footprints
MAGAZINE

IDEAS & ADVENTURES FOR ADVANCED FANTASY GAMING

Artwork

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Publisher

Footprints is published by Dragonsfoot. It is available at the Dragonsfoot website for download. Please visit http://dragonsfoot.org/ft/ to download other issues.

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MAGAZINE

Number 22
February 2015

Dragonsfoot's free online magazine

Content

When it was decided that I could do % in Lair for this issue (okay maybe I begged a little), I went back to check out the history of this article that kicks off every issue of *Footprints*. I thought I'd be innovative and maybe do a "% in Lair, this is your life!" But then I came to *Footprints* #19 where Stuart Marshall did a "what is % in Lair," so that scrubbed that idea. You all remember that issue, the one where Stuart asked for folks to submit their material. You in the back, don't look away, you remember it! But at least I can put down what % in Lair means to me, how Dragonsfoot being my "lair" brought me back to the game.

Moving from Long Island, NY, to southern New Jersey was a bigger move than I had realized. It was best for my family (there were only 2 young daughters then; now there are 4) but the new job and the new life left me searching for something. One day just futzing around with Google led me (as it does all of us) to Dragonsfoot. After lurking for quite some time I downloaded a bunch of A-grade free D&D stuff. I hadn't played in probably a decade or two, but it started the juices, and memories, flowing. Then I signed up for the forums and, after the hazing, I was soon a full-fledged member of the Dragonsfoot community. It was wonderful, I had found my lair. My % in Lair at that point, and many years after, was 100% Dragonsfoot. I've met and continue to meet some wonderful people and made some excellent friends here. There's a "Phila./South Jersey Players" thread in the Looking for Games forum that was, at one time, infamous—we did great things—terrible, yes, but great. One of the coolest things I've done is to roll dice with Stuart (both in PbP and in G+ Hangouts) while he was in his home, and I in mine, an ocean separating us geographically, but a love for a game bringing us together.

Now my lair has expanded some, I spend more time with another AD&D ezine than I do *Footprints* (don't tell Steve). I visit DF daily, but I spend as much time at a more 1E-focused forum, and even more time at an old school PbP forum DMing games. Still, Dragonsfoot is where it all started for me. In many ways DF will always be my lair, maybe not 100% in that lair anymore, but no less home.

I'm honored to present in this issue things written by friends I've known for quite some time, Ian Slater, Steve McFadden, and Stuart Marshall, as well as fellow members of my lair, Michael Haskell, Tony Chaplin, and Darren Dare. I want to particularly thank Tony, who is a first time contributor, as well as Michael and Darren, who wrote for this issue as well as past Footprints. This issue includes adventures and articles, all of the wonderment and quality you have come to expect from *Footprints*. So kick back in your gamer's den (or bathroom for those of us with a wife, four daughters, and no basement) relax, and enjoy this issue of *Footprints*.

– Ron "rredmond" Redmond
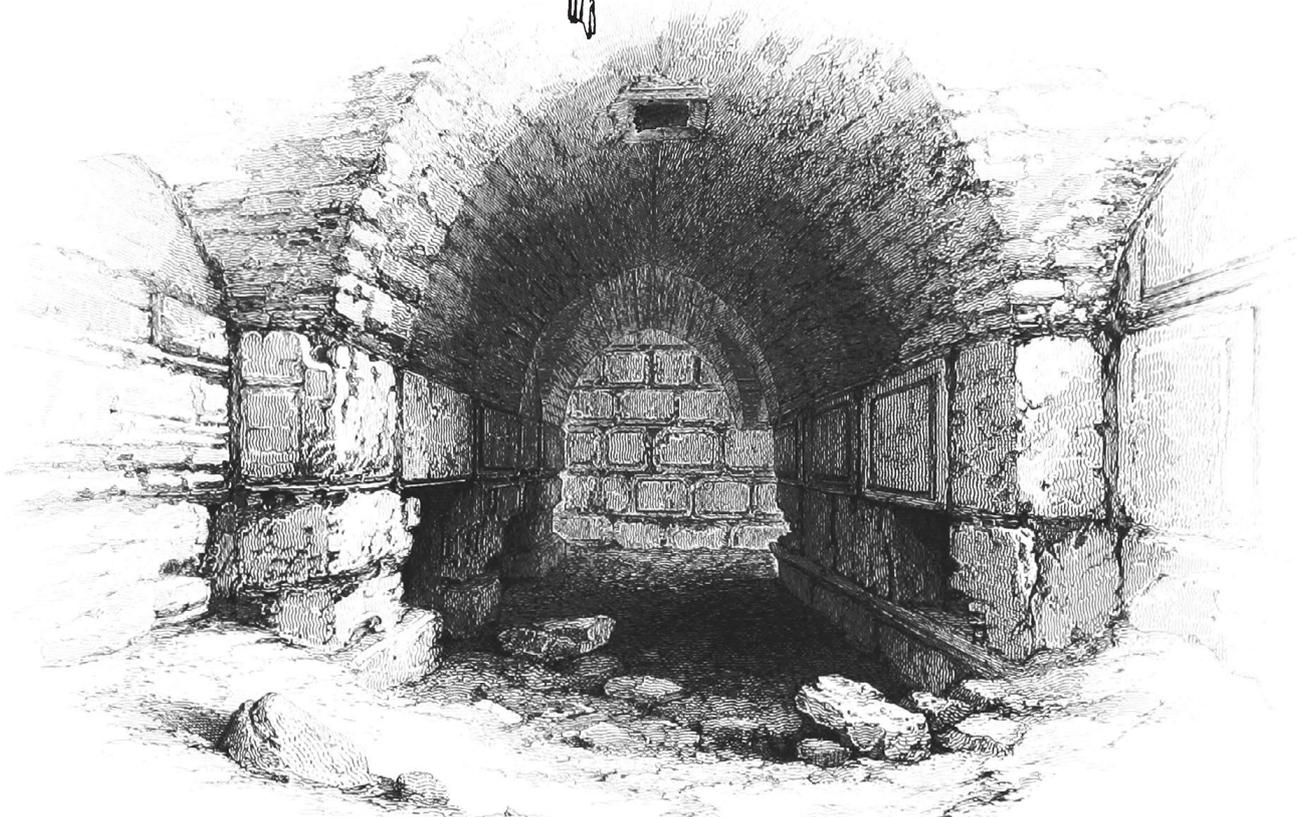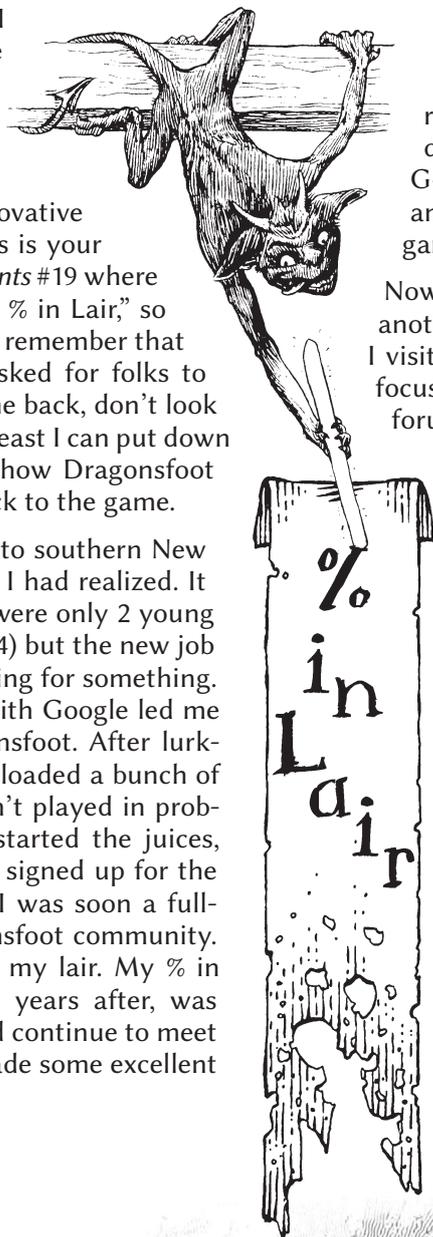
By Ian Slater

The *Dungeon Masters Guide* specifies which rods, staves and wands can be recharged, but it does not tell us how to recharge them.

Below are some ideas that are broadly compatible with the rule books, but are by no means an exclusive interpretation.

Where to Start

When developing a mechanism for recharging items one place to look is the spell description for *enchant an item*. This spell allows magic-users to create magical items, so it makes sense that it could also be used to recharge them.

Enchant an Item (BtB):

- Requires a high quality, well-crafted base item with a minimum raw material cost of 100 gp.
- Takes a total of 2 + d8 days to cast.
- After casting, the item saves against magic as the caster, with a bonus up to +3 added (e.g. an 11th level caster saves versus magic on an 8; a 65% chance; with a +3 bonus this increases to an 80% chance).
- If successfully cast, all spells that are to be invested in the item must be cast within 24 hours.
- Anything subsequently cast upon an object bearing an enchant an item spell requires 4 hours plus 4–8 additional hours per level of the spell being cast (I read "subsequently" here as any spell beyond enchant an item.)
- Each spell cast upon the item requires a saving throw as per the original save.
- It is not known by the magic-user whether any of those castings have taken hold.
- A permanency spell is required to make enduring (i.e. non-charged) items.
- Enchant an item cannot be cast from a scroll or another item (the caster must know the spell and be of at least 11th level.)

To get a handle on recharging, I will first work through an example of how to enchant an item.

Let's say a magic-user wants to make a **wand of fear**. He prepares the requisite materials and casts *enchant an item*. This takes 2 + d8 days to cast, and then the wand must save versus magic as the magic-user. Assuming this goes well, the magic-user then has 24 hours to cast the relevant spells on the wand. In this case the relevant spell is obvious: *fear*. Once the magic-user casts *fear* and the wand makes another save the wand is ready to go.

There's a question that needs to be answered: how many charges does the wand get from this one casting of *fear*?

Does one *fear* spell cast on an enchanted item produce one charge? Possibly. However, if we assume that the requirement to invest an enchanted item with a spell is 4 hours plus an additional 4–8 hours per spell level, then a minimum allotment of 20 hours is needed to cast the 4th level *fear* spell, and an average of 28 hours. At most, one charge could be given to the item per casting of *enchant an item*!

If we use the one spell equals one charge mechanism, then to imbue such a wand with one charge would require, at minimum, 3 days of casting *enchant an item* and 1 day more to cast *fear*. In other words, 4 days per charge, and at least 400 days to fully charge the wand.

That's clearly not what was intended in the *Players Handbook* description of *enchant an item*.

What if you industrialize the process while still using the same mechanic? Say you have ten 7th level magic-users (high enough in level to cast *fear*) and one 11th level magic-user working together. The ten 7th level casters could each cast *fear*, adding 10 charges to the wand per day. Using that model, you cast *enchant an item*, add 10 charges, and then repeat the process every four days. That's forty days to fully charge a wand, which seems more workable. However, I assumed that the castings would take the minimum amount of time, and that no castings would fail.

Each casting of *enchant an item* requires a saving throw, as does each casting of *fear*. If the 11th level caster has +3 in saving throw bonuses then the casting of *enchant an item* has an 80% chance of success. Even if we assume that the 7th level magic-users casting *fear* are as effective as the 11th level wizard with regards to the saving throw (80% chance of success), the odds that the first 10 charges will all make it into the wand are:

$$0.8 \times 0.8 \times 0.8 \times 0.8 \times 0.8 \times 0.8 \times 0.8 \times 0.8 \times 0.8 \times 0.8 = 11\%$$

How about a single charge?

$$0.8 \times 0.8 = 64\%$$

It seems clear that if you use a one casting = one charge ratio then charging an item with spells becomes completely unworkable. In addition, because each casting of a charging spell takes 4 hours + 4–8 hours per spell level, any spell of 6th level or above will be impossible to cast on the item. A 5th level spell requires a minimum roll for the casting time to fit within *enchant an item's* 24-hour window, and even charging items that use lower-level spells will take excessive amounts of time.
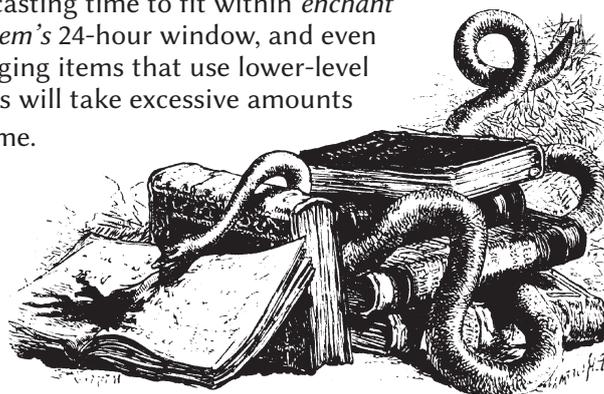
So the DM has a few choices:

a. A wand can be fully charged (100 charges), either on creation or afterwards, by casting both *enchant an item* and the wand's characteristic spells on the device exactly once. Thus, a **wand of fear** would be fully charged by casting both *enchant an item* and *fear* exactly once, and a **wand of fire** with four functions could be fully charged by casting *enchant an item*, *burning hands*, *pyrotechnics*, *fireball* and *wall of fire*, once each.

b. A wand can be fully charged (100 charges), either on creation or afterwards, by casting *enchant an item* and each of the wand's characteristic spells multiple times, but not at a one casting = one charge ratio.

A few observations regarding this:

To create and charge, or recharge, a **wand of fire** would need either multiple magic-users working on the process or extended castings. Each spell casting requires 4 hours + 4–8 additional hours per spell level. So if you require one casting each of *burning hands*, *pyrotechnics*, *fireball*, and *wall of fire*, it would take a minimum of 8 + 12 + 16 + 20 = 56 hours, far beyond the 24-hour period allowed for casting. You could accomplish the charging or creation by casting *enchant an item* and having three other magic-users assist: after the *enchant an item* spell you cast *burning hands* and the remaining spells are cast by the other three mages.

As an example, for an 11th level magic-user (A) with a +3 on saves (80% chance of success), and three 7th level MUs (B1–3) with no save bonuses (65% chance of success for them), we have:

(A) Cast *enchant an item* (80% chance of success): 2 days + 1–8 days (average 6.5 days)

(A) Cast *burning hands* (80% chance of success): 4 + 4–8 hrs per spell level (average 10.5 hrs, min 8, max 12)

(B1) Cast *pyrotechnics* (65% chance of success): 4 + 4–8 hrs per spell level (average 17 hrs, min 12, max 20)

(B2) Cast *fireball* (65% chance of success): 4 + 4–8 hrs per spell level (average 23.5 hrs, min 16, max 28)

(B3) Cast *wall of fire* (65% chance of success): 4 + 4–8 hrs per spell level (average 30 hrs, min 20, max 36)

Assuming that a run through occurs where all casters make all their rolls and that average values are obtained for each required time roll, we get:

(A) casts *enchant an item* (6.5 days), and *burning hands* at 10.5 hours, (B1) casts *pyrotechnics* at 17 hours, (B2) casts *fireball* at 23.5 hours, (B3) casts *wall of fire* at 30 hours—which doesn't take as it exceeded the 24-hour window.

The primary mage doesn't know if any of the spells take, just that those that took longer than 24 hours didn't take. So he tries to redo B3's effort. He casts *enchant an item* again (6 days), and this time it takes 22 hours to cast *wall of fire*.

Assuming that all of the spells took, the primary mage then tries the wand. The chances of all functions working are therefore:

$$0.8 \times 0.8 \times 0.65 \times 0.65 \times 0.8 \times 0.8 = 17\%$$

So, if we assume one casting fully charges a wand, then

there is a 17% chance of getting a fully charged wand after 16.8 days of casting. And, since the magic-user has no idea if any of the spells "took", he would be unable to tell if he should continue casting or not. This doesn't even consider the material costs and the costs of hiring four magic-users, one 11th level and three others of 7th level. Overall, this is a complex, expensive process.

Conclusion: Enchant an Item

Any way you look at it, *enchant an item* is borked. The 4 + 4–8 hours per spell level for each spell cast, the lack of specificity as to how many charges are put on the item with subsequent castings, the requirement to cast every spell within 24 hours, the need for repeated saves, and the inability to know if the saves were made or not, all make this spell virtually unworkable.

How to Fix the Spell

I am going to suggest a few revisions that are in the spirit of the spell *enchant an item* and will allow both creation and charging without too many restrictions.

Enchanting/Recharging an Item

1. Cast *enchant an item* on the object in question (2 days + 1–8 days)

2. Item saves as the magic-user, with up to +3 in save bonuses. If this is successful, go to step #3.

3. For each spell the item will be able to cast, or spell like power that it will possess, the magic-user must cast one imbuing spell on the wand.

4. Each casting takes (spell level × 2.5) hours to cast, and all spells must be cast within 24 hours of completion of *enchant an item*, otherwise another casting of *enchant an item* is needed. Multiple casters may simultaneously cast spells on the item.

5. Each casting requires a saving throw as the magic-user, with up to +3 in bonuses.

6. The magic-user will know if any given casting fails.

7. Each individual spell cast on a wand, staff, or rod gives ⅕ of the total charges to the item: if the item only requires one spell to be cast on it, you would have to cast this spell five times to fully charge it. If the item is to be imbued with four spells, you could cast those four, with any one of those four as the fifth spell to fully charge the item. If there are multiple spells for an item (e.g. **wand of fire**), each must be cast at least once to fully charge the item.

Example: Recharging the Wand of Fire

1. I will roll randomly for results for this example and I'll assume an 11th level caster working on his own.

2. Magic-user casts *enchant an item* (roll: 6 days) on the wand to be recharged. The caster happens to have +3 in bonuses so, with an 80% chance of the spell "taking", he rolls a 50 and is successful.

3. Magic-user casts *burning hands* (3 hours). With an 80% chance of success, he rolls a 62 and is successful.

4. Magic-user casts *pyrotechnics* (6 hours). He rolls a 12 and is successful.

5. Magic-user casts *fireball* (9 hours), rolls an 85 and is unsuccessful. He cannot cast another spell in the time remaining (6 hours).

