrained creature must repeat the saving throw at the end of its next turn, becoming petrified on a failure or ending the effect on a success. The petrification lasts until the creature is freed by the greater restoration spell or other magic.

Unless surprised, a creature can avert its eyes to avoid the saving throw at the start of its turn. If the creature does so, it can't see the medusa until the start of its next turn, when it can avert its eyes again. If the creature looks at the medusa in the meantime, it must immediately make the save.

If the medusa sees itself reflected on a polished surface within 30 feet of it and in an area of bright light, the medusa is, due to its curse, affected by its own gaze.

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** When the medusa fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Magic Resistance.** The medusa has advantage on saving throws against spells and magical effects.

**Spellcasting.** *The medusa is an 11th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks). The medusa has the following bard spells prepared:*

- Cantrips (at will): mage hand, minor illusion, prestidigitation, vicious mockery
- 1st level (4 slots): charm person, disguise self, Tasha's hideous laughter
- 2nd level (3 slots): detect thoughts, enthrall, invisibility, shatter
- 3rd level (3 slots): bestow curse, dispel magic, nondetection
- 4th level (3 slots): compulsion, confusion
- 5th level (2 slots): dominate person, hold monster
- 6th level (1 slot): mass suggestion

**ACTIONS**

**Multiattack.** The medusa uses her Frightful Presence. She then makes either three melee attacks—one with her snake hair and two with her shortsword—or two ranged attacks with her longbow.

**Snake Hair.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage plus 21 (6d6) poison damage.

**Shortsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

**Longbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage plus 14 (4d6) poison damage.

**Frightful Presence.** Each creature of the medusa's choice that is within 90 feet of her and aware of her must succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the medusa's Frightful Presence for the next 24 hours.

**LEGENDARY ACTIONS**

The medusa can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The medusa regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn.

**Attack.** The medusa makes an attack with her shortsword or her longbow.

**Teleport.** The medusa magically teleports, along with any equipment she is wearing or carrying, up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space she can see.

**Focused Gaze (Costs 2 Actions).** The medusa targets one creature she can see within 30 feet of her with her petrifying gaze. The creature must make a DC 20 Constitution saving. If it fails its saving throw, it is instantly petrified. If it succeeds on its saving throw, it begins to turn to stone and is restrained. The restrained creature must repeat the saving throw at the end of its next turn, becoming petrified on a failure or ending the effect on a success. The petrification lasts until the creature is freed by the greater restoration spell or other magic. A creature can use its reaction to avert its eyes and avoid the saving throw. If the creature does so, it can't see the medusa until the start of its next turn, when it can avert its eyes again. If the creature looks at the medusa in the meantime, it must immediately make the save.





**Greater Specter**

A specter is the angry, unfettered spirit of a humanoid that has been prevented from passing to the afterlife. Specters no longer possess connections to who or what they were, yet are condemned to walk the world forever.

Greater specters are older specters who maintain a piece of their undying quest. Although more rational than their lesser kin, they are also far more dangerous.

**Undead Nature.** The greater specter does not require air, food, drink, or sleep.

**A Greater Specter's Lair**

Greater specters influence the locations they haunt, exerting their will over their surroundings. Often, the specter's lair is a tomb where its original body rests. Some long-forgotten mission binds it to that location. The intense psychic energy the specter emits distorts and changes the place. Thick, musty mist clings to the floors. It's always cold, even in the midst of summer. And dark, pervasive thoughts echo through the thoughts of trespassers.

**Lair Actions.** On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the specter takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects; the specter can't use the same effect two rounds in a row:

- **Dread Moan.** The specter targets one creature it can see within 60 feet of it. The creature must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened. While frightened,

**GREATER SPECTER**

*Medium undead, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 14  
**Hit Points** 135 (18d8 + 54)  
**Speed** 0 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	13 (+1)	18 (+4)

**Saving Throws** Int +6, Wis +6, Cha +10  
**Damage Resistances** acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder  
**Damage Immunities** necrotic, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks  
**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious  
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11  
**Languages** understands all languages it knew in life but can't speak  
**Challenge** 16 (15,000 XP)

**Incorporeal Movement.** The specter can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 4 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If the specter fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Magic Resistance.** The specter has advantage on saving throws against spells and magical effects.

**Sunlight Sensitivity.** While in sunlight, the specter has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

**ACTIONS**

**Multiattack.** The creature makes two life drain attacks.

**Life Drain. Melee Spell Attack:** +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. **Hit:** 28 (8d6) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the creature finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0, and returns as a wraith in 1 minute.

**LEGENDARY ACTIONS**

The specter can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The specter regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Forceful Slam. Melee Weapon Attack:** +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. **Hit:** 10 (3d6) force damage.

**Invisibility.** The specter magically turns invisible until it attacks or casts a spell. Any equipment the specter wears or carries is invisible with it.

**Life Drain (Costs 2 Actions).** The specter uses its life drain attack.

the target's speed is halved and it can't use reactions.

- **Snap Freeze.** Each creature within 30 feet of the specter must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. On a failed saving throw, a creature gains one level of exhaustion. Creatures with resistance or immunity to necrotic damage automatically pass the saving throw.
- **Telekinetic Thrust.** The specter targets a creature or unattended object within 30 feet of it. A creature must be a Medium or smaller to be affected by this magic, and an object can weigh up to 200 pounds.

The target must succeed on a DC 17 Strength check or the specter hurls the target up to 30 feet in any direction, including upward. If the target then comes into contact with a hard surface or heavy object, the target takes 1d6 damage per 10 feet moved. If the target is an object that isn't being worn or carried, the specter hurls it up to 30 feet in any direction. The specter can use the object as a ranged weapon, attacking one creature along the object's path (+9 to hit) and dealing 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**New Mass Combat Units**

The following units are used with the new mass combat rules, participating in the *Battle of Dragard Mine*.

<p><b>MINERS UNIT</b> <i>Huge unit of Medium humanoids (dwarf), lawful neutral</i></p>
<p><b>Armor Class</b> 11 (armor scraps) <b>Hit Points</b> 50 <b>Speed</b> 25 ft.</p>
<p><b>STR</b> 20 (+5) <b>INT</b> 10 (+0) <b>DEX</b> 10 (+0) <b>WIS</b> 10 (+0) <b>CON</b> 20 (+5) <b>CHA</b> 10 (+0)</p>
<p><b>Skills</b> Perception +4 <b>Damage Resistances</b> poison <b>Condition Immunities</b> charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned <b>Senses</b> darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14 <b>Languages</b> Common, Dwarven <b>Challenge</b> 2 (450 XP)</p>
<p><b>Unit.</b> The unit can occupy a Medium or smaller creature's space and vice versa, and the unit can move through any opening large enough for a Medium dwarf. If the unit is targeted by an area effect that completely encloses the unit and the unit has more than half its hit points remaining, the unit takes double damage from the effect. The unit can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.</p>
<p><b>Dwarven Resilience.</b> The unit has advantage on saving throws against poison.</p>
<p><b>ACTIONS</b></p>
<p><b>Pick Axes.</b> <i>Melee Weapon Attacks:</i> +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target within reach or one target in the same space as the unit. <i>Hit:</i> 26 (6d6 + 5) piercing damage, or half as much damage on a miss. Or, the unit deals 15 (3d6 + 5) piercing damage on a hit and no damage on a miss if the unit has half its hit points or fewer.</p>

<p><b>GUARD UNIT</b> <i>Huge unit of Medium humanoids (human), lawful neutral</i></p>
<p><b>Armor Class</b> 16 (chains shirts, shields) <b>Hit Points</b> 110 <b>Speed</b> 30 ft.</p>
<p><b>STR</b> 21 (+5) <b>INT</b> 10 (+0) <b>DEX</b> 12 (+1) <b>WIS</b> 11 (+0) <b>CON</b> 12 (+1) <b>CHA</b> 10 (+0)</p>
<p><b>Skills</b> Perception +6 <b>Condition Immunities</b> charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned <b>Senses</b> passive Perception 16 <b>Languages</b> Common <b>Challenge</b> 5 (1800 XP)</p>
<p><b>Unit.</b> The unit can occupy a Medium or smaller creature's space and vice versa, and the unit can move through any opening large enough for a Medium human. If the unit is targeted by an area of effect spell or effect that completely encloses the unit and the unit has more than half its hit points remaining, the unit takes double damage from the effect. The unit can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.</p>
<p><b>ACTIONS</b></p>
<p><b>Spears.</b> <i>Melee Weapon Attacks:</i> +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target within reach or one target in the same space as the unit. <i>Hit:</i> 26 (6d6 + 5) piercing damage, or half as much damage on a miss. Or, the unit deals 15 (3d6 + 5) piercing damage on a hit and no damage on a miss if the unit has half its hit points or fewer.</p>
<p><b>Volley of Spears.</b> The unit hurls its spears at a point that it can see within 60 feet of it. Each creature in a 15-foot cube centered on that point must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw, taking 21 (6d6) piercing damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the unit has half its hit points or fewer, the target instead takes 10 (3d6) piercing damage on a failed saving throw, and zero damage on a successful one.</p>


<p><b>ARCHERS UNIT</b> <i>Huge unit of Medium humanoids (human), lawful neutral</i></p>
<p><b>Armor Class</b> 13 (leather armor) <b>Hit Points</b> 110 <b>Speed</b> 30 ft.</p>
<p><b>STR</b> 19 (+4) <b>INT</b> 10 (+0) <b>DEX</b> 14 (+2) <b>WIS</b> 11 (+0) <b>CON</b> 12 (+1) <b>CHA</b> 10 (+0)</p>
<p><b>Skills</b> Perception +6 <b>Condition Immunities</b> charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned <b>Senses</b> passive Perception 16 <b>Languages</b> Common <b>Challenge</b> 5 (1,800 XP)</p>
<p><b>Unit.</b> The unit can occupy a Medium or smaller creature's space and vice versa, and the unit can move through any opening large enough for a Medium human. If the unit is targeted by an area effect that completely encloses the unit and the unit has more than half its hit points remaining, the unit takes double damage from the effect. The unit can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.</p>
<p><b>ACTIONS</b></p>
<p><b>Short Swords.</b> <i>Melee Weapon Attacks:</i> +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target within reach or one target in the same space as the unit. <i>Hit:</i> 25 (6d6 + 4) piercing damage, or half as much damage on a miss. Or, the unit deals 15 (3d6 + 4) piercing damage on a hit and no damage on a miss if the unit has half its hit points or fewer.</p>
<p><b>Volley of Arrows.</b> The unit fires its longbows at a point that it can see within 600 feet of it. Each creature in a 15-foot cube centered on that point must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 27 (6d8) piercing damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the unit has half its hit points or fewer, the target instead takes 13 (3d8) piercing damage on a failed saving throw, and no damage on a successful one. A target has advantage on this saving throw if it is 150 or further from the unit.</p>





<p><b>OGRE HORDE</b> <i>Gargantuan unit of Large giants, chaotic evil</i></p>
<p><b>Armor Class</b> 11 (hide armor) <b>Hit Points</b> 590 (33d20 + 231) <b>Speed</b> 40 ft.</p>
<p><b>STR</b> 27 (+8) <b>INT</b> 5 (-3) <b>DEX</b> 8 (-1) <b>WIS</b> 7 (-2) <b>CON</b> 24 (+7) <b>CHA</b> 7 (-2)</p>
<p><b>Skills</b> Perception +10 <b>Condition Immunities</b> charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned <b>Senses</b> passive Perception 11 <b>Languages</b> Common, Giant <b>Challenge</b> 18 (20,000 XP)</p>
<p><b>Unit.</b> The unit can occupy a Large or smaller creature's space and vice versa, and the unit can move through any opening large enough for a Large ogre. If the unit is targeted by an area effect that completely encloses the unit and the unit has more than half its hit points remaining, the unit takes double damage from the effect. The unit can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.</p> <p><b>Siege Monster.</b> The unit deals double damage to objects and structures.</p>
<p><b>ACTIONS</b></p> <p><b>Greatclubs.</b> <i>Melee Weapon Attacks:</i> +14 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target within reach or in the same space as the unit. <b>Hit:</b> 62 (12d8 + 8) bludgeoning damage or half as much damage on a miss. Or, the unit deals 35 (6d8 + 8) bludgeoning damage on a hit and no damage on a miss if the unit has half its hit points or fewer.</p>

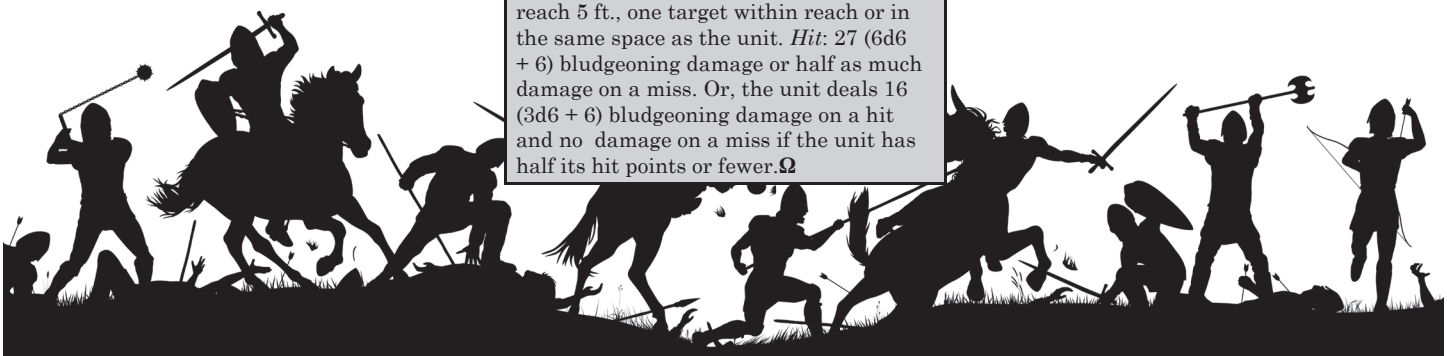
<p><b>BEASTMAN HORDE</b> <i>Huge unit of Medium monstrosities, chaotic evil</i></p>
<p><b>Armor Class</b> 16 (breastplates) <b>Hit Points</b> 200 <b>Speed</b> 40 ft.</p>
<p><b>STR</b> 23 (+6) <b>INT</b> 7 (-2) <b>DEX</b> 14 (+2) <b>WIS</b> 9 (-1) <b>CON</b> 22 (+6) <b>CHA</b> 6 (-2)</p>
<p><b>Skills</b> Perception +7 <b>Condition Immunities</b> charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned <b>Senses</b> darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17 <b>Languages</b> Abyssal <b>Challenge</b> 11 (7,200 XP)</p>
<p><b>Unit.</b> The unit can occupy a Medium or smaller creature's space and vice versa, and the unit can move through any opening large enough for a Medium beastman. If the unit is targeted by an area effect that completely encloses the unit and the unit has more than half its hit points remaining, the unit takes double damage from the effect. The unit can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.</p> <p><b>Charge.</b> If the unit moves at least 20 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a ram attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 21 (6d6) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 18 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.</p>
<p><b>ACTIONS</b></p> <p><b>Greataxes.</b> <i>Melee Weapon Attacks:</i> +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target within reach or in the same space as the unit. <b>Hit:</b> 45 (6d12 + 6) slashing damage or half as much damage on a miss. Or, the unit deals 25 (3d12 + 6) slashing damage on a hit and no damage on a miss if the unit has half its hit points or fewer.</p> <p><b>Ram.</b> <i>Melee Weapon Attacks:</i> +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target within reach or in the same space as the unit. <b>Hit:</b> 27 (6d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage or half as much damage on a miss. Or, the unit deals 16 (3d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage on a hit and no damage on a miss if the unit has half its hit points or fewer. Ω</p>



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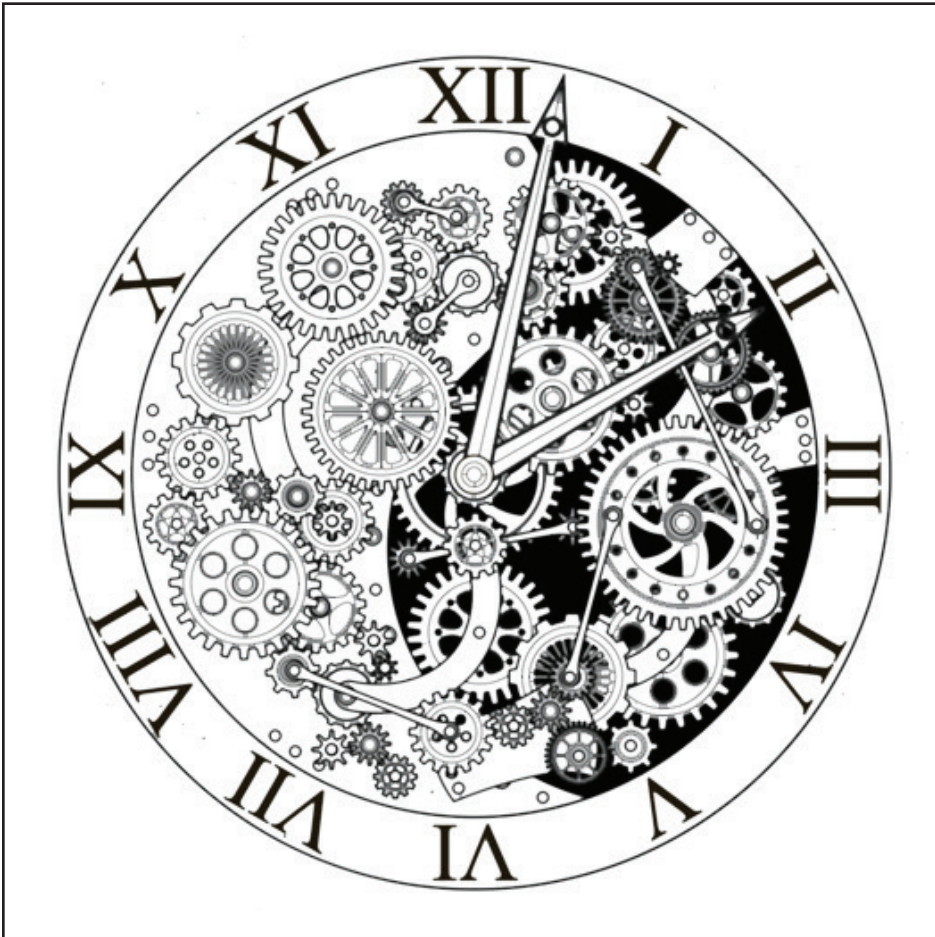
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# PART III

## THE TRIAL OF HEROES





# THE TRIAL OF HEROES

BY DAVE HAMRICK

## New Adventure for Fifth Edition

Diagrams by Dave Hamrick

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*Trial of Heroes is a Fifth Edition adventure for four characters of any level and of any character class. The adventure takes place on the outskirts of a major city and can be inserted into nearly any campaign. Trial of Heroes' format is heavily inspired by the awesome Challenge of Champions series from Dungeon magazine, created by Johnathan M. Richards.*

Before running the adventure, be sure to read the full article in order to gain a firm understanding of the ten scenarios. This ensures the adventure progresses smoothly and will help you adjudicate alternative solutions the players may devise for each challenge.

### Adventure Background

A prominent adventurers guild is sponsoring an event to test the skills of teams of adventurers. Open to parties of all levels of experience, the trial is to be held in three days' time at the edge of a major city. Teams begin forming and registering days before the event.

To enter, each team must register at the adventurer's guild headquarters by sundown the night before the trial begins. Team members must provide the guild with their name, character class, and team name. Then, they must also sign a form that absolves the adventurer's guild in the case of injury or death. However, contestants are given the opportunity to sign up in advance for either a *raise dead* spell (5,000 gp per character) or a *resurrection* spell (11,000 gp per character) to be used in the event of their death during the course of the Trial. The guild officials try their best to ensure the safety of the participants, but accidents can (and will) happen. Characters wishing to use this service must pay in advance as a deposit. Should the characters accomplish the Trial without a death, the guild returns the deposit.

There is an entrance fee of 5 gp per character. If the adventuring guild is already a major part of your campaign

setting and the characters are members, you may consider waiving the fee.

The prize for success in the Trial of Heroes is 10,000 gp for the winning team, as well as trophies, medallions and the prestige associated with such an honor. Feel free to adjust the cash prize up or down to better suit the party's average level.

The characters enter the Trial of Heroes, a competition composed of ten scenarios, testing their adventuring capabilities. At the end of the contest, the scores of all contestants are ranked to determine the winning team.

### Adventure Hooks

The Trial of Heroes is a pretty big deal in the land. The toughest, smartest, and bravest adventurers from all over travel far and wide to take part. If the glory of winning such a prestigious contest isn't enough to influence the characters to participate, here a few more reasons they might enter.

**Keep Tabs on an Enemy.** A member of one of the competing teams is a nemesis of the characters. The characters may have been sent to spy on their enemy, or they may suspect that the villain is up to something.

**A Debt is Due.** The characters owe a considerable amount of money to someone. This can be a foe or friend. However, the clock is ticking—they have less than a week to come up with the cash. Fortunately, the Trial of Heroes is paying the exact amount that they need.

**Impress a Powerful Ally.** Earning money isn't enough for the characters. They need to impress upon a powerful ally—perhaps a king, governor, or powerful sorcerer—how capable they are as adventurers. The ally points them towards the Trial of Heroes. “Win this, and I'll give you whatever you wish.”

### For the Game Master

The contest itself is a series of ten scenarios, each designed to test the resourcefulness and cohesion of the

characters. These challenges are level-agnostic, meaning they are just as difficult for a 20th-level rogue as they are for a 1st-level one.

### The Rules

Here are the basic rules for the Trial of Heroes:

- **No armor or weapons.** Team members must show up in non-magical clothing and nothing else.
- **No magic items.** Team members may not bring magic items into the contest.
- **No tools.** No tools of any sort are allowed in the contest, especially thieves' tools or anything that would give them an obvious edge over the competition.
- **No spells.** Spellcasters cannot cast any prepared spells; this includes spell-like abilities and cantrips. The only spells used in the contest must be cast using rings of spell storing provided as part of a scenario. This allows all spells to be cast at the same level, negating any advantage high-level spellcasters have over low-level ones.
- **No animals.** Team members may not bring in familiars, special mounts, animal companions, summoned creatures or any other sidekicks that might provide an advantage.
- **Items stay with their respective scenarios.** Team members may not transfer items between scenarios.

All contestants are inspected by the guild's wizards and guards before the contest begins. The guild wizards use detect magic to make sure no magic items are being smuggled in. Anyone caught attempting to smuggle magic items into the contest is immediately disqualified.

### Cheating Shouldn't Be Encouraged. However...

While this adventure expects that the characters use teamwork and ingenuity to solve the scenarios, creativity should always be awarded in Fifth Edition. If

the characters find interesting ways to circumvent the Trial of Heroes' rules and referees and there is no way to detect it—keep in mind that the Trial's refs are very good at catching cheats—allow them to get away with it.

Furthermore, if the characters are clever enough to outsmart the guild, they'll probably be seen as a boon to the organization anyway.

### Scenario Debriefing

At the start of each scenario, a proctor briefs the team on any equipment they can use. Command words to magic items are provided at this time (unless determining the command word is part of the puzzle). Once the team is satisfied that equipment is in place, the official reads the scenario briefing and starts the clock. The briefing consists of the goal the team must try to accomplish, as well as any special rules for that scenario.

### The Hint

Once per scenario, the team can ask for a hint if they are stumped. The decision to use the hint must be unanimous between all active team members. After the hint is given, the team earns half the normal points for completing the scenario. The Hint for each scenario is decided upon by the guild's wizards in advance. Therefore, the hint may address a part of the scenario that the contestants have already solved.

### How to Run the Adventure

Some adventuring parties may have less than four characters. Fortunately, the adventure provides NPCs that the characters can encourage to join their group. See the “Trial Hopefuls” sidebar for more information. On the other hand, parties with more than four characters must choose which four members to enter the Trial. Players who don't have active characters in a scenario should remain silent; if they provide clues or assistance to active characters, the scenario and any points gained are forfeited (unless they find



a clever way to cheat as mentioned above).

Although Trial of Heroes can be played with one GM and one player (with that player running all four team members), that puts the task of solving the solutions on that lone player. Alternatively, the players may decide to make it a contest between themselves, each character running a group of four NPCs.

### Trial Hopfulness

If there are less than four characters, the players may select one or more of the following NPCs to join their party for the duration of the Trial. Each NPC is helpful and will follow the characters' instructions.

- Jojo McFee, LG male human **acolyte**. "I wish to respectfully represent my homeland."
- Tawny Zenn, LN female half-elf **druid**. "I've been bullied my whole life. This is my chance to prove the bullies that I'm better than them."
- Jack Eaman, CG male halfling **knight**. "This looks like a lot of fun."
- Becky Strongarm, NG female dwarf **gladiator**. "I'm great at winning contests. This is just another victory waiting to happen."
- Zoan Un'dorren, N male elf (drow) **mage**. "I'm interested in the inner workings of the Trial itself."
- Kaleb Koons, N male human **veteran**. "Nothin better to do this week."