6. Magic-user casts *enchant an item* again (roll: 8 days), rolls a 90 and is unsuccessful.

7. Magic-user casts *enchant an item* again (roll: 3 days), rolls a 44 and is successful.

8. Magic-user casts *fireball* (9 hours), rolls a 77 and is successful.

9. Magic-user casts *wall of fire* (12 hours), rolls a 34 and is successful.

10. Magic-user casts *burning hands* (3 hours), rolls a 40 and is successful.

So, for an 11th level magic-user, it has taken 19 days to successfully cast all the relevant spells and obtain a fully charged **wand of fire**.

Take the same magic-user, this time recharging a **wand of fear**. He casts *enchant an item* and it takes. He then must cast *fear* 5 times to fully charge the wand if it was down to one charge. If he only cast *fear* once, the most he could give the wand is 20 charges.

Importantly, in this mechanic the magic-user knows at each stage if a casting took or not (as opposed to the BtB method). Thus, the mage would know if he had to re-cast the imbuing spell, or *enchant an item*, again—something crucially important if the mage is working alone, as castings must be done in sequence. Working with others would speed things up, and a higher level caster would have improved base chances of being successful at each of these rolls. The main differences between BtB and what I propose here are twofold: the base casting time for each spell is much lower (spell level × 2.5 as opposed to 4 hours + 4–8 hrs per level), and the caster knows when the spell has "taken". These changes allow the caster to cast spells higher than 5th level on the object. Also, more spells can be fit into a particular 24-hour casting, and fewer saves must be rolled.

With respect to balance, I think this proposal works out well. Other magic-users can cast alongside you, if you want to speed things up, but this would be expensive and impossible to accomplish if you couldn't bring together enough magic-users of the relevant level.

In addition, it should be remembered that although *enchant an item* can only be cast by a magic-user of the appropriate level (not from a scroll or item), the follow up spells have no such restriction, so you could have lower-level casters help out if you have the spells on a scroll.

Finally, if you are attempting to recharge a multi-use item, like a **wand of fire**, you might have problems "knowing" all the relevant spells. Thus you may need to find other casters with the relevant knowledge.

Details, Details, Details . . .

Say you are recharging your favorite wand.

Any individual spell cast on a wand/staff/rod gives it ⅕ of its total charges. Thus, the enchanter can simply cast one spell on the wand and know it is adding 20 charges. Simple enough.

I would suggest, in addition, that it doesn't matter which of the imbued spells is used to recharge the wand (e.g. for the **wand of fire** you could use *burning hands*). Each individual spell gives, in this case, 20% of the total charges. So if you brought in a wand of fire with 4 charges, and you cast *enchant an item* and *burning hands* on the wand, it would, if both castings worked, be a wand with 24 charges that can be used for any of the wand's normal functions. The only stipulation is that fully charging the item requires at least one casting of all the spells that an item can cast. To fully recharge a **wand of fire** requires one casting each of *burning hands*, *pyrotechnics*, *fireball*, and *wall of fire*, and the fifth casting can be whatever spell from those four is desired.

What about overcharging?

Say you bring in a **wand of fire** with 85 charges (keeping in mind you might not know how many charges it has). You cast *enchant an item* and then cast *pyrotechnics* on the item. Now with 105 charges in the wand, you have overcharged the item by 5 charges.

I would like to suggest an optional rule: every charge over the maximum you impart by this process gives you an equal percentage chance of destroying the item and also requires a save to avoid damaging the caster (2–8 damage). So, in the above case, after charging the wand you would roll percentile dice as there is a 5% chance of destroying the wand by overcharging it.

Illusionists

The process for creating and charging magic items for illusionists is similar but not exactly the same as the one for magic-users. The requirements are:

− An illusionist must be at least 11th level to create a charged magic item.
− An item of excellent craftsmanship must be used (min. 100 gp value).
− *Major creation* is used to alter the item to make it ready for spells.
− All spells to be cast on the item must be cast in 16 hours.

After that it gets a bit ambiguous. The DMG (p. 118) states:

> The basic thing to remember if details are in question is that illusionists are a sub-class of magic-users, and except for what has been outlined above, what applies to magic-users applies to illusionists as well.

So what does this mean? The description for *major creation* mentions nothing of saves and spell casting durations, so I will assume these are similar to the magic-user version. Thus, for the illusionist we are left with something like this:

Enchanting/Recharging Magic Items: Illusionists

1. Cast *major creation* on the object in question (2 days + 1–8 days).

2. Item saves as the illusionist with up to +3 in save bonuses. If successful, go to step #3.

3. For each spell the item will be able to cast, or spell like power that it is to possess, the illusionist must cast one imbuing spell on the wand.

4. Each casting takes (spell level × 2) in hours to cast, and all spells must be cast within 16 hours of completion of *major creation*. Otherwise, another casting of *major creation* is needed. Multiple casters may simultaneously cast spells on the item.

5. Each casting requires a saving throw as the illusionist, with up to +3 in bonuses.

6. The illusionist will know if any given casting fails.

7. Each individual spell cast on a wand, staff, or rod gives ⅕ of the total charges to the item. If the item only requires one spell to be cast on it you would have to cast this spell five times to fully charge the wand. If the item requires four spells to be cast on it, you could cast the four then any one of those four as the fifth to fully charge the item. If there are multiple spells for an item (e.g. **wand of fire**), each must be cast at least once to fully charge the item.

Note that I have reduced the time component to (spell level × 2) in hours, otherwise it would be impossible to cast a 7th level spell on the item in question.

Costs

Unearthed Arcana lists 200 gp per spell level as the cost of casting a spell on an item after *enchant an item* has been cast. So, if you have to cast *burning hands*, *pyrotechnics*, *fireball*, and *wall of fire*, which is:

$$200 \times 1 + 200 \times 2 + 200 \times 3 + 200 \times 4 = 2{,}000 \text{ gp}$$

Enchant an item, however, is another matter. Consider the spell descriptions in the DMG (pp. 83–84):

> The item to be prepared must be touched manually by the spell caster. This touching must be constant and continual during the casting time . . .

> Haste or any other spells will not alter time required in any way . . .

> During rest periods the item being enchanted must never be more than 1′ distant from the spell caster, for if it is, the whole spell is spoiled and must be begun again . . .

> During rest periods absolutely no other form of magic may be performed, and the magic-user must remain quiet and in isolation.

So to cast this spell the magic-user will be tied up for days (2 days + 1–8 days per casting). During this time he must be in physical contact or no more than 1′ away from the item. He can't use magic to speed this up, and he must be alone and cast no other spells.

This puts quite the burden on the caster. He must be protected for the duration of the spell as he himself can cast no other spells for the duration. The caster can't continue with other work, advance his interests, work on ongoing projects, and so on. He must memorize the required spells rather than the spells he may want or need, and he must be in isolation, ignoring his enemies and allies alike. It is also common for there to be multiple castings of *enchant an item* in these cases, necessitating many days away and costing more than 200 gp per spell level.

I would suggest that rather than mapping out the protective arrangements the caster makes in detail, these can be rolled into a greater cost to cast the spell. Spending 500 gp per day in casting results in a minimum cost of 1,500 gp and a maximum cost of 5,000 gp.

As a final example, assume that someone brought in a **wand of fire** with one charge and we use the example above to provide the casting sequence for the recharging process. With those spells cast, it would cost

1. *Enchant an item*: (roll: 6 days) 1,200 gp (200 gp per level) + 3,000 gp (500 gp × 6 days) = 4,200 gp

2. *Burning hands*: 200 gp

3. *Pyrotechnics*: 400 gp

4. *Fireball*: 600 gp

5. *Enchant an item* again: (roll: 8 days) 1,200 gp + 4,000 gp = 5,200 gp

6. *Enchant an item* again: (roll: 3 days) 1,200 gp + 1,500 gp = 2,700 gp

7. *Fireball* = 600 gp

8. *Wall of fire* = 800 gp

9. *Burning hands* = 200 gp

So the total cost for a fully recharged **wand of fire** is 14,900 gp and 17 days. A **wand of fire** has a listed (DMG) value of 25,000 gp, so our cost seems to be pretty close, a fully recharged wand costs a bit more than half of that.

With these rules it is possible to charge items with a minimum of confusion. And, with an assumed cost of 200 gp per spell level for the casting of all spells and 500 gp per day for *enchant an item*, it is not beyond the means of a mid-level adventurer (or a low-level party if they pool their resources) to obtain such a device.

Huzzah!

This material is Open Game Content, and is licensed for public use under the terms of the Open Game License v1.0a.

Have you ever wanted a more systematic approach to random trap generation? These tables allow the for generation of traps whose difficulty and danger increase as the dungeon gets deeper.

A result such as "1+2" indicates that two traps (in this case, traps level 1 and 2) are combined, usually with the same trigger. Try these out in your next random dungeon, but, as always, Rule Zero applies: never follow a random table off a cliff. The GM should feel free to alter, reroll, or disregard any inappropriate or nonsensical results.


Trap Level Matrix (d12)

Dungeon Level	Trap Level									
	1	2	3	1+1	2+1	3+1	4	4+1	4+2	4+3
1-2	1-8	9-11	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
3	1-5	6-8	9-10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
4	1-4	5-7	8-9	10	11	12	—	—	—	—
5	1-3	4-5	6-7	8-9	10	11	12	—	—	—
6	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9	10	11	12	—	—
7	1	2-3	4-5	6-7	8	9	10	11	12	—
8	1	2	3-4	5-6	7	8	9	10	11	12
9	1	2	3	4-5	6-7	8	9	10	11	12
10-11	1	2	3	4	5-6	7-8	9	10	11	12
12-13	1	2	3	4	5	6-7	8-9	10	11	12
14-15	1	2	3	4	5	6	7-8	9-10	11	12
16+	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8-9	10-11	12

Note: Pluses in Trap Level should be added to the die when rolling on the Trap Level table.

Trap Level 1 (d30)

1	Acid spray (mild acid, 1d6 damage, +2 to item saves)
2	Crossbow (fires 1d3 bolts, 1d6+1 damage each)
3	Pit (10 ft. fall, roll 1d4: 1–2 no covering, 3 concealed, 4 secret collapsing door)
4	Collapsing bridge (1d3 × 10 ft. deep, 50% land one level down)
5	Illusory bridge (1d3 × 10 ft deep, 50% land one level down)
6	Pit w/locking trap door (50% very simple lock, +10% to open)
7	Caltrops drop from ceiling (half movement or 1d4 damage/10 ft)
8	Ceiling block drops (roll 1d6: 1–2 in front of players, 3–4 behind players, 5–6 both sides)
9	Poisoned Crossbow (Weak poison, 1d6+1 + slowed and reduced combat abilities)
10	Dust and debris fall from ceiling (reduces vision, 50% snuffs torches)
11	Magnetic ceiling (all metal and metal-wearing players fly up and stick on the ceiling)
12	Portcullis drops (roll 1d6: 1–2 in front of players, 3–4 behind players, 5–6 both sides)
13	One-way elevator room down 1d3 levels
14	Alarm (very noisy, lasts 1d6 turns, wandering monster check each round)
15	Flame jets (as burning hands spell cast at level 1d3)
16	Flooding room (10 cubic ft./round, 50% chance of door locking)
17	Sliding room (50% rotates 1d3 × 90 degrees, 50% moves to a different location)
18	Gas, roll 1d4: 1 (blinds 1d3+6 turns), 2 (laughing 1d6 turns, attracts monsters), 3 (as fear spell), 4 (as slow spell)
19	Antimagic mist (any blessings, enchantments, illusions, or curses are lifted)
20	Swinging log (1d3+6 damage, knocks player off feet)
21	Polymorph (turns a victim into a harmless animal for 1d4+4 turns)
22	Trick stairs down 1d3 levels (roll 1d4: 1 Collapsing stairs, 3–4 Folding stairs)
23	Greased chute (down 1d3 levels)
24	Living vines (as entangle spell)
25	Teleporter (roll 1d4: 1 - 3d100 miles away, 2 - back to exit, 3 - down 1d3 levels, 4 - somewhere else on level, 10% chance it doesn't teleport gear)
26	Net (concealed, roll 1d4: 1–2 lifts to the ceiling, 3–4 falls on top of players)
27	Spring-loaded pile-driver disguised as a door (1d6 damage)
28	Poisoned caltrops (weak poison, half movement or 1d4 + chance of illness/10 ft.)
29	Webs (10% invisible, as *web* spell)
30	Cage (large, heavy cage falls from ceiling and traps players)
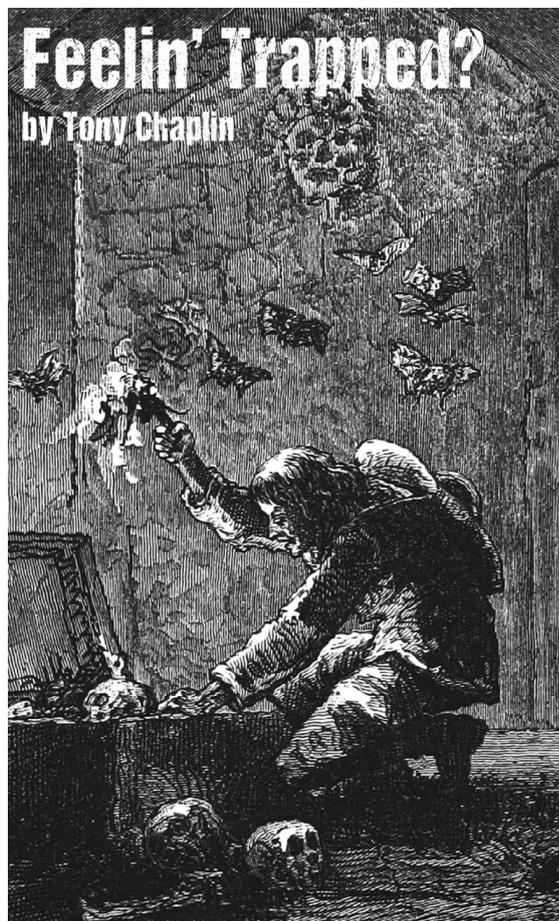
Trap Level 2 (d12)

1 Acid spray (2d6 damage, items must save or be destroyed)
2 Crossbow (fires 1d6+3 bolts, 1d6+1 damage each)
3 Pit (1d4 × 10 ft., roll 1d4: 1–2 no covering, 3 concealed, 4 secret collapsing door)
4 Bridge: 50% collapsing, 50% illusory (2d6 × 10 ft. deep, 50% land 1–3 levels down)
5 Shrinking room (ceilings move toward floor at 10 ft./rnd.)
6 Pit w/locking trap door (50% strong lock, −10% to open)
7 Poisoned caltrops (half movement or risk 1d4+2d6 damage from weak poison/10 ft.)
8 Flame jets (as *burning hands* spell cast at level 1d6+3)
9 Spiked swinging log (1d12+6 damage, knocks player off feet, 10% to impale)
10 Heavy spring-loaded pile-driver disguised as door (1d12+6 damage)
11 Sleeping gas (as *sleep* spell)
12 Spiked pit (10 ft. drop, roll 1d4: 1–2 no covering, 3 concealed, 4 secret collapsing door, 10% chance to impale)

Trap Level 3 (d12)

1 Acid spray (strong acid, 3d6 damage, equipment saves at −4)
2 Crossbow (fires 1d6+10 bolts, 1d6+1 damage each)
3 Pit (2d6 × 10 ft. fall, secret collapsing door, 50% magically hidden)
4 Monster in pit with locking trap door (50% foolproof lock, −50% to open)
5 Poisoned caltrops (half movement or risk 1d4 + poison/10 ft.)
6 Ceiling block falls on players (dungeon level X d6 damage)
7 Flame Jets (as *burning hands* spell cast at level 1d6+10)
8 Poisoned spear ballista (2d6 damage + poison)
9 Poison-spiked pit (1d6 ft. deep, 3d6 + poison, 10% impaled)
10 Gas (flammable, as *fireball* spell of level 1d6+5 if ignited)
11 Scything blade, ankle high (save or lose feet)
12 Oil-filled pit with dropping lit torch (2d6 × 10 ft. deep, torch drops in 1d4 rounds)

Trap Level 4 (d12)

1 Flame jets (as ancient 11HD red dragon)
2 Pit (bottomless, secret collapsing door, magically hidden)
3 Flash of the Medusae (everyone that sees this light must save or be turned to stone)
4 Carbonite pit (secret collapsing door, magically hidden, save or be turned to carbonite)
5 Polymorph beam (fish out of water, permanent)
6 Flooding room (lava, 10 sq. ft./round, exits magically seal)
7 Monster in pit with locking trap door (wizard locked)
8 Gas (poisonous)
9 Scything blade, head high (save or lose head)
10 Pit (Abyssal, filled with undead who will drag anyone down to the Abyssal plane)
11 Flash of the Arctic (everyone that sees this light save or be frozen)
12 Mini black hole (1d3 dungeon levels are compressed into nothingness before it collapses)

Trap Trigger (d6)

1	Location (must be in a specific place, e.g., trip wire, pressure plate, etc.)
2	Proximity (must simply be near; responds to changes in air pressure, magic, etc.)
3	Sound (ranges in sensitivity from whispers to a dragon battle)
4	Touch (must touch something, e.g., a sacred idol, a door knob, a switch, etc.)
5	Timed (triggers at a specific time or periodically)
6	Magic (similar to proximity, except it can be sensitive to anything, e.g., alignment, race, hair color, etc.)

Trap Reset (d4)

1	No reset (trap can be triggered only one time)
2	Requires repair (must be repaired after use)
3	Manual reset (must be reset, but no repairs required)
4	Automatic reset (trigger automatically resets after use)

Trap Bypass (d4)

1	No built-in bypass (character can't get through this trap; must go around)
2	Inherent in design (e.g., a 6 inch ledge around pit, not touching something, etc.)
3	Deactivation switch (roll 1d4: 1–2 hidden in same area, 3 hidden on same level, 4 somewhere else)
4	Password (speak a secret word to deactivate, roll 1d4: 1–2 word hidden in same area, 3 word hidden on same level, 4 somewhere else)

The final step is to combine the results as reasonably (or unreasonably) as possible to create a unique trap encounter.

Example Traps:

Dungeon Level 1

Spring-Loaded Pile Driver disguised as door (1d6 damage)

Trigger: Sound

Reset: Manual Reset

Bypass: No built in bypass

Interpretation: In a room with 3 doors, one is actually a spring-loaded pile driver. If any footfall lands near the door it will slam down on the unsuspecting PC, dealing 1d6 damage. The trap must be lifted back into place to be reset.

Dungeon Level 10

Swinging log (1d3+6 damage) + scything blade, ankle high

Trigger: Proximity

Reset: No reset

Bypass: Password, hidden in same area

Interpretation: Anyone approaching the chest in the center of the room will be hit by a swinging log and take 1d3+6 damage. This will push the character forward into an ankle-high scything blade. If the character makes fails a saving throw by rolling higher than their Dexterity score on 3d6, they will fall, and the slicing blade will divide the character lengthwise. A sign above the chest bears the Dwarvish word "Tulok", and, if this is spoken aloud, the log will not swing and thus the scything will not activate. If the trap is set off, the force of the scything will shatter the trap system, making it unusable afterward.
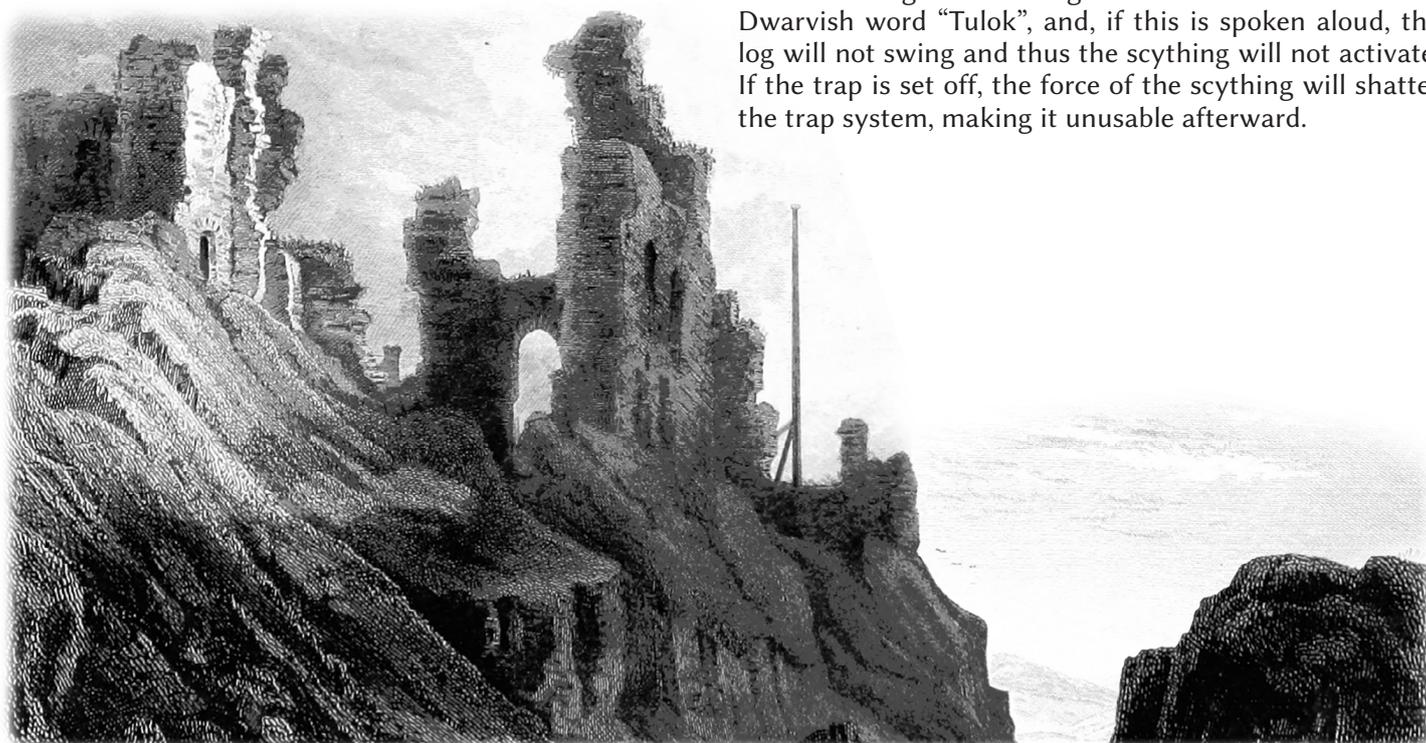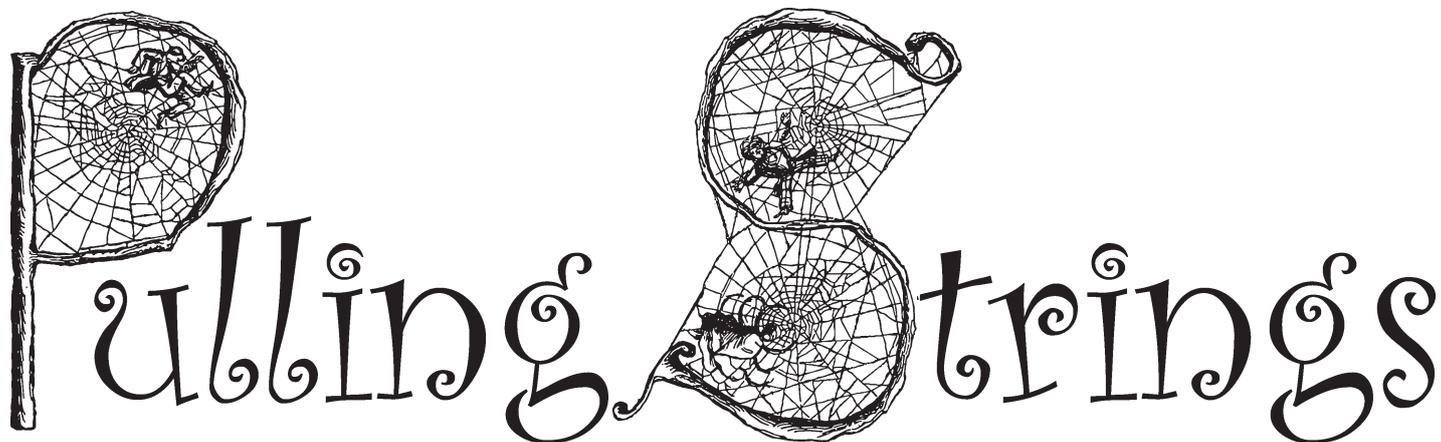
Pulling Strings

By Darren Dare

An 2nd Edition AD&D adventure for 2-5 characters of 3rd and 4th level.

Adventure Synopsis

For months now, travellers on the Forest Road have been disappearing. Many are now terrified to make the trip through the forest. What people don't know is that an ettercap has taken up residence in the forest and is preying on passersby.

This adventure can take place whenever the PCs travel through a heavily wooded area. The ettercap and large spiders attempt to trap the PCs in webs and devour them.

Web Trap

DM's Note: A being with Strength 19 or more is unaffected by the webs. For each point of Strength less than 19, it takes one round to break free of the webs (for example, a PC with Strength 15 can break free in four rounds). As many spiders as possible will attack the defenceless victim as it struggles to free itself. Entangled characters can be attacked at a +4 bonus to hit and lose all AC bonuses from Dexterity.

The forest will seem unusually quiet. No birds or small animals can be seen or heard in the woods. When they arrive at the spot marked on the outdoor map, there is a 3 in 6 chance that the party will trip the thin web that is strung across the road. If the web is broken it will cause a large web net to fall onto the PCs (successful DEX check means a PC has avoided the net and rolled to the side of the road). The net is 30′ long × 20′ wide and completely covers this section of the road.

DM's Note: If the PCs are mounted they may still avoid the net with a successful DEX check, but their horses will be trapped under the net.

Spider Attack

Whether or not the PCs are entangled in the webs, the ettercap will send spiders to attack. The spiders will attempt to bite and incapacitate entangled PCs first. The ettercap will wait to see how the spiders do before entering the fray.

Ettercap (1): AC 6; MV 12; HD 5; hp 31; THAC0 15; #AT 3; D 1d4/1d4/1d8 (claw/claw/bite); SA poison bite*, web; SZ M; ML 13; AL NE; XP 650

*save vs. poison or die in 1-4 turns

Spider, Large (4): AC 8; MV 6, 15 (web); HD 1+1; hp 9, 7, 7, 4; #AT 1; D 1; SA poison*; SZ S; ML 7; AL N; XP 175

*15 points of damage, save vs. poison at +2 for no damage

If the encounter goes badly for the spiders, the ettercap will retreat to his cave. Once 50% of the spiders are killed, they will also retreat to the cave.

The Lair

The trail to the ettercap's cave is relatively easy to find and follow (even for non-rangers). It will take the PCs approximately half an hour to get to the cave.

The cave is damp and choked with webs. Movement and sight (including infravision) within the cave are limited to 30′. Droplets of water cover most of the webs making them hard to light on fire. Using a torch to burn the webs will increase movement and visibility only to 60′. Fireballs and the like will clear an area of webbing equal to the area effect of the spell.

A: Entrance

> The five-foot-wide opening to the cave is choked with webs, allowing only about 30′ of visibility. Bones, the dried husks of several birds, and other remnants litter the ground in front of the entrance.

The moment the PCs enter the lair, the vibration in the webs (as the PCs make their way through them or burn them) will alert the spiders, and they will come to investigate.

There are a total of eight spiders in the lair, in addition to any spiders that survived the initial attack on the road.

Once the webs have been disturbed, two spiders will arrive every three rounds until either all the spiders or all the PCs are dead.

Spider, Large (8): AC 8; MV 6, 15 (web); HD 1+1; hp 9, 9, 9, 7, 7, 7, 4, 4; #AT 1; D 1; SA poison*; SZ S; ML 7; AL N; XP 175

*15 points of damage, save vs. poison at +2 for no damage

B. Main Chamber

The floor of this large rough cavern is so covered with moisture that combat here will force PCs to roll checks against their DEX each round or fall prone.

C. Bottle Neck

This intersection is so clogged with webs that if PCs are burning the webs with torches, there is only a 30% chance (40% for elves or half-elves) that they will discover the entrance to chamber D.

D. Refuse Chamber

> Clearing the webs away from this chamber reveals a grotesque and macabre sight. The drained husks of birds, small animals, and even a few humanoids lie everywhere. Amongst them you can see small, white, egg-shaped clusters of webs, approximately a foot in diameter. These masses number in the hundreds; many of the clusters are broken open and are emptied of whatever they contained.

The odour of this room is so nauseating that PCs must roll a CON check for each round they are here or be incapacitated. Combat while in this state is at -2 "to hit", and PCs suffer a +2 to their armour class.

DMs Note: If any of the spiders survived the attack on the road, they will be found here with whatever hit points they had when they fled the initial attack.

E. Ettercap's Chamber

This foul-smelling, humid chamber is home to the ettercap. If it managed to survive the attack on the road, it will have healed itself by now with a **potion of extra healing** and be ready for the PCs when they enter the chamber.

Due to the humidity of the chamber things such as flint and steel will not work. Torches will give off a black smoke, and burning the webs will be only half as effective as normal for the area (see *DM's note* at the start of this section).

The webs in this chamber are thick and covered with water droplets. Movement through them will only be 30′. This increases to only 40′ if a torch is used to burn them.

The ettercap will be ferocious and fight to the death here,

especially if the PCs have already wounded it. In the chamber with the ettercap are two giant spiders.

Ettercap (1): AC 6; MV 12; HD 5; hp 31; THAC0 15; #AT 3; D 1d4/1d4/1d8 (claw/claw/bite); SA poison bite*, web; SZ M; ML 15; AL NE; XP 650

*save vs. poison or die in 1-4 turns

Spider, Giant (2): AC 4; MV 3, 12 (web); HD 4+4; hp 21, 19 #AT 1; D 1-8; SA poison*; SZ L; ML 13; AL CE; XP 420

*save vs. poison or die immediately

Scattered throughout the chamber, amongst the wet webbing, the PCs can find the following items accumulated from previous meals: 85 cp, 350 sp, 60 pp, a golden flute worth 350 gp, and a necklace of platinum set with sapphires worth 1,600 gp. In the back of the ettercap's chamber(where the ettercap would sleep), the PCs will find a *cloak of protection +2* and a *mace +1, +2 vs undead*.

Concluding the Adventure

The adventure is concluded when the ettercap and spiders are killed or driven out of the lair.

Intrepid PCs may wish to gather venom from the spiders and ettercap. Large spider venom will sell for 50 gp per ounce. Giant spider venom will sell for 100 gp per ounce. The ettercap's poison is so strong and hard to obtain that it will sell for 1,000 gp per ounce. The ettercap and all the spiders each have only one ounce of poison in their glands.

Scaling the Adventure

If the PCs were severely challenged by the attack on the road, it is recommended that the DM remove the two giant spiders from the ettercap's chamber. However, if the PCs handle the road attack easily and the ettercap is severely threatened, then feel free to add as many spiders as you see fit. Maybe even add another ettercap…perhaps a mate.

Author Bio

I am a single dad of 48 with three great kids. I have been playing AD&D since the age of 16 (there were chits instead of dice). I have been DMing for about 30 of those years and presently run a Forgotten Realms campaign.

I have previously had adventures published in *Dungeon* magazine ("Skulking Below", Issue #81) and *Footprints* ("The Rats Meow", Issue #20).

LAIR MAP
1 SQ = 5 Feet

N

WEBS
TREES
TERRACE
PATH
SPIDER

A
B
C
D
E

START
WEBS

WILDERNESS MAP
1 SQ = 50 Feet

N

LAIR

WEB TRAP
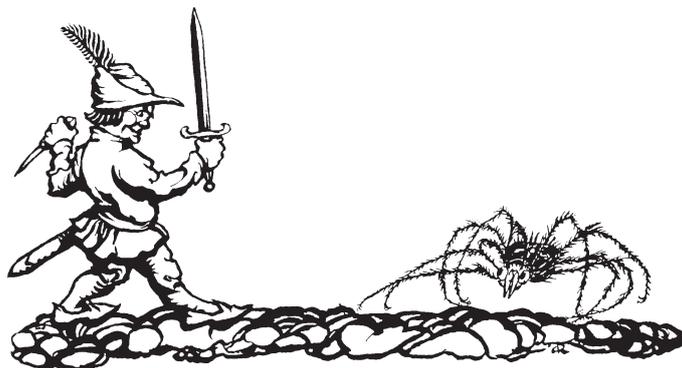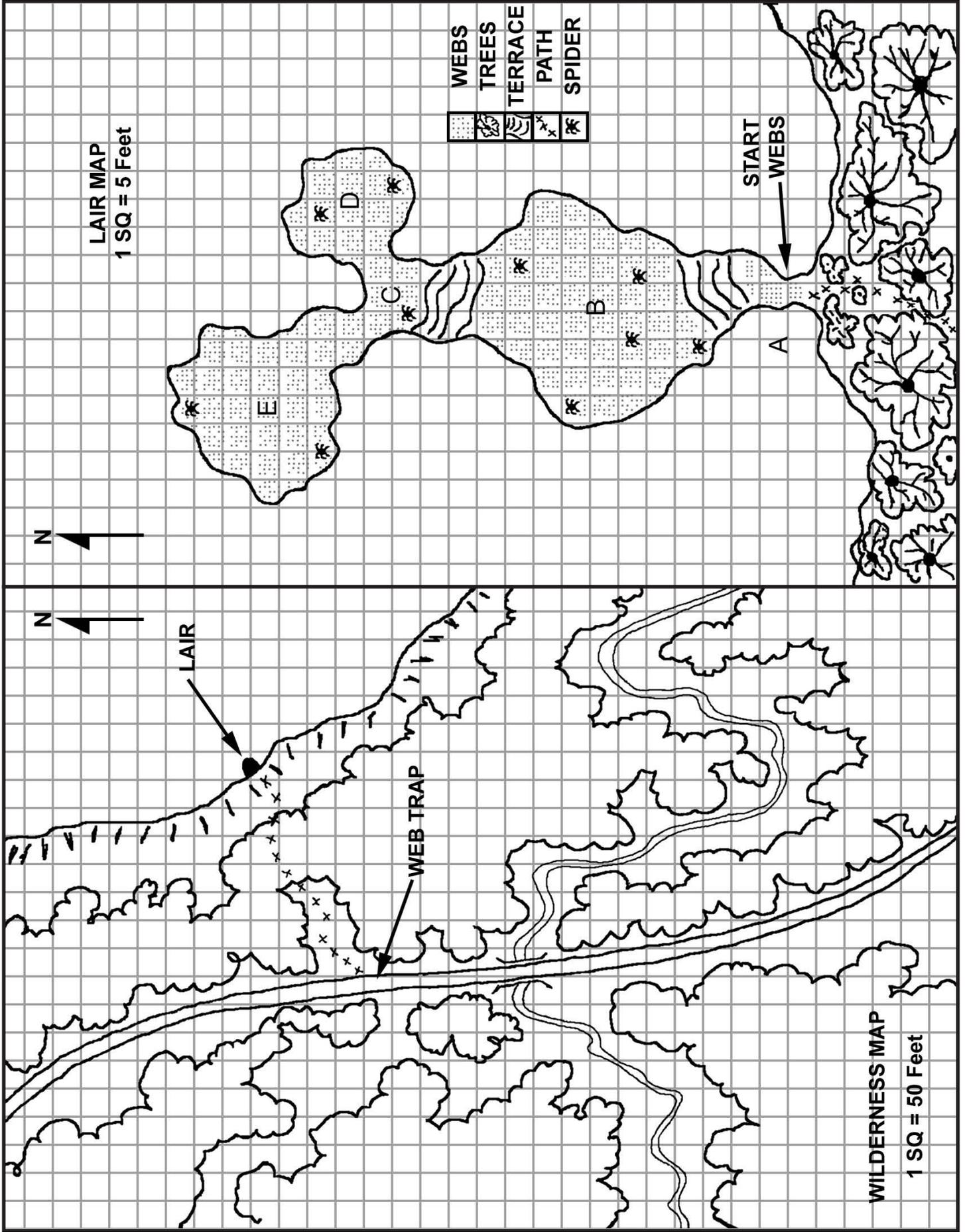
By Stuart Marshall

The following article is Open OSRIC™ content.