### The Trial Begins

On the day of the contest, the participating teams are led to an arena where spectators cheer them on. This year, 16 teams compete. Before the contest officially begins, some of the teams pass around a sign-up sheet for a betting pool. Not every team enters the pool. However, those that do are putting up 100 gp pieces per team. The highest scoring team gets the pot. Nine of the 16 teams have put into the pot. Should the characters enter, the pot will be an

### Running the Scenarios

Here is how to run a Trial of Heroes scenario.

1. **Present Resources.** At the beginning, show the players the map or diagram corresponding to that event. Allow the players to read the appropriate spells and magic item entries in their respective sourcebooks.
2. **Review Starting Equipment.** Once each player has had a chance to review their starting equipment, give the scenario briefing. Start tracking the time.
3. **15 Minutes per Scenario.** Players have a total of 15 minutes for their characters to accomplish the task. This is 15 minutes in real time, not game time.
4. **Time Constraints.** Some tasks the characters must perform to complete a scenario goal take more time in-game than in real time, though, and for these tasks, the approximate completion time is provided, often with a modifier, under the heading "Time Constraints." Whenever a player announces that his or her character is performing that task, determine the length of time it takes and subtract that from the 15 minutes of the scenario. For example, if it takes 30 seconds to secure a rope properly, tell the players that time has been used.

5. **Solutions.** A "proper solution" is provided for each scenario. This is the way the adventurers' guild anticipates the goal to be accomplished. Of course, this is by no means the only—or even best—way to accomplish the goal. It is provided so you can see one method to accomplish each goal, in the event the characters fail to accomplish it and the characters don't think it can be done.
6. **Safety Measures.** The guild is responsible for ensuring the safety of the contestants. Each scenario may place the contestants in danger, but each proctor has the means to counter the danger.
7. **"Dead" Characters.** In any scenario, the official has the power to declare any character "dead". This happens when a proctor has to save the character or if the character commits a "lethal" act (like falling into a "pool of sharks" represented by a shallow pool of water). Characters declared "dead" are not allowed to participate further in the scenario in which they "died". Furthermore, they receive no points for that scenario. Once the team moves onto the next scenario, any "dead" characters are restored to "living" status and may continue as before.
8. **Keep Score.** As the characters complete each scenario, record their scores on the score sheet.

even 1,000 gp.

Give the characters a few minutes to interact with the other contestants. Once they get to know their competitors, a thin, bookish wizard named Evadimus arrives at the clearing to explain the rules.

Each team's name is entered on a slip of paper and the names are drawn randomly out of a small chest to determine the order that the teams will compete. The characters are number seven. As the first team is led away to the start of their first scenario, the characters can wander around the arena. Eventually, a pair of proctors scan the characters

for illicit magic items. Then, a pair of guards then the characters looking for smuggled items like lockpicks or hidden weapons.

If any of the characters have tried sneaking forbidden items into the contest, they're probably discovered at this point and ejected from the Trial. There is no reimbursement for entry fees. However, *raise dead* and *resurrection* deposits are returned. Assume the guards rolled a 20 on their Intelligence (Investigation) checks.

When the characters are ready to begin, read or paraphrase the boxed text for the first scenario.

## SCENARIO #1 – WRITE THIS WAY

You are led through a door into a large chamber roughly 60 feet wide and 85 feet across. At the center of the room is a 45-foot wide pit. Taking a quick peek over the edge, you can see that the pit is probably 100 feet deep or more. There appears to be no easy way to cross the pit.

At the far end of a pit, there is a door. Otherwise, there appears to be nothing on that side.

On the side of the pit that you are standing on, there is a simple desk with a written letter, an ink bottle, and an ink pen.

A dwarf dressed in the robes of the adventurer's guild clears his throat and speaks up. "All right, Team Seven," he says, "I hope you can do better than the last team." The dwarf chuckles, then blows a whistle, starting the clock.

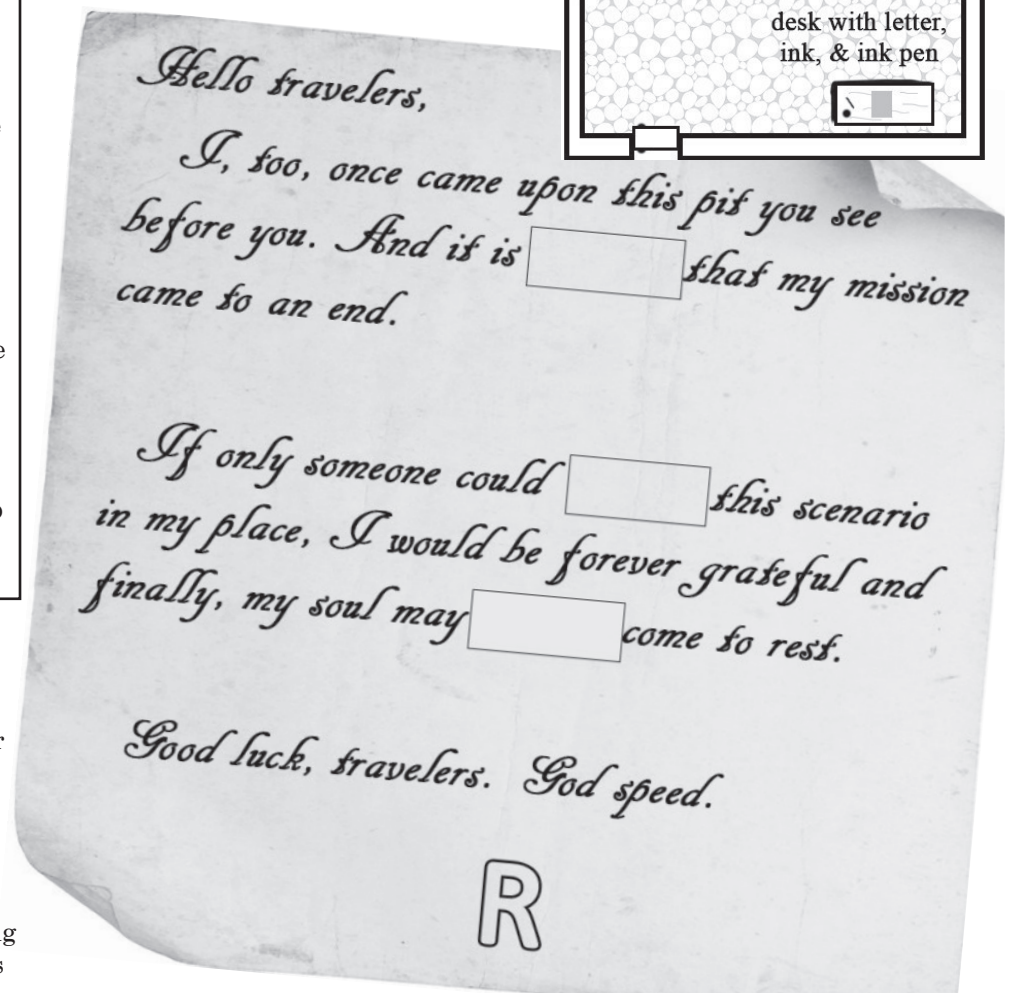
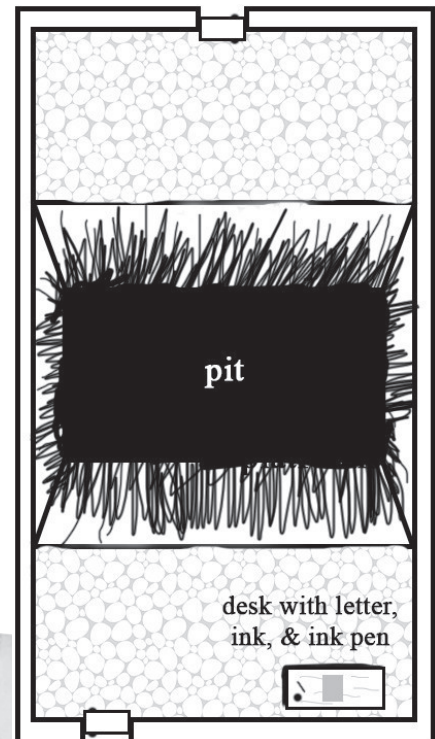
"Here's what you've got to do for this scenario. Across the pit is the door to get out of here. Get through the door within the next 15 minutes and you win the scenario. That's it! Easy peasy. Just don't fall in the pit. Fall in the pit and you're dead. The only items you have to help you are here on this desk."

He then exits.

**The Problem.** The desk is a simple wooden desk. On top of it sits an ink bottle filled with blue ink, an ink pen, and a letter (see the Player Handout for this scenario).

The pit is 45 feet across and 100-feet deep. Walls on either side of the pit are made of smooth, featureless stone, lacking footholds, handholds, ledges

or anything else to help a character skirt across. The pit itself is a major illusion made to look like it's deadly. Should a character fall into it, they are automatically teleported outside of the scenario and can't return to the party until the next challenge. Illumination is provided by continual flame spells cast at regular intervals providing light over both sides of the pit. Only the pit is cast in shadow.





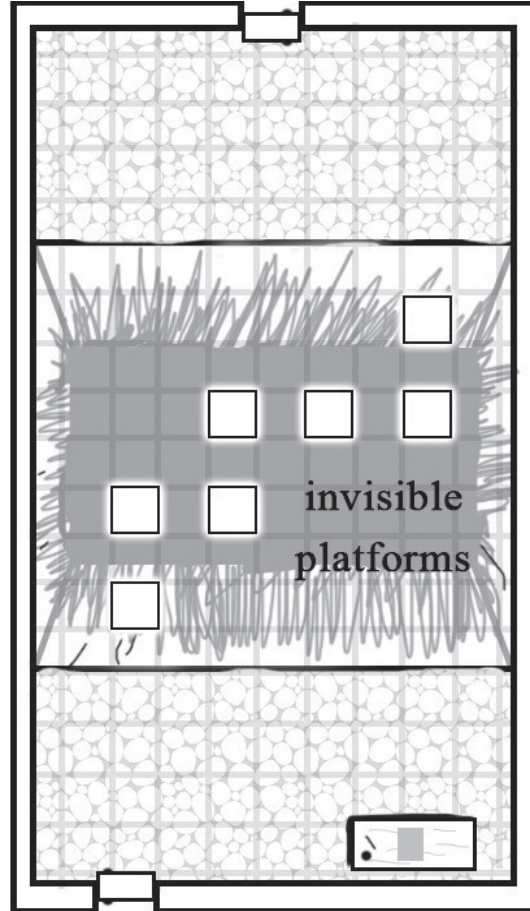
SCENARIO #1 – WRITE THIS WAY - GM INFO

**Scoring.** 10 points per character that exits through the door at the other side of the pit.

**Solution.** There are seven invisible platforms made of force energy hovering over the pit as shown on the DM's Diagram of the scenario. The platforms are fixed in place and can't be moved.

The characters should ignore the letter and use the ink to find the platforms. However, they should make note of the red "R" on the letter (the R will be in black-and-white when printed, so you might want to color it in for effect). This will be important later. Of course, the characters are free to use other methods to determine the placement of invisible platforms. Each of the platforms are spaced 5 feet apart, so the characters will need to jump to each one.

**The Hint.** "Ignore the letter."



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SCENARIO #2 – DON'T LOSE YOUR BEARING

You are met by a halfling that introduces himself as Ob-bob. Ob-bob leads you to a room that reeks of acid—for good reason, too. A huge pool of sizzling, green liquid dominates the majority of the room. At the center of the pool, roughly 25 feet from where you're standing, is a column with a scale placed atop it. On one side of the scale is a large rock which teeters the other side upward.

Casting your gaze upward, you notice that you are at the bottom of what-looks-like a well, the opening some 100-feet above your head. Painted vertically on the shaft's walls are the words "WELL, THAT'S ODD" in white, with the exception of the letter "E" which is in red. A coiled rope hangs from the top of the shaft.

"Welcome to scenario 2, Team Seven. You get a piece of equipment for this one: a *ring of telekinesis*. Also, you'll notice at your feet three buckets with ball bearings in them."

Ob-bob blows a whistle, starting the clock.

"To complete this scenario, each one of you needs to get through the door that's in the room at the top of the well shaft. There is a rope hanging near the top of the well, 100-feet up. Careful with the acid. Touch it and you're 'dead.' You've got 15 minutes to escape the room."

*Continual flame* spells have been cast all throughout the pool room, well shaft, and exit room providing enough light for the charac-

ters to see.

The column with the scale is 25 feet away. The pool itself is shallow, only 5 feet deep. Of course, the liquid isn't really acid, just enchanted to look like acid. However, if a character sets foot in the 'acid pool', they are "dead" and immediately removed from the scenario.

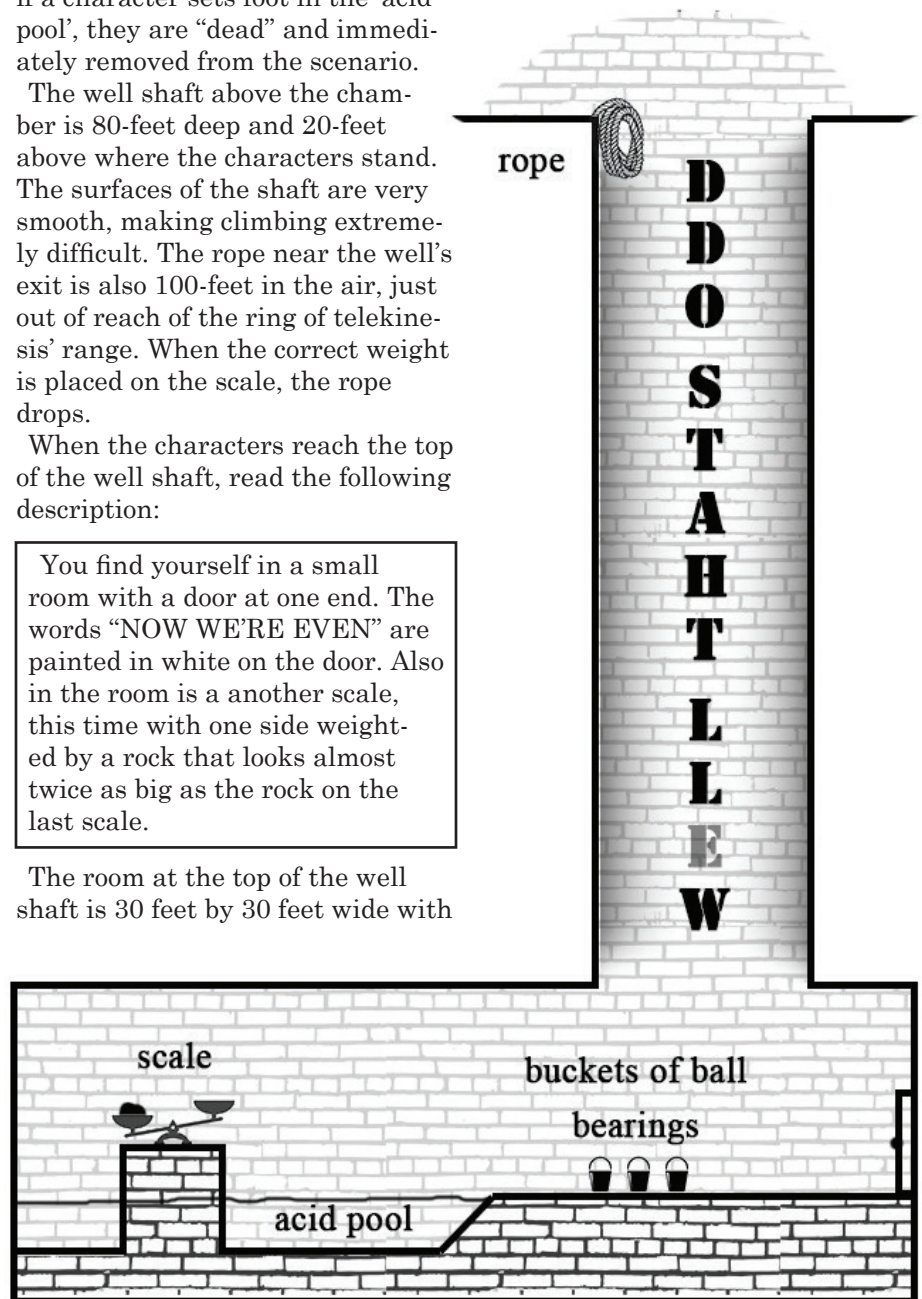
The well shaft above the chamber is 80-feet deep and 20-feet above where the characters stand. The surfaces of the shaft are very smooth, making climbing extremely difficult. The rope near the well's exit is also 100-feet in the air, just out of reach of the ring of telekinesis' range. When the correct weight is placed on the scale, the rope drops.

When the characters reach the top of the well shaft, read the following description:

You find yourself in a small room with a door at one end. The words "NOW WE'RE EVEN" are painted in white on the door. Also in the room is another scale, this time with one side weighted by a rock that looks almost twice as big as the rock on the last scale.

The room at the top of the well shaft is 30 feet by 30 feet wide with

15 foot high ceilings with the well in the center. Naturally, the door is locked. Placing the correct weight on the scale unlocks the door so long as the scale remains balanced.





SCENARIO #2 – DON'T LOSE YOUR BEARING - GM INFO

**Scoring.** 10 points per character that exits through the door at the top of the well shaft

**Solution.** The characters should count the number of ball bearings in each of the buckets. One bucket holds 333 ball bearings, and the other two hold 332 ball bearings. Using the ring, the characters should cast *telekinesis* to lift the bucket with the odd

number of ball bearings and place it on the scale. Once balanced, the rope drops, offering the characters a way to climb up the shaft. The characters must then climb up the shaft with the other two buckets of ball bearings. Once at the top, they must set both of the remaining buckets with 332 ball bearings on the second scale, which opens the door. The door remains open so long as the scale remains balanced.

**Hint.** “You must use all of the ball bearings to win the scenario.”

**Time Constraints.** Counting the bearings in a single bucket takes 1 minute. Also, for most characters that move 25-30 feet per round, it takes 45 seconds to climb up the rope.



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SCENARIO #3 – A LIGHT IN THE DARK

A balding half-orc wearing a tunic bearing the insignia of the adventurer’s guild greets you as you enter this chamber. He smiles and speaks with an oddly high-pitched voice, “Welcome to the third scenario, Team Seven! My name is Gil!”

At one end of this odd-shaped room is a door sixty feet in the air, with nothing more than a narrow ledge in front of it. Bright light from a skylight illuminates the door, the ledge, and everything below it. The remainder of the room is cast in shadow. Six feet up the wall to your left are two round holes, each roughly 6-inches in diameter spaced 60-feet apart. At the center of the room is a stone circle that’s 3-feet in diameter, sticking 4-inches out of the ground.

Gil hands you your starting equipment: a cloak of the bat with a red letter “D” sewn into it and a crystal ball. The half-orc also mentions that there is a rope of climbing hidden somewhere in the scenario. Once you’ve familiarized yourself with the items and how they function, he blows the whistle starting the clock.

“The goal is simple,” Gil smiles. He points to the door sixty feet in the air. “All of you need to get out through the door up there in 15 minutes or less. That’s it! Good luck!” He happily claps his hands and exits, giggling. Strange fellow.

The chamber is actually two rooms split by a solid brick wall.

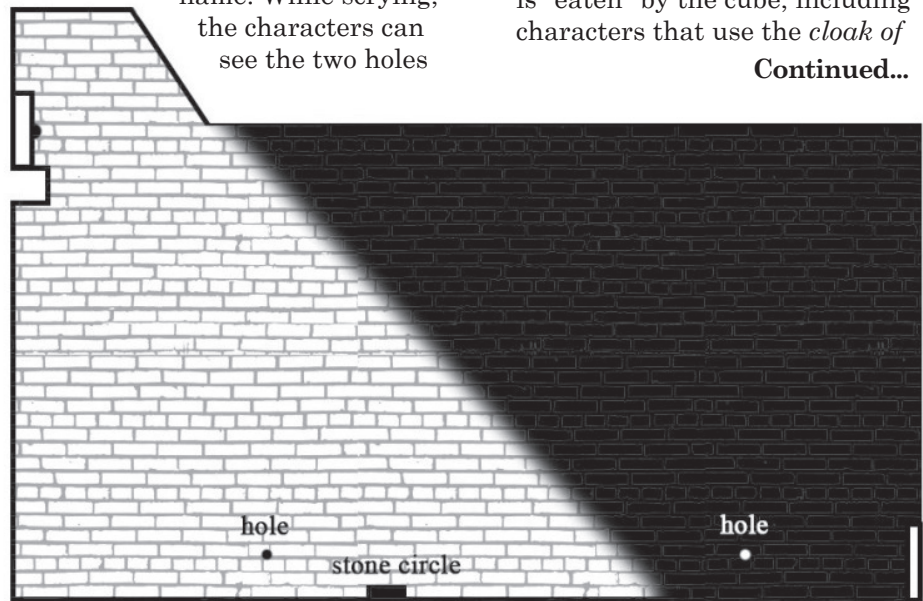
Both rooms are roughly 115-foot long and 10-foot wide. The first room, where the characters start, is the one depicted on the player’s diagram of the scenario. Half of the room is well-lit by a skylight just above the door. The other part of the room is cast in darkness. The two holes in the wall allow the characters to see through to the other side.

The *crystal ball’s* scrying sensor offers a clear view of the second room from the far wall. Its ceilings are lower than the first room’s, and dimly lit thanks to specialized castings of continual flame. While scrying, the characters can see the two holes

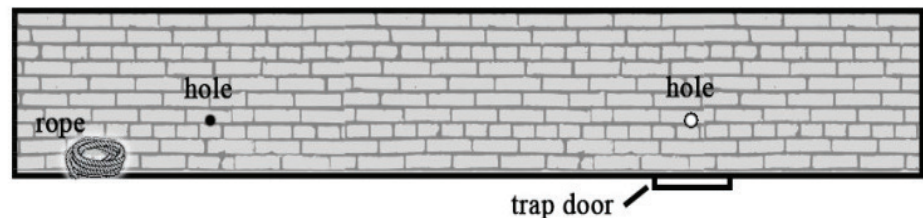
from the other side. Note that the holes appear in reverse order because of the switched point-of-view. There are no obvious ways into or out of the adjoining room beyond the holes.

Directly in front of the hole covered in darkness is a **gelatinous cube** (see the GM’s Diagram for this scenario). Looking through the hole from the main room, a character is unlikely to notice the cube unless they make a successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check (it’s more difficult to see than usual because of the narrow view and dim light). Anything passing through that hole while the cube is still there is “eaten” by the cube, including characters that use the *cloak of*

Continued...



Scrying View





SCENARIO #3 – A LIGHT IN THE DARK - GM INFO

*the bat's* polymorph ability. Eaten characters are declared “dead” and removed from the scenario. Two more items of note in the room: to far left of the room is the *rope of climbing*. And to the far right of the room is a noticeable trap door.

In the main room, the stone circle is actually a button. Placing 50 pounds of weight or more on the button lowers a 10-foot by 10-foot area of floor in the cube’s room (marked “trap door” on the scrying view). The pit it creates is 10-feet deep, and directly in front of the well-lit hole. A character that sries into the room with the crystal ball while the button is pressed will notice the floor lower. Once the weight is removed from the stone circle, the floor returns to its original position along with anything on top of it.

Note that the *cloak of the bat* and its polymorph effect won’t work in the well-lit area of the main room. It only functions in the dark. Even if a character dons

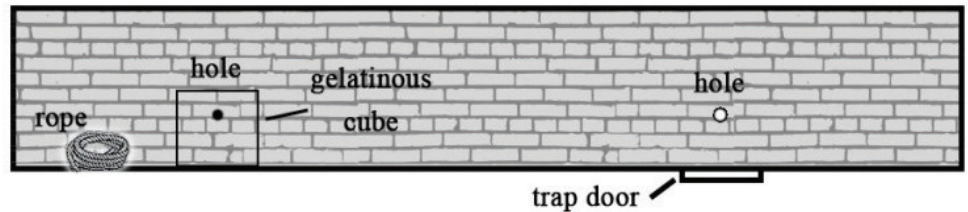
it in the darkened area then moves to the well-lit area, it ceases to function.

**Scoring.** 10 points per character that exits through the door 60 feet up.

**Solution.** One of the characters should use the *crystal ball* to see into the other room revealing the location of the *rope* and trap door. That character will need to make a Wisdom (Perception) check to notice the gelatinous cube (passive is fine, DC 15) standing in front of the darkened hole. Another character can then stand on the stone button, opening up the trap door to the right side of the gelatinous cube. However, the gelatinous

cube will only move if distracted. A character should push the *crystal ball* through the well-lit hole, allowing it to fall into the pit created by the stone button. The gelatinous cube will move to inspect the clatter, then fall into the perfectly-sized pit. The cube is stuck in the pit so long as the button remains pressed. Then, a character wearing the *cloak of the bat* polymorphs into a bat, flies through the darkened hole, grabs the *rope*, and returns to the group. From there, the group uses the *rope of climbing* to reach the platform and the exit.