I present an optional, alternative system for generating random magical items. These tables allow for more variation in the kinds of items found.

In tables A–D, the notation "d66" means roll two dice of different colours, such that one colour corresponds to the rows of the table and the other corresponds to the columns. This produces a table with 36 possible results, all of exactly equal probability.

There are some references to creatures that aren't in the core rules, either from supplements or which will appear in forthcoming publications; if you don't have stats for a creature, substitute something appropriate from your own campaign, re-roll, or make something up!

Magic Item Type Table

d%	Type
01-05	Helm
06-15	Clothing (see clothing subtable)
16-30	Weapon (see weapon subtable)
31-50	Wand/Rod
51-60	Staff
61-70	Armour (see armour subtable)
71-75	Book
76-85	Item (see item subtable)
86-95	Jewellery (see jewellery subtable)
96-00	Gemstone/Rock
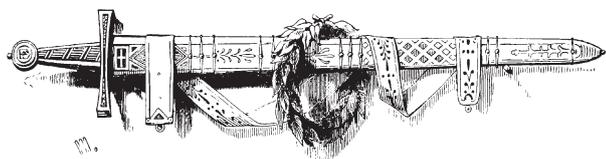
Armour Subtable

d%	Type
01–04	Banded
05	Brigandine
06	Bronze plate
07–16	Chain
17	Haubergeon
18–21	Lamellar
22–39	Leather
40	Linothorax
41	Padded
42–69	Plate
70	Ring
71–74	Scale
75–93	Shield
94–98	Splint
99–00	Studded leather

Weapon Subtable

d%	Type
01–06	Arrow
07	Arrow, silver
08	Atlatl
09–12	Axe, battle
13–15	Axe, hand
16	Axe, two-handed
17	Blowgun
18–19	Bolt, heavy crossbow
20–21	Bolt, light crossbow
22	Bow, composite long
23	Bow, composite short
24–26	Bow, long
27–29	Bow, short
30	Club
31	Cosh/sap
32	Crossbow, hand
33–34	Crossbow, heavy
35	Crossbow, light
36–39	Dagger
40	Dagger, main gauche
41	Dagger, poignard
42	Dagger, rondel
43	Dart
44–45	Flail, heavy
46	Flail, light
47	Halberd
48–49	Hammer, war, heavy
50	Hammer, war, light
51	Javelin
52	Knife
53	Lance
54–57	Mace, heavy
58–59	Mace, light
60	Morning star
61	Pick, heavy
62	Pick, light
63	Pole arm
64	Shield, spiked buckler
65	Sling
66	Sling bullet
67	Sling bullet, silver
68	Sling, staff
69	Sling stone
70	Spear
71–73	Staff
74–75	Sword, bastard/claymore
76–79	Sword, broad
80	Sword, foil
81–92	Sword, long
93	Sword, rapier
94	Sword, scimitar
95–97	Sword, short
98–99	Sword, two-handed
00	Trident

Jewellery Subtable

d%	Type
01–09	Amulet
10–14	Anklet
15–18	Arm-ring
19–25	Bracelet
26–31	Brooch
32–34	Chain
35–37	Choker
38–41	Clasp
42	Coronet
43	Crown
44	Diadem
45–56	Earring
57–61	Locket
62–64	Medal
65–68	Medallion
69–73	Necklace
74–76	Pendant
77–78	Pet's collar
79	Pin
80	Orb
81–93	Ring
94	Sceptre
95–97	Tiara
98–00	Toe-ring

Item Subtable

d%	Type
01–03	Anvil
04–05	Brush
06–11	Candle
12–13	Candelabrum
14–16	Comb
17–21	Container (see subtable)
22–25	Cutlery (fork/knife/spoon)
26–28	Distaff
29–31	Easel
32–34	Figurine
35–41	Furniture (see subtable)
42–43	Hook, grappling
44–48	Idol/Fetish
49–51	Ladle/Scoop
52–55	Lamp/Lantern
56–59	Mirror
60–71	Musical Instrument (see subtable)
72–74	Plate/Platter
75–77	Scabbard/Sheath
78–81	Seal
82–84	Statuette
85–87	Tent
88–93	Tool (see subtable)
94–98	Vehicle (see subtable)
99–00	Whetstone

Clothing Subtable

d%	Type
01	Apron
02	Baldric
03–08	Belt
09	Bodice
10–13	Boots
14	Cap
15–16	Cape
17–22	Cloak
23–24	Doublet
25–26	Dress
27	Frock
28	Gaiters
29–32	Gauntlets
33–37	Girdle
38	Gloves
39–40	Gown
41	Habit
42–43	Hat
44–48	Hood
49	Hose
50	Houppelande
51–53	Jerkin
54–55	Kirtle
56	Loincloth
57–58	Mask
59	Mittens
60	Nightgown
61	Peignoir
62	Peplos
63	Petticoat
64–68	Robe
69–70	Sandals
71	Sash
72–73	Scarf
74	Shawl
75	Shift
76	Shirt/blouse
77–79	Shoes
80	Skirt
81	Slip
82	Smock
83	Stockings
84	Stola
85	Strophion
86–87	Surcoat
88–89	Tabard
90–92	Toga
93	Tricorne
94	Trousers
95–97	Tunic
98–99	Veil
00	Vest

Tool & Vehicle Subtables

d6	Tool	d6	Vehicle
1	Adze	1	Boat
2	Bellows	2	Carriage
3	Hammer	3	Cart/Waggon
4	Saw	4	Canoe
5	Spade/Shovel	5	Sledge
6	Tongs	6	Ship

Furniture Subtable

d4	Type
1	Chair
2	Stool
3	Table
4	Throne

Instrument & Container Subtables

d12	Instrument	d12	Instrument
1	Bell	1	Amphora/Jug
2	Cornet	2	Bag/Sack
3	Drum	3	Barrel
4	Dulcimer	4	Bowl
5	Fife	5	Bottle
6	Flute / Pipe	6	Box/Chest
7	Harp	7	Bucket/Pail
8	Lute	8	Cauldron/Pot
9	Lyre	9	Cup/Chalice/Flagon/Goblet
10	Viol	10	Flask/Phial
11	Whistle	11	Pouch
12	Zither	12	Waterskin

Weapon Bonus Table

d%	Type
01	Cursed -3
02	Cursed -2
03–04	Cursed -1
05–50	+1
51–75	+2
76–80	+3
81–87	+4
88–89	+5
90–96	Bane weapon
97–98	Double bane (bonuses against two kinds of target)*
99	Triple bane (bonuses against three kinds of target)*
00	Special

Armour Bonus Table

d%	Type
01	Cursed -3
02	Cursed -2
03–04	Cursed -1
05–50	+1
51–75	+2
76–80	+3
81–87	+4
88–89	+5
90–96	+1d4 to AC but not saving throws
97–98	+1d4 to saving throws but not AC
99	+1d6 to saving throws, +1d6 to AC
00	Special

* If the same kind of target is rolled twice, bonuses are cumulative up to a maximum of +7

Bane weapons: Weapons in the form **+1, +2 vs. skeletons** or **+3, +5 vs. undead** are generically called "bane weapons". To generate a bane weapon, take the base weapon bonus (+1, +2, +3 or whatever) and add an additional +1d2 vs. a specific target. Use the following tables for determining target-specific bonuses:

Target-Specific Bonus Table Type

d8	Table Type
1–2	Use Table A
3–4	Use Table B
5–6	Use Table C
7–8	Use Table D

Table A

d66	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Birds	Giants	Dwarfs (E)	Kobolds (G)	Worms	Dragons
2	Reptiles	Trolls (G)	Gnomes (E)	Goblins (G)	Slugs and snails	Unicorns (E)
3	Amphibians	Ogres (G)	Halflings (E)	Hobgoblins (G)	Crustaceans	Pegasi (E)
4	Mammals*	Ettins (G)	Elves & Half Elves (E)	Lizard men	Arachnids	Perytons (G)
5	Insects	Bugbears (G)	Humans	Gnolls	Plants	Griffons/Hippogriffs
6	Fish	Gnolls (G)	Orcs & Half Orcs (G)	Troglodytes	Fungi	Rocs

Table B

d66	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Carnivores	Aquatic/marine creatures	Evil creatures	Demons	Dogs/Canines	Sheep/Ovines
2	Herbivores	Flying creatures	Good creatures	Devils	Cats/Felines	Goats/Caprines
3	Omnivores	Burrowing creatures	Lawful creatures	Daemons	Bears/Ursines	Cattle/Bovines
4	Vertebrates	Extraplanar creatures	Chaotic creatures	Elementals	Swine/Porcines	Deer/Cervines
5	Invertebrates	Insubstantial creatures	Male creatures**	Golems	Horses/Equines	Snakes/Elapines
6	Animals	Unintelligent creatures	Female creatures***	Undead	Rodents/Murines	Primates/Simians

Table C

d66	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Clerics	Cavaliers	Troubadours	Anti-paladins	Harpies (G)	Dinosaurs
2	Druids	Paladins	Kung fu monks	Berserkers	Chimaerae/Gorgimaerae	Slimes, moulds, and jellies****
3	Witches	Magic-users	Inquisitors	Elementalists	Centaurs (E)	Lycanthropes/Shape-changers
4	Fighters	Illusionists	Necromancers	Minotaurs (G)	Manticores (G)	Shedu/Lammasu/Couatl (E)
5	Rangers	Thieves	Warlocks	Nagas	Drakes/Wyverns	Phoenixes (E)
6	Barbarians	Assassins	Sorcerers	Hags (G)	Sphinxes	Squid/Octopi/Krakens

Table D

d66	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Ghouls/ghasts	Shoggoths	Moon Beasts	Annunakim	Mermen	Basilisks/Dracolisks
2	Zoogs	Deep Ones	Polypous Ones	Cephaloids	Grimlocks	Catoblepas
3	Gugs	Elder Things	Stirges/Bloodsuckers	Slaasthaki	Ixitxachitl	Cockatrices
4	Shantaks	Great Race	Titans (E)	Dvergar/Derro	Locathah	Gorgons
5	Nightgaunts	Men of Leng	Mephits/Imps/Quasits	Cheiropterans	Pech	Salamanders
6	Byakhee	Mi-Go	Disenchanters*****	Peikko	Tritons	Sahuagin

* Includes only mammals in the "Animal" class, so not humans, demi-humans, etc.
** Misandric weapon, will function as -3 in the hands of a male
*** Misogynistic weapon, will function as -3 in the hands of a female
**** Includes gelatinous cubes, black puddings, etc.
***** These rare, prized weapons are unaffected by the disenchanter's attack.
(G) If intelligent sword, will never be evil-aligned, 90% chance of being good.
(E) If intelligent sword, will never be good-aligned, 90% chance of being evil.

Special Table

d%	Special
01–50	Use a standard "special" type from the core rulebook (e.g. hammers will be either a Hammer of Thunderbolts or a Hammer of the Dwarfs; daggers will be Daggers of Venom, etc.)
51–75	Attack effect, see below
76–00	Item power, see below

Attack Effects

Attack effects resemble weaker versions of the special powers of a sword with a special purpose. They only occur if the wielder rolls a natural "20".

Attack Effects Table

d%	Effect
01–10	+1 damage
11–20	+1d3 damage
21–30	+1d6 damage
31–50	Double rolled damage
51–57	Target blinded for 1d4 rounds
58–64	Target deafened for 1d4 rounds
65–71	Target mute for 1d4 rounds
72–78	Target dispelled (as if by *dispel magic* cast by a 20th level character)
79–83	Wielder healed 1 hp
84–88	Wielder healed 1d3 hp
89–92	Wielder healed 1d6 hp
93–95	Wielder blessed (as the 1st level cleric spell *bless*) until combat ends
96	Target attracts missiles for 1d6+4 turns. Any nonmagical missile (arrow, quarrel, thrown item, etc.) that passes within 10′ of the target has a 75% chance of striking him or her
97	Target shrunk 50% for 1d6+4 turns (as a **potion of diminution**)
98	Target enfeebled for 1d6+4 turns (as the 2nd level magic-user spell *ray of enfeeblement*)
99	Wielder strengthened for 1d6+4 turns (as the 2nd level magic-user spell *strength*)
00	Siphon: target loses 1d6 hp, wielder healed by the same amount

Item Powers Table

d%	Power	d%	Power	d%	Power	d%	Power
01	+1 to wearer's AC	26	Immunity to Lightning	51	2 Wishes	76	Heal
02	+2 to wearer's AC	27	Immunity to Acid	52	3 Wishes	77	Cure Disease
03	+3 to wearer's AC	28	Acid Arrow	53	Minor Globe of Invulnerability	78	Cure Blindness
04	+1 to Saving Throws	29	Wall of Stone	54	Globe of Invulnerability	79	Remove Curse
05	+2 to Saving Throws	30	Wall of Fire	55	Shield	80	Wall of Force
06	+3 to Saving Throws	31	Charm Person	56	Push	81	Force Sculpture
07	+1 to AC/Saving Throws	32	Cursed	57	Cursed	82	Cause Fear
08	+2 to AC/Saving Throws	33	Magic Missile	58	Summon Earth Elemental	83	Remove Fear
09	+3 to AC/Saving Throws	34	Colour Spray	59	Summon Air Elemental	84	Phantasmal Force
10	+4 to AC/Saving Throws	35	Aetherealness	60	Summon Fire Elemental	85	Phantasmal Killer
11	Pyrotechnics	36	Astral Travel	61	Summon Water Elemental	86	Audible Glamour
12	Fireball	37	Petrifaction	62	Plane Shift	87	Prismatic Spray
13	Delayed Blast Fireball	38	Disintegration	63	Monster Summoning I	88	Tongues
14	Cone of Cold	39	Paralyzation	64	Monster Summoning II	89	Wizard Lock
15	Lightning Bolt	40	Blindness	65	Monster Summoning III	90	Knock
16	Chain Lightning	41	Finger of Death	66	Monster Summoning IV	91	Light
17	25% Magic Resistance	42	Feeblemind	67	Monster Summoning V	92	Darkness 15′ rad.
18	50% Magic Resistance	43	Fly (1d6+1 turns)	68	Monster Summoning VI	93	Silence
19	75% Magic Resistance	44	Airy Water (1d6+1 turns)	69	Prot. from Evil/Good	94	Silence 15′ rad.
20	95% Magic Resistance	45	Detect Invisible (1d6+1 turns)	70	Prot. from Evil/Good, 10′ rad.	95	Dancing Lights
21	Regenerate 1hp/round	46	ESP (1d6+1)	71	Know Alignment	96	Faerie Fire
22	Regenerate 2hp/round	47	See Aetheral (1d6+1)	72	Clairvoyance	97	Feather Fall
23	Regenerate 3hp/round	48	Invisibility (will)	73	Clairaudience	98	Jump
24	Immunity to Cold	49	Telekinesis	74	Raise Dead	99	Polymorph Other
25	Immunity to Fire	50	1 Wish	75	Animate Dead	00	Cursed

Item Uses/Charges Table

d%	Number of uses/charges*	d%	Number of uses/charges*
01-05	1	71-85	3/day
06-15	2	86-95	1/week
16-30	3	96-99	1/month
31-55	1/day	00	1/year
56-70	2/day		

* GM's discretion whether an item has a limited number of charges or uses.
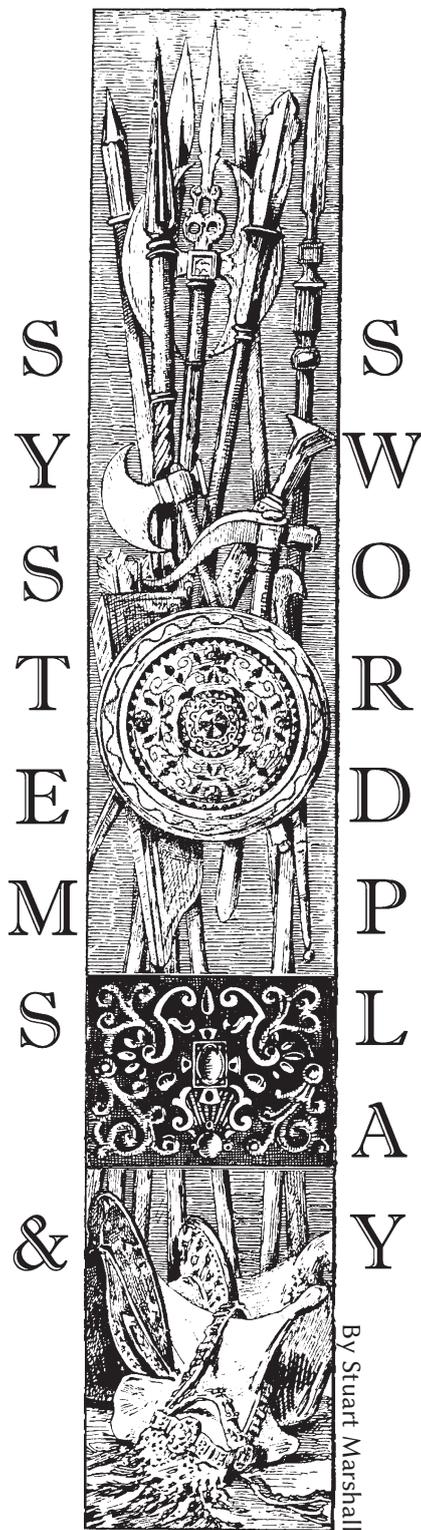
Weapon Specialisation (Revised)

This optional rule replaces the rules for Weapon Specialisation on p. 13 of the OSRIC™ Core Rules.

Weapon Specialisation is permitted to:

1. Single-class barbarians, cavaliers, fighters, rangers and paladins, and NPC berserkers and inquisitors, starting at level 1.

2. Multi-class barbarians, cavaliers, fighters, rangers, and paladins starting upon gaining an additional weapon proficiency at level 4.

3. Thieves and assassins starting when they gain an additional weapon proficiency at level 5.

Using an additional proficiency, it is possible to double-specialise in any melee weapon *except* a polearm, the two-handed axe, the two-handed sword, and any missile weapon. Double-specialisation is permitted to:

1. Single-class barbarians, cavaliers, fighters, rangers, and paladins, and NPC berserkers and inquisitors, starting when they gain an additional weapon proficiency at level 4.

2. Multi-class barbarians, cavaliers, fighters, rangers and paladins, and NPC berserkers and inquisitors, starting when they gain an additional weapon proficiency at level 7.

3. Thieves and assassins starting when they gain an additional weapon proficiency at level 9.

Weapon specialisation costs weapon proficiencies to acquire: one such proficiency to gain basic familiarity with the weapon, a second to specialise, and a third to double-specialise. It has the following effects:

PC Level	Specialised			Double-Specialised		
	To hit	Damage	Attacks/round*	To hit	Damage	Attacks/round*
1	+1	—	1	—	—	—
2	+1	+1	1	—	—	—
3	+1	+1	5/4	—	—	—
4	+1	+1	5/4	+1	+2	3/2
5	+1	+2	5/4	+1	+3	3/2
6	+1	+2	5/4	+2	+3	3/2
7	+1	+2	3/2	+2	+3	3/2
8	+1	+2	3/2	+2	+3	2
9	+2	+3	3/2	+3	+3	2
10	+2	+3	3/2	+3	+3	2
11	+3	+3	2	+3	+4	2
12	+3	+3	2	+3	+4	5/2
13	+3	+3	2	+3	+5	5/2
14	+3	+3	2	+3	+5	5/2
15+	+3	+3	5/2	+3	+6	3

* For weapons that normally have more or less than one attack per round, use the better choice between the number listed here and the weapon's base That is, a longbow specialist at first level has 2 attacks/round (using the bow's stats because those are better than the rate listed here), and a heavy crossbow specialist at first level has 1 attack/round (using the specialised stats, which are better than the weapon's base rate).

Fighting with Two Weapons (Revised)

This rule replaces the one on p. 123 of the OSRIC™ Core Rules. If this optional rule is used, a character may fight with two single-handed weapons. The character will take a penalty on "to-hit" rolls according to his or her dexterity:

DEX	Main hand penalty	Off-hand penalty
18+	0	-1
17	0	-2
15–16	-1	-3
8–14	-2	-4
6–7	-3	-5
1–5	Fighting with two weapons is not possible	

If the optional weapon specialisation rules are in play, then they apply only to the main-hand weapon. A weapon used in the off-hand receives no specialisation bonus even if the character is specialised in it. The character's number of attacks per round are improved by fighting with two weapons according to the following table:

	Two-weapon use	
Normal attacks	Main hand	Off-hand
1	1	1/2
5/4	1	1/2
3/2	1	1
2	3/2	1
5/2	2	1
3	5/2	1

The off-hand weapon may be a hand axe, dagger (any type), knife, short sword, light flail, light mace, light pick, or light warhammer.

By Stuart Marshall

Expanded Weapon Tables

Weapon type	Damage S/M	Lg	Enc.	Cost	Usable by classes
Arrow	1d6	1d6	4/doz	2gp/doz	A, B, Ca, F, R, P, Th, Tr
Arrow, silver	1d6	1d6	4/doz	2gp ea.	A, B, Ca, F, R, P, Th, Tr
Axe, battle	1d8	1d8	7	5 gp	A, B, Ca, F, R, P
Axe, hand	1d6	1d4	5	1 gp	A, B, Ca, F, R, P, W
Axe, two-handed	1d10	2d8	12	10 gp	A, B, Ca, F, R, P
Bolt, heavy crossbow	1d6+1	1d8+1	4/doz	4 gp/doz	A, B, Ca, F, Kfm, R, P
Bolt, light crossbow	1d4+1	1d6+1	2/doz	2 gp/doz	A, B, Ca, F, Kfm, R, P
Club	1d4	1d3	3	2 cp	A, B, Ca, Cl, D, F, R, P, Th, Tr, W
Cosh/sap†	1d2	1d2	3	3 cp	A, B, Ca, F, R, P, Th
Dagger	1d4	1d3	1	2 gp	A, B, Ca, F, I, Kfm, M, R, P, Th, Tr, W
Dagger, main gauche‡	1d3	1d3	1	10 gp	A, B, Ca, F, I, Kfm, M, R, P, Th, Tr, W
Dagger, poignard	1d3	1d4	1	5 gp	A, B, Ca, F, I, Kfm, M, R, P, Th, Tr, W
Dagger, rondel	1d2+1	1d2+1	1	5 gp	A, B, Ca, F, I, Kfm, M, R, P, Th, Tr, W
Dart	1d3	1d2	½	2 sp	A, B, Ca, F, I, M, R, P, Th, Tr
Flail, heavy	1d6+1	2d4	10	3 gp	A, B, Ca, Cl, F, R, P
Flail, light	1d4+1	1d4+1	4	6 gp	A, B, Ca, Cl, F, R, P
Halberd	1d10	2d6	18	9 gp	A, B, Ca, F, R, P
Hammer, war, heavy	1d6+1	1d6	10	7 gp	A, B, Ca, Cl, F, R, P
Hammer, war, light	1d4+1	1d4	5	1 gp	A, B, Ca, Cl, F, R, P
Javelin*	1d6	1d4	4	5 sp	A, B, Ca, F, R, P
Knife	1d3	1d2	1	4 sp	A, B, Ca, F, I, Kfm, M, R, P, Th, Tr, W
Lance*	2d4+1	3d6	15	6 gp	A, B, Ca, F, R, P
Mace, heavy	1d6+1	1d6	10	10 gp	A, B, Ca, Cl, F, R, P
Mace, light	1d4+1	1d4+1	5	4 gp	A, B, Ca, Cl, F, R, P
Morning star	2d4	1d6+1	12	5 gp	A, B, Ca, Cl, F, R, P
Pick, heavy	1d6+1	2d4	10	8 gp	A, B, Ca, F, R, P
Pick, light	1d4+1	1d4	4	5 gp	A, B, Ca, F, R, P
Pole arm*	1d6+1	1d10	8	6 gp	A, B, Ca, F, R, P
Shield, spiked buckler‡	1d3	1d3	1	10 gp	A, B, Ca, F, R, P
Sling bullet	1d4+1	1d6+1	4/doz	1 gp/doz	A, B, Ca, F, I, M, R, P, Th, Tr, W
Sling bullet, silver	1d4+1	1d6+1	4/doz	1 gp ea.	A, B, Ca, F, I, M, R, P, Th, Tr, W
Sling stone	1d4	1d4	2/doz	Free	A, B, Ca, F, I, M, R, P, Th, Tr, W
Spear*	1d6	1d8	5	1 gp	A, B, Ca, D, F, Kfm, R, P, Tr, W
Staff	1d6	1d6	5	Free	A, B, Ca, Cl, D, F, I, Kfm, M, R, P, Tr, W
Sword, bastard/claymore	2d4	2d8	10	25 gp	A, B, Ca, F, R, P
Sword, broad	2d4	1d6+1	8	10 gp	A, B, Ca, F, R, P, Th, Tr
Sword, foil	1d4+1	1d6	2	10 gp	A, B, Ca, F, R, P, Th
Sword, long	1d8	1d12	7	15 gp	A, B, Ca, F, R, P, Th, Tr
Sword, rapier	1d6+1	1d8	3½	20 gp	A, B, Ca, F, R, P, Th, Tr
Sword, scimitar	1d8	1d8	5	15 gp	A, B, Ca, D, F, R, P, Th
Sword, short	1d6	1d8	3	8 gp	A, B, Ca, D, F, R, P, Th, Tr
Sword, two-handed	1d10	3d6	25	30 gp	A, B, Ca, F, R, P
Trident*	1d6+1	3d4	5	4 gp	A, B, Ca, F, R, P

* Long-hafted, pointed weapons, such as the spear, lance (when used dismounted), pole arm, or trident, inflict double damage when set to receive a charge from a charging foe. The lance inflicts double damage when used by a character riding a charging heavy warhorse or similar animal; if the attacker is mounted on a normal riding or cavalry horse, the bonus damage should be reduced.

† A cosh or sap attack does 1d2 damage in most circumstances but has a special attack. If the target is a human, demi-human, humanoid, or animal and the attacker has surprise or is in position for a backstab, they may attempt to knock their target unconscious by hitting them on the head. The target's head is treated as AC6 or AC1 if wearing a helm. On a surprise or backstab, roll 1d6 for damage and apply any backstab modifier. If this exceeds the target's current hp, then the target is knocked out; otherwise, damage is 1d2.

‡ A main gauche or spiked buckler improves the wielder's AC by one point against one attacker only.

Specially-Forged Pure-Metal Weaponry

Some monsters such as lycanthropes, undead, demons, and devils (as well as others) are susceptible to damage from specially forged "pure-metal" weaponry, when nonmagical weapons would otherwise not harm them. Specific pure metals will vary from campaign to campaign, but often include one or more of the following ores:

– Adamantine
– Cold iron
– Magicum
– Meteoric iron

– Mithril
– Orichalcum
– Silver

Some campaigns will require pure-metal weapons forged from these metal to be pure and unalloyed; others will require that these be alloyed
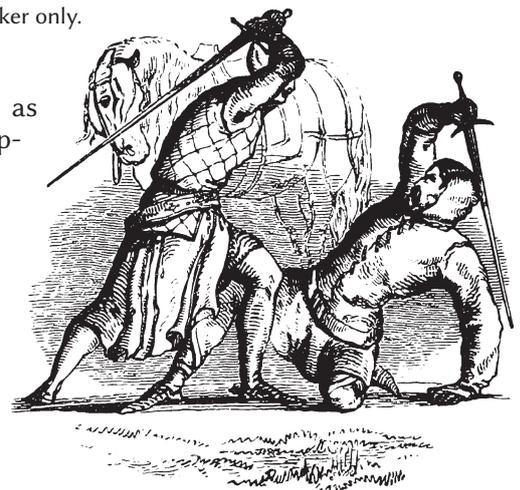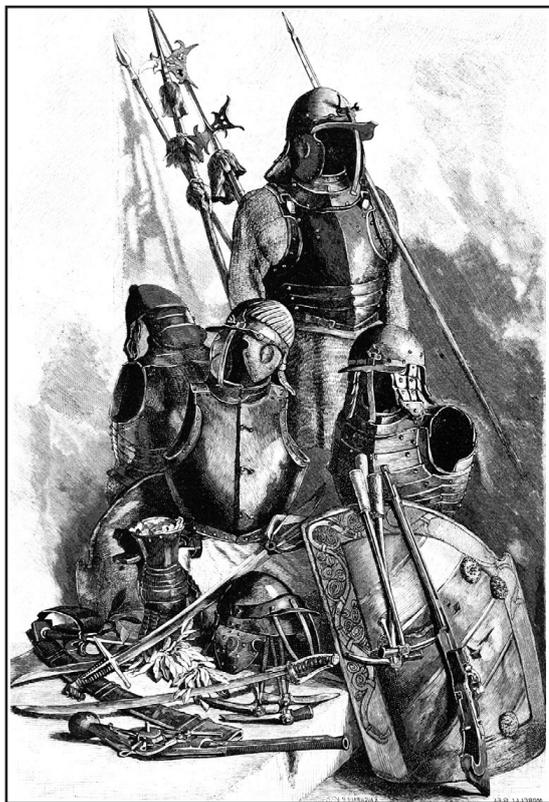
with other metals (such as steel, precious metals, etc.), to be specially quenched using holy or unholy water or other special coolants, or to use other campaign-specific conditions, rituals, or blessings as part of their manufacture. These guidelines are not exhaustive, and in some campaigns specially forged weaponry may be created using nonmetallic materials (special woods, other-planar substances, etc.).

The net effect of forging such pure-metal weaponry is that the cost of weapon is significantly higher: a minimum increase of 12 times the cost of a standard weapon is a good baseline, and the cost may vary by material in some campaigns. For example, a standard arrow costs 2 gp per dozen arrows, while a single silver arrow costs 2 gp; a standard bastard sword costs 25 gp, so a silvered bastard sword would cost 300 gp. The same weapons forged from meteoric iron may cost 20 times the standard weapon cost instead of 12. Given the additional cost and time required to forge pure-metal weapons, most will probably need to be commissioned and may not be readily available to purchase off the shelf.

The specific effect of a specially forged pure-metal weapon will vary from monster to monster. Silvered weapons may be required to damage some monsters, but the same weapon may not have any effect upon others that can be damaged only by meteoric iron. Unless otherwise noted in a monster's description, magical weapons of sufficient potency will always damage a monster regardless of the materials used in their construction—so a magical silver arrow +1 would still damage a creature that can be hit only by meteoric iron or magical weapons.

Expanded Missile Weapon Tables

Weapon type	Damage S/M	Lg	Rate of fire	Range (-2 to hit per increment)	Enc.	Cost	Usable by classes
Atlatl, with dart‡	1d4	1d3	2	35 ft	3	‡	A, B, Ca, F, R, P
Atlatl, with javelin‡	1d6	1d6	1	30 ft	3	‡	A, B, Ca, F, Kfm, R, P
Axe, hand	1d6	1d4	1	10 ft	5	1 gp	A, B, Ca, F, R, P, W
Blowgun	1	1	2	20 ft	1	20 gp	A, B, Ca, F, R, P
Bow, long†	1d6	1d6	2	70 ft	12	60 gp	A, B, Ca, F, R, P
Bow, short†	1d6	1d6	2	50 ft	8	15 gp	A, B, Ca, F, R, P, Th, Tr
Club	1d4	1d3	1	10 ft	3	2 cp	A, B, Ca, Cl, D, F, R, P, Th, Tr, W
Composite bow, long†	1d6	1d6	2	60 ft	13	100 gp	A, B, Ca, F, R, P
Composite bow, short†	1d6	1d6	1	50 ft	9	75 gp	A, B, Ca, F, R, P
Crossbow, hand‡	1d3	1d2	1	20 ft	1	‡	A, B, Ca, F, R, P
Crossbow, heavy*	1d6+1	1d6+1	½	60 ft	12	20 gp	A, B, Ca, F, Kfm, R, P
Crossbow, light	1d4+1	1d4+1	1	60 ft	4	12 gp	A, B, Ca, F, Kfm, R, P
Dagger	1d4	1d3	2	10 ft	1	2gp	A, B, Ca, F, I, M, R, P, Th, Tr
Dart	1d3	1d2	3	15 ft	½	2 sp	A, B, Ca, F, I, M, R, P, Th
Hammer	1d4+1	1d4	1	10 ft	5	1 gp	A, B, Ca, Cl, F, R, P
Javelin	1d6	1d4	1	20 ft	2	5 sp	A, B, Ca, F, R, P
Sling, bullet	1d4+1	1d6+1	1	35 ft	½	1 gp/ doz	A, B, Ca, F, R, P, Th, Tr
Sling, stone	1d4	1d4	1	35 ft	½	—	A, B, Ca, F, R, P, Th, Tr
Spear	1d6	1d8	1	15 ft	5	1 gp	A, B, Ca, F, R, P, Tr, W
Staff sling‡	2d4	2d4+1	½	30 ft	5	‡	A, B, Ca, Cl, F, R, P

* Heavy crossbows may not be used from horseback; only a footman can brace them correctly before firing.

† Some specially made bows (sold at special cost if at all—GM's discretion) permit the user to add his or her strength bonus to damage inflicted with the weapon. Otherwise, the damage bonus from strength with missile weapons is restricted to hurled weapons (axes, hammers, clubs, darts, javelins, and spears).

‡ Hand crossbows, atlatls, and staff slings are cultural weapons used by dark elves. In most campaigns they are uncommon or unknown on the surface, so many GMs will not permit surface dwellers to gain proficiency in them unless and until the party meet dark elves in the course of adventuring. Some primitive or barbarian tribes will use atlatls with darts.

Additions to Armour Table

Armour type	AC	Armour type	AC
Mail hauberk (as OSRIC™)	5	Heavy scale	5
Mail haubergeon (or lorica hamata)	6	Brigandine	7
Bronze plate (chariot armour)	4	Linothorax (Greek armour)	7
Hoplite panoply (or lorica musculata)	6	Lamellar	6
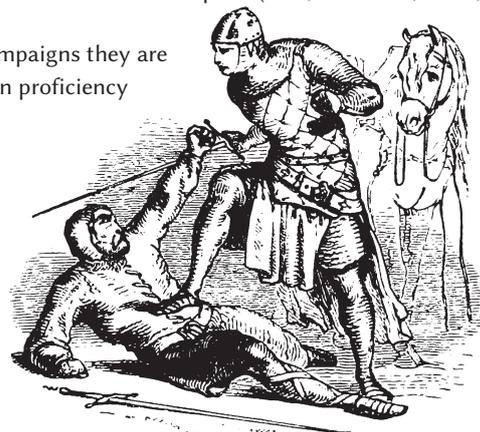
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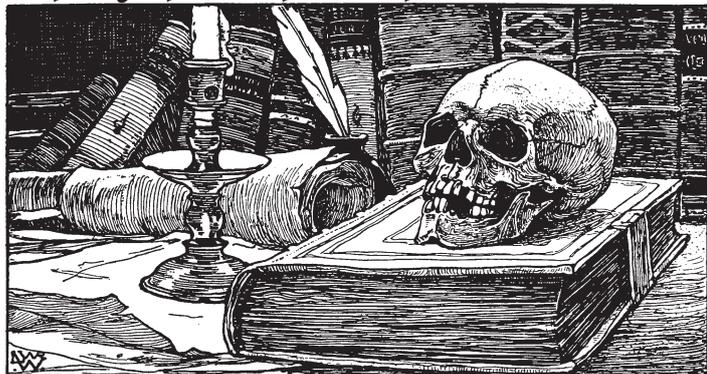
VOLUME OF FORGOTTEN LORE

A Library Research System for AD&D Magic-Users or the Equivalent

By Michael Haskell

The time between adventures should be a magical one, but what is there for a magic-user to do in town? In those rare periods of peace the party's fighters are off training, sunk eye-deep in the pleasure pits (they call this "training", too), or loading the ears of Iron Alley whores with tales of their latest battles (*also* called "training"). But what are the magic-users to do? What task has the dignity, the intellectual heft, and the opportunity for magic-users to mingle with fellow scholars of the arcane and forbidden? What activity tantalizes with flame-bright flashes of discovery and the triumph of the individual mind? Why, research of course! Let clerics and thieves spend the time between adventures polishing the various objects of their various devotions. During periods of relative peace, ancient archives and dusty tomes call out to those who would meld their minds with books of ultramondane lore and bend reality to their will.