**Hint.** “Be careful sticking objects into the hole cast in shadow.”



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## SCENARIO #4 – THE FOUR FRIENDS

You're teleported into a circular room with eight doors, each with a different animal's head carved onto it. At the center of the room stands four marble statues on a stone dais depicting a dwarf, an elf, a halfling, and a half-orc. Each statue has its back to the others, crossing its arms, as if the four are in the middle of a feud. At the base of each statue is a nameplate reading: DWARF, ELF, HALFLING, and HALF-ORC, respectively. The "H" in halfling is painted red.

"Welcome!" comes a voice behind you. You turn to see a green-skinned tiefling woman. She introduces herself as June. Without further ado, June blows her whistle to start the clock.

"Meet the four friends: the dwarf, halfling, elf, and half-orc. They were once a party of great adventurers. But now they can't seem to agree on anything. Because of that, no one can leave this room until they're able to figure out what the four have in common with each other, thus rekindling their relationship. Once you know what connection the four share, the way out will be obvious. Just don't choose the wrong door—horrible monsters wait behind seven of the eight doors. You have 15-minutes to figure out the correct door and exit."

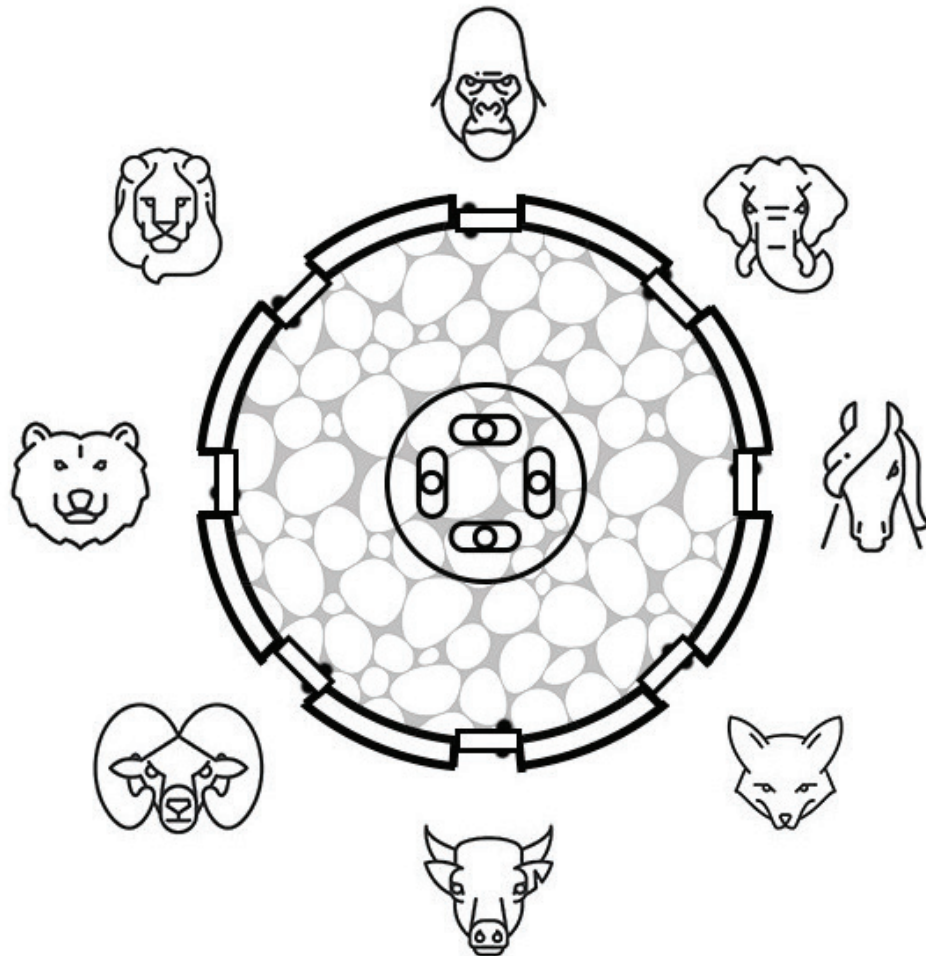
She then teleports out of the room.

The room is 40-feet in diameter and the ceilings are 15 feet high. The entire area is lit by continual flame spells cast on the ceiling. Each statue is the average height for their respective races. Inspecting each statue reveals nothing of importance. They are all very heavy and bolted into the dais.

The animals are (from the top-

most door going clockwise): ape, elephant, horse, fox, bull, ram, bear, and lion.

If the characters go through any door other than the door with the fox carved onto it, a wizard dressed like an owlbear grabs them and pulls them through. When this happens, that character is declared "dead."





SCENARIO #4 – THE FOUR FRIENDS - GM INFO

**Scoring.** 10 points per character that exits through the door with the fox.

**Solution.** Each of the four friends has the letter “F” in their name. The only animal with an “F” in its name is the Fox. Thus, the Fox door is the door through which the characters must exit.

**Hint.** “The four friends have something in common with one of the animals, too.”




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## SCENARIO #5 – SHHH...

Before you enter the next room, a goblin with a purple mohawk stops you. He puts a clawed finger to his lips, “Shhhh.” The goblin introduces himself as Jeth. He hands you a *chime of opening* and a key ring with 20 nearly identical, plain-looking keys. Once you’ve had a moment to look over the items, he blows his whistle starting the clock.

“Just beyond this door is a room with another door that you need to exit through in order to win the scenario. Of course, the door is locked. Only that *chime of opening* that you are holding will allow you to get through that door. Also, we’ve cast a permanent silence spell on the room, so the chime won’t work while you’re standing in the its area of effect. But good news: there are also twenty locked chests in the room. Each one of those keys you’re holding opens one of those chests. Pick the right chest and you’ll find your way out. You’ve got 15 minutes”

Jeth opens the door, allowing you to enter the silent room. He then shuts the door behind you.

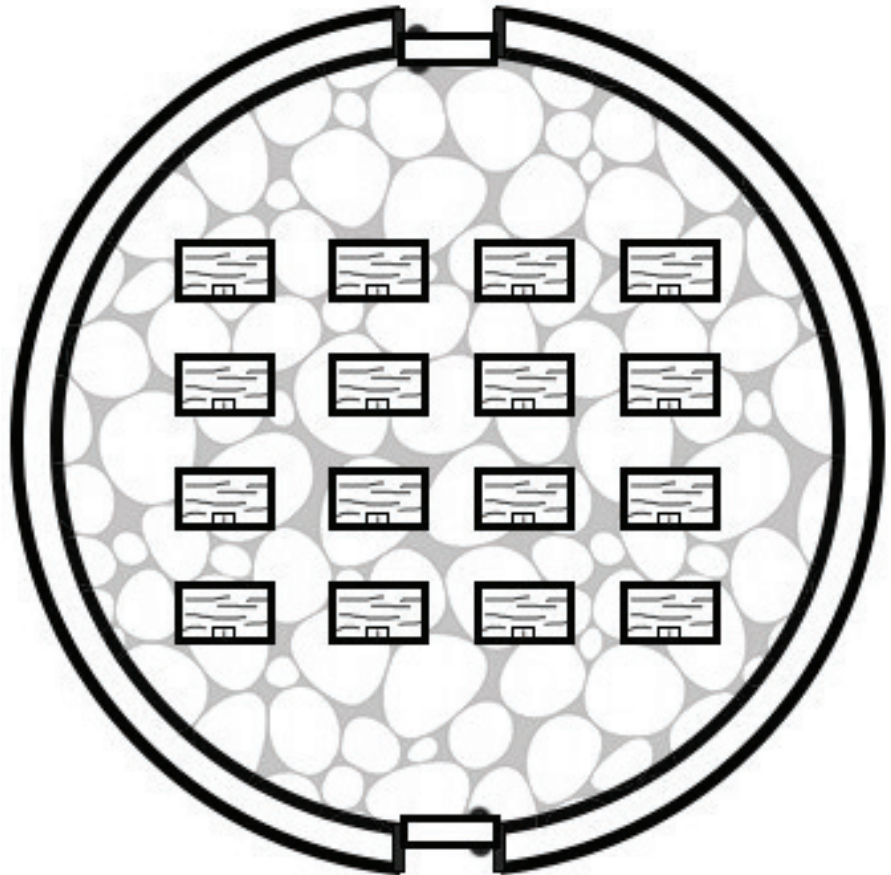
The room is a perfect dome, 20-feet high and 40-feet in diameter. No matter which part of the room the characters stand in, the *silence* spell affects it. While their character are in the room, the players are not allowed to talk and must work in complete silence.

The door at the far end of the room has a red letter “E” painted on it. The door is fake and does not open.

The chests are made out of wrought iron and weigh 100

pounds each. Each is locked and can only be opened with one of the 20 keys.

When a character tries a key, roll a d20. On a result of a 20, the key opens the chest. The same key can open more than one chest, so the odds of finding the right key doesn’t improve after any one key opens a chest. Only on a result of a 20 (or running through all 20 keys) will a chest open.



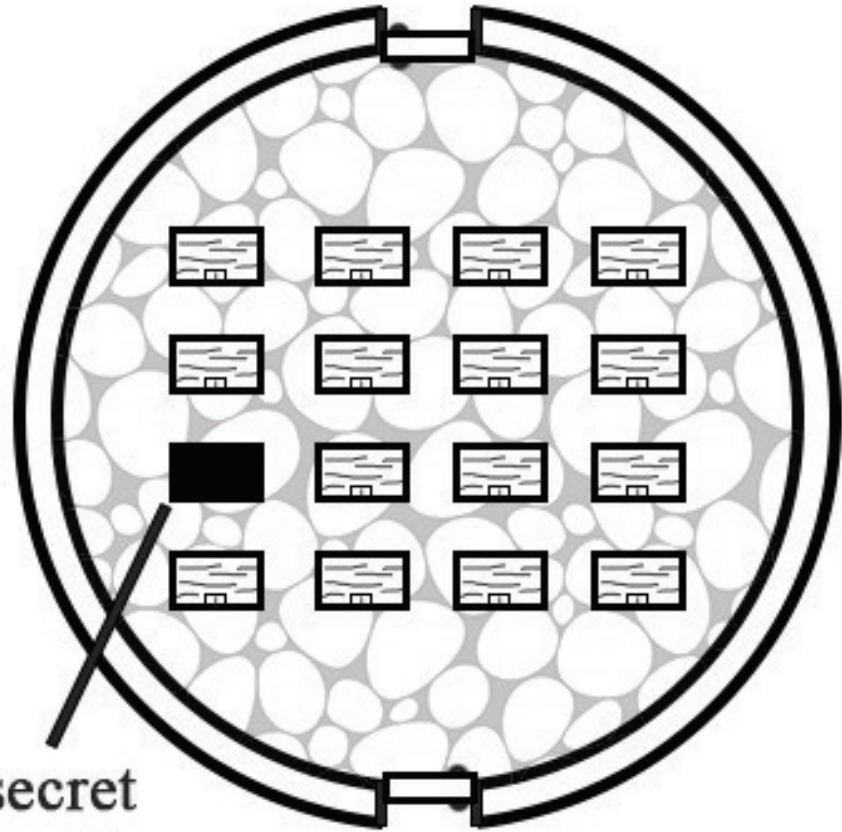


SCENARIO #5 – SHHH... - GM INFO

**Scoring.** 10 points per character that exits through the secret door below the chamber.

**Solution.** All twenty of the chests are completely empty. However, each chest only weighs 100 pounds and can be easily moved out of the way. If a character moves the chest marked on the GM's diagram, it reveals a hole in the floor with a ladder leading down 30 feet. At the bottom of the ladder is a small, 10-foot by 10-foot room with a locked door. Once in the room, the characters are removed from the *silence* spell's area of effect and can use the *chime of opening* to open the secret door.

**Hint.** "You won't find the way out inside one of the chests."



SCENARIO #6 – I PUT A HEX ON YOU

Nix, a female gnome wizard greets you in the next room. The room is shaped like a hexagon. At the center of the room is a hexagonal table with seven hexagonal shaped tiles stacked on it. Other than the door you entered through, there is only other door. Above the door is a stone gargoyle carved in the shape of a red dragon's head.

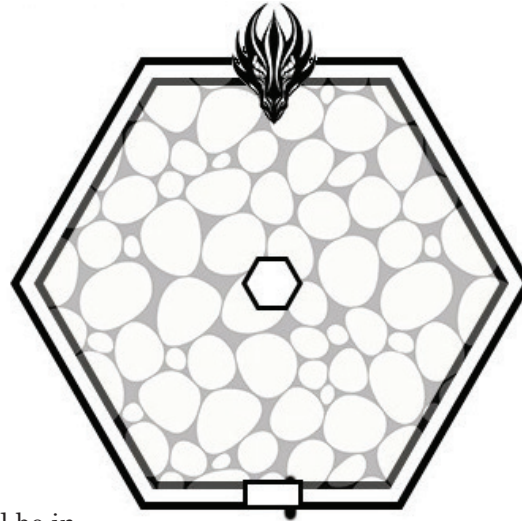
Smiling, Nix blows the starter whistle.

“All right, Team Seven! Listen up. To win this scenario, you’ve got to get through that door under the dragon in 15 minutes or less. Of course, the big dragon above it ain’t gonna let you just slide through easy. No, sir. Try going through that door without disarming it, and you’ll get blasted with fire ‘til you’re nothing but a pile of ash. How do you disarm it you wonder? Simple! Say the right command word and presto—it’s disarmed. Good luck!”

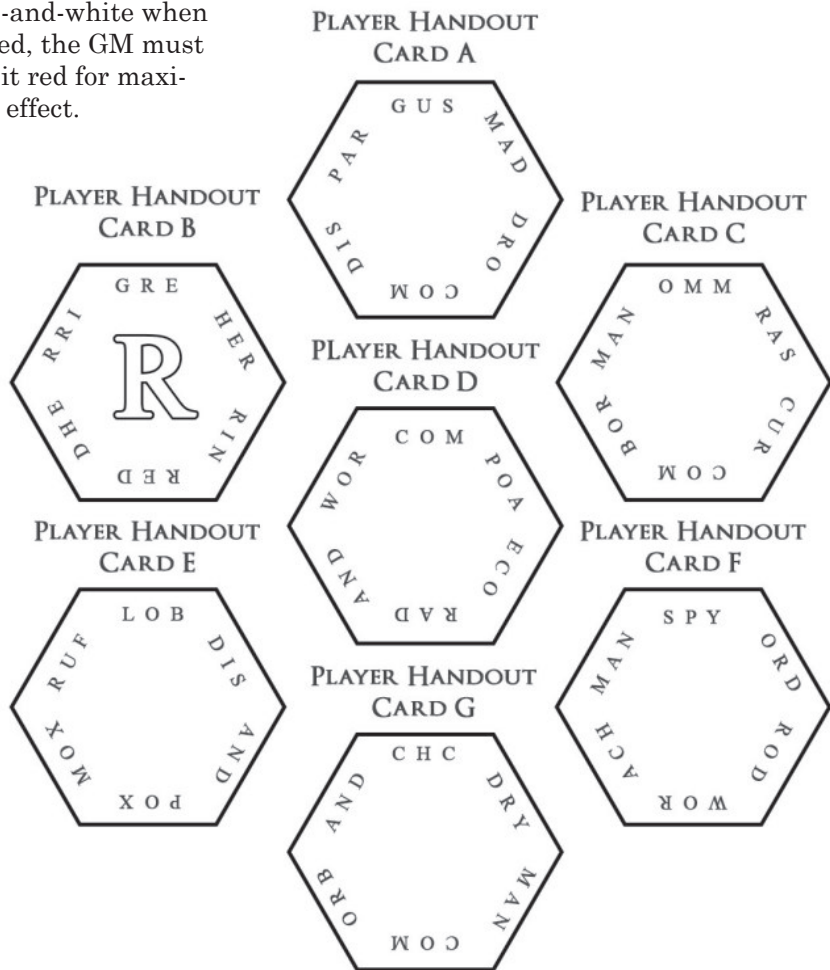
The ceilings in this hexagonal room are 15-foot high, and the room is 40-foot wide at its widest point. The hexagonal table is made of stone and attached to the floor. Everything is lit by a *continual light* spell cast on the ceiling directly above the table.

Hand the players the cut-out hex tiles from the Scenario 6 Player Handouts.

If a character approaches the door and tries to open it before the command word is spoken, they’re blasted with illusory fire from the dragon trap and declared “dead.” That character may no longer participate in this scenario.



**Note.** The R will be in black-and-white when printed, the GM must color it red for maximum effect.



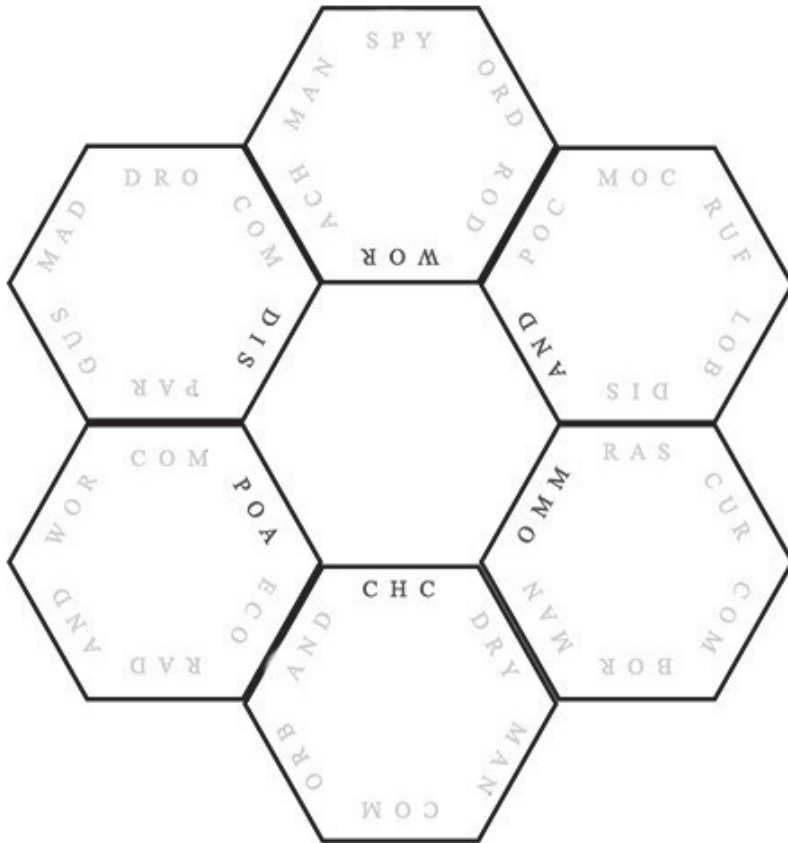


SCENARIO #6 – I PUT A HEX ON YOU - GM INFO

**Scoring.** 10 points per character that exits through the door without being hit by the dragon’s fire.

**Solution.** When put in the proper position, the tiles read: COMMAND WORD IS POACH. Saying “poach” aloud disarms the dragon trap and opens the exit door.

**Hint.** “Command word is...”



## SCENARIO #7 – ALL THE RIGHT MOVE

The first thing you notice when you enter the room is the giant chessboard laid out before you. Each square on the chess board is 5-feet by 5-feet. Atop the chessboard are 21 pieces, 11 white (which are closest to you) and 10 black. The black king has a red letter “R” painted on it.

Judging by the pieces’ current placements, someone must have been in the middle of a game.

A human man with a bushy mustache greets you, introducing himself as Galan. He hands you a *ring of telekinesis*. He notes that the ring is faulty, and can only be used to move a single object before it loses all of its power. Galan gives you a moment to examine the ring.

Once you’re ready, Galan blows his whistle, starting the timer.

“Welcome to the seventh scenario, Team Seven. As you can see, there is a massive chessboard in front of you; you’ll be playing white. You must use the ring you hold to telekinetically move a single piece on the board up to 30 feet. Furthermore, the move you make must be a ‘legal’ chess move. For example, the bishops may only move diagonally, kings may only move to adjacent squares, and so on. Remember: after you use the ring once, you can’t use it again. Move the right piece and you will be able to escape through the far door on the other side and win the scenario.

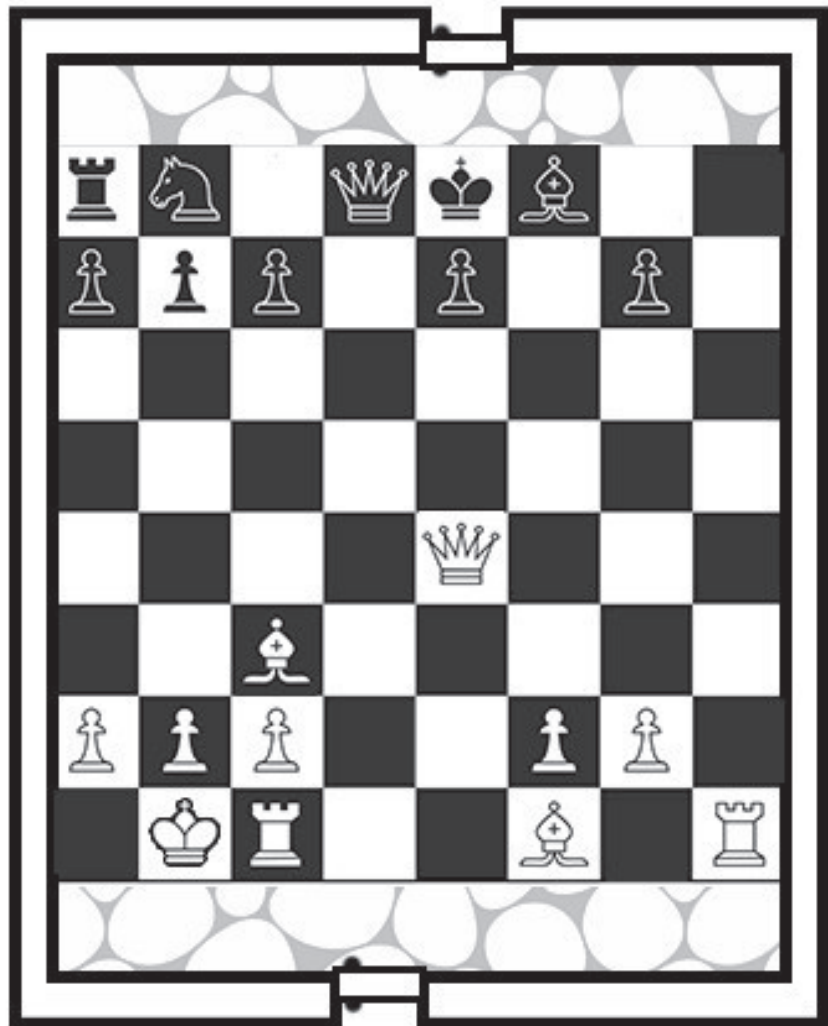
“Oh, and one last thing: do not step on the chessboard. It’s electrified, and will instantly kill you if you do. You have 15 minutes. Good luck!”

Two things will get characters disqualified in this scenario. First, if a character steps on the chessboard, the character is ‘electrified’ and ‘dies.’ Remove the character from the scenario. Second, if the character’s use the single-charge ring of telekinesis to move a chess piece in an illegal way, the entire group is disqualified.

Each chess piece is roughly 3-foot round, 4-feet tall, and weighs 200 pounds. They are made out of

plates of steel bolted to a wooden frame and can support up to 1,000 pounds of weight each. Moving a chess piece into another chess piece will not knock out the second chess piece, even if it would be a legal move. Instead, the moving chess piece stops just before entering the target chess piece’s square.

The room is lit by multiple *continual flame* spells cast above the chessboard.