The following mechanics are for those between-adventure periods when a magic-user has time to investigate some topic of inquiry (**Archive Research**), and for investigating those signs and rumors that arise in game play (**Determining Immediate Knowledge**). Research topics may spring from adventure hooks, mysterious items, the locations of treasures and important artifacts, the natures of bizarre creatures, or even the legends that surround dungeons, wilderness regions, and beings of power. A magic-user's research can provide the DM with means to plant adventure seeds and introduce important regions and NPCs. Research and investigation can also provide hints to advance any overarching quests that the DM might have in place.

I started thinking about player-character research while speaking with a friend about a one-on-one game that he DMed. Since the only PC in his game was a magic-user, it was obvious that combat could not be the answer to everything that cropped up. For my friend, player-character research seemed a good way to provide engaging sessions that were not based solely upon smashing things. I eventually decided to bring a mechanic to the game that is a little like the Call of Cthulhu system's Credit Rating/ Library Use style of investigation. However, I did not want to bring a full-on skill system into play, as I do not think such systems have ever worked well in AD&D.

Archive Research

The Mechanic

Chance to Glean Information =
Chance to know each Listed Spell*

*from Intelligence Table II: Ability for Magic-users (PHB p. 10)

Modify the player's roll as follows:

- Subtract 1% from the **die roll** for each day after the first spent looking
- Subtract 1% from the **die roll** per level of the MU
- Subtract another 5% for each **friendly reaction roll** made while researching this piece of information
- Subtract an additional 5% for each **enthusiastically friendly reaction** roll made while researching this piece of information (q.v. DMG p. 63)

Allow a "critical" success at ⅕ of the needed % roll (after making the appropriate modifications). A roll below this critical threshold indicates that an extra piece of information has been revealed that makes what is found more immediately useful — such as a time factor, the strength of nearby guardians, the nature of a magical treasure, a lesser-known route to the location, and so on. Essentially, the critical information that has been gleaned is something that reduces the blood, time, and treasure the PCs will have to expend in a subsequent quest.

On Days Spent in Research

The magic-user may spend as many days as she likes in research, but if the **Glean Information** roll at the end of the research period fails, any subsequent research attempt must be of at least equal duration. In addition to this, modifiers are gained for the second roll only for days spent over and above the original research attempt.

On Reaction Rolls

Money is not necessarily a component of magic-user research, but spending coin may shave some time off finding the right archive or source by altering the character's reaction rolls. Dropping 50 gp at the Thirsty Scholar to learn which don brags about his encounter with the Scolopendrine Queen or spending 25 gp at Bear Essentials for two phials of tincture of cave bear hypothalamus may help a PC's reaction rolls. If a player has a good idea, reward him for it. The reaction rolls can be made at any time, whether the player simply announces his plan to sweet-talk an apprentice of the Hundred-Legged Guild for access to the Scolopendrine Codex or actually role-plays an encounter between her character and the mind-sylph servants of the Sage of the Aerial Pit.

On Location

A couple of assumptions are built into this mechanic. The first is that the library, archive, Armatured Hide of the Wyvern of the Mnemosyne Reach, or ravings of the Eremite of the Deadlands actually has the information that the PC seeks. If the DM has determined that there is no chance the PC can find the desired information *from that source*, a successful roll should reveal where the information can be found, with a critical success increasing the specificity of this information.

The second assumption is that the research is conducted in the appropriate location. Researching when the Unheld Center will slouch roughly into the Lost Vale really calls for a city, a university, the Rookery of the Black Birds of Memory, a serpentarium of unmolted knowledge, or some other center of learning. In such circumstances a successful roll would indicate that the Unheld Center slouches once per lustrum on the night of the blood-dimmed tide; a critical success indicating that that night is June 16 by the calendar of the Smaragdos Athol. For each degree the research location is removed from the ideal — in the above example, moving down to a small city, a town, a village, a hamlet, a thorp, a hunting lodge, a rude hovel, a closet, a water closet, a cornfield, a puddle — the DM should add 5% to the **Glean Information** die roll. If located in a true world center, like Greyhawk, the DM may opt to subtract 5 – 10% from the player's roll.

This mechanic, then, gives a magic-user something to game if she happens to be at liberty in town while the rest of the party trains, if the magic-user's player is the only one to make it to a session—or when the party really needs to know something and is forced to turn to the nerd for help. A secondary use, though, is more directly applicable to in-dungeon situations.

Determining Immediate Knowledge

When the party has penetrated to the necromancer's Scapular Sanctum and found his eldritch books, each bound in the hide of a different sentient creature that still whispers its wisdom a thousand years after its flaying — when the group stumbles from the haunted hall, where a barbarian king enacts his final bloody feast every night—when the magic-user searches the insignificant nook where a strange priest scribbled the hermetic doxology of his new god—when the bold text in the module says **32. Library** — a quick adjustment of the above rule lets the DM sort out what can be learned and how long it will take.

In these situations it is the job of a magic-user to separate wheat from chaff: to realize that the volume bound in the still-humming wings of a species of immortal bees is of value only to the curious (100 gp), while the sheaf of oak bark stitched with wires of dendritic silver contains the secret of thrice-yielding grain (5,000 gp in any farming land). With one roll, the magic-user (assuming she is competent in the appropriate languages or has the necessary spells prepared) can either separate the valuable books from the dross or determine the goal of library's original collector (i.e., the treasonous plot, nefarious scheme, deadly bargain, unhallowed compact, erotic adventure, necromantic doom cult, alien bargain, or ultra-planar itinerary that the library builder was working toward). A critical success roll should reveal the library's specific worth to collectors, produce some details about the original archivist's coconspirators, and so on.

The Mechanic

Chance to Glean Information =
Chance to know each Listed Spell*

*from Intelligence Table II: Ability for Magic-users (PHB p. 10)

Modify a player's rolls as follows:

– Subtract 1% from the **die roll** for each hour after the first spent perusing the library
– Subtract 1% from the **die roll** per level of the MU
– Subtract another 5% for each **assistant** (an assistant can be another MU or a thief of 4th level or higher; always use the base % chance of the most competent character — unless the PCs insist on placing another in charge)

If a roll fails, the magic-user, of course, can repeat the process while the fighters admire their muscles, roast giant rats, or whatever it is that amuses them most. As with archive research, though, if the **Glean Information** roll fails, any subsequent research attempt must be of at least equal duration, and modifiers are gained for the second roll only for time spent over and above the original research attempt.

Take heart, magic-users! No longer must you cast your magic missile into the darkness and then wait upon the morrow to do something cool. Now you get to read, too. And that has made all the difference.

A short fiction by Steve McFadden

3rd of Frost-ebb

Bored with the task before him, Dolgrim decided to instead examine the mirror that Lord Ordovar had asked him to identify. The preparations he was currently working on could wait until later and, if the fatigued expression on Aeric's face was telling, his apprentice was equally tired of grinding up their stores of *copperas* and *ambergris*.

Dismissing his student, the doughty warlock then trudged down to the tower's great hall and skirted that chamber's stagnant, still space. Moving into the kitchen, Dolgrim looked about, rummaging through the larder for something to assuage his rumbling belly. Predictably, a large, dusky raven chose just that moment to arrive, gliding through the shadows of the hall and into the kitchen's light. Landing upon the mage's broad shoulder, Syl pecked its master's robe and cawed quietly, the intelligent bird indicating that it was also eager to snag a morsel. Dolgrim stroked his familiar affectionately.

Loading a salver with smoked sausage, cheese and a hunk of bread, Dolgrim shared a bit of the rasher with his companion and then bade the raven to keep watch over the hall. The warlock then descended a staircase that led to the tower's cellar.

Despite the unnatural darkness that hung over the cellar, years of habit allowed Dolgrim to wend his way past the broken furniture and equipment that cluttered the chamber's floor. Reaching out, the warlock found the section of wall he desired and, after removing two of its stones, deftly slid back the pins that held fast a secret door. This portal led to Dolgrim's private laboratory, a sanctum that his servants did not know about and that Aeric dared not enter.

Replacing the stones, Dolgrim's slippered feet then led him down an equally dark passageway. This terminated in an unusually formidable door: a multi-layered, wood and metal construction that had been crafted by dwarven skill and human dweomercraft. Huffing much more than when he had first raised his tower, the aging warlock gave thanks that the immense door did not require brute strength to shift. Instead, the wizard-locked portal opened silently after Dolgrim traced his personal sigil across the gold plate set at chest height. Light from the hidden laboratory split the darkened passage and Dolgrim eagerly shuffled into the room, his analytical mind already formulating a series of tests to perform on the magical mirror.

Hours later, Dolgrim rubbed his eyes and squinted at the page before him. He had hoped that Bardoc's Codex would help determine the mirror's function, but the treatise on optics and lenses was proving to be less than useful. Indeed, the mirror continued to vex the warlock, who chewed upon his lower lip and slammed the tome shut. Dolgrim stretched his limbs and grunted in frustration.

Choosing a different approach, Dolgrim got up to study the speculum more closely. Peering at the object's perfect gold and platinum encasement, the mage admired the mirror's workmanship and construction and examined its frame from every angle. Muttering through an incantation designed to reveal hidden glyphs and inscriptions, Dolgrim's close inspection discovered a series of cleverly formed symbols running across the bottom edge of the metallic frame. Using a Bardoc lens to magnify the images, the warlock studied the foreign words and carefully copied their characters onto a handy piece of parchment. Currently unprepared to decipher the three terms, Dolgrim chose instead to retire for the evening. In the morning he would commit to memory a spell of translation and see what would come of the effort.

7th of Frost-ebb

Dolgrim had been spending the last few days in his library, poring over the (decidedly few) elven texts that were in his collection. None of those ancient tomes were of the arcane sort. Rather, they were religious in nature and served as a means for Dolgrim to place the mirror's inscriptions into context. The hidden words had been translated easily enough but, even though the warlock knew them to be elvish, he also knew they were somewhat archaic. Two nights spent riffling pages had produced no new insight, until the warlock enlisted Aeric's sharp eyes in the endeavour. The youth's energy and enthusiasm could yield wondrous results when channelled correctly.

Dolgrim's apprentice had identified passages where two of the terms were used in the oldest text and, after several hours of puzzling over the book, the warlock had discerned the general meanings of those words. The first word, *athás*, was used not only in the context of opening vessels and containers, but also in describing the relinquishment, or freeing, of one's spirit. *Nŭin*, on the other hand, was used in the opposite sense. It connoted the sealing, or closing of a portal – usually in reference to a tomb's door, or in the stubborn refusal to contemplate a deity's benevolent teachings. These two words seemed rather straightforward and, upon the mirror frame, were written to the left and right of the third term: *reláthos*. The third elvish term had not been found in any of the warlock's books.

Ever impatient, and having always been a man of action, Dolgrim instructed Aeric to continue to search for instances of the third term. The warlock then marched down to his laboratory to investigate how the insight that had been gained could be put to practical use. Intent upon determining the mirror's purpose before preparations for the divination to be performed at the vernal equinox would have to begin, Dolgrim secluded himself in his inner sanctum and began an experiment that would hopefully settle the matter . . .

After pulling a series of scrolls from some chests and drawers, Dolgrim recited the words inscribed upon each document. This erected several wards about his person - spells that would deflect energy away from his body and also prevent the warlock from becoming befuddled, blinded or stunned. As Dolgrim completed his recitations the words scribed upon each scroll disappeared and the vellum subsequently turned to dust. Then, taking a lump of charcoal and some chalk from a case of writing implements, the warlock drew a set of three concentric semicircles on both the floor and ceiling of the laboratory - below and above where the mirror hung on a wall. Connecting the termini of each semicircle with lines drawn across the surface of the wall, Dolgrim formed two concentric half-cylinders about the mirror. Imbuing those tracings with mystical energy, the mage then wove spells of containment along the closed surfaces - precautions that were meant to absorb any elemental discharges emanating from the device. Lastly, the cagey warlock used his powers to erect an invisible defensive shield directly between his self and the mirror. This final spell would offer a small degree of protection from shards of glass should the mirror explode.

Donning a couple rings of moderate power and holding several enchanted wands at ready, Dolgrim squared himself to the mirror. The warlock believed that, in all likelihood, the speculum was designed for scrying. After all, legends held that mirrors were used in the magical art of divination, often performing the same functions as viewing crystals and water basins. The two words that had been identified, Dolgrim surmised, were the commands needed to activate and deactivate the mirror's magical powers. The warlock was mainly concerned that, at some point in its history, the ancient device may have had a trap placed upon it by a jealous owner.

Concentrating upon his reflection in the mirror, Dolgrim steeled himself and then, with authority, spoke the presumed activation word.

"Athás . . ."

In the blink of an eye a red-hued shape materialized before the warlock, accompanied by a feral, but sulphurous reek and a deafening, hideous bellowing. Before he could do more than flinch and reel backwards, Dolgrim was attacked by the creature that had so suddenly materialized. Blows that would have landed upon the warlock's head and chest were instead deflected by the protective barrier that he had erected only moments before. Yet, the force of the powerful strikes still managed to send Dolgrim sprawling several paces across the laboratory's floor, testament to the thing's terrible strength.

Landing heavily, most of Dolgrim's weight fell upon his buttocks and his left hand. The wands that the old warlock had held scattered uselessly across the floor and he quickly crawled under the room's enormous table - nearly flopping on his face when his injured wrist buckled. Recovering somewhat, Dolgrim briefly registered that the man sized, reddish-brown humanoid was striding purposely forward. He was immediately glad that the bulk of the table was between his self and the creature.

Sounding like an ox being slaughtered, the creature howled with rage and frustration at seeing the warlock retreat beneath the enormous workbench. As Dolgrim paused to catch his breath, the thing lurched forward in fury and hammered its fists onto the tabletop, intent upon pummelling the man to death. Alembics shattered and apparatuses clanged to the floor as the table's two inch-thick wood splintered and cracked, but momentarily held. A twisted wooden stick bounced from the slab as the hammering commenced and the warlock's injured hand protectively closed over the wand. Looking at the device, hope fled from Dolgrim when he realized that, out of all of his treasures, it was perhaps the least useful for battle. Instead, the piece of crooked tree root was ensorcelled to transmute stone into mud . . . and vice versa.

Hiding under the table Dolgrim got a good look at the beast's lower extremities. Squat, crimson-ochre legs sprang from a groin of wiry black hair; a miniscule, purplish penis barely visible in the tangled mess. Bowing out at impossible angles, the monster's bandied legs seemed grossly malformed, their limbs bent and turned inwards at the knees as if a giant had wrung the thing cruelly. Ending with taloned, but smallish three-toed feet, the bottom portion of the creature looked as if it had been the victim of a gaoler's rack - so much so that it was a wonder the thing could walk.

Pushing himself up, opposite the creature, Dolgrim turned and pointed his right hand at the beast, intending to stun

the thing and make for the chamber's door. As he did this, the crazed monster smashed the tabletop with all of its weight put into the blow. This collapsed the bench outright and spilled the rest of the warlock's equipment onto the floor in a ringing crash. Ignoring the thing's actions Dolgrim focussed his mind and spat out a pair of arcane words: "*Kulash murak!*"

In quick succession, three bursts of plasmatic energy sprang from the warlock's fingertips and drove towards the monster. Resembling so much a trio of brilliant, white sparks shooting from a blacksmith's anvil, the magical missiles burned into the creature's chest but seemed to be more absorbed by its taut, leathern skin than to seriously harm it. With intensified rage the creature raised the pitch of its bellowing and, with little apparent effort, grabbed and flung the halves of the table to each side. Dolgrim judged the thing would be upon him before he could manage to open the laboratory's door.

Standing a hand's span taller than an average man, two-thirds of the monster was blood-red torso topped with a blunt, conical head. Hairless, save for the bristles that erupted from enormous warts coating the being's head and body, the thing resembled some monstrous, simian cousin of man. Adding to this impression were the creature's freakishly long and powerfully muscled arms - each of which would have hung nearly to the floor if not for being in constant, seemingly random motion.

Small, ridiculous bat ears erupted from the monster's ovoid head. More disturbing was the wide, lipless mouth that gaped open in rage, shouting confused gibberish through a score of black, conical teeth. The creature's eyes were beady, but demonic looking. Pale yellow in color, the inhuman orbs had black, vertically slit irises and nictating lids. Finally, the monster's powerful, four-fingered fists contrasted with its three-toed feet and belied its alien origin. On some subconscious level Dolgrim registered the thought that, by using the cursed mirror, he had inadvertently gated in a fiend from the nether planes.