SCENARIO #7 – ALL THE RIGHT MOVE - GM INFO

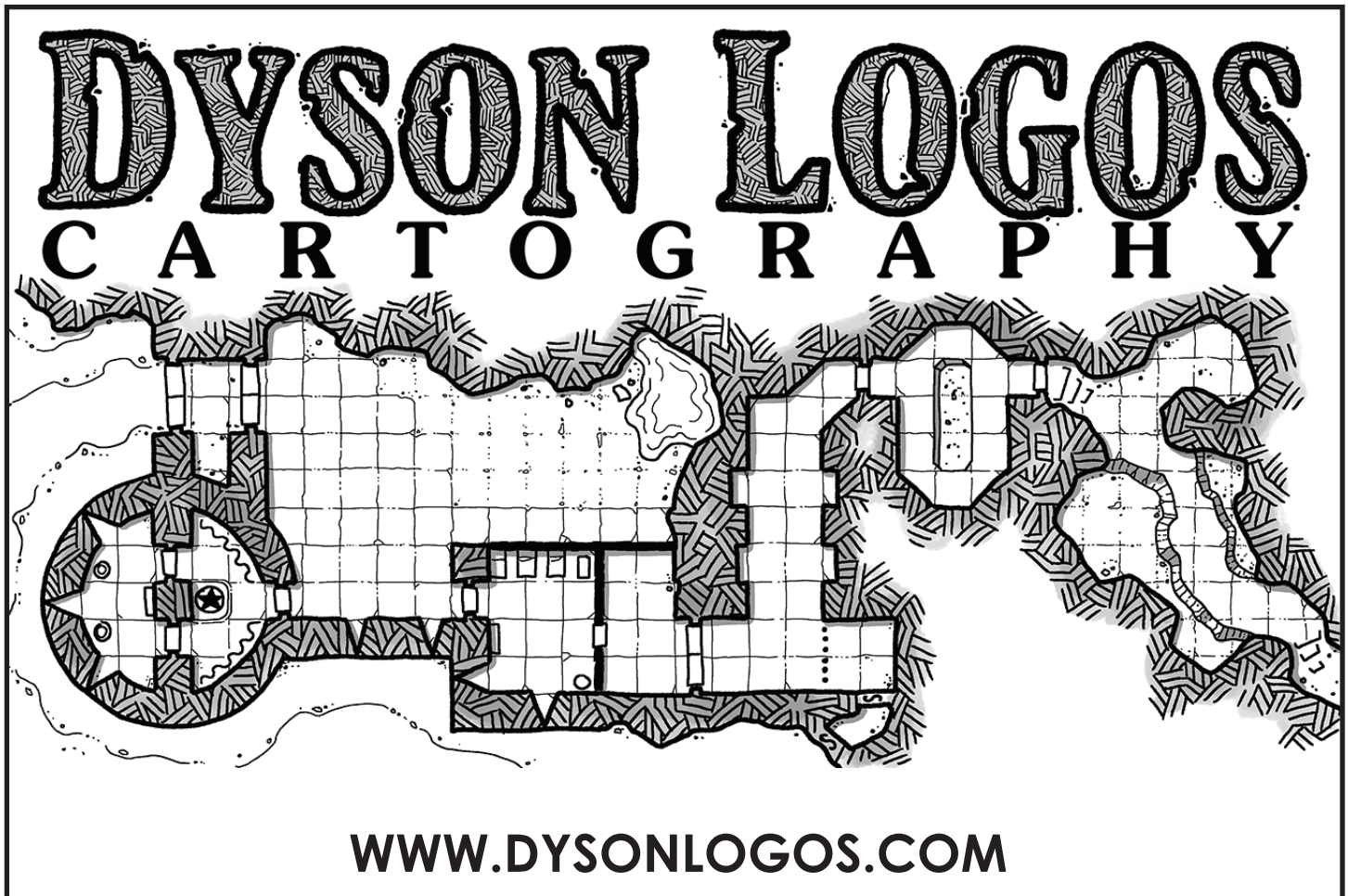
**Scoring.** 10 points per character that exits through the door on the opposite side of the chessboard.

**Solution.** The characters must grab onto the white rook (bottom right corner). There is enough room for each of them to grab the piece as long as they place their feet on the rook's base. Then, one

of the characters uses the *ring of telekinesis* to move the piece 30 feet forward. From there, the characters can jump off the rook and onto the far side of the chessboard. If the characters weigh more than 800 pounds combined (which would exceed the spell's normal limits), allow them to continue regardless, citing the faulty nature of the ring.

If the players disagree with this method, they can also arrange the pieces so that they can leap from piece to piece.

**Hint.** "You can't win the chess match."



SCENARIO #8 – I’VE GOT A CRUSH ON YOU

A long corridor stands before you, 15-foot wide and 160-foot long. At regular intervals, six separate sections of the wall violently smash together with a resounding “CRUNNNGGG!”

It doesn’t take a brainy wizard to realize anyone unfortunate enough to stand between those walls when they close will meet their doom.

A half-elf woman enters just behind you, carrying four 5-foot long brooms. She quickly introduces herself as Cara and tells you that the brooms are, in fact, *brooms of flying*. One of the brooms has a red letter “N” painted on it.

After you’ve had a moment to look over the brooms, Cara blows her whistle. The countdown begins.

“Heya, Team Seven. At the far end of this corridor is the only exit out of here. You’ve got 15 minutes to get through that door. Just don’t get squished!”

If the characters take a moment to watch the crushing walls, they will notice that each section is 20-feet in length. In addition, the walls crush at irregular intervals. If the characters watch the walls, read the following:

If section 1 is the section closest to you, with section 6 being the one furthest from you, the sections’ crushing walls close in the following order: section 1, section 3, section 5, section 1, section 6, section 3, section 2, section 5, section 4. After section 4 closes, the pattern repeats. It would appear that sections 1, 3, and 5 are twice as fast as the other three sections, closing twice per round.

After the players discuss their strategy and are ready to move down the

corridor have each player roll initiative as if entering combat. As normal, a character can move up to their full movement speed and take an action on their turn. A character may also take a bonus action if available. The only difference is that each round should be performed in real time, instead of 6 seconds of game time it normally would. This should encourage the players to take their turns quickly.

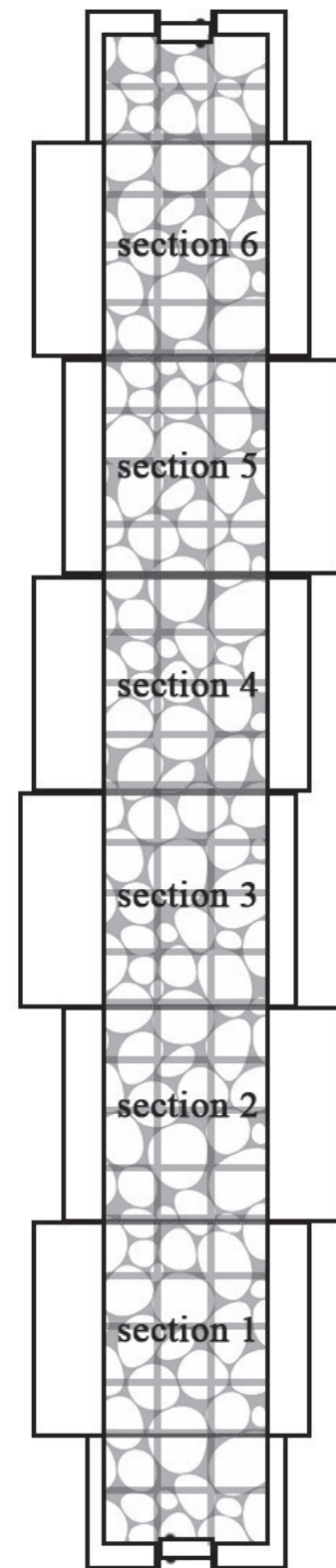
Be sure to remind the players that mounting and dismounting—even a *broom of flying*—costs an amount of movement equal to half a character’s speed.

Each section takes one or more turns in a round. A section’s initiative is shown on the Crushing Wall Initiative table (winning any ties). On a section’s turn, its walls slam shut, crushing anything in its path. Then, the walls immediately return to the open position. Any character caught in the section when its walls close is ‘crushed’ unless they’ve discovered a way to stop the walls. Of course, the walls stop just short of dealing any real damage. Still, a character that would’ve been crushed is declared “dead” and removed from the scenario.

Crushing Wall Initiative

Section	Initiative
1	20 and 10
2	5
3	17 and 7
4	2
5	13 and 3
6	9

Note that some of the walls are faster than others, closing twice per round. For example, section 1 slams shut on initiative count 20 and initiative count 10.



SCENARIO #8 – I’VE GOT A CRUSH ON YOU - GM INFO

**Scoring.** 10 points per character that exits through the door at the end of the corridor.

**Solution.** Here is a play-by-play of how the characters should tackle this challenge:

**Round 1.** Holding a *broom of flying*, the first character runs past section 1—avoiding the crushing walls, of course—into section 2, then holds the broom up horizontally with opposite ends facing the crushing walls. The broom is magical and strong enough to stop the walls when they close, so long as that character continues to hold the broom horizontally. With the first character stopping section 2’s crushing walls, the other three characters use their turns to join the first character in section 2, each carrying their own *broom of flying*.

**Round 2.** The first character continues to hold their broom up, stopping section 2’s wall. The second character then rushes into section 3 and holds their broom horizontally in front of themselves, halting section 3’s crushing walls just as the first character did. The remaining two characters use their turns to join the second character in section 3.

**Round 3.** The first character can now remove their broom and join the other characters in section 3. Meanwhile, the second

character continues to hold their *broom* to prevent section 3’s walls from crushing their allies. The third character rushes forward into section 4 and holds up their *broom of flying* to stop section 4’s walls. Finally, the fourth character joins the third character in section 4.

**Round 4.** The first character runs into section 4 and stops. Then, the second character removes their *broom* and joins the other three characters in section 4. The third character keeps their broom in place while the others get into positions. Finally, the fourth character runs into section 5 and put their broom in place, stopping the walls in section 5.

**Round 5.** The first and second character join the fourth character in section 5. Once the first, second, and fourth character are in section 5, the third character removes their broom and joins the other three.

**Round 6.** The first, second, and third characters rush past section 6 to the safe zone by the door. When the other three characters are clear, the fourth character removes their broom, then rushes through section 6 to join them.

**Round 7.** All four characters exit. If done correctly, it should take 7 – 10 rounds to get to the other side of the corridor. The character may wish to use a turn to learn their

order with respect to the sections’ order. If they do, you may reveal to the players the initiative counts for each section.

**Hint.** “The brooms are sturdier than they look.”





SCENARIO #9 – HORSE FROG DUCK

Before heading to the next scenario, an elf named Noffin approaches you. Out of a sack he pulls three stage costumes: one of a frog, one of a duck, and one of a horse.

“Before we begin the next scenario, three of you must choose one of these costumes to wear. Of course, as I only have three costumes to give you all, one of you will not receive a costume. Instead, you get this leather pouch and everything inside of it.”

Although you can’t see what’s in the pouch itself, you can hear its contents clacking around within.

Allow the characters to decide among themselves who gets which costume and who gets the pouch. Once it’s decided, the three costumed characters are lead away by the Trial’s proctors leaving only the character with the pouch.

Hand the other three characters the copy of the Scenario 9 Player Handout so they understand their roles in the scenario. The remaining character is not allowed to see the handout:

THE PROCTORS INFORM YOU THAT YOU HAVE BEEN “KIDNAPPED” AND ONLY YOUR FRIEND CAN SAVE YOU.

WHILE YOU ARE KIDNAPPED, YOU CANNOT SPEAK OR ASSIST YOUR FRIEND.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

Once the characters have read the note, read the following to the remaining character, from here on referred to as the **challenger**.

About fifteen minutes after your friends leave, Noffin hands you the leather pouch. Inside are three wooden figurines carved in the shape of animals: one frog, one duck, and one horse. The horse has a red letter “G” painted on the bottom of it. Noffin explains that the figurines are not magical; they are simple, wooden carvings, and nothing more. He then leads you through a door.

The room within is a large square room measuring 75-feet on a side with 20-foot high ceilings.

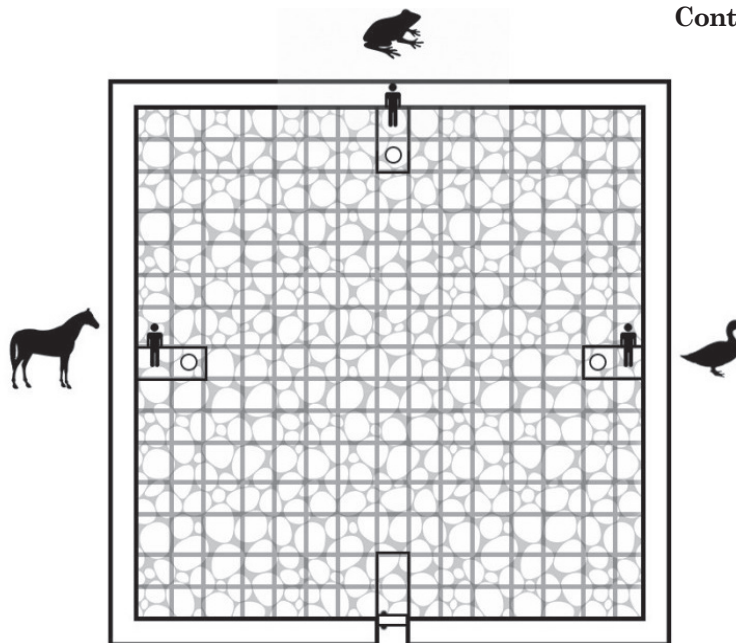
Immediately, you notice your friends. Much to your shock, each has been bound and gagged, and placed on stone platforms at different parts of the room. They all are wearing the costumes they selected earlier. At each of their feet is an empty wooden bowl. Also, each of your friends has a globe suspended above their head by a chain attached to the ceiling. The globe hung over your friend who is dressed like a horse is

currently glowing, while the other two are not. After a few seconds, that globe goes out and the globe hanging over your friend dressed like a frog glows in its place.

Of course, that’s not the worst part. With the exception of the platforms you and your friends are standing on, nearly every square foot of the room explodes with traps. Scythes swoop down from the ceiling. Spikes jut out the floor. Flames spew from the walls.

“Welcome to Scenario 3, adventurer,” Noffin says just before blowing his whistle to start the timer. “To win this scenario you must save your three friends in 15-minutes or less. To save a friend, you must place the figurine that matches their costume into the bowl in front of them. Doing so instantly teleports them away. Once you free your last companion, you, too, will be teleported to the final scenario. Good luck.”

Continued...



SCENARIO #9 – HORSE FROG DUCK - GM INFO

The room is lit by *continual flames* cast on the ceiling at regular intervals. Refer to Scenario 9 Diagram’s animal icons to see where each character is positioned in the room.

Since the other three characters are bound and gagged, the challenger must solve the scenario by themselves; the other players should remain silent. With the exception of the four platforms, every square of the trap room is dangerous. Failure to move through it correctly results in the challenger getting hit with a trap. While the trap won’t deal fatal damage, it does render the challenger ‘dead’, and the scenario ends.

Every 6 seconds, a random globe lights up while the two remaining globes go dark. Roll 1d6. On a result of 1-2 the globe over the horse-character lights up. On a 3-4, the globe over the frog-character lights up. And on a roll of 5-6, the globe over the duck-character lights up. It is possible for a globe to stay lit for longer than 6 seconds if the die result comes up the same two rolls in a row.

**Scoring.** 10 points per “rescued” character, plus an additional 10 points if all three are rescued before the time runs out.

**Solution.** If the challenger takes the time to watch the globes and traps from the safety of their platform, they will notice that the scythes and spikes stop shortly after the globe over the horse-character lights up; only the fire shoots from the walls during that time. Also, the fire and spikes stop shortly after the globe over the duck-character lights up; only the scythes swing. Finally, the fire and scythes stop when the globe over the frog-character lights up; just the spikes pop out of the floor.

The challenger must act according to whichever globe lights up. If the globe over the horse-character lights up, the character can move up to 30 feet so long as they don’t move along a wall (where the fires spew). If the globe over the frog-character lights up, they must jump in place to avoid the spikes coming up from the floor. Finally, if the globe over the duck-character lights up,

they must drop prone in their space to dodge the scythes. If the challenger fails to act accordingly, the challenger is hit by a trap, and the scenario ends.

**Note:** the challenger can move freely along the walls so long as they move away from the wall when the horse-character’s globe lights up and the fire comes out.

Once the challenger reaches a companion, they must place the appropriate wooden figurine in the bowl; immediately afterward, the respective character teleports to another location. After the challenger saves the last one of their companions, the challenger teleports away, as well, rejoining their friends for the final scenario.

**Hint.** “Act like the animals would.”



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SCENARIO #10 – RED HERRING

You are in a cylindrical room that’s 15-feet in diameter with a 30-foot high ceiling. It appears that the only way out is through the lone door in the room. Hanging from hooks all around you are twenty-six copper keys. Each key has a different letter of the alphabet painted in red upon it.

The wizard Evadimus stands before you. “Congratulations for making it this far, Team Seven. This is the final scenario.”

Evadimus blows his whistle, starting the timer.

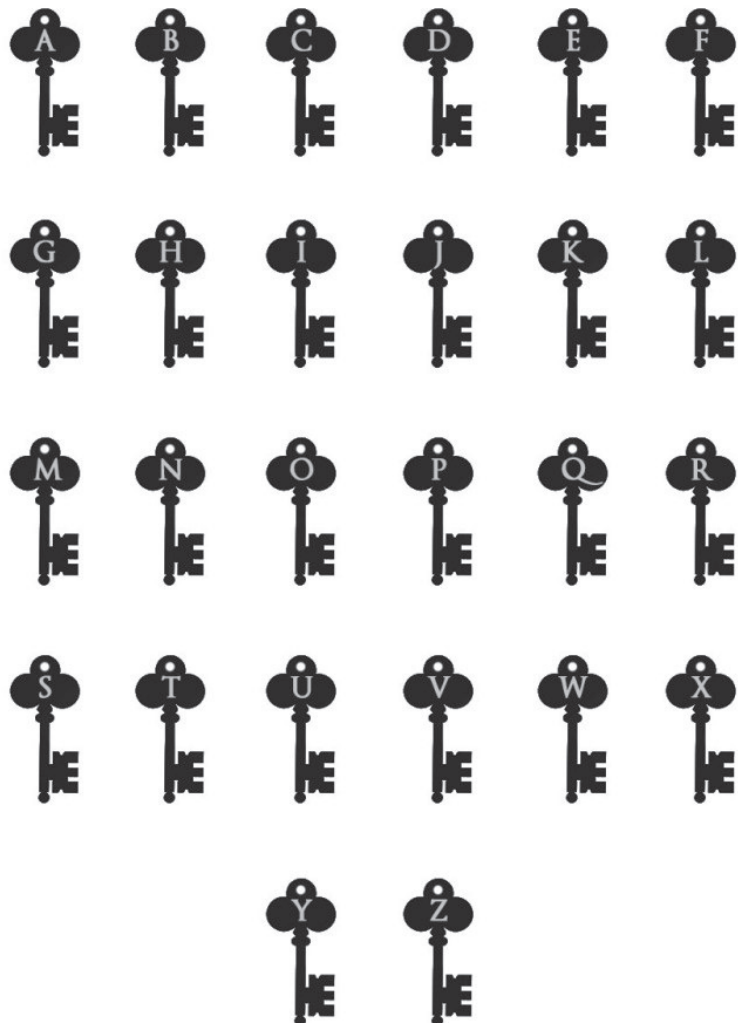
“The goal is simple: get through this locked door here. Fortunately, one of the keys hanging on this wall opens the door. All of the others are fakes.

One of you must select a key from the wall and place it in the door. If you are wrong, you are removed from the scenario. Then, another one of you may select a key. If that key is the wrong key, then you, too, will be removed. And so on, until you discover the correct key or all four of you are removed. You have 15 minutes.”

The room is lit by a *continual flame* spell cast over the exit door. Hand the players the Scenario 10 handout.

If a character places any key but the key with the “T” on it in the door, they instantly vanish along with the incorrect key. That character may no longer participate in the scenario.

SCENARIO 10 - HANDOUT





**SCENARIO #10 – RED HERRING - GM INFO**

**Scoring.** 10 points per remaining character after the correct key is found and placed in the door. If the time runs out or all four characters are removed from the scenario, the team receives 0 points.

**Solution.** The players should have taken note of each of the red letters found throughout the other nine scenarios. Together, the letters spell RED HERRING. This should clue them in that the “I” is missing. Thus, the “I” key opens the door.

**Hint.** “Hope you’ve been paying attention this whole time.”

**Concluding the Adventure**

Once the characters complete the final scenario, one of the guilds’ proctors escorts them back to the arena where they first met the other contestants. The members of the teams that finished the contest ahead of them wait there as well. The other six teams are: Black Carnival, Stagger Lee’s Gang, the Rouge Rogues, Handsome Bill’s Troupe, Crows, and the Jungle Scouts.

While waiting for the other teams to finish, teams compare scores to see who is winning. The winning teams boast and showboat in front of the gathered audience.

Every 15 minutes or so, another team emerges to join the characters and other contestants. No one is allowed to leave the arena until all of the teams have finished.

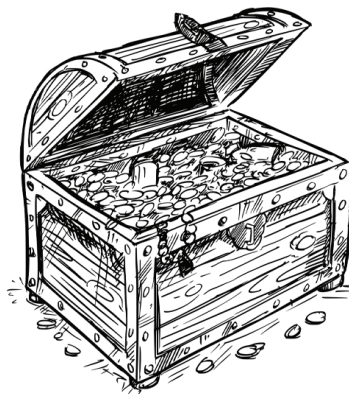
Once every team has finished, the results of the Trial of Heroes are given. First, the teams that didn’t come in first, second, or third are announced. Those teams stand off to the side. Some act with humility. Others react poorly, screaming “foul play” or calling the entire event “a dumb affair.”

Next, the wizards announce the third-place team and awards the teams bronze medallions. Second-place comes next, handed silver medallions. Finally,

the winning team is announced, gifted a golden trophy made in the likeness of the winning team along with individual gold medals. Congratulations are made all around.

In order to determine the first-, second-, and third-place winning teams, compare the point totals gained by the characters to the other groups, as summarized on the Team Results (By Scenario) table. In addition, the winning team is awarded the 10,000 gp promised.

The trophy is worth 50 gp. And each medallion worth 1 gp (first place), 1 sp (second-place) or 1 cp (third-place).

**Development**

There are also other less tangible benefits to having participated in the Trial of Heroes. The characters gain notoriety in the region and are well respected by the adventurers’ guild. Even if the characters didn’t win, they might be approached by members of the guild or spectators of note with further missions that fit their skill set.

The characters may have even made enemies during the event. One of the other teams may be jealous of their success. Alternatively, if the characters did poorly, one of the teams might offer mentorship to the characters, or possibly act as bullies.

**Experience Awards**

The Trial of Heroes adventure is a bit different from most adventures in that the scenarios are somewhat artificial. After all, the characters are never in any real danger.

Each scenario should be assigned a CR equal to the average party level. If the characters completed a scenario, they earn XP equal to that CR award; if they failed a scenario, they earn no XP for that award. Ω

# NPC Team Scores

<b>NPC Team Name</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>Total</b>
<i>The Bloody Bunch</i>	40	30	40	30	40	30	40	40	40	40	<b>370</b>
<i>Northern Knife</i>	40	40	40	40	0	40	40	40	40	30	<b>350</b>
<i>Red Right Hand</i>	20	30	40	40	40	30	30	40	0	40	<b>310</b>
<i>Lovermen</i>	40	40	40	30	40	0	15	40	0	20	<b>265</b>
<i>Stagger Lee's Gang</i>	40	30	10	30	40	0	40	20	20	20	<b>250</b>
<i>Distant Sky</i>	30	30	10	20	0	40	30	10	40	30	<b>240</b>
<i>Orc Squad</i>	40	20	0	40	40	0	10	10	40	30	<b>230</b>
<i>Black Carnival</i>	40	40	0	20	40	40	0	0	0	20	<b>200</b>
<i>Brothers Kipler</i>	0	20	0	10	0	40	40	0	40	40	<b>190</b>
<i>Four Kings</i>	40	0	5	0	40	20	40	0	0	30	<b>175</b>
<i>Wretched Few</i>	20	0	0	0	15	40	0	0	0	40	<b>115</b>
<i>Handsome Bill's Troupe</i>	40	20	40	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	<b>110</b>
<i>Crows</i>	30	0	0	5	0	0	40	10	0	0	<b>85</b>
<i>Rouge Rogues</i>	0	0	0	0	0	40	40	0	0	0	<b>80</b>
<i>Peaches and Watermelons</i>	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	40	20	<b>70</b>
<i>Jungle Scouts</i>	0	0	0	5	0	40	10	0	0	0	<b>55</b>

# PC Team Scores

Team Name					
Scenario	Character 1	Character 2	Character 3	Character 4	Total
1 Write This Way					
2 Don't Lose Your Bearing					
3 A Light in the Dark					
4 Four Friends					
5 Shhh ...					
6 I Put a Hex on You					
7 All The Right Move					
8 I've Got a Crush on You					
9 Horse Frog Duck					
10 Red Herring					



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# PART IV

## ZERO LEVEL ADVENTURES



# EVADIMUS' SCHOOL FOR GIFTED SPELLCASTERS

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BY DAVE HAMRICK

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## A New Campaign Setting For Fifth Edition

Primary Artwork and Cartography by Justin David Russell

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*No wizard is born a wizard. Unlike sorcerers who are born with their powers, clerics and warlocks who “borrow” their spells from powerful otherworldly beings, or rangers and druids who derive their abilities from nature, the wizard learns their craft through discipline and study. But where do wizards study? There are a few wizards who are self-taught. And a few wizards have private tutors teach them the way. But for the most part, young wizards develop their abilities at special academies known as wizarding schools, the most famous of which being Evadimus’ School for Gifted Spellcasters.*

Wizarding schools are a combination of private school and university. There, they learn everything they need to in order to become a wizard. Apprentice wizards learn advanced areas of study such as arcana, history, and religion. They are taught how to make ranged attacks, and how to defend their minds from intrusion. And, of course, apprentice wizards unlock the mysteries of cantrips and spells. Typically, an apprentice wizard spends two years at such an academy.

An Evadimus’ School for Gifted Spellcasters Fifth Edition campaign setting assumes that all the characters start as a new class option called apprentice wizards. Apprentice wizards are “pre-wizards” or “0-level” characters. They are not as powerful as the typical 1st-level character. As such, apprentice wizards must spend their first few years of adventuring learning their craft at a wizarding school. Refer to the “Apprentice Wizard” section on details on how to start an Apprentice Wizard.

### Rules in Brief

In an effort to provide a complete campaign setting, we’ve constructed game rules that are as concise as possible. In general, the Evadimus’ School for Gifted Spellcasters setting use the traditional Fifth Edition rules. If you have questions about how a rule in this

campaign setting works, you can usually find an answer in one of the three core rulebooks.

## Character Creation

In an Evadimus' School for Gifted Spellcasters campaign, the rules for character creation are mostly the same as they are in a traditional Fifth Edition setting with the exception of a few changes noted below.

### Choosing a Class

An Evadimus' School for Gifted Spellcasters campaign is intended for a party of all wizards starting with the Apprentice Wizard class. The GM may include other character classes at their discretion. In addition, future editions of *BroadSword Monthly* will include rules for other 0-level classes that can play alongside apprentice wizards.

**Level.** Apprentice wizards start at level-0. They do not gain experience points until they become 1st-level wizards (unless the character is multiclassing, as described in the "Wizard Restriction" optional rule). Instead, they earn additional levels of the apprentice wizard class through rigorous study and testing.

**Hit Points and Hit Dice.** Until an apprentice wizard becomes a full-fledged wizard, the character has a single hit die: a d6. An apprentice wizard's starting hit points are 6 + his or her Constitution modifier.

### Determine Ability Scores

Ability scores are determined using the normal Fifth Edition options. However, all apprentice wizard characters have a seventh ability score: Standing.

### Standing Score

Standard measures a character's performance at a wizarding school, representing how much they have actually learned (or not learned, as the case may be) throughout the course of a school year.

A character's starting standing score is equal to his or her Charisma score. In addition, the character's Standing score is directly tied to the school they are at. If they leave the school, graduate, or flunk out, they lose their Standing ability.

Unlike other abilities, Standing can't be raised with normal ability score increases. Instead, the GM awards an increase to Standing—or imposes a reduction—based on the character's actions and activities during the school year as detailed in the "Downtime and School Activities" section below. As with other ability scores, a character's Standing can't exceed 20 or go below 1.

If the GM ever needs to make a check or saving throw for Standing for a monster or NPC that lacks the score, the GM can use the creature's Charisma in place of Standing.

**Standing Checks.** Standing checks can be used in educational situations, much as Intelligence would when a character's Standing at the school is the most defining factor in the way their research and work will play out.

The GM might also call for a Standing check when a character is in one of the following situations:

- They're caught getting in trouble by a member of the faculty.
- The character uses their reputation at school to get their way.
- Trying to estimate another character's Standing score.

**Standing Saving Throws.** This comes into play when a character wants to determine whether or not they have done something that hurts their reputation at the school. The GM might call for a Standing saving throw in the following situations:

- Avoiding an accidental breach of the school code of ethics.
- Resisting the urge to get distracted from their studies.
- Recognizing when a situation arises that would hurt the character's Standing.

### Describe Your Character

Typically, an apprentice wizard is younger than most 1st-level wizards, either in their teens or even early twenties if they are human, or at similar levels of maturity for longer-lived races. Additionally, this article provides new background options for apprentice wizard characters in addition to those normally offered. The new options are detailed in the "Apprentice Wizard Backgrounds" section.

**Optional Rule: Tuition.** A character starting at the wizarding school is responsible for tuition, which usually costs 100 gp per semester. This price includes basic room and board, meals, access to the facilities, and everything else that is needed for an apprentice wizard to succeed during the school year.

Certain backgrounds may not require tuition either, because they assume the character comes from privilege (noble) or earned a scholarship (overachiever, natural talent or legacy).

It is assumed that the character was able to cover the cost of tuition for the first semester. However, at the start of each semester beyond the first, the character must pay the 100 gp tuition costs. If a character fails to pay their tuition for a semester, they must make a DC 15 Standing saving throw. On a failed save, the character is expelled from the school and cannot continue their studies until they find a way to pay for their tuition. On a successful saving throw, the school takes pity on the character and allows them to continue at the school for another semester.

### Come Together

The characters may know each other before they start at the wizarding school. Or they might meet each other once the first semester starts. Either way, wizarding schools lend themselves well to explanations of how friendships and party bonds are formed.





### Apprentice Wizards

Unless the GM says otherwise, an apprentice wizard is the only class option available to a character in an Evadimus' School for Gifted Spellcasters campaign.

#### Tier Zero

Apprentice wizards are not “complete” characters. Instead, they start as 0-level characters and they function at tier

zero (levels 0 – 1/2). Apprentice wizards must earn a few levels of education and expertise before they can become an official 1st-level wizard and enter the traditional first tier (levels 1 – 4).

#### Quick Build

You can make an apprentice wizard quickly by following these suggestions. First, Intelligence should be your highest ability score, followed by Constitution or Dexterity. If a character plans

to join the School of Enchantment, they should make Charisma their next-best score. Second, choose a background. Third, choose the mage hand cantrip.

### Class Features

As an apprentice, you gain the following class features.

#### Hit Points

**Hit Dice:** 1d6

**Hit Points at 0 Level:** 6 + your Constitution modifier

**Hit Points at Higher Levels:** an apprentice wizard does not gain additional hit points until it becomes a wizard and achieves the 2nd level in that class

#### Proficiencies

**Armor:** None

**Weapons:** daggers, quarterstaves

**Tools:** None

**Saving Throws:** Intelligence

**Skills:** Choose one from Arcana, History, Insight, Investigation, Medicine, and Religion

#### Equipment

You start with the following equipment, in addition to the equipment granted by your background:

- (a) a quarterstaff or (b) a dagger
- (a) a component pouch or (b) an arcane focus
- (a) a scholar's pack or (b) an explorer's pack
- A spellbook

## THE APPRENTICE WIZARD

Level	Proficiency Bonus	Features	Cantrips Known	1st-Level Spells Known	1st-Level Spell Slots
0	+2	Spellcasting	1	-	-
1/8	+2	-	1	1	1
1/4	+2	Ranged Weapon Training	2	3	1
1/2	+2	Bonus Proficiency	2	4	2
1st	+2	Wizardry	3	6	2

**Spellcasting**

The apprentice's spellcasting feature is the same as the one described in the *PHB*, with the following changes:

- You only know one cantrip of your choice from the wizard spell list. You learn an additional cantrip at level-1/4 and when you become a 1st-level wizard.
- Before becoming a 1st-level wizard, the Apprentice Wizard table shows you how many spell slots you have to cast your spells of 1st level.
- Until you become a 1st-level wizard, you can only prepare a number of wizard spells from your spellbook equal to your Intelligence modifier (minimum of one).
- At 0-level, you have a spellbook but it does not contain any spells. At apprentice level-1/4, you learn one 1st-level wizard spell of your choice, and then you continue to learn additional spells as you gain levels in this class as shown on the 1st-Level Spells Known column on the Apprentice Wizard table.

**Ranged Weapon Training**

At level-1/4, you gain proficiency with darts, slings, and light crossbows.

**Bonus Proficiency**

At level-1/2, you become proficient in one of the following skills of your choice: Arcana, History, Insight, Investigation, Medicine, or Religion.

**Wizardry**

At level 1, you become a wizard. As a wizard, you gain the following benefits:

- You gain proficiency with Wisdom saving throws.
- You gain the Arcane Recovery feature (as described in the *PHB*).

**Optional Rule: Wizard Restriction**

The GM may require that all characters—even those multiclassing—must successfully complete four semesters at a wizard's academy in order to gain the first level of the wizard class.

A higher level character may multiclass into an apprentice wizard. When they earn additional levels of apprentice wizard, they do not add the levels to their character classes. Instead, they replace the former apprentice level with the new one all the way up until they gain the first level of a wizard. Because of this, the character can earn experience and take class levels independently of the apprentice wizard class. However, they may not take an additional level of the wizard class unless they complete their training.

This may create interesting roleplaying opportunities for established characters as their colleagues may have to wait for the apprentice wizard character to finish studying or participating

in vital school activities before they can set out on an adventure.

**Apprentice Wizard Backgrounds**

Most non-wizards think that all wizards are bookish sages, their noses always stuffed in some dusty tome. Quite the contrary. Wizards can come from all different walks of life. Certainly, there are those who devote their time at the academy to obsessive study. But just like any school, there are bullies, class clowns, and even "the cool kids."

The background options overleaf are available in addition to those normally offered.



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## Bully

It's kind of hard to imagine that among hyperintelligent, disciplined mages, there are bullies, but they do exist. In fact, even if you aren't the toughest guy or girl around, you're still a big fish in a little pond. You exert your will onto those you deem inferior: physically or even intellectually, tormenting your victims with name-calling, pranks, and even physical harm.

Note: the presence of bullies make some people uncomfortable in games. While it can be argued that bullies are a realistic part of life, the GM may opt to remove this background option all together to create a safe gaming environment.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Athletics, Intimidation

**Equipment:** A set of common clothes (or a wizard's robes), a small knife, a pouch containing 10 gp

**Preferred Target.** Bullies have a preference for the type of people they pick on, typically those that they know they have a comparative advantage. Often, the targets also have a quality that the bully lacks, inciting jealousy in the bully. Choose your preferred target's qualities, or roll on the table below.

### d8 Target Qualities

- 1 Big and Slow
- 2 Weak and sickly
- 3 Low intelligence
- 4 Lacks common sense
- 5 Unattractive / poor social skills
- 6 Incredibly high intelligence
- 7 Poor family
- 8 Wealthy family

**Feature: Minions.** Your presence and reputation appeal to other bullies who look up to you. You are usually surrounded by one or two "lesser bullies" (at the GM's discretion) who assist you in your bullying activities, but rarely get involved in physical confrontations and are quick to run away when the heat is on.

**Suggested Characteristics.** Bullies usually have a good reason for their wicked ways. Often, their origin bubbles to the surface and becomes obvious to anyone with a modicum of insight.

### d8 Personality Trait

- 1 I have a quirk, such as pounding my fists together when talking, or growling. I use this to incite fear in my quarry.
- 2 I'm a terror to my targets, but incredibly friendly to everyone else, especially to faculty members.
- 3 I'm not interested in making friends.
- 4 I have no sense of humor and don't really get most jokes.
- 5 Any time someone else is the center of attention, they become my next target.
- 6 I'm good at sensing weakness in others.
- 7 I believe that I'm the best when it comes to a particular skill; anyone who shows they're better than me induces rage.
- 8 Any time I'm made to feel bad, I want to cause pain.

### d6 Ideal

- 1 **Anti-bully.** I actually hate bullies; I only bully other bullies. (Good)
- 2 **Model Student.** I'll never let my bullying get in the way of my studies or damage my standing at school. (Lawful)
- 3 **Sadist.** I just love causing pain. (Evil)
- 4 **Apex Predator.** I'm the strongest person around, all others are weak. (Chaotic)
- 5 **People.** I'm committed to the people I care about, but I don't care about others outside of my circle. (Neutral)
- 6 Reflection. My own life is difficult, and I feel that others should share in my pain. (Any)

### d6 Bond

- 1 I just want to feel loved by others.
- 2 Someone in my life hurt me, and I am unable to get revenge.
- 3 Everything I do is for my closest friends.
- 4 I actually idolize my targets and I am jealous of them.
- 5 My life outside of school is difficult, and I am reluctant to return to it.
- 6 I have a bully of my own.

### d6 Flaw

- 1 I fear challenges that I can't easily overcome.
- 2 I don't trust anyone.
- 3 I can never have real friends because I am paranoid that they will hurt me.
- 4 I have a secret disability that makes things hard for me; that's why I lash out.
- 5 Any time someone gets close to me, I drive them away.
- 6 I believe that I am better than everyone else.



## Clown

You've got the perfect joke or quip for every situation. You enjoy hearing others laugh or appearing amused by your antics, whether it's your fellow students, members of the faculty, or anyone else that you come into contact with. Often, you're seen as an extrovert and the life of the party. Other times, your comedy frustrates others who may feel that you're never serious.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Insight, Performance

**Tool Proficiencies:** One type of musical instrument

**Equipment:** A musical instrument (one of your choice), a funny prop, a costume, a set of common clothes, and a pouch containing 10 gp.

**Joke Themes.** There are plenty of ways to get an audience to laugh. And you've specialized in one or more of those methods. Choose up to three themes or roll on the table below to determine your routine as a class clown.

### d8 Joke Themes

- 1 Off-color jokes
- 2 Low-brow jokes
- 3 High-brow jokes
- 4 Sarcasm
- 5 Insults
- 6 Witty quips
- 7 Physical comedy
- 8 Impressions

**Feature: Distraction.** You're pretty well known as being "that funny girl or guy", which gives you access to social events and other functions where you otherwise wouldn't be accepted. You might get into a party with a bunch of physical types. Or you could befriend a bully who would otherwise pound you for extra gold pieces. In return for entry, others may expect you to perform and tell jokes at the event.

**Suggested Characteristics.** There's always more to a joker than a few bad puns.

### d8 Personality Trait

- 1 I hate when it gets quiet.
- 2 I love making jokes at others' expense, but not my own.
- 3 Serious situations make me uncomfortable.
- 4 Everything is funny to me.
- 5 It's pretty rare people stay mad around me; my jokes help defuse tension.
- 6 When I'm not at the center of attention, I get annoyed.
- 7 I'm pretty happy-go-lucky most of the time.
- 8 I have a very short attention span and get bored easily.

### d6 Ideal

- 1 **Levity.** Everyone's so serious all the time. It's my job to bring them back to reality. (Chaotic)
- 2 **Wholesome.** My jokes may be corny, but I make sure that doesn't hurt someone's feelings. (Good)
- 3 **Cruel.** I like it when my words cut. (Evil)
- 4 **Satire.** My jokes are designed to draw attention to the flaws in society and the inequities around me. (Lawful)
- 5 **Open Season.** Nobody is immune to my humor. (Neutral)
- 6 **Art.** Comedy is an art form and should be treated like one. (Any)

### d6 Bond

- 1 I've had a few jokes bomb in the past, so I'm always working to get better.
- 2 Something scary once happened to me, so now everything feels like a joke.
- 3 I want to be like my comedy idol and stylize my jokes after theirs.
- 4 My jokes are how I protect my friends.
- 5 I want to be the center of attention at all times.
- 6 There is someone whom I have a crush on; my comedy is my way of getting closer to them.

### d6 Flaw

- 1 I freeze up whenever I'm in serious situations.
- 2 I'll do anything to make a good joke, even if causes trouble.
- 3 Jokes made at my expense make me lose my temper.
- 4 Everyone has flaws and I'm determined to point them out.
- 5 I'm a compulsive liar.
- 6 Someone once got very offended by one of my jokes and now they have it out for me.

## Legacy

You may have come from a long line of successful wizards who attended the same school that you hope to attend. Or you're connected to a successful celebrity wizard; your presence at the school could do wonders for its reputation.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Perception, Persuasion

**Tool Proficiencies:** One type of artisan's tools

**Languages:** One of your choice

**Equipment:** One set of artisan's tools (your choice), a set of fine clothes, a patch bearing your family crest, and a belt pouch containing 20 gp

**Feature: Easy Ride**

You come to most places with high expectations. As such, those in authority treat you with admiration and excitement. This may grant you access to special locations or areas you would otherwise be denied entry. Furthermore, your lineage may grant you and your allies leniency when caught causing trouble.

**Suggested Characteristics.** Your name is already on the lips of everyone before you even set foot in the school. Whether you choose to embrace your destiny or not, your lineage is something you have to deal with every day.



### d8 Personality Trait

- 1 Despite the advantages my lineage offers me, I want to be known for my own accomplishments.
- 2 I hope to outshine those who came before me.
- 3 I hate that everyone expects so much of me.
- 4 I don't want anyone to know who I really am.
- 5 This legacy has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember. I'm kinda over it.
- 6 I have a legacy to uphold and will go out of my way to make sure I don't embarrass my name.
- 7 Most new adventurers don't know what they're doing. Fortunately, I learned from the best.
- 8 I have a feature or quirk that everyone says is something my family members were known for.

### d6 Ideal

- 1 **Might.** My family name evokes fear in others, and I plan on keeping it that way. (Evil)
- 2 **Benevolence.** I plan to use my name and powers for good. (Good)
- 3 **Disruption.** I want to break the cycle of my family's name, even if it means causing trouble for myself. (Chaos)
- 4 **Relaxation.** I just want to get in, get out, and go do my own thing. (Any)
- 5 **Fame.** I hope to outdo not just those in my lineage, but everyone else around me. (Neutral)
- 6 **Discipline.** I just want to be the best me that I can be. (Any)

### d6 Bond

- 1 I've long suspected that I'm not actually a member of the family. I hope to find out my true origins.
- 2 I have relationships with the members of authority thanks to my family's notoriety.
- 3 My parents are everpresent, constantly getting involved with my day-to-day life.
- 4 I have a secret pet that I keep hidden from everyone else. They were my only friend growing up.
- 5 Despite their renown, my family bears an ancient curse. I hope to break that curse.
- 6 My family is not as well-respected as they once were. I want to bring honor back to my family name.

### d6 Flaw

- 1 Used to having everything handed to me in life, I am quite lazy as a result.
- 2 I not only know that I'm better than everyone around me, but I openly challenge those who try to argue otherwise.
- 3 I'm a terrible one-upper; if I'm not better than you, I probably know someone else who is and will tell you all about them.
- 4 When I do poorly, I suffer from extreme anxiety.
- 5 I know everything there is to know about adventuring and don't really see why I have to learn from others.
- 6 At the first sign of danger, I'm running the other way.

## Natural Talent

While most classes require dedication and discipline, there are those who have a natural affinity for their chosen discipline. You may have a touch of monstrous blood, lending to your talents. Or you may just “get” it, your mind quickly able to grasp the core concepts of your skills and abilities.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Nature, Survival

**Languages:** Any two of your choice

**Equipment:** A trinket important to your family history, a set of common clothes (or a wizard’s robe), and a pouch containing 15 gp

**Feature: Affinity.** Faculty members and scholars may take a special interest to you, putting you and your interests before others. You might even become well-known due to your natural talents. At the GM’s discretion, you may gain special entry to places where others would be banned. Or you might be able to make contacts with those who have an interest in you, whether it’s to learn more about you or more from you.

**Suggested Characteristics.** Natural talents are met with an equal balance of awe and jealousy. What comes easily to you, others have had to work at their entire lives.



### d8 Personality Trait

- 1 My natural talents are a blessing and a curse.
- 2 I sigh loudly when I’m bored, which is often.
- 3 I enjoy helping others learn, whether they enjoy it or not.
- 4 While I enjoy my innate talents, I hope to learn more to improve myself.
- 5 Many believe that I waste my potential.
- 6 Deep down, I desire to be something other than what I’m naturally good at.
- 7 My understanding of the world is different from others.
- 8 I probably know more than my mentors do.

### d6 Ideal

- 1 **Corruption.** I’m better than everyone else around me. Why should I hold back? (Evil)
- 2 **Altruism.** I have these talents for a reason, and I should use them to help others. (Good)
- 3 **Acceptance.** Good or bad, I have these talents. It doesn’t matter what I do with them. (Neutral)
- 4 **Wild.** I have no way of controlling these talents, so why even try? (Chaos)
- 5 **Cooperation.** I am unique. I should allow scholars to study and learn more about the nature of these talents through me. (Lawful)
- 6 **Self-Reliance.** I am where I am because I choose to be and no other reason. (Any)

### d6 Bond

- 1 I never knew my family. Learning more about them may shed light on my curious powers.
- 2 I feel like I’m being followed by someone at all times. But who?
- 3 My parents were natural talents, too. They encouraged me to develop my powers.
- 4 I come from a mundane family that doesn’t share the same affinities as me. Regardless, I hope to do them proud.
- 5 A mentor whom I respect led me along the path I am now.
- 6 My natural talents once hurt someone I care about. I must learn more about these gifts.

### d6 Flaw

- 1 When I feel like I’m cornered, I lose my temper. That’s when the bad things start to happen.
- 2 I’ll do anything to get rid of these talents.
- 3 Some call me cocky. But what do they know?
- 4 I have a bad habit or vice that controls my life.
- 5 I am rude.
- 6 Oh, you need help? What’s in it for me?



## Overachiever

You always go above and beyond what's required of you. If there's extra credit, you do it (and then some). When there's a free hour in the day, you use it to catch up on your studies. Sleep? What's that? It's rare that anything distracts you from your goals.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Insight, Investigation

**Languages:** Two of your choice

**Equipment:** A bottle of black ink, a quill, a small book for you to write your notes in, a letter of recommendation from a member of faculty, a set of common clothes, and a pouch containing 10 gp

**Feature:** Impressive Credentials

Most faculty members and scholars see you as a boon instead of an annoyance. This favoritism allows you to gain access to special tomes, knowledgeable sages, and private study times that your peers may not be privy to. Your GM decides the nature of your favorable treatment.

**Suggested Characteristics.** As an overachiever, you are frequently found with your nose in a book, your hand in the air ready to blurt out the answer, and following closely behind a mentor. Of course, not all overachievers are driven by the same goals.



## d8 Personality Trait

- 1 I am never more than 5 feet away from a book if I can't help it.
- 2 It's important to me that I'm recognized for my accomplishments.
- 3 I frequently lament how there aren't enough hours in the day.
- 4 I'm determined to be the best at everything I do.
- 5 I am terrible at social situations and avoid them whenever I can.
- 6 I'm remarkably pedantic and have a counterpoint for every argument.
- 7 I try to surround myself with only the best and the brightest.
- 8 Focus, people! Focus!

## d6 Ideal

- 1 **Obsession.** Nothing will stop me from accomplishing my goals. (Chaotic)
- 2 **Jealousy.** I will destroy anyone that appears better than me. (Evil)
- 3 **Destiny.** It is my duty to be the best I can be for the betterment of the world. (Good)
- 4 **Tradition.** Failure to do my best is disrespectful to my mentors and elders. (Lawful)
- 5 **Freedom.** Once I accomplish all of my goals, I will be free to do whatever and be whomever I like. (Chaotic)
- 6 **Education.** I just enjoy learning as much as I can. (Any)

## d6 Bond

- 1 My mentors and/or family expect a lot out of me.
- 2 People always shower praise on my sibling; I wish people admired me the same way.
- 3 Not everyone has the same opportunities as I do; it would be wrong to take these privileges for granted.
- 4 I come from humble origins, so it's important to me to prove naysayers wrong.
- 5 I have a nemesis. I am determined to outdo them.
- 6 My friends are my top priority, even more so than my studies.

## d6 Flaw

- 1 I rarely get enough sleep and I'm always tired.
- 2 Nothing affects me more than losing at something.
- 3 My tireless obsession with self-improvement annoys others.
- 4 I can't tell a lie, even if a lie would save me from an uncomfortable situation.
- 5 A lot of people think I'm stuck up. But they're just useless idiots.
- 6 I would literally sell my soul to get ahead in life.

## The School Year

Traditionally, the typical fledgling wizard studies for two years at a wizarding school. Each year is divided into two sixteen week semesters (112 days). The first semester starts in the late summer or early fall, then lasts until the start of the new year. After a two-week break, the second semester begins, ending sometime in the late spring or early summer. The students then enjoy a long summer break.

During the school year, characters have plenty of time to perform school activities as described in the “Downtime and School Activities” section, go on adventures, and get into mischief.

### End of the Semester Check

Apprentice wizards don’t earn experience or gain levels like normal characters do. Instead, they must make a Standing check at the end of each semester. This check represents the character’s dedication to learning at the school as well as the faculty’s overall impression of the character. Characters who perform extremely well may gain additional benefits for their dedication. Consult the End of Semester table to determine the character’s status at the end of the semester.

Check Total	End of the Semester Check Result
1 or lower	The character fails to earn the next level fo the pre-wizard class and must retake the semester.
2-10	The character just barely earns the next level of the pre-wizard class. However, faculty members warn that the character is on academic probation.
11-20	The character earns the next level of the pre-wizard class.
21+	The character earns the next level of the pre-wizard class and earns an Apprentice Wizard Boon.

**Academic Probation.** When a character only manages to scrape by during a semester, the faculty keeps a close eye on the character. The chance that complications arise in activities such as Bullying, Making Friends, and Participating in Sports are much more common. The GM decides the nature of the probation.

**Apprentice Wizard Boons.** When a character performs exceptionally well during the school year, they learn more than what was required of them. The GM awards the character one of the following benefits:

- The character learns one additional cantrip.
- The character gains proficiency in one skill, weapon or tool of their choice. Alternatively, the character may become fluent in a language of their choice.
- The character gains a favor from a faculty member. The GM determines the nature of the faculty member’s favor.

### Downtime & School Activities

As the school year progresses, there are plenty of things that a character, as a wizard school student, can do. Many of these options function similar to the downtime rules found in the Fifth Edition core rulebooks. Because an

Evadimus’ School for Gifted Spellcasters campaign is focused on learning and growing as a student, downtime is a major part of the game.

Of course, this is not to say this is the only focus of the students of a wizarding school. The party will go on plenty of adventures, get into mischief, and thwart the occasional lich-worship school deadset on destroying the school. Downtime and school activities fill the spaces in between and work as a way of putting the “less interesting” parts of being at a school on auto-pilot.