Stumbling backwards, Dolgrim circled the nearer table piece and jerked a large leather glove from his waist belt. Donning the ungainly glove, the warlock slipped an amber ring from his left thumb and quickly jammed it over his gloved, right ring finger. Clenching that fist and aiming the ring at the creature, Dolgrim hummed loudly and channelled his magical focus into the circlet's amber gemstone. Reaching a rapid crescendo, Dolgrim barked out a single, seemingly incoherent sound and released a torrent of electrical power. An intense bolt of lightning lanced forth, crackling from the warlock's silver ring to the monster, which had begun to shamble forth. This blast flashed brightly and seemed to coruscate around the fiend for the briefest of instants, but then coursed past the thing and continued on a path behind it, completely failing to harm the monster. Arcing into the elemental wards that Dolgrim had placed around the ill-fated mirror, the lightning strike dissipated meekly and left only the pungent smell of ozone hanging in the air. At this failed attack, the demonic looking humanoid paused, screamed insanely and flailed its arms even more violently. Hunching over, the thing placed its knuckles to the laboratory's flagstones and charged the warlock with blinding speed.

In a complete panic, Dolgrim dove to his left to avoid the monster's deadly rush. Yet, the thing clipped the warlock's hip with a swing of a knobbed fist - the blow strong enough to crush Dolgrim's ribs if it had only landed there. The monster's furious charge could not be halted, however, and it smashed into a bookcase that held the man's most prized magical tomes. Ironically, the beast's fist bash launched the desperate Dolgrim back around the table's wreckage and afforded him a few precious seconds.

Quickly realizing that his spells were completely useless against the thing, Dolgrim instead attempted to stop the creature through indirect means. Carefully raising the wand that he somehow still held in his left hand, the warlock pointed the tip of the sinuous stick at the room's ceiling and activated its power.

"*Gölomoch*," intoned the mage, even as the fiend lurched up and swung its hammer-like fists in a chaotic frenzy. Controlling the wand's earthly powers was easy for Dolgrim, as he had actually constructed much of the lower sections of the tower with the item's help. Thus, with a mere thought and gesture, Dolgrim dissolved several tons of fitted stone situated directly above the creature. Mud, sand and large chunks of granitic rock cascaded down, towards the humanoid, the warlock intending to trap the creature under a pile of muck and then quickly re-crystallize the sediment. Unfortunately, the creature rolled away from the falling material with cat-like speed and was only partially encased in the mound of earth.

Re-solidifying the heap a split second too late, Dolgrim only managed to entrap the bottom third of the creature's trailing leg. Even this failed to stop the monster as, after an interlude where it scrunched its face in intense concentration, the thing began to instead strain mightily and then scream in absolute insanity. Frustrated with its inability to teleport out of this new restraint, the creature literally tore its leg away from the rock that was concreted about its ankle and foot, severing the bottom portion of the appendage completely. Lumbering out of the debris upon a single foot and upon the jagged stubs of its tibia and fibula, the monster ignored whatever pain it felt and maneuvered into position for another charge. Calming itself, the thing eyed Dolgrim with insane malevolence as it bled from the stump of its right leg and as billowing clouds of dust and dirt cascaded down. The half of the chamber where Dolgrim had caused the collapse suddenly slumped and shifted, with the ceiling dropping nearly two feet. With stone grinding upon stone in a new, threatening cacophony, the warlock hurled himself backwards, away from the fiend and the impending collapse. Unfortunately, that was also away from the door.

Dolgrim searched for an escape, and his eyes found only the damned speculum hanging from a wall. Afraid of dying at the fiend's hands, but grasping at straws, the warlock attempted a final, desperate measure. Wracking his mind to recall the mirror's deactivation word, Dolgrim fumbled with it, but eventually found it.

The fiend stirred from the cloud of dust and was now a whirlwind of doom hurtling through the air. Only inches from death, and with no other option, Dolgrim the Warlock spoke the unknown word:

"*Nüin!*" the mage stammered . . .

Blacktop Vale

by Steve McFadden

Advice on Using This Work

This adventure is to be used on a drop-in basis for a small party of 1st and 2nd level characters campaigning in or near a suitable mountain range. The action takes place during the last stages of winter within a mountain valley.

Play-testing was done with a party of 1st and 2nd level characters in possession of two minor magic weapons, several silver daggers, and a dozen silver-tipped arrows; the silver weapons were present because the party had reason to believe a lycanthrope was in the region. That group fell nicely into the blockhouse trap but just managed to escape the wererat's clutches. Sweeping through Dolgrim's Tower after a week spent hiding and recuperating, the party managed to recover the **Elven Mirror of Lifetrapping** and determine what had occurred in the Blacktop Vale but missed much treasure and lost two characters.

Background

The domain of Dolgrim the Warlock is a high mountain valley nestled below Blacktop Peak, an 11,000 foot mountain capped by a massive, granitic dome. Small streams course around the mountain's eastern and western slopes and then converge just south of its base. Nearly dry in autumn and winter, the resulting brook cuts down the center of Blacktop Vale before meandering through the surrounding mountains and becoming a tributary of a major river system. Water is plentiful in the warlock's valley, and a dozen cattle and a herd of goats are afforded sufficient grazing on its pastures.

Coming across the treeless, lightning-blasted mountain a dozen years earlier, Dolgrim identified the place as an energy nexus and endeavored to erect a small tower below it. From such a base the magic-user could study the power unleashed by thunderstorms and learn how to siphon away some of the electricity that frequently hammers the mountain. The warlock parlayed with Ordovar, the dwarf lord who held dominion over Blacktop Vale, and eventually gained permission to construct a tower there. With Ordovar's thanes helping in its construction, Dolgrim's tower was erected in less than a year's time.

In return for the dwarves' permission and help, Dolgrim swore oaths to their clan, promising to protect the stout folk's southern borders and to act as an intermediary in the clan's efforts to repel further human encroachment. Relations between Ordovar's clan and neighboring human realms were often tense before Dolgrim moved into the region, but in recent years negotiations conducted within the warlock's great hall proved quite efficacious: lightning strikes timed to underscore the dwarven emissaries' demands tended to bring results. Over the course of a decade, Lord Ordovar became quite pleased with his sorcerous ally.

Dolgrim's tower was recently damaged, however, in an incident that occurred three weeks before the player characters' presence in the surrounding mountains. During that terrible event Dolgrim mysteriously disappeared, and his tower suddenly slumped and shifted, killing Aeric, his lone apprentice. Even more devastating, after days spent searching for their master and attempting to recover the apprentice's body from its resting place, Dolgrim's dozen retainers and servants were set upon by an army of goblins and svartlings that had been scouting the area. Seeing that Dolgrim's tower was in distress, and already preparing for their springtime raids, the humanoids immediately shifted their objective and attacked Blacktop Vale. Thus, only four days after the mysterious incident Blacktop Vale was sacked by a humanoid army that killed the valley's remaining inhabitants and razed all of its wooden structures. Presently, a small contingent of goblins resides in the tower, and the bulk of the raiders have moved on to their seasonal raiding.

Circling above the devastation is Syl, Dolgrim's raven familiar. Whether because of confusion or sorrow, the warlock's intelligent companion is visibly agitated and will be observed to periodically leap into the sky, circle about the tower for a few minutes, and then settle itself fitfully upon the edifice's broken battlements.

At the GM's discretion, the characters may be stopped just short of Blacktop Vale by Grüldin Fasselstock, a member of Lord Ordovar's clan and a friend to Dolgrim the Warlock. Grüldin arrived at the scene two days before the party and is convinced that the warlock's familiar is acting strangely because Dolgrim is still inside. Grüldin would have already assaulted the tower and attempted to free his friend, but the youngish dwarf realized that he would never have been able to succeed alone. With the PCs' arrival, Grüldin sees an opportunity to free Dolgrim from the clutches of the goblins that have invaded the tower.

From the edges of the valley's forest, the PCs will espy the warlock's tilting tower in the center of Blacktop Vale, canted fifteen degrees to one side. Some of the fortification's merlons have crumbled and fallen to the ground, and in the light snow that covers the valley the PCs can make out hundreds of goblin-sized footprints. It is clear that a horde of the creatures recently rampaged through
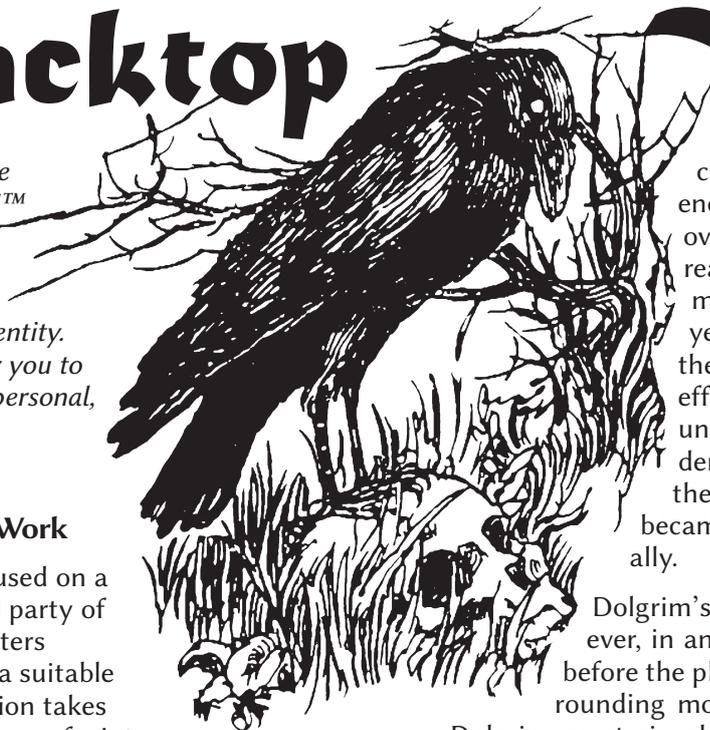
the valley and slew everyone residing there. Dolgrim's familiar is visible atop the tower and appears to be acting much like a dog with a nearby, distressed master.

This adventure is broken into three parts:

1. A wilderness journey through untamed foothills to Blacktop Vale.

2. A trap encounter at a human outpost.

3. Ridding Dolgrim's tower of the vermin that infest it while attempting to discover what happened to the warlock.

A Possible Hook

> Your party has been hired by a local herbalist-arcanist to deliver a supply of pastes and powders to Dolgrim the Warlock at least a week before the year's vernal equinox. Dolgrim requires the spell components to cast a divination that can only be performed on the first day of spring so, to ensure timely delivery of the coffer, he has entrusted your party with the task.

The coffer is emblazoned with Dolgrim's ring-and-lightning bolt sigil, reminding the PCs of the warlock's affinity towards electricity (if requested, make a rendering of Dolgrim's sigil for the players, see sketch in Part 3).

> Setting out three weeks before the advent of spring, with snow and ice still crusting the ground, your party plans to make haste and spend less than two weeks getting to the warlock's domain of Blacktop Vale, for Dolgrim's plans may be put into jeopardy if you dawdle. Although Dolgrim is an old friend of Master Willim, no sane man would anger a mage who can reputedly fling lightning bolts from his fingertips.

Part 1: Journey to the Blockhouse

Departing from the nearest village, the party will be traveling through late-season snow drifts and ice melt, along an ill-kept road that is designed for the passage of mule trains rather than wagons. Forty miles separate the village from the blockhouse that represents the northernmost border of the local lord's domain. Under such conditions, it should take the party five to seven days to slog through the winter forest and reach that checkpoint. The GM can encourage the party to head for the blockhouse rather than skirt around it through some ploy, such as a promise to pay the party for delivering missives to its commander, Sergeant Bordal. Of course, the GM should press the players, hastening them along while simultaneously making it difficult for their party to reach the Vale on time.

The GM can complicate things further by having the weather turn foul, which will have a 25% cumulative chance of making characters sick for every 24-hour period spent in it (i.e., a 50% chance the second day, 75% chance on the third and 100% on the fourth). Instances of such mundane sickness will temporarily reduce each of a character's STR, DEX, and CON scores by two points for three consecutive days.
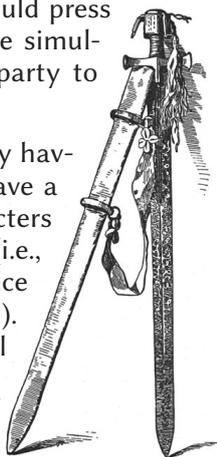
Random Encounters in the Lowlands

During the first three days of travel things should be fairly uneventful, as few things move about the wooded foothills in late winter. There is only a 33% chance each day and each night of encountering anything interesting, but if an encounter is determined roll a d8.

1. **Bugbear Hunters (3):** AC 5; MV 90′; HD 3+1; hp 16, 14, 13; #AT 1; D 2d4 (thrown spear) or 1d10 (bardiche); SA surprise 50% of the time; SZ L; ML 13; AL CE

   The party comes across a trio of bugbears that attempt to ambush the characters near one of the region's endless stream-carved gulleys.

2. **Rotting Skull Svartlings (5):** AC 8; MV 90′; HD 1-1; hp 4, 4 (javelin + knife), 3, 3, 3 (short bow + knife); #AT 1; D 1d6 (javelin) or 1d4 (short bow) or 1d4 (knife); SZ S; ML 11; AL CE

   This group has been sent out by the wererat and is scouting for targets to raid come spring. They will launch missiles at a party if it seems advantageous, but will retreat at the first sign trouble (new OSRIC™ creature, see description in the adventure Lake of Sorrows in *Footprints* #21).

3. **Crushed Skull Goblins (7):** AC 8; MV 120′; HD 1-1; hp 5, 5, 5 (short bow + knife) 3, 3, 3, 3 (javelin + knife); #AT 2 (short bow) or 1 (javelin or knife); D 1d4 (short bow) or 1d6 (javelin) or 1d4 (knife); SZ S; ML 11; AL LE

   Missing the sack of Blacktop Vale, the Crushed Skulls are determined to get an early start on their springtime raiding. The seven goblins possess few items of worth but do have an assortment of agate and glass beads (2sp) and silver-trimmed bracers (3 sp) among them.

4. **Pack of Wolves (8):** AC 7; MV 180′; HD 2+2; hp 10, 9, 9, 8, 8, 7, 7, 6; #AT 1; D 1d4+1 (bite); SZ S; ML 12; AL N

   The party has attracted a pack of plains wolves. If a wolf is killed the pack will immediately retreat. The treated pelts of plains wolves may be sold for 3 sp each.

5. **Mountain Lion:** AC 6; MV 180′; HD 3+2; hp 14; #AT 3; D 1d3/1d3/1d6 (paw/paw/bite); SA rear claws will do an additional 1–4/1–4 damage if *both* font paws successfully hit, springs 30′; SD surprised only on a 1 in 6; SZ M; ML 13; AL N

   The mountain lion attacks a lone character or mount in the early morning or evening. The lion attempts to strangle the target, dragging it away quietly. If treated and cured, the mountain lion's pelt may be sold for 5 sp.

6. **Halfling Scouts (5):** AC 7; MV 120′; hp 5, 4, 4, 3, 3; #AT 2 (short bow) or 1 (knife); D 1d6 (short bow) or 1d4 (knife); SZ S; ML 11; AL LG

   This troop of halflings holds a neutral attitude toward the region's humans and will parley with a party that does not act with hostility. Sharing information about recent humanoid and bandit movement, they will mention that goblins and bugbears have been seen in the vicinity, along with a group of human bandits. The halflings put a premium on goblin and bugbear ears and are willing to pay 1 sp for a set of goblin ears, 5 sp for a set of pointy bugbear ears.

7. **Baba Volgra, the Gypsy (MU3):** AC 10; MV 30′; hp 7; #AT 1 or spell; D 1d4 + poison; SA dagger coated with a weak paralytic poison (save at +2 or paralysis for 1 turn), spells—*mending, unseen servant, scare*; SZ M; ML 13; AL CG

Gypsy Family (0-level humans): AC 10; MV 120′; hp 5 (Orlan), 3 (Gella), 2 (Lika); #AT 1; D 1d4 (knife, Orlan and Gella only); SZ M, S (Lika); ML 10; AL NG

Located in a cold depression just a bowshot from the forest track, the sharp lines of a snowbound gypsy wagon is seen by an observant character. Suspected of stealing a holy relic, this family was expelled from a remote town just before the onset of winter. Orlan made a poor decision to follow the mountain track months ago, and inspection of the gypsy's camp will show that he was in the process of repairing a wheel and axle on the wagon when the family was caught in a heavy snowstorm. One of their two emaciated horses has died, and its meat, along with the beast's feed oats, has barely sustained the family through winter. Grateful for any help that the party can provide, Baba Volgra will gift a party that shares food and helps fix the family's wagon with a pebble ensorcelled with a *continual light* spell. Alternatively, she will allow a magic-user in the party to copy a single spell from her spellbook. Along with the mundane tools and implements associated with a nomadic lifestyle, the following items are hidden in the family's wagon: 13 sp, 25 cp, a gilded tarot deck worth 1 gp, a set of silver knucklebones worth 5 sp, silver jewelry worth 35 sp, assorted gemstones worth 3 gp. **Baba Volgra's spellbook**: 1st level— *detect magic, charm person, comprehend languages, mending, read magic, unseen servant*; 2nd level:—*continual light, knock, scare.*

8. **Morlit the Bastard (F2):** AC 5 (chain); MV 120′; hp 14; #AT 2 (longbow) or 1 (long sword); D 1d6 (bow) or 1d8+1 (sword + STR); SZ M; ML 12; AL NE

Bandits (6): AC 8 (leather); MV 120′; HD 0-level; hp 6, 5, 4 (long bow + melee weapon) 5, 4, 3 (melee weapon); #AT 2 (bow) or 1 (melee weapon); D 1d6 (bow) or by weapon; SZ M; ML 11; AL CN

Morlit is a bandit leader in possession of a handful of men and absolutely no scruples. Scraping a meager existence from the traffic that moves along the forest track, the bandits are presently cold, hungry, and miserable. More than happy to waylay and kill a moderately sized party, the bandits will fire arrows from a distance to minimize the chances of being wounded. Morlit's band will retreat if more than two of the bandits fall. In addition to a trove of coins (3 gp, 27 sp, 83 cp), Morlit has acquired some choice pieces of gilded silver that are locked in a chest located back in the bandit camp. These include a chalice destined for a local temple (10 gp), a salver stolen from a lord's table (15 gp), and a delicate lantern intended as a gift from the local lord to his king (50 gp). The bandit also has a coffer full of vellum dispatches and records that are signed and stamped by various regional merchants and lords. Enterprising characters may find a use for the documents if they are scraped clean and rewritten in the proper style.