### Complications and Rivals

Just like the typical selection of downtime activities, school activities can create complications and new rivals for apprentice wizards. Often, these events lead to new adventure seeds. When a complication or a rival comes into play during downtime or school activities, the GM determines the particulars. The activities presented at the end of this section all come with tables of possible complications. Of course, the GM—and even the characters themselves—are free to come up with even more troubles to plague the apprentice wizards during the school year.

### Downtime

In place of the typical downtime activities offered in the core rulebooks

and expansions, this section presents the characters with new activities. The length of time requires for these activities varies, from a number of days to one school week (5 days) or more. All the normal rules for downtime must be followed by the characters undertaking the activity, including spending 8 hours each day engaged in that activity for the day to count toward the activity's completion.

Some downtime and school activities increase and decrease a character's Standing score. See the "Standing" section in this article for information on how to determine the character's Standing ability, and see the downtime and school activities listed below for more information on how a given activity might modify the character's Standing score.

## Bullying

There's a social order to things and bullies are determined to stay at the top of that order. Characters can spend time exerting their influence and intimidating others to improve their fearsome reputation at school. This may even help them improve their grades and earn an income.

**Resources.** Bullying covers a school week of imposing your will on others. Typically, there is no cost to bullying, however, the GM may rule that the bully needs to possess a weapon or have an ally to assist them in these activities.

**Resolution.** After a school week of bullying, a character hopes to benefit from their fearmongering. The character makes a Charisma (Intimidation) check using the Bullying table. The character makes the check with advantage if they target an NPC that they previously bullied in the past.

The target of the character's bullying awards the bully a favor which can be one of the following (the bully's choice):

- The target gives the bully 5 gp.
- The target helps the bully cheat, giv-

### d6 Roll Bullying Complication

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | Turns out that the bully's actions have attracted competition from another bully in the school.*  |
| 2 | The bully's parents or guardians are made aware of the situation. There is the potential that the character could be completely pulled from school unless they change their ways.                                     |
| 3 | The bully's popularity tanks. The character has disadvantage on all School Activities that require Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) for the remainder of the semester or until they do something that redeems them. |
| 4 | A faculty member watches the bully closely from now on. For the remainder of the semester, the bully has disadvantage on Bullying checks until they find a way to get the faculty member off their back.*             |
| 5 | The faculty catches the character bullying and expels them for one school week as an example to any other bullies. While expelled, the character can't perform any school activities including Studying and Testing.  |
| 6 | One of the targets the character bullied has become a rival and seeks to undermine the bully at every turn.*  |

\*Might involve a rival.

ing the bully a 2d10 bonus on their next Studying and Testing check.

- Something else (GM's discretion).
- Once the character uses the favor, the character needs to bully the target again to gain another favor.

### Check Total Bullying Result

- |       |  |
|-------|--|
| 1-5   | The targets of the character's bullying stood up to the bully character. The bullying character's Standing score is reduced by 2, and they have disadvantage on their next Bullying check. |
| 6-10  | The character got caught by the faculty before they could gain benefits from their bullying. Their Standing score is reduced by 1.   |
| 11-15 | The character failed to leave an impression on any of their targets. No change.  |
| 16-20 | The character gained one favor from a target.  |
| 21+   | The character gained two favors from one or more targets, and the character has advantage on their next Bullying check.  |

**Complications.** Characters who bully risk targets fighting back, faculty members suspending or expelling the character, or building a bad reputation around the school. The GM might also impose a complication even when the character is successful in their bullying attempt. The GM can choose a complication or roll on the Bullying Complications table.

## Exploring School Grounds

Adventures aren't just had at the school itself. After all, it's not uncommon for a wizarding school to find itself surrounded by primordial forests, mysterious bodies of waters, breathtaking mountains, or even exotic cities. The grounds surrounding the school are filled with opportunities for characters to explore and discover secrets.

Exploration can be done any number of times around the school grounds, representing new areas being discovered (or rediscovered).

**Resources.** Exploring the school grounds requires at least one school week of effort.

**Resolution.** A character directing the



Check Total	Exploring School Grounds Result
1-5	Major threat*
6-10	Minor threat*
11-15	No discovery of note
16-20	Area of interest
21+	Ally or useful monster

expedition makes a Wisdom (Survival) check to determine the outcome. The total of the check determines the outcome, as shown on the Exploration Discoveries table.

**Major Threat.** A major threat represents a discovery, event, or entity that could put the entire school in jeopardy. Such threats may include the discovery of a powerful lich hellbent on destroying the school or a tribe of hill giants causing a ruckus. The school's classes and activities are completely suspended for at least one semester unless the threat is resolved, as determined by the GM.

**Minor Threat.** When a minor threat arises, the characters discover a danger to themselves and the school. Typical minor threats include finding a monster's lair or learning the schemes of a rival school. The school's classes and activities are suspended for at least one school week until the threat is resolved, as determined by the GM.

**Area of Interest.** The expedition finds a unique location such as the ruins of an old building, a strange, hollowed-out tree, a cave shaped like a skull, or the remains of a strange creature. This location can serve as a spot for future adventures, a quest item, or simply a location for the characters to hide.

**Ally or Useful Monster.** The expedition comes across the home of a useful ally, such as a monster tamer that lives in the forest or a wandering wizard. This ally can become a source of lore, providing secrets. To gain the trust of the ally, a character must make a Making Friends check targeting the potential ally.

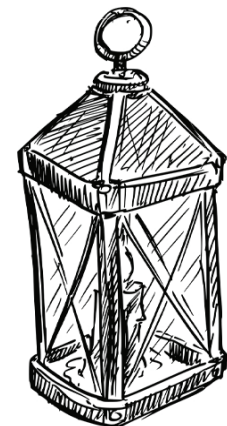
**d6 Roll Exploring School Grounds Complications**

- 1 Within 1 month, the characters learn that the beneficial element is owned by or sworn to serve another.\*
- 2 The beneficial element turns out to be a fraud. A location could be a temporary front, or an ally proves to be a charlatan.
- 3 The beneficial element comes with a dark past. It could bear a curse or harbor a dark secret.
- 4 The beneficial element is temporary, ending without much notice. Allies leave, locations are destroyed, monsters turn hostile.
- 5 Others discover the beneficial element, competing for it. The characters may lose access to the element.\*
- 6 The characters are forbidden by the faculty from using or interacting with the beneficial element.

\*Might involve a rival.

Alternatively, the expedition could find a monster that is willing to help the party or can be tamed. The challenge rating of the monster is typically 1 or less. To gain the trust of the monster, a character must make a Making Friends check targeting the potential ally. The monster could serve as a scout or spy, or even as a mount or guardian of the school.

**Complications.** A result of 1-10 on the Exploration Discoveries table is its own complication. However, the GM can opt to have a complication occur, even on a successful check. Choose or roll one of the complications on the Exploring School Grounds Complications table.



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**Kissing Up**

Sometimes it pays to schmooze with the higher-ups at a school. Characters that engage and focus on improving their status among the faculty members often reap benefits for doing so.

**Resources.** Kissing Up takes one school week of interactions. Characters who participate in kissing up should dress well and offer gifts, spending gold as a result.

**Resolution.** The character may specify which specific members of the faculty they wish to kiss up to. Then, the character makes a Charisma (Persuasion) check. The character gains a +1 for every 10gp spent on gifts for the faculty members, to a maximum of +5. The total of the check determines the outcome, as shown on the Kissing Up Result table.

Check Total	Kissing Up Result
1-5	The faculty is turned off by the obvious kissing up attempt. The character's Standing score is reduced by 1.
6-10	While appreciated, the kissing up attempt has no immediate benefit. However, the next Kissing Up check the character makes is with advantage so long as it's among the same faculty members.
11-15	The character impresses one or more of the faculty members with their kissing up. The character's Standing score increases by 1.
16-20	The character greatly impresses the faculty members with their kissing up. The character's Standing score increases by 2.

**Complications.** A check of 5 or lower made to kiss up automatically triggers a complication. Even with a success, the GM may decide to involve a complication, either by rolling or choosing one

**d6 Roll Kissing Up Complications**

- 1 Another student notices the character's kissing up attempts. The student threatens to expose the character as a fraud unless the character performs a favor or pays a bribe.\*
- 2 To win over the faculty members, the character must perform a task or favor for the faculty member.
- 3 Other faculty members take note of the character's nature; the character's future kissing up checks are made with disadvantage for the remainder of the semester.
- 4 The targeted faculty member becomes obsessed with the character, potentially creating problems for the character.\*
- 5 Another student (or even another character) wants the character to kiss up on their behalf, potentially threatening the character if they don't.\*
- 6 The faculty member is caught showing favoritism to the character. The character's reputation and Standing could be tarnished as a result.

\*Might involve a rival.

of the complications on the Kissing Up Complications table.

**Making Friends**

What would school be without multiple opportunities for making friends? After all, all work and no play makes Anthazar a dull spellcaster.

**Resources.** Making friends covers a school week of socializing, throwing parties, and trying to make contacts. A character can rub elbows with everyone in the school, from the bullies to the bookworms, the jocks to the outcasts. A character must spend at least 10 gp to cover expenses.

Check Total	Making Friends
1-5	The character has made a hostile contact.
6-10	The character has made no new contacts.
11-15	The character has made an allied contact.
16-20	The character has made two allied contacts.
21+	The character has made three allied contacts.

**Resolution.** After a school week of making friends, a character stands to make important contacts within the school which may help them in school and possibly later in their quests. The character makes a Charisma (Persuasion) check using the Making Friends table.

Contacts are NPCs who now share a bond with a character. Each one either owes the character a favor or has some reason to bear a grudge. All of the contacts' details are determined by the GM.

Hostile characters could be bullies with an axe to grind, or even a faculty member that has it out for the character. Typically, hostile contacts stop short of violence or committing crimes. Instead, the GM will use them to offer a disadvantage on a School Activity check or a -5 penalty to Studying and Testing. When and where that happens is up to the GM.

Meanwhile, allied contacts are friends who will render aid to the character, but not at the risk of their own lives. Each ally provides a one-time benefit that the character can use throughout their stay at the school. The GM selects or rolls randomly on the Allies and Benefits table below to determine

the nature of the ally and what benefit they provide. A character may try to find a specific type of ally; ultimately, it's up to the GM whether or not the character earns the trust of the type of ally they are aiming for.

Once a friendly contact has helped or hindered a character, the character needs to use the Making Friends action again to get back into the NPC's good graces. A contact provides help once, not help for life. Of course, a contact usually remains friendly, which can influence roleplaying and how the characters interact with them but doesn't come with a guarantee of help.

**Complications.** A roll of 5 or less is automatically a complication. However, the world of social interactions is never an easy one. Even with a successful check, the GM may decide that a complication arises. The GM may roll or choose one of the complications on the Making Friends Complications table.



### Participating in Sports

Just because wizards are book nerds doesn't mean that they don't appreciate a good sport or two. Whether its flying broom races, maze running, or competitive dragon taming competitions, sports are an important part of the curriculum. Characters who succeed at sports are looked at positively by their peers and teachers alike.

**Resources.** Participating in this activity requires one school week of effort from a character.

#### d6 Roll Making Friends Complications

- 1 The relationship was a con. The contact only wanted to embarrass the character or steal something from them.
- 2 The contact is obsessed with the character and follows them everywhere.\*
- 3 The only way the contact agrees to help the character is if they complete a dangerous task for them.
- 4 Making friends with the contact has earned the character new enemies.\*
- 5 The character spent an additional 10gp trying to impress contacts.
- 6 The character embarrassed themselves during their social interactions. The next Making Friends check the character makes is made with disadvantage.

\*Might involve a rival.

#### Making Friends: Allies & Benefits

d6	Ally	Benefit
1	Bully	The character can call upon the bully to help them with a rival or a complication. The end effect is up to the GM.
2	Overachiever	The character can call upon the overachiever to give them advantage on one Research check. Alternatively, the overachiever can grant a 3d6 bonus to the character's Studying and Testing check.
3	Athlete	The character can call upon the athlete to give them advantage on a Participating in Sports check.
4	Mr/Ms Popular	The character can call upon the popular student to give them advantage on a Partying check.
5	Nobleborn	The character can call upon the nobleborn to give them 10gp.
6	Faculty Member	The character can call upon the faculty member to give them advantage on one Standing check or saving throw.

\*Might involve a rival.

**Resolution.** The character must make a series of checks, with a DC determined at random based on the quality of the opposition that the character or the character's team runs into. A big part of the challenge in participating in sports lies in the unknown nature of the character's opponents.

The character makes three checks: Strength (Athletics), Dexterity (Acrobatics), and an Intelligence saving throw. If the character is a member of a team, at the DM's discretion, the

character can replace one of these checks with a Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check. The DC for each check is 5 + 2d6; generate a separate DC for each one. Consult the Participating in Sports Results table to see how well the character did.

**Optional Rule: Seasonal Play.** A character can join the school's official team. Doing so means that they must participate in sports at least four times per semester. After the character participates a fourth time in a semester,



their Standing score increases by an additional +2, regardless of whether or not the character or their team win or lose their bouts.

**Complications.** Sports can be emotional events, even wizard sports. Characters involved in sports must deal with their opponents, opposing schools, and even the other coaches. Even a successful result can trigger a complication at the GM's determination. The GM can choose a complication or roll on the Participating in Sports Complications table.

Succ- esses	Participating in Sports Results
0	Not only does the character or their team lose the match, but they are handily defeated. The next time the characters participate in sports, the character gains a +2 penalty to each of your checks.
1	The character or their team loses, but they put up a good fight. No change.
2	The character or their team narrowly win the match. The character's Standing score increases by 1.
3	The character or their team easily beat the other team. The character's Standing increases by 2. The next time the character participates in sports, the character gains a +2 bonus to each of their checks.

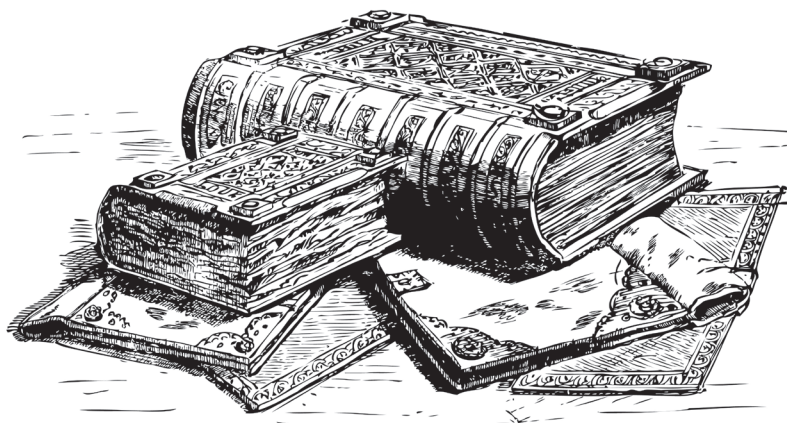
## Researching

Sometimes, a student at the spellcasters school doesn't feel that they've learned everything they want to learn. Instead, they turn to the school library, the laboratories, or the knowledge of their elders to expand their education, be it for personal gain or improved school standing.

### d6 Roll Participating in Sports Complications

- 1 An opponent swears to take revenge on the character.\*
- 2 Another parent, faculty member, or coach approaches the character and offers to pay them to intentionally throw their next match.\*
- 3 The character enters a disagreement with one of their own teammates, their coach, or a faculty member.\*
- 4 The character defeats a team from a wealthy city or region, drawing the wrath of the noble houses.\*
- 5 The character or their team are accused of cheating. The character and the school's reputation are tarnished as a result.\*
- 6 The character accidentally (or even purposely) injures one of their opponents or one of their teammates.

\*Might involve a rival.



**Resources.** The character must spend at least one school week of effort to perform research. In addition, a character might spend gold to gain improved access to forbidden knowledge, closed areas, or sealed lips.

**Resolution.** The character declares the focus of the research—a specific person, place, or thing. After one school week, the character makes an Intelligence check with a +1 bonus per 10gp spent, to a maximum of +6. If the character has access to a sage or special location with well-stocked books (such as those gained by exploring the school grounds or through making friends) gains advantage on this check. Determine how much lore a character learns using the Research Outcomes table.

Each piece of lore is the equivalent of one true statement about a person, place, or thing. Examples include

knowledge of how a particular rare potion works, the history of the headmaster, or what lives in the enchanted forests at the edge of the school grounds.

As a GM, you are the final arbiter concerning exactly what a character learns.

Check Total	Research Outcomes
1-5	No effect.
6-10	The character learns one piece of lore.
11-20	The character learns two pieces of lore.
21+	The character learns three pieces of lore.

**Complications.** Of course, the greatest risk a researcher faces is uncovering false information. Not all lore is accurate or truthful, and any number of

**d6 Roll Researching Complications**

- 1 The character accidentally damages a rare book or causes an accident in a laboratory.
- 2 One of the faculty members grows suspicious of the character's activities and starts to follow them.\*
- 3 The character accidentally unlocks a curse, cause an irreversible condition, or some other malady.
- 4 The character attracts the attention of a strange or insane sage who tries to convince the character of a number of unusual theories.\*
- 5 The character's actions cause them to be banned from a library, laboratory, or another source of information until they can make reparations.\*
- 6 The character uncovers useful lore, but only by promising to complete a favor—possibly even a dangerous one—in return.

\*Might involve a rival.

rivals from within or without the school may try to lead the character astray. The rival may plant false information, bribe sages to give poor advice, or steal key tomes or ingredients needed to find the truth.

Even a successful result can trigger a complication at the GM's determination. The GM can choose a complication or roll on the Researching Complications table.

**Studying and Testing**

Studying and testing is an important part of a character's progress at the wizarding school. After all, testing is more than just answering the right questions on parchment. Testing involves demonstrating capabilities before faculty. Furthermore, a character's studies play a huge hand in their testing; as such, the two are closely related. The more focus characters place on studying the better they perform.

Unless the GM decides otherwise, this school activity must be run at the end of each semester. Unlike other activities, studying and testing results are determined for each character even if a character does not allocate time to the activity. However, allocating time to studying greatly improves the chances for a favorable testing outcome.

**Resolution.** Percentile dice are rolled by a player for their character. The number of total days spent by the character on this activity are added to the roll. That total is then compared to the Studying and Testing table to determine what happens for the semester.

**Complications.** Even testing and studying can lead to complications. A result of 0-59 is its own complication. However, a successful result can also trigger a complication at the GM's determination. The GM can choose a

**d100+ Days Studying and Testing Results**

- 1-59 The character completely tanks the semester. Their Standing score is reduced by 1, and they make their End of Semester check with disadvantage.
- 60-69 The character scrapes by during the semester. Their Standing score is reduced by 1.
- 70-79 The character passes all of their classes. Their Standing score does not change.
- 80-89 The character performs better than average in their classes. Their Standing score increases by 1.
- 90+ The character is at the top of their class during the semester. Their Standing score increases by 2, and they make their End of Semester check with advantage.

complication or roll on the Studying and Testing Complications table.

**d6 Roll Studying and Testing Complications**

- 1 Others around the school resent the character's test scores, either seeing the character as an overachiever or underachiever.
- 2 The character notices that some of the answers they got correct on their test were marked wrong. Bringing it to light could sour the character's relationship with the character's favorite teacher.
- 3 Studying and testing have left the character fatigued. Unless the character takes personal time as their next school activity, the character has disadvantage on the next die roll they make towards a school activity. If the activity involves more than one die roll (such as Participating in Sports), the character only has disadvantage on one of the die rolls.
- 4 One of the character's allies or even another character is caught cheating from the character's work. If the character doesn't distance themselves from the culprit, the character's Standing score could be affected.
- 5 The character is accused of cheating. The character's Standing score is reduced by 2 until the character can prove otherwise.
- 6 A faculty member grows suspicious of the character's test results.\*

\*Might involve a rival.

**Taking Personal Time**

School is hard work. Even the most diligent overachievers occasionally need a little “me” time to get themselves centered.

**Resources.** After spending at least one school week taking personal time, a character can make a DC 15 Standing saving throw. On a successful save, you gain advantage on the next die roll you make to perform a school activity with the exception of studying and testing. If a school activity check requires more than one die roll (such as participating in sports), you gain advantage only a single die roll.

**Complications.** Despite personal time being an important part of reducing stress during the school year, too much personal time might be frowned upon by a student’s peers and teachers. Even a successful result can trigger a complication at the GM’s determination. The GM can choose a complication or roll on the Taking Personal Time Complications table.

d6 Roll	Taking Personal Time Complications
1	The character falls behind on their studies; they have a -5 penalty to their next Studying and Testing check.
2	Rumors are flying about the reason for the character’s absence. The character’s Standing is reduced by 1 until they can disprove the rumors.
3	Friends or family members outside of the school need the character to prolong their absence to help with tasks.
4	Something important happens while the character is out; some may even think that the character is responsible for what occurred.
5	While away the character learns of a plot vs the school.*
6	One of the faculty members grows suspicious of the character’s absence.*



**Working a Job**

There are plenty of reasons why young wizards would work a job. Some just like having extra spending money. Plus, not all wizards are fortunate to earn scholarships or have noble families to pay for their studies. There are those who have to work to keep their spot at the school. The job might be outside of the school, or even within the school, working as a custodian or librarian’s assistant.

**Resources.** Working a job requires one school week of effort.

**Resolution.** To determine how much money the character earns, the character makes an ability check. The ability check that the character makes depends on the type of job that they have: Strength (Athletics), Dexterity (Acrobatics), Intelligence using a set of tools, Charisma (Performance), or Charisma using a musical instrument or the most common skills associated with jobs. The GM has the ultimate say in what sort of job the character is able to get and what skill is tied to the job.

Check Total	Working a Job: Income Earnings
>10	Not enough to cover an improved lifestyle and/or cover tuition for the semester.
10-14	You cover tuition and/or live a modest lifestyle for the next four weeks.
15-20	You cover tuition and/or live a comfortable lifestyle for the next four weeks.
21+	You cover tuition and/or live a comfortable lifestyle for the next four weeks and earn an additional 25 gp.

Consult the Income table to see how much money is generated according to the total of the check.

**Optional Rule: Working for Tuition.** A character that is not fortunate enough to earn a free ride into the school may have to work to keep their spot. Each semester, a character that must work for their tuition must spend at least four school weeks working and roll 10 or better on each their checks in order to pay for their tuition for that semester. See the “Tuition” section for details.

**Optional Rule: Finding a Job.** Sometimes, finding a job isn’t easy, especially if the character lacks marketable skills or any real-world experience. As an optional rule, the first time a character selects the working a job activity, they must spend one school week applying for jobs before they can

Check Total	Working a Job: Finding a Job
>5	The character is unable to find a job.
5-9	The character finds a job, but it doesn’t pay well. The GM decides what the job is and what skill is tied to the job. In addition, the character makes their working a job checks with disadvantage.
10-14	The character finds a job. It isn’t ideal, but it pays. The GM decides what the job is and what skill is tied to the job.
15-20	The character finds a job that fits with your skill set. The player decides what the job is and what skill is tied to the job’s checks (GM’s discretion).
21+	The character finds a job that fits perfectly with their skill set and pays well. The player decides what the job is and what skill is tied to the job (GM’s discretion). In addition, the character makes their working a job with advantage.




start earning wages. The character makes a Charisma (Persuasion) check. Consult the Finding a Job table to determine what job they find. If the character wishes to change jobs (or failed to land a job the first time around), the character must spend another school week looking for another job.

**Complications.** Ordinary work is rarely filled with significant complications. Regardless, even a successful result can trigger a complication at the GM's determination. The GM can choose a complication or roll on the Working a Job Complications table.

d6 Roll	Working a Job Complications
1	A difficult customer or a fight with a coworker reduces the income the character earns by one category. If the character already rolled the lowest category, they are fired from the job.*
2	The employer's financial difficulties result in the character not being paid.*
3	A coworker with ties to an important family in town takes a dislike to the character.*
4	The character is required to work overtime with no additional pay. The character must spend another school week working, or earn no income.
5	The character gains a reputation for laziness (unjustified or not, the GM's choice), giving the character disadvantage on the checks made for this downtime activity for the next six workweeks they devote to it.
6	The people at the character's school look down on the character for having a job; the character's Make Friends activity checks are made with disadvantage for the remainder of the semester.

\*Might involve a rival.



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## The School

Evadimus' School for Gifted Spellcasters is an impressive building built into the cliff side of a towering hill. The school was once the enigmatic Library of Morza, bearing the same name as a ruined town surrounding it. For years, undead monks toiled within, scribing books and treating visitors to its astounding collection of ancient lore. The only thing the monks asked for in exchange for the lore was the gift of new lore for them to transcribe.

When Headmaster Evadimus and Lady Maestra took over the rights to the land surrounding the library, they rebuilt and cleaned up the ancient monastery, turning it into a school for burgeoning wizards to learn spellcraft. The wizards allowed the monks to continue their work, convincing them that with each pupil that enters the school, more information comes with them. The new pact worked and the monks continued their compulsive work.

With wizards in the area, locals returned to the ruins of Morza and the town was built anew. The town of Morza now acts as a hub for information and magical trade, as well as arcane tourism.

## Arrival

Thousands of aspiring wizards from all over the land submit applications and appeal letters to join the ranks of Evadimus' spellcasters. Of course, less than 6% are accepted. Tuition costs 100 gp per semester, so many who are accepted are unable to afford the high costs. As such, many of the wizards who enroll at Evadimus' School come from noble and adventuring families. Evadimus' School also extends scholarships to especially promising talents who demonstrate incredible intelligence and wisdom despite their lack of worldly experiences.

The first time the characters arrive at Evadimus' School for Gifted Spellcasters, read the following:

Welcome to Evadimus' School for Gifted Spellcasters!

Not so much a school as it is a palace of learning, the red and white brick school towers over the forests and town surrounding it. Two massive statues—one in the shape of a wizened old man with a waist-length beard, the other of a mesmerizingly attractive bald woman—flank the steps leading into the school's gates.

Already students are pouring into the facilities. Some you can tell are on their third or fourth year by the badges that line their red and white school robes and vestments. Others, like yourselves, are just getting started, their faces a blend of curiosity, excitement, and anxiety.

The school itself is surrounded by a magically-secured wall that prevents most notoriously evil magical creatures—such as unseelie fey, aberrations, fiends, and undead—from entering. The exception, of course, being the withered monks who reside within the main library.

The courtyard and gardens are lush with life. Fragrant flowers, green plants, and vines grow everywhere. Pilcoff, the school's gardener and nature instructor, uses his spells to keep the school verdant, even through the winter. Animals are a common sight within school grounds, too.

The school itself is made of large, white stones supported by massive timber beams. Its roofs are made of curved terracotta roof tiles that give the school the appearance of a traditional southern monastery. During the warmer summer days, the windows are left open to allow in sunlight and breeze.

All of the students at Evadimus' School are given red robes with white trim. As they pass their classes and earn honors, they are awarded special badges which they sew onto their robes. The instructors wear black robes with red and white vestments. Senior instructors also wear white, silk caps to denote their status.

## Locations in the School

While excursions do happen at the school, the majority of the students' work occurs within the school's walls. Furthermore, all students are required to live within the dorms through their entire education at the wizarding school. The only time students are permitted to leave is during the winter and summer break.

### 1 – Junior Faculty Quarters

The majority of the faculty members live in the dormitory near the front gate in the lower courtyard. The house, built in the style of a timber frame manor, can comfortably hold twenty-four instructors in its twelve rooms. However, only the infirmary attendants, Ed and Loe share a room together.

Typically, students aren't allowed in faculty dorms. However, exceptions are made for tutoring and teachers' aides. Evadimus strictly forbids student-instructor relationships.

### 2 – Temple

Classes on religion and necromancy take place at the Temple, taught by Gavin Gargoyle. After school hours, Gavin holds service for those who worship the gods of magic and the arcane. Gavin actually lives in the temple in a small, unadorned room.

### 3 – Porter

Mangrove Oonz, an ogre, is the school's porter, custodian, and occasional hired muscle. Mangrove handles many of the "brute force" chores around the temple, digging ditches, carrying luggage, and anything else that the instructors can't—or won't—do. Despite Mangrove's simple nature, he is a dear friend of Evadimus. Evadimus does not take kindly to anyone—including senior instructors—speaking down at Mangrove.

### 4 – Stores

The school's food supplies are kept



here. Also, a staircase leads down into a cistern below the main courtyard. The cistern is a popular “romance” spot in the school.

**5 – Senior Faculty Quarters**

The five senior faculty members (Cronin, Fangzara, Malevoil, Ofin, and Pilcoff) live in this building. This dorm has six large suites each with its own kitchen area, bath, bedroom, and lounge. The sixth suite was once Lady Maestra’s. Since her departure, Evadimus locked and magically warded the room. All are forbidden to enter.

**6 – Evadimus’ House**

Headmaster Evadimus lives in a humble cottage at the southwestern end of the main courtyard. Of course, it’s rare that the headmaster can actually be found here. Usually, he is teaching a class, meeting with staff members, studying in the library, or pacing the school grounds consumed in thought.

**7 – Infirmary**

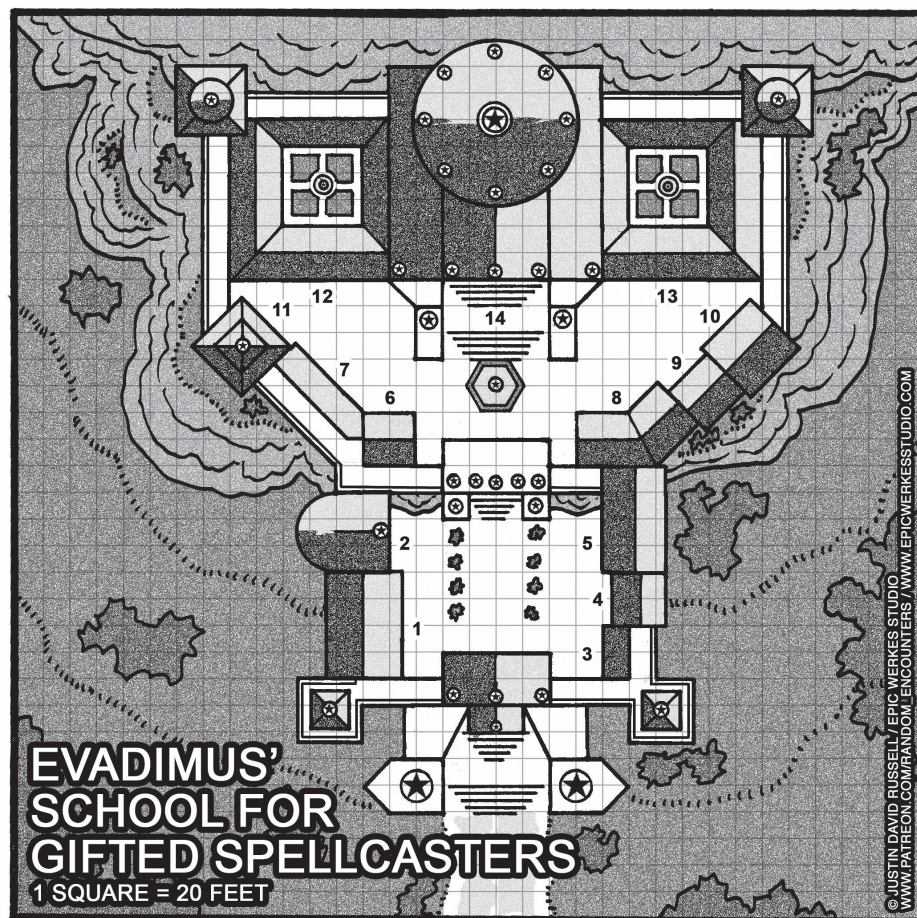
When students or faculty are injured, they are taken to the infirmary. And naturally, because medicine is a major area of study at Evadimus’ school, the infirmary doubles as a learning center. Medical duties are shared by Loe Godwin and Edd Namer. Both are medical experts and skilled educators.

**8 – Alchemical Laboratory**

Once used as a brewery for the Library of Morza, the alchemical lab is one of the most interesting (and noisy) locations on school grounds. Mistress of Alchemy Achk specializes in alchemy, brewing, and even poison craft. Many graduates look back fondly on Achk’s classes, often with an anecdote involving an explosion or accidental mishap involving a misplaced potion of polymorph.

**9 – Bakery**

Evadimus considered altering the bakery into something more “useful”, but Lady Maestra—an amateur baker



herself–convinced him to keep it. Now, it’s one of the best parts of the school. Botan the Bold Baker (CG male human **commoner**), a dashing rogue if there ever was one, ensures the school’s faculty and student body receive fresh baked goods each morning. Pastries, muffins, boules: there’s no telling what will come out Botan’s kitchen next.

**10 – Kitchen**

Next door to Botan’s bakery are the main kitchens. Worthwerk and his gang of goblins and mephits man the fires of the school’s kitchens. While meals occasionally arrive slightly off-schedule, they’re always delicious. “Food that ain’t done perfect, ain’t worth cookin’!” Worthwerk is known to holler in defense of late meals. None dare argues with the cantankerous old goblin, lest they receive a thwappin’ from his comically oversized soup ladle.

**11 – Bell Tower**

A single zombie monk nicknamed Toller resides in the belltower. Despite his emaciated form, the ancient corpse keeps perfect time. The base of the bell tower was once one of the most popular places on campus to study away from the other students. Now, the campus’ most famous club, Toller’s Ten, uses it as their own, private study area. Because of the club’s regular contributions to the school, the faculty allows them to operate here without too much provocation.

**12 – Women’s Dorms**

The western wing of the library hosts the women’s dormitory. Just like the men’s dormitory, the women’s dormitory is divided into thirty-six simple rooms, each with a bunk, and work area for a pair of roommates. Three communal baths and privies are



# EVADIMUS' SCHOOL FOR GIFTED SPELLCASTERS

shared between the students. For the most part, the women police their own behavior. However, there are typically 2-3 senior resident assistants who ensure no issues arise. Men are strictly forbidden in the women's dorms.

### 13 – Men's Dorms

East of the main library are the men's dorms. The entire area is divided into thirty-six rooms. Roommates share a bunk and workspace. The men are relatively well behaved, but just in case, the faculty employs 2-3 senior resident assistants to keep the men mindful of the school's rules. Women are never allowed in the men's dorms.

### 14 – Main Library

The majority of studies at Evadimus' school take place within the gargantuan main library. In addition to the thousands of books that crowd the ancient, monk-attended shelves of the library, the signature building hosts classrooms and laboratories. A massive auditorium sits at the center of the main library. Here, Evadimus and his faculty address the entire school body from the center of the room. Also, it is where communal feasts are held.

Should the campus ever come under assault from a major threat, students are advised to hole up within the library. Like the walls surrounding campus, the library is magically warded and protected from evil. Along with the security force lead by Dazen Brightblade, six **helmed horrors** keep watch from perfectly spaced alcoves. Also, the zombie monks will defend the contents of the library at all costs. Plus, if things get too bad, there is a secret exit leading out of the library into Morza Hill.

### School Faculty

At any given time, Evadimus' employs 20 – 25 full-time staff members to teach classes and run the school. Turnover is rare. Even junior faculty members have worked for Evadimus for at least five years.

Important School Faculty Members		
Name	Job	Stats
Evadimus	Headmaster, arcana and history instructor	LG male human <b>archmage</b>
<i>Senior Instructors</i>		
Cronin	Enchantment instructor	CG male half-orc <b>mage</b>
Fangzara	Evocation and combat magic instructor	LE female tiefling <b>mage</b>
Malevoil	Conjuration instructor	N male half-elf <b>mage</b>
Ofin	Illusions instructor	N male dwarf <b>mage</b>
Pilcoff	Gardener, nature instructor	LG male elf <b>druid</b>
<i>Junior Instructors</i>		
Ackh	Alchemy instructor, brewer	CN female goblin <b>mage</b>
Asra	Divination instructor	N female elf <b>mage</b>
Churgin Brokeaxe	Practical magic instructor	CG male dwarf <b>mage</b>
Ed Namer	Infirmiry attendant, medicine instructor	LN male human <b>priest</b>
Gavin Gargoyle	Necromancy and religion instructor, temple attendant	LN male human <b>priest</b>
Iflinkle	Transmutation instructor	NG female gnome <b>mage</b>
Loe Godwin	Infirmiry attendant, medicine instructor	NG female half-elf <b>priest</b>
Romerienne	Abjuration instructor	LG female halfling <b>mage</b>
<i>Staff</i>		
Botan	Baker	CG male human <b>commoner</b>
Dazen Brightblade	Head of security	LG female elf <b>veteran</b>
Mangrove Oonz	Porter	N male <b>ogre</b>
Worthwerk	Kitchenmaster	N male <b>goblin</b>

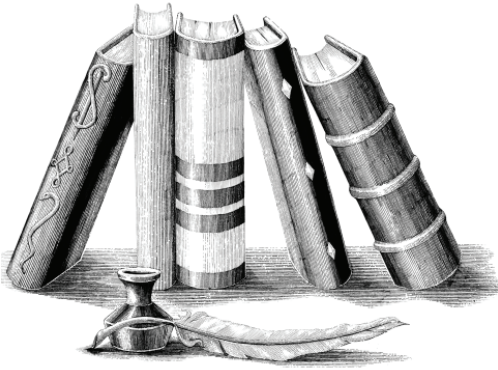
### Additional Support

In addition to the faculty members mentioned above, the school keeps a rotating staff of hirelings, the majority of which live off-campus.

**Kitchens.** Worthwerk has two **goblin** assistants, Doyle and Rote. In addition, the kitchens employ a **steam**, **ice**, and **magma mephit** to assist in cooking duties. Two boys from the town, Jimm and Dabble (NG male human **commoners**) work as assistants, too. Botan mostly works alone but will pull the older of the two boys, Jimm, into the bakery when he's pressed with large orders.

**Monks.** The main library is attended to by the undead monks who worked there before the school was built. There are twenty **zombie** monks in all. The belltower across the courtyard from the main library is also home to a single zombie monk nicknamed Toller who operates the bells.

**Security.** Dazen Brightblade is in charge of the school's security. She manages a staff of sixteen loyal **guards**. The guards work in three shifts, morning, afternoon, and evening, four guards in each shift. When the school hosts larger events, Dazen brings in temporary help to assist.



### Side Quests in the School

As the characters get settled at the school and start performing activities, they might encounter NPCs who need their help. The monotony of learning should act as a catalyst to these side quests. Naturally, the characters are under no obligations to complete any of the side quests. Of course, side quests often lead to greater adventure opportunities for fledgling wizards.

Introduce as many or as few of these side quests as you like. The NPCs who trigger them can be encountered anywhere within the school at any point during the semester. If you can't decide which side quest to choose, roll a d10.

1. **Out of Ink.** Master of Illusions, Ofin ran out of lead-based ink for illusory script spells. Tied up with classes, he gives the characters 50 pp to travel to the town of Morza and purchase some at the magic shop. The characters are to purchase 50 bottles of ink and bring it back to the school. If the characters perform the task, Ofin doesn't offer them a reward, but each of their school standing scores will increase by 1.
2. **Help with a Ritual.** Mungo and Brop, two CG male human **students** (see the appendix), ask the characters if they can help perform

a necromantic ritual, offering 5 gp to each character that assists. The two have stolen a scroll that allows them to temporarily control an undead creature. Mungo and Brop want to test it on one of the **zombie** monks working in the lower stacks of the main library. If the characters participate, the two perform the ritual. Unfortunately, the ritual is a disaster, causing the zombie to turn evil and attack the characters, Mungo, and Brop. Even if the characters destroy the zombie, there is a chance that they could get caught by members of faculty, which could hurt their standing.

3. **Lost Girl.** While outside of the school, Elaine (N female human **commoner**) approaches the characters asking if they have seen her daughter, Elle. Elaine begs the characters to help find her daughter. If the characters agree, they can search the forest surrounding the school. Each hour spent searching, have one of the characters roll a DC 13 Wisdom (Survival) check. A successful check leads the character's to a small cave where Elle is hiding. Elaine can't repay the characters, but she is extremely thankful for their assistance.
4. **Explore the Crystal Pond.** Jola, a fellow **student** (see the appendix) approaches the characters claiming that she dropped her spellbook while hiking around the Crystal Pond. Already on probation, she can't disrupt her classes to return to where she last saw it. She asks the characters to find it, offering to pay them 10 gp if they do. If the characters agree, they must spend one day hiking to the pond using Jola's directions. However, when they arrive, they discover that two members of the Manticores, Ione and Rashar (LE male and female **students**) found

the book and refuse to return it. The two propose a spell duel between Rashar and one of the characters. First to draw blood wins.

5. **Touch the Standing Stone.** Adal Nightwing (N male tiefling **student**) approaches the characters with a dare. Lady Maestra's old standing stone, the spot where she judged whether or not students were worthy to learn from here, is still at the top of Morza Hill. However, it's believed to be cursed. Adal challenges the characters to climb the hill and touch the stone, then get a parchment rubbing of the stone for proof. If the characters do, Adal will owe the characters a favor (GM's discretion).
6. **Bully Protection.** Nonce Porter (NG female human **student**) gets bullied daily by members of the Manticores. Nonce is desperate for help and even agrees to pay the characters 1 gp per day if they can protect her from the bullies. The bullies are lead by Ione and Rashar, both junior members, and both well-known for their sports prowess.
7. **Help the Silent Image.** Hwaeg (CN male half-orc **student**), a member of the mysterious school club, The Silent Image, needs a distraction so he and other members of the club can escape for a late night ritual. He keeps the club a secret but explains that should the characters help, a powerful school club will be in the characters' debt. There is a chance that the characters could be caught creating the distraction. If they are, it's likely each of their Standing scores decreases by 1.
8. **Rumblehouse Needs Beer.** Rumblehouse is throwing a massive bonfire party off school grounds on the last day of the fall semester. Trouble is, they need beer. Of course, Mistress of Alchemy, Achk keeps a huge barrel of southern ale in the alchemists' laboratory. If

the characters can steal the barrel and bring it to the Rumblehouse bonfire, Rumblehouse will pay the characters 100 gp and allow them to join in on the festivities.

9. **Save Gingo.** Two junior student brothers, Gingo and Rup (CN male halfling **students**) performed a ritual in the forest, summoning a **magmin**. Gingo is now in danger as the magmin has him cornered in a cave. Rup begs the characters to help save his brother before the school faculty finds out—Rup worries that if the faculty learns of the ritual, the two will be expelled.
10. **Mysterious Stranger.** While the characters are alone, a mysterious robed stranger approaches. The strange isn't wearing the typical robes or vestments of a student or faculty member. In a distorted voice, the stranger says, "The Dark Lady wants what is hers. The Silent ones march for her once more. Whitestone crumbles." The stranger collapses, leaving behind a pile of robes. If the characters do research on the robes, they discover that the robes were Lady Maestra's.

### School Clubs

There are five traditional clubs at Evadimus' School for Gifted Spellcasters. All are presided over by a member of faculty, who then nominates a senior student as president or counsel to oversee day-to-day operations. The clubs start searching for prospective members within the first week of school. By the end of the first month,

#### Manticore

"Magic is Power" is the motto of Manticore. Manticore's members—easily recognized by their fur-lined hoods—are often serious, cold, and calculating. Many students see the Manticores as a club to be avoided at all costs. The Manticores rarely associate within any-



#### Who is Lady Maestra?

The school's co-founder, Maestra, was Evadimus' partner and arcane equal. Unfortunately, the two had a major falling out when Evadimus' discovered that Maestra was using one of the school's clubs, The Silent Image, to perform dark deeds. Maestra, driven into a rage, attempted to destroy the school but was defeated by Evadimus and senior members of the faculty. Maestra, mortally wounded from the battle, fled the school. In the years since Maestra turned herself into a lich. She continues to plot against her former colleagues, hoping to destroy Evadimus and the school once and for all.

one outside of their own ranks. When they do, it's because there is something they want.

The "survival of the fittest" attitude of the Manticores typically attracts evil-leaning wizards. However, Manticore's success in wizard sports and school competition earns even their most corrupt members leniency from the faculty. Fangzara, mistress of evocation, a Manticore herself during her school years, oversees the club.

#### Rumblehouse

Easily the rowdiest and largest of the four major clubs, Rumblehouse enjoys

the chaotic elements of magic. They have no preference for particular any school of magic, but many of their ranks are conjurers and evokers. Rumblehouse loves drinking, carousing, and starting fights. Their overseer, Churgin Brokeaxe was a graduate of Evadimus' school, and it's clear he never wanted to leave. The grizzled, one-eyed dwarf drinks, parties, and brawls with the rest of them.

Rumblehouse has no clear rules for joining but generally prefers athletic, chaotic, or easy-going wizards within its ranks. Those that do join, however, are submitted to a rigorous series of initiation rituals. Rumor has it that Churgin lost his eye during his own initiation. Whenever he's asked about it, he usually responds with 1) punching the inquirer in the face and 2) a plucky wink and a grin.

#### Rod, Staves, and Wands

Headmaster Evadimus himself once presided over the prestigious club known as Rod, Staves, and Wands (often abbreviated as "The Wands"). Now, his former assistant and mistress of abjuration, Romerienne helps the club with its activities.

The Wands are the friendliest club at the school, and the majority of its members are of good alignment. While there are trials the Wands subject prospects to, the trials are nowhere near as dangerous as those the other clubs perform. After all, the Wands consist primarily of enchanters and diviners, wizards who devote their time to protecting others.

#### The Silent Image

A not-so-secret secret society, the Silent Image are strictly students interested in illusion magic. The group meets in a small cave outside of town. Members of the Silent Image wear black robes with featureless white masks. Only senior members of the Silent Image know the true identities of their members. For the most part, the Silent Image is



harmless. Years past, Lady Maestra oversaw the group. In that time, she used them as pawns in her machinations against Evadimus. Since then, the illusions instructor, Master Ofin has taken over as their overseer.

Ofin taps those that show promise in his classes to join the enigmatic group. A potential recruit must demonstrate their illusory abilities. Should they perform well before the senior members of the Silent Image, they are awarded the robes and mask of the club.

### Toller's Ten

Also known as "The Ten", Toller's Ten are a club made of ten students, overseen by Gavin Gargoyle (whose title is Master Eleven to the members). The Ten are divided into two explicit ranks: the seniors and juniors. The senior members dictate the actions of the Ten while the junior members carry them out. While seen as "stuffy" by their peers, the Ten are one of the oldest and most respected organizations at the School.

All members of the Ten are required to be of lawful alignment. Typical members of Toller's Ten have specialty in alchemy and tend towards necromancy as their area of specialization.

### Classes

Evadimus' School for Gifted Spellcasters has sixteen classes. All students are required to take four classes per semester. Students that fail one or more of their classes may be required to take additional classes during the summer (at the normal cost of tuition, of course), or take an extra semester. The classes at Evadimus' School for Gifted Spellcasters are not easy. Even the most intelligent mages may find themselves taking five or six semesters.

Each class is two hours long, separated by an hour of free time. Breakfast is served from 7 bells to 9 bells, then dinner is served from 20 bells to 22 bells. Students often get lunch in between 11 bells and 15 bells.

### School Encounters

#### d20 Encounter

- 1 A **fire elemental** breaks out of the dungeon and charges into the courtyard while the characters are in between classes.
- 2 One of the characters becomes the target of a **bully's** ire (use the student stat block detailed in the appendix). The bully demands that the character either give them money or help them study (or both!)
- 3 Achk approaches a character, claiming that they stole a potion of fire resistance from her laboratory. The character could get into trouble with the faculty (and lose standing) unless they can learn who actually stole the potion.
- 4 1d6 + 1 members of Rumblehouse **students** (see the appendix) pick a fight with an equal number of Manticore students. The characters are caught in the middle of the fight, especially if they are part of either club.
- 5 One of the Ten approaches a character asking to borrow their focus or component bag, promising to pay them 10 gp the next day. The member of the Ten makes good on their promise. If the character is especially gracious, the member of the Ten may even ask the character to join Toller's Ten.
- 6 One of the characters' foot lockers is broken into and all of their personal possessions are stolen.
- 7 The characters hear rumors that there is an **ettin** wandering around in the forests surrounding the school
- 8 An alarm sounds. 3d6 **orcs** attack the school. The faculty is able to keep the orcs away, but any characters or students outside during the attack may get attacked. The orcs are servants of Lady Maestra.
- 9 "Look out!" shouts a student, whose *fire bolt* spell accidentally hits one of the characters.
- 10 The characters stumble on one of the faculty members sending a *message* spell to Lady Maestra. The faculty member threatens the students but is interrupted just before they can harm the characters.
- 11-20 The characters are tasked with a side quest. See the Side Quests section for details.

### Random Events

No school year is free from drama and trouble. Thanks to the magical nature of the schools' inhabitants and its students, the school acts as a beacon for all manner of chaos, magical shenanigans, and, of course, random encounters.

While it's likely that the characters

will find plenty of mischief on their own, random incidents can help bring the school experience to life and point them in the direction of adventure. Roll a d20 once per day of game time. An encounter occurs on a roll of 18 or higher. Roll a d20 and check the School Encounters table to determine what happens to the characters, or simply choose an encounter you like.Ω

# SPELLCASTERS SCHOOL APPENDIX

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## NEW RULES FOR FIFTH EDITION

BY DAVE HAMRICK

### Wizard Arcane Traditions

#### Teacher

There's an old saying, "Those who can, do; and those who can't, teach." Of course, that saying is completely erroneous when applied to those who practice the mystic arts. Wizard teachers are often considered to be some of the most powerful practitioners around. Typically, they are feared by those who recognize their relationship with magic. Wizard teachers use their coaching powers to boost other spellcasters and improve the abilities of those around them.

Level	Teature Feature
2nd	<i>Magical Expertise, Advanced Studies</i>
5th	<i>Master and Student</i>
10th	<i>Aura of Concentration</i>
14th	<i>Aura of Magical Resistance</i>

**Magical Expertise.** Starting when you choose this tradition at 2nd level, you learn two languages of your choice. You also become proficient in the Arcana and History skills.