Signs of Activity (Day 3)

On the third day of travel the party will come across a few sets of footprints that cross the forest track. These footprints appear to be about a day old and, when examined carefully, reveal that a significant group of humanoids moved through the forest recently. The humanoids (evidently goblins or svartlings, from the small sizes of the prints) have been paralleling the road since crossing it and have established an ambush point a day's march to the north. If the party bumbles into the humanoids' ambush it will be attacked by nine of the marauders.

Upon detecting the humanoids' spoor, the most logical course of action would be for the party to move off of the track and trudge through the deeper snowdrifts of the forest. This will add two or more days of travel to the first leg of the journey and expose the party to more random encounters.

Ambush Along the Road (Day 4)

If the party proceeds along the northern road despite the warning afforded by the tracks, it will stumble into an ambush set by the Bloody Flux tribe of goblins.

These humanoids are neither well equipped nor well organized, but they have numbers on their side. To spring their trap, they have chosen a location set within a particularly thick section of woods. The tribe's archers (the three strongest goblins) will fling arrows at the party from the safety of some trees located on one side of the forest track. If the party retreats from this, it will find that the javelin throwers have rushed in from behind, attempting to gain surprise:

Bloody Flux Goblins (9): AC 8 (4 behind trees); MV 120′; HD 1-1; hp 6, 5, 5 (short bow + knife), 4, 4, 3, 3, 3, 2 (javelin + knife); #AT 2 (bow) or 1 (javelin or knife); D 1d4 (short bow) or 1d6 (javelin) or 1d4 (knife); SZ S; ML 11; AL LE

This band participated in the attack upon Blacktop Vale two weeks ago, but was late in arriving and came up short when spoils were divided. To rectify this, the group has decided to waylay the mule trains that will soon ply the road. If searched, the bodies of the Bloody Fluxes will yield the following items: an unusual number of human-made clothes; three daggers of high quality steel (5 sp each); several iron pots and kettles (5 sp total); 7 sp; 23 cp. Other than their daggers, the humanoids' weapons are of poor quality and are not salable.

The Ascent (Day 5+):

After four or more days of travel, the party will begin to approach the edges of the human lands. Wending through the thinning northern edges of the forest, the trail slowly ascends into the high reaches of the dwarves' mountains. The party's path meanders through several steep canyons as it leads upwards, and the travelers should be happy to finally reach the top of the ridge after hiking up a series of steep switchbacks. That ridge's lip marks the end of the party's ascent, but it also signals the start of a mountain forest of black pine. Until recently, that plateau had never been occupied, but the human lord established an outpost at the top of the ascent last summer. The new blockhouse now marks the boundary between the lord's lands and Blacktop Vale, the southern portion of Ordovar's holdfast.

Part 2: The Wererat's Trap

Larweln Grazt, a wererat, has been attempting to unify the region's humanoid tribes. Instrumental in the sacking of Blacktop Vale, the wererat and his henchmen have since slain the guards of the blockhouse and created a trap for the prospectors and merchants that will soon be traveling along the mountain track. Wearing the local lord's livery and posing as blockhouse guards, Orlim Borhold and Serna Limwort, the wererat's human henchmen, will lure unsuspecting PCs inside the fort with the innocuous claim that the characters "need to speak with Sergeant Bordal." If the PCs follow them into the courtyard, Larweln and his followers will spring their trap.

The GM should allow players a chance to discern the ruse if they state that their characters are actively attempting to detect deception. A percentile roll equal to or less than the character's combined intelligence and wisdom scores is appropriate and, if the deception is detected, the GM should indicate that the character notes that the two men seem familiar (they frequently travel throughout the region, acting as the wererat's spies).

The Lord's Blockhouse

Orlim and Serna are dressed in appropriate livery and will meet the party outside the closed blockhouse entrance. The henchmen will engage the player characters in amiable conversation before opening the gates and escorting the party into the courtyard. After the group passes through the entrance, Orlim will close the gate innocuously and two svartlings that have been hiding outside will quietly wedge it tight (their actions noticeable only 10% of the time).

Walking through the courtyard ahead of the characters (see the description for location #2), Serna will be the first to enter the main hall. With the help of his master, the fighter will slam the door to the main hall in the characters' faces. Orlim, trailing behind the group, will duck into the door located in the southwest corner of the courtyard. If these maneuvers succeed, the party will be trapped in the blockhouse's courtyard and subject to a hail of arrows and javelins from the wererat's minions:

Serna Limwort (F1): AC 7 (leather + shield); MV 120′; hp 7; #AT 1; D 1d6+1 (spear or short sword) or 1d4+1 (dagger); SZ M; ML 11; AL LE

Orlim Borhold (T1): AC 7 (leather + DEX); MV 120′; hp 5; #AT 2 (short bow) or 1 (short sword or dagger); D 1d6 (short bow or short sword) or 1d4 (dagger); SZ M; ML 11; AL LE

Once the party is trapped, Orlim and the svartlings will fire from the arrow slits located along the second-floor walls of the main hall, the upstairs guardroom, and above the entrance (the southern and eastern edges of the courtyard). There is no respite for trapped characters along the courtyard's eastern wall, as Serna will skewer characters standing near that wall with a spear rammed through the main hall's ground-level arrow slits. Murder holes also line the loft's floor and will be used by the two svartlings that are located there. Larweln will move to any location where

The Lord's Blockhouse
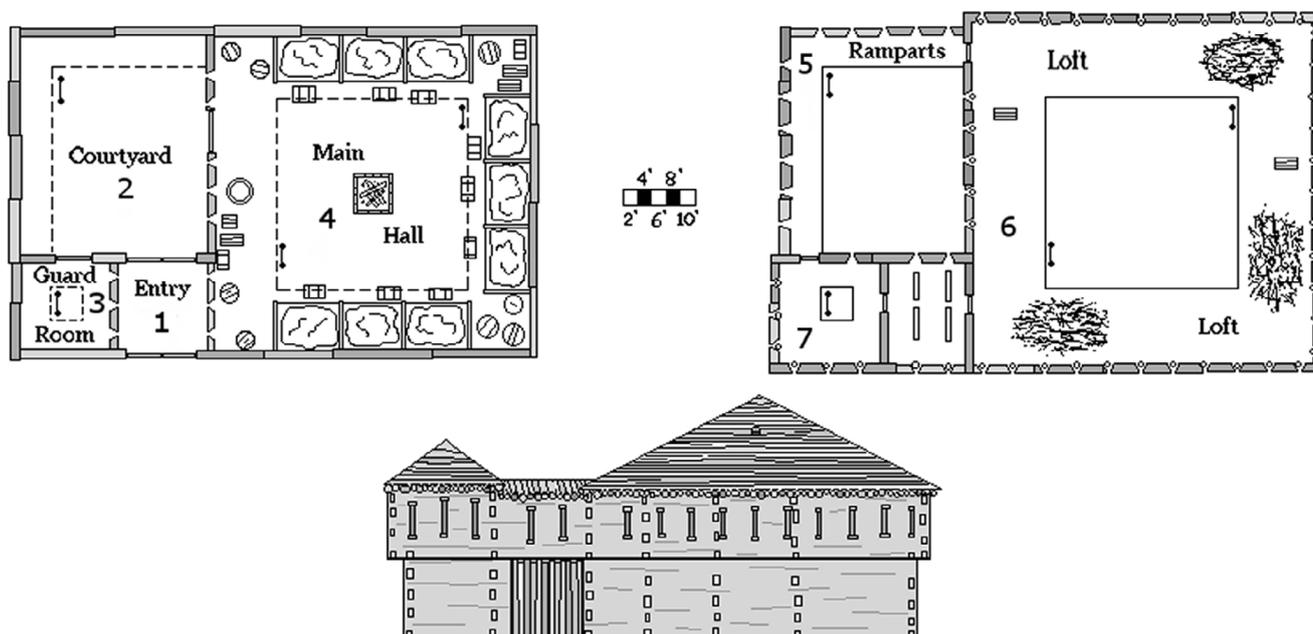
his sword is needed and will seek to slay all the characters save one—whom he intends to torture and question:

Larweln Gratz (wererat): MV 120′; AC 6; HD 3+1; hp 16; #AT 1; D 1d6+1 (**short sword +1**) or 1d2 (bite); SA surprise on 1–4; save vs. poison or causes lycanthropy if he reduces a character's hit points by half through biting; SD only hit by silver or magic weapons; SZ M; ML 13; AL LE

Larweln wields a **short sword +1** in combat and relies upon his immunity to normal weapons to protect himself from physical harm. Sporting an assortment of jewelry worth 23 gp (necklace, bracelet, and gilded cloak clasp), Larweln has additional treasure buried under one of the trunks located in the blockhouse's main hall.

Rotting Skull Svartlings (4): AC 8; MV 120′; HD 1-1; hp 5, 4, 4, 3; #AT 2 (short bow) or 1 (javelin or knife); D 1d4 (short bow) or 1d6 (javelin) or 1d4 (knife); SZ S; ML 11; AL CE

Two svartlings are stationed above the blockhouse's entrance, and the other two are in the loft (new OSRIC™ creature, see description in the adventure Lake of Sorrows in *Footprints* #21).

Larweln infiltrated the blockhouse a week ago and, with the help of his followers, slew the six guards that were stationed in the building. The unfortunate guards were eaten by the svartlings, their bones carelessly tossed about the main hall. Since taking the blockhouse the perpetrators have been enjoying its comforts and strategizing how to bring all of the region's humanoid tribes under the wererat's sway. Larweln's ultimate goal is to bring a goblin and svartling army to bear against the closest human village and gain complete control of the region.

1. Entry

Serna Limwort and Orlim Borhold (see stats above) sit on a collection of crates and lumber that is carelessly scattered in front of the blockhouse's closed gate. Appearing to be lazily whiling away their stint of guard duty, in reality the men have been warned of the party's approach by the svartlings tasked with keeping watch over the mountain track. The small humanoids are currently hiding in some nearby brush and will move to the gates after the entire party has entered. Once the party is inside, the svartlings will quietly wedge several pieces of lumber into place, with only a 10% chance of being detected.

Rotting Skull Svartlings (2): AC 8; MV 120′; HD 1-1; hp 4, 3; #AT 1; D 1d6 (javelin) or 1d4 (knife); SZ S; ML 11; AL CE

These svartlings will station themselves outside the gate during Larweln's ambush, bolstering the portal. They will open the gate if called or after ten rounds of combat.

2. Courtyard

Upon entering the courtyard, characters that are not actively attempting to detect deception will be surprised by the wererat's ruse 66% of the time. If a search is declared, the party notes the absence of the barrels, crates, and bales that would normally be lying about and also notes that the ladders leading to the ramparts have been pulled up and stored on the platforms, some ten feet above the ground. In this case the party will be surprised only 33% of the time. If the ruse is detected, the party may state that it

attempts to prevent the closing of the doors leading to the guardroom or the main hall. If not surprised, closure by Serna or Orlim is prevented if the character closest to each man rolls a successful dexterity check (a d20 roll less than or equal to the character's dexterity scores).

Once closed, the outer gate and the main hall's door each require a bend bars roll to open (sum all of the relevant characters' bend bars percentages), with up to five characters able to assault the courtyard gate and three characters able to attempt the main hall's door. The small, fortified door to the southwest guardroom may be chopped down in five rounds if using an axe or maul, or a successful bend bars roll will break it down, with two characters able to combine their efforts on the roll.

Desperate parties may seek to escape Larweln's trap by hoisting members onto the ramparts, which are only ten feet above ground level. Characters need to lift one another to the ramparts; half of the PCs involved in this effort achieving the ramparts each round. During that time all characters will receive penalties of -4 to their AC, as they expose their backs to missile fire and are not actively defending themselves. If the party gains the ramparts, Larweln and his minions will rush from the doors leading from the loft and the guardroom's second floor, attempting to cut down as many characters as possible before the party can escape by leaping down. The svartlings at the main entrance will aid their fellows by running around the building and flinging their javelins at fleeing characters.

3. Guardroom

Disgusted by the sight and smell of Larweln's humanoid followers, Orlim and Serna have appropriated the upper and lower levels of the guardroom. Also not trusting their dubious allies, the henchmen have placed formidable locks on each of the guardroom's three access doors. This gives the humans a location to store those items that they have acquired over several years of banditry. These items are found in a small chest that is buried in the earth below a keg of ale. Secured with a lock that harbors a poisoned needle (save versus poison at +2 or fall into coma for 1d8 days), the chest contains a vial of the same poison (5 applications), a small cask of brandy (5 sp), a bag of dwarven spices (10 sp total), three pots of honey (1 sp each), 3 garnets (2 gp each), 5 tourmalines (1 gp each), 2 pieces of agate (8 sp each), a silver brooch (15 sp), a gold ring (2 gp), 3 gp worth of gold coin clippings in a scrotal coin purse, and 28 sp.

The fortified door leading to the courtyard is unlocked unless Orlim has ducked into the room. If locked, it may be chopped down in five rounds using an axe or maul or can be broken down on a successful bend bars roll from up to two characters. The trapdoor in the ceiling is open, and a ladder is set in place. The ladder may be pulled up by anyone upstairs, and bolts are set on both sides of the trapdoor.

4. Main Hall

This large room was rank when it served as the barracks of Sergeant Bordal and his five guardsmen; with Larweln and his svartling followers taking up residence, the hall stinks as badly as a city sewer. Adding to the chamber's overall ambience, a large number of bones have been carelessly

thrown into the hall's fire pit and about the chamber. Identifiably human, and with strips of flesh still attached, it is apparent from the remains that Bordal and his men came to a vicious end.

Hiding in the hall's shadows and gnawing upon some of the more rancid bones is the pack of giant rats that Larweln has attracted. These scavengers are well fed, but they will attack any characters that search the room (e.g., rummaging through the sleeping stalls or looking around the hall's periphery):

Giant Rats (4): AC 7; MV 120′; HD ½; hp 3; #AT 1; D 1–2; SA bite cause bubonic plague 5% of the time, save vs. death at +2 or die three weeks later; SZ S; ML 11; AL N

The hall has been ransacked, and anything useful for the maintenance of a large troop of soldiers (e.g., bundles of sacks, rope, hides) has been stacked near the main door, ready for transport. The wererat's humanoid followers have been sleeping in the former occupants' stalls and have hidden a number of valuables beneath the straw. If a full turn is spent sifting through the straw characters will find a total of 1d20 cp, 1d10 sp, and 1d4 gp.

Larweln has amassed a small fortune over the last year as he and his followers have raided farmsteads and merchant caravans. One of several chieftains to sack Blacktop Vale, the wererat also managed to acquire a few of Dolgrim's and Aeric's valuables. Larweln's treasure chest is locked and has been smeared with offal that harbors a deadly strain of flesh eating bacteria (Larweln's lycanthropy somehow makes him immune). The disease will affect the first three humanlike creatures that touch the chest, and those individuals must save versus poison one turn after handling the chest or suffer 1 hp of permanent damage as 1d4 of their fingers blacken, then putrefy, and finally fall off. The individual must save again the following turn, or suffer an additional hit point of permanent damage and have his entire hand go through a similar process. This process will continue each turn, moving up to the elbow and then the shoulder, until the character either makes a save versus poison or the bacteria eats its way past the victim's shoulder (at which point the character dies.) Once the lock on the chest is opened the party will find 240 cp, 105 sp, 34 gp, three dented silver goblets (9 gp), a slightly tarnished electrum bracer (5 gp), and a gilded tortoise hairpin (2 gp). In addition to the mundane valuables, there is a small leather sack that contains a small perfume bottle holding a **potion of animal control**, two doses of contact poison in an ornate vial (save versus poison or die if ingested or touched), and a clerical **scroll of hold person** (9th level) in a stoppered bronze tube.

5. Ramparts

Bloodstains mar the timbers directly before the guardroom door, but the rest of the ramparts are largely bare of equipment or articles. The two ladders have been pulled up, one adjacent to the guardroom and the other in the northwest corner. The doors leading to the guardroom and loft are reinforced and secured with sturdy locks, requiring either five rounds of chopping with an axe or maul, or a combined bend bars roll to open. Up to two characters may combine their efforts on this task (see area 2. Courtyard).

If the party gains the ramparts, Serna and Orlim will quickly lead an attack from the guardroom, bringing with them the svartlings stationed above the entryway. Larweln will charge from the opposite direction, rushing to the loft and picking up the humanoids stationed there. The ramparts are less than five feet wide and will allow only individual combatants to face off, with those in a second rank able to attack if using pole arms. The svartlings will hang back, taking positions behind their superiors and using their short bows to provide flanking fire.

6. Loft

Used primarily for the storage of hay, the loft is bare of goods save two piles of mouldering straw and a few bundles of arrows. Arrow slits line each of the walls and cover every direction. Below each arrow slit is a matching murder hole that allows defenders to attack anyone attempting to hug the blockhouse's walls. These arrow slits and murder holes provide a +4 AC bonus on return fire to any combatant hiding within.

A female giant rat recently gave birth to a litter of kits and has made a nest behind the pile of straw located in the loft's northeast corner. If any character comes within ten feet of the pile the mother will rush out and savagely attack the intruders:

Giant Rat: AC 7; MV 120′; HD ½; hp 3; #AT 1; D 1–2; SA bite cause bubonic plague 5% of the time, save vs. death at +2 or die three weeks later; SZ S; ML 11; AL N

The baby giant rats are the size of normal wharf rats and will scurry away from characters.

7. Upper Guardroom

This chamber's doors are locked from the inside (see location #3), and the trapdoor set into the floor is open. The fortified doors leading to the ramparts and loft can be chopped down in five rounds if using an axe or maul, or can be broken on a successful bend bars roll, on which up to two characters can combine their efforts. The trapdoor has a ladder at the ready. This ladder may be pulled up, and bolts are set on both sides of the trapdoor.

The room is rather