Your proficiency bonus is doubled for any ability check you make that uses either of those skills.

**Advanced Studies.** At 2nd level, your knowledge of magic extends beyond the arcane. Choose two 1st-level spells to learn from any spell list. You can cast each of these spells once at its lowest level, and you must finish a long rest before you can cast it in this way again. Your spellcasting ability for these spells is Intelligence.

**Master and Student.** Starting at 6th level, your coaching bolsters your allies' spellcasting abilities. When a friendly creature that you see within 30 feet of

you casts a spell, and the creature can hear you, you can use your reaction to give the creature advantage on its ranged spell attack roll or to give the target of the caster's spell disadvantage on its saving throw against the spell.

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

**Aura of Concentration.** At 10th level, while you or friendly creatures within 10 feet of you are concentrating on a spell, you and the creatures have advantage on Constitution saving throws to avoid breaking your concentration.

**Aura of Magical Resistance.** At 14th level, you and friendly creatures within 10 feet of you have advantage on saving throws against spells.

#### Wizard School Dropout

Wizards schools are tough. After all, the average graduation rate for most is below 85%. Of course, just because someone fails at a wizarding school, doesn't mean that they still can't try to wield arcane power, even if they do so poorly.

If you are partaking in an Evadimus' School for Gifted Spellcasters campaign, at your GM's discretion, you can take this option even if you flunk out of the school.

Level	Wizard School Dropout Feature
2nd	Improvised Spell, Supplementary Abilities
5th	Ability Score Increase
10th	Combat Magic Tactics
14th	Reflexive Magic

**Improvised Spell.** Starting when you choose this arcane tradition at 2nd level, you've learned creative ways to

cast spells that most arcane scholars consider "sloppy." Once per turn, you can use your action to expend one spell slot to create an improvised magic spell. The spell is a ranged spell attack with a range of 30 ft and deals 2d10 force damage on a hit. For each spell slot you expend above 1st, you can add one of the following features:

- The spell's range increases by 30 feet, to a maximum of 150 feet.
- The spell's damage increases by 1d10, to a maximum of 5d10.
- The spell can target one additional target within range, to a maximum of 5 targets. You must make a separate ranged spell attack roll for each target.

You may not cast another spell, including cantrips, on the same turn that you use this feature.

**Supplementary Abilities.** Also at 2nd level, you've learned to supplement your magic with abilities that rely on your physical tenacity more than your intellect. You gain one of the following features of your choice:

- **Danger Sense.** You have advantage on Dexterity saving throws against effects that you can see, such as traps and spells. To gain this benefit, you can't be blinded, deafened, or incapacitated.
- **Jack of All Trades.** You can add half your proficiency bonus, rounded down, to any ability check you make that doesn't already include your proficiency bonus.
- **Mobility.** On each of your turns, you can a bonus action on each of your turns in combat. This action can be used only take the Dash or Disengage action.

**Ability Score Increase.** At 6th level, you can increase one ability score of your choice by 2, or you can increase two ability scores of your choice by 1. As normal, you can't increase an ability

score above 20 using this feature.

**Combat Magic Tactics.** At 10th level, you gain one of the following features of your choice.

- **Rapid Fire.** When you cast a ranged spell attack of 1st level or higher that targets only one creature, you can have it target a second creature. You must roll a separate ranged spell attack roll for each target.
- **Spell Tag.** When you hit a creature with a spell attack, you have advantage on ranged spell attacks against that creature and the creature has disadvantage on saving throws against your spells until the end of your next turn.

**Reflexive Magic.** At 14th level, you gain one of the following features of your choice.

- **Retaliatory Spell.** When you take damage from a creature that you can see within 30 feet of you, you can use your reaction to expend a 1st-level or higher spell slot. The creature immediately takes 2d10 force damage.
- **Self-Preservation.** You can your action to end one spell on yourself.

## New Cantrips

The following cantrips are available on the spell lists for sorcerers, warlocks, and wizards in addition to those normally offered.

### Blades

*Conjuration cantrip*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 60 feet

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** Instantaneous

Two daggers appear in front of you.

You can direct the daggers at the same target or at different ones. Make a separate ranged spell attack for each dagger. On a hit, the target takes 1d4 piercing damage. The daggers then disappear.

The spell creates more than two daggers when you reach higher levels: four daggers at 5th level, six daggers

at 11th level, and eight daggers at 17th level.

### Distraction

*Enchantment cantrip*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 15 feet

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** Instantaneous

You create a distracting sound or image, causing a creature of your choice that you see within range and that can perceive the distraction to make a Wisdom saving throw. A creature that can't be charmed succeeds on this saving throw automatically, and if you or your companions are fighting the creature, it has advantage on the save. On a failed save, the target has disadvantage on its Wisdom (Perception) checks until the start of its next turn.

### Keyhole

*Divination cantrip*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Touch

**Components:** V, S, M (a copper key)

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 minute

You touch a non-magical door. An invisible, magical keyhole that only you can perceive appears somewhere on the door. For the duration, you can look through the keyhole to see what is on the other side of the door. Because of the relatively small size of the keyhole, you have disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) and Intelligence (Investigation) checks to perceive anything on the other side of the door.

A spell that magically locks or wards the door (such as the knock and guards and wards spell, etc.) prevents this spell from working.

### Magesword

*Transmutation cantrip*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Touch

**Components:** V, S, M (a drop of steel polish, a piece of cloth cut from a wizard's robe, and a steel tool such as a fork or butter knife)

**Duration:** 1 minute

The steel tool you are holding transforms into a longsword. You are proficient with this sword, even if you aren't normally proficient with longswords. For the duration, you can use your spellcasting ability instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of melee attacks using the sword. The sword is magical. The spell ends if you cast it again or if you let go of the sword.



### Odd Mutation

*Transmutation cantrip*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 15 feet

**Components:** V, S, M (a toad's eye, a mushroom, and a pinch of paprika)

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 minute

One target that you can see within range must make a Charisma saving throw. On a failed saving throw, you create one of the following magical effects:

- The target's skin changes to a color of your choice for the duration.
- You alter the appearance of the target's eyes for the duration.
- A mushroom, patch of grass, or rough tuft of hair appears on the target's skin and remains for the duration.
- The target's voice deepens or softens for the duration.
- The target appears ten years older or ten years younger for the duration.

None of the changes have an adverse effect on the creature, although, another creature that witnesses the transformation may see the sudden change as odd.



**Repel Projectile**

*Abjuration cantrip*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Self

**Components:** S

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 round

You raise your palm in the air. The next time you are hit by a ranged weapon attack before the start of your next turn, the damage that you take from the attack is reduced by 1d10 + your spellcasting ability.

**Scream**

*Evocation cantrip*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Self

**Components:** V, M (a tuning fork)

**Duration:** Instantaneous

You emit a high-pitched scream, causing damage to creatures and objects in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a Constitution saving throw, taking 1d6 thunder damage on a failed save. A creature made of inorganic material such as stone, crystal, or metal has disadvantage on this saving throw.

A nonmagical object that isn't being worn or carried also takes the damage if it's in the spell's area.

The spell's damage increases by 1d6 when you reach 5th level (2d6), 11th level (3d6), and 17th level (4d6).

**Skull Bomb**

*Necromancy cantrip*

**Casting Time:** 1 bonus action

**Range:** Touch

**Components:** V, S, M (a Small or Medium humanoid skull is consumed)

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 minute

You touch a non-magical, non-sentient humanoid skull, imbuing it with necromantic energy. You can throw the skull as a ranged spell attack with a range up to 60 feet. On a hit, the target takes 1d6 necrotic damage and the necrotic energy leaps from the target to a different creature of your choice that you

can see within 5 feet of it. The second creature takes necrotic damage equal to your spellcasting ability modifier. If someone else attacks with the skull, that attacker adds your spellcasting ability modifier, not the attacker's to the attack and damage rolls. Whether the attack hits or misses, the spell ends on the skull.

If you cast this spell again, the spell ends on any skulls still affected by your previous casting.

This spell's damage increases when you reach higher levels. At 5th level, the skull deals an extra 1d6 necrotic damage to the target and the necrotic damage to the second creature increases to 1d6 + your spellcasting ability modifier. Both damage rolls increase by 1d6 at 11th level and 17th level.

**Sluggish**

*Transmutation cantrip*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 60 feet

**Components:** V, S, M (a living slug and a pinch of salt)

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 round

You target one creature that you can within range. For the duration, the creature's speed is reduced by 5 feet.

**Encounter Difficulty for Zero-Level Characters**

In addition to the actual rules for creating the characters for the Evadimus' School of Gifted Spellcasters themselves, GMs will need rules to help balance their encounters. Here is the supplemental Encounter Difficulty XP per Character table.

Additionally, included here is a supplement for the Adventuring Day XP.

Encounter Difficulty XP per Character (Supplement)				
Level	Easy	Medium	Hard	Deadly
0	0	5	10	15
1/8	5	10	15	20
1/4	10	15	20	30
1/2	15	25	40	50

**New NPC: Student**

STUDENT	
<i>Medium humanoid (any), any alignment</i>	
<b>Armor Class</b> 10	
<b>Hit Points</b> 4 (1d8)	
<b>Speed</b> 30 ft.	
<b>STR</b> 10 (+0)	<b>INT</b> 13 (+1)
<b>DEX</b> 10 (+0)	<b>WIS</b> 10 (+0)
<b>CON</b> 10 (+0)	<b>CHA</b> 11 (+0)
<b>Skills</b> Arcana +3	
<b>Senses</b> passive Perception 10	
<b>Languages</b> any one language (usually Common)	
<b>Challenge</b> 0 (10 XP)	
<b>Innate Spellcasting.</b> The student can cast <i>mage hand</i> at will, requiring no components. The student's spellcasting ability is Intelligence.	
ACTIONS	
<b>Quarterstaff.</b> <i>Melee Weapon Attack:</i> +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage, or 4 (1d8) bludgeoning damage when wielded with two hands.	

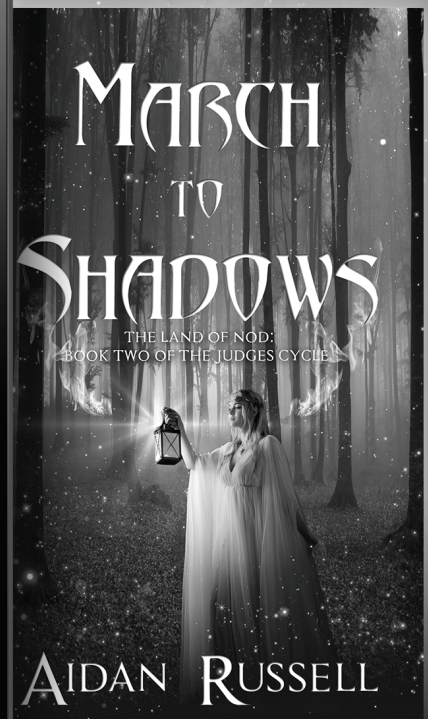
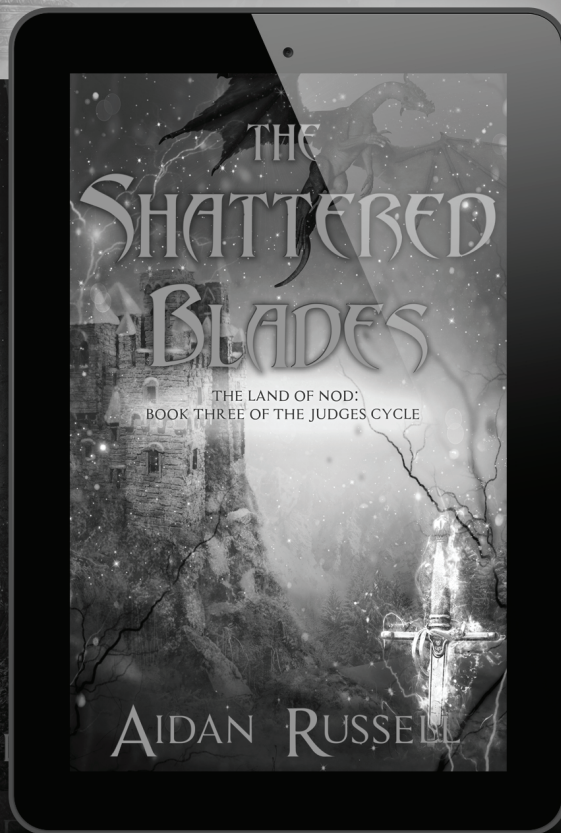
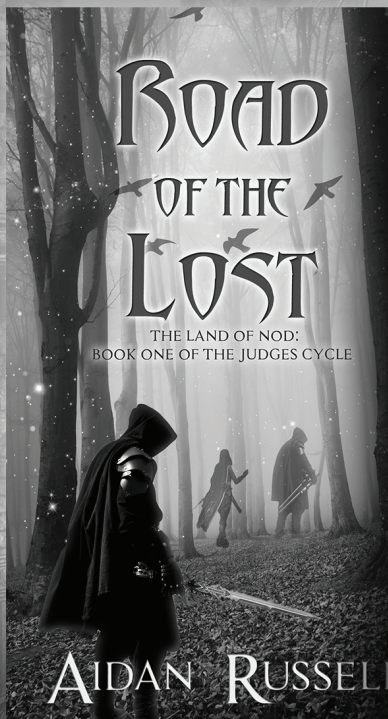
Before a wizard becomes a mage, they must learn the basics of magic from a wizarding school. Use the following stat block for the apprentice wizards studying at Evadimus' School for Gifted Spellcasters. Ω

Adventuring Day XP (Supplement)	
Level	Adjusted XP per Day per Character
0	10
1/8	35
1/4	75
1/2	150

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# ARTICLE SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

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## FOR BROADSWORD MAGAZINE

This article contains information for those who wish to submit content to BroadSword Magazine. If you are considering submitting information, please refer to these guidelines first before submitting as the content may be turned away if it does not conform to the guidelines.

### Queries and Forms

Before you submit content to BroadSword Magazine send us a brief proposal. Preferably, put it into a Google Document with the following elements:

- Working Title
- Original and compelling plot
- Major foes
- The game system. This should always be Fifth Edition unless it "piggybacks" on a spin-off rule-set from dmdave.com or BroadSword Magazine (example: ZACS 5e)
- Types of characters for which the module was meant
- A summary of the rewards to be gained and foes to be overcome
- An estimate of the completed adventure's length and number of maps
- Your information including name, age, location, and email address.

Send all proposals to: [submissions@broad-swordmagazine.com](mailto:submissions@broad-swordmagazine.com)

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If we request a complete manuscript, we will reach out to you via Discord, Facebook Messenger, or the provided email.

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There are two types of adventure modules BroadSword Magazine accepts:

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### Artwork and Maps

We do not produce maps for the modules we buy or license. A finished module should be accompanied by all relevant maps and diagrams. Additional drawings, sketches, and charts might be added for clarification.

Make sure all artwork and maps are rendered neatly using graphic design processing software, preferably in Vector format or JPG in 300 dpi. The maps and artwork must be readable in black and white. Make sure you have described all relevant

areas on the maps and have not mislabeled anything. Maps and artwork that are not legible or concise may be denied.

### Adventure Design Guide

Use these guidelines and templates when designing Fifth Edition adventures for BroadSword Magazine. While we understand mistakes occur, submissions with glaring errors and difficult-to-read formats may be rejected.

### Introduction (Mandatory)

50-70 words (one paragraph) explaining what the adventure is about. Sort of like the "elevator pitch" for the adventure.

### Story Overview

A broad (and more in-depth) explanation of how the characters will get involved in the adventure, what happens to them during the adventure, and what the desired outcome for the adventure should be. Typically, this section should be no longer than 250 – 400 words.

### Running the Adventure (Mandatory)

Notes to the GM running the adventure. Should include the following information:

- Number of characters and average levels
- How far the characters will progress in the adventure
- What type of region the adventure takes place in. Because of the Fifth Edition OGL/SRD guidelines, your modules may not take place in a preestablished Fifth Edition campaign world and must be either campaign agnostic or offer up enough context to place it in a relevant campaign setting
- Any special requirements for the campaign setting

All adventures should use only the "Core Three" books for Fifth Edition.

**Adventure Summary.** A more detailed play-by-play of the adventure. This may include major clues, hooks, or other important details that the GM should be aware of.

**Special Rules.** If there are any special rules for the campaign—such as "low magic", whether or not the adventure uses optional rules, or other suggestions the GM can consider—add them to this section.

**Scaling the Adventure.** Any notes that you have for scaling an adventure beyond the intended level goes here.

### Starting the Adventure (Mandatory)

This is the characters' introduction to the adventure itself. Typically, it includes all the pertinent information to get the characters involved in the story. You may also include a text box to be read aloud by the GM.

**Treasure.** If there is a reward presented in the hook or by the important NPCs, you can add it into this section.

### Character Hooks (Mandatory)

Beyond the introduction of the main hook, suggest different motivations to involve characters in the main plot.

### The Adventure's Encounters (Mandatory)

All of the planned encounters for the adventure keyed to a map of timeline go here. Each encounter can include any or all of the following sections:

- **Read Aloud Text (optional, but preferred)** are set off in a shaded box.
- **General Description (mandatory)** provides the GM with information on interesting features, creatures, traps, and other specifics of the encounter that play off the read-aloud text.
- **Traps (optional)** describe in details any traps

that the character may trigger.

- **Creatures (optional)** that the characters may encounter are put into bold print in the text.
- **Tactics (optional)** are for creature encounters that have complex tactics beyond what is described in the MM.
- **Treasure (optional)** covers any non-experience or roleplaying rewards the characters discover after the encounter.
- **Development (optional)** should the results of the encounter affect the overall course of the adventure, use this section to inform the GM.

### Concluding the Adventure (Mandatory)

Describing the possible consequences resulting from the adventure's success or failure, including rewards, punishments, and spin-off adventures for later gaming sessions.

### Appendix (Optional)

Any items that the adventure module references that aren't included in the "Core Three" are added here. The Appendix should be no longer than 750 – 1,500. There may be special considerations for larger adventure modules.

### Fifth Edition/BroadSword Specific Formats

The following sections include information you need before writing an adventure.

**Capitalization.** Capitalize abilities, skill names, feat names, subclasses, and names of languages. Always capitalize "Game Master" and the abbreviation "GM."

Creatures, classes, alignments, spells, weapons, and magic items, that do not include proper nouns are all lower case.

Magic items and spell names are italicized. Spell scrolls have only the name of the spell italicized. Also, the "plus" for weapons and armors is listed before the item, but the "plus" for other items is listed after.

**Abbreviations.** Abbreviations usually use all capital letters and no periods (DM, DC, NPC, HD, CR, XP, LG). The abbreviations for hit points and coins use lower case letters and no periods (hp, gp, sp).

Ability Scores are abbreviated as follows: Str (Strength), Dex (Dexterity), Con (Constitution), Int (Intelligence), Wis (Wisdom), Cha (Charisma).

**Numbers.** Numerals should be used for any measurement of distance expressed in yards (or meters), or any smaller unit, except when the expression is a specific large number. Correct: 750 miles, fifteen miles, 15 feet.

Numerals should be used for any measurement of time expressed in hours or any smaller unit. The spelled-out form should be used for any expressions of time longer than hours, except when the expression is a specific large number. Correct: 648 years, forty-eight years, forty-eight days, 48 hours, 48 minutes.

Numerals should be used for any measurement of weight expressed in pounds or any smaller unit. The spelled-out form of a number should be used for any expression of weight larger than pounds except when the expression is a specific large number. Correct: twenty tons, 20 pounds.

Numerals are always used for geometric angles (for example, 45 degrees) and expressions of temperature (for example, 45°F), ability scores, ability modifiers, creature statistics, amounts of currency, level references ("1st level," not "first level"), bonuses and penalties, experience points, dice designators (percentile dice or d100, not d%), multipliers, number of charges (in the context of a magic item that has charges), and number of times per day or other unit of time in a stat block (written as 2/Day, 2/Day, and so on). Note: spell out feet, pounds, minutes, and all other units of measurement in a non-stat block.

**Hyphenation.** Always hyphenate class and spell levels when they precede a noun. Hyphenate compound adjectives before nouns. Do not hyphenate before the suffix "-like" except after double-l endings.



**Skill Checks.** When a situation in an adventure calls for a skill check of some sort, you have two choices for presenting the check.

You can list the skill check in the running text and present a parenthetical with the DC number, or you can describe the situation and then list the skill check DC number in the parenthetical.

**Trap Presentation.** Traps have several associated DC values the GM needs to adjudicate the PC's application of their various skills. Whenever a trap is encountered, include checks to notice the trap as well as disarm it. If a complex trap is involved, include all of the pertinent information as detailed in XGtE.

**Creature Statistics.** Fifth Edition monsters are presented in a very specific format which BroadSword Magazine aims to emulate.

When referencing a specific monster from the MM, include the monster's name in **bold** in the context of the encounter description the first time it is mentioned. For numbers preceding the monster's name, write out the number unless it is a specific high number.

NPC's are given their abbreviated alignment, gender, race, and NPC type in bold either in parenthetical or in the text. Example: Dave (LN male Virginian human **commoner**).

For monsters with minor variants that do not require a full stat block, use bullet points to address the changes.

Full-length statistics for new monsters and NPC's should be provided in the area in which the creature or creatures are initially encountered, or in the Appendix (if any).

**Additional Formats.** For all other content besides monsters—such as magic items, feats, subclasses—try to adhere to modern Fifth Edition format as much as possible. When in doubt, copy what works.

**Standard Fifth Edition Monster Format**

Use the following format for monsters in Fifth edition.

**Monster Name**

Description of the monster follows the monster. The description should be only 1-3 paragraphs, preferably three for brevity unless it is a major challenge such as a legendary creature or boss. **Flavor Sub-headers.** For longer descriptions, split the paragraphs and apply flavor subheaders. Typically, sub-headers address the creature's combat features and tactics (leaving out any numbers or game mechanics), its ecology, and its habitat.

**Monster's Lair**

Brief description of the lair (if any). If the creature's lair is not relevant to the adventure, leave this out.

**Lair actions.** If the monster has actions tied to its lair, explain how it can access its lair actions. Then least of its lair action options (typically no more than 3) in bullet points below the description.

**Regional Effects.** Some legendary creatures with lairs have regional effects. Explain how the creature affects the lair, then give 2-3 specific effects following the description.

**Creature Nature.** If the creature does not require air, food, water, or sleep, or anything else that is not relevant for combat, place a note above the Monster's Stat Block.

**No Offensive Content**

This probably goes without saying—but I'll put it here anyways—please be mindful that this book reaches a broad, family-oriented audience of all different genders, races, backgrounds, religions, etc. Exclude any content such as graphic violence, sex, and drug use. Exclude political references—even euphemistically—and other controversial topics, and no racism, sexism, or blatant bullying. If it seems like a bad idea, that probably means it is.

<b>MONSTER NAME</b> <i>Size category (sub-category), alignment</i>
<b>Armor Class ##</b> (source) <b>Hit Points ##</b> (hit dice) <b>Speed ## ft.</b>
<b>STR ## (+#) INT ## (+#)</b> <b>DEX ## (+#) WIS ## (+#)</b> <b>CON ## (+#) CHA ## (+#)</b>
<b>Saving Throws Con +#</b> <b>Skills Insight +#</b> <b>Damage Vulnerabilities</b> type, type <b>Damage Resistances</b> type, type, type <b>Damage Immunities</b> type, type, type <b>Condition Immunities</b> type, type, type# <b>Senses</b> extra senses ## ft, passive Perception ## <b>Languages</b> Language, Language <b>Challenge #</b> (### XP)
<b>Special Equipment.</b> If the creature has any special magic items or equipment is using, list those items at the top of the special traits block.  <b>Special Trait.</b> Any special traits the creature has are placed here with a description of the mechanics.  <b>Special Trait (1/Day).</b> If the creature has a special trait with limited uses, describe it here and place the number of uses in parenthetical after the trait's name.  <b>Spellcasting.</b> For spellcasting and innate spell-casting, list the creature's spellcasting ability, its spell save DC and attack bonus, then list its spells and number of uses below the block.  • Cantrips (at will): spell, spell, spell • 1st Level (2 slots): spell, spell, spell
<b>ACTIONS</b>  <b>Multiattack.</b> Multiattack is always placed at the top of the action list.  <b>Attack.</b> <i>Type of attack: +#</i> to hit, reach # ft., one target/creature. Hit: ## (damage dice) type damage. Any additional special effects are placed after the initial damage with relevant saving throws.  <b>Special Action.</b> <i>Description of how the special attack works.</i>  <b>Special Action (Recharge 5-6).</b> For special actions with recharge rates, put the recharge time in parentheticals following its title.
<b>REACTIONS</b>  <b>Reaction.</b> If the creature has a special reaction, describe how it works
<b>LEGENDARY ACTIONS</b>  If the creature can take legendary actions, explain how it can access its legendary actions and which it can use.  <b>Legendary Action.</b> A description of the legendary action.  <b>Legendary Action (Costs 2 Actions).</b> For any legendary action that has an increased action cost, list the action cost in parentheticals following the action's name.

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Dungeons & Dragons 5E SRD v5.1

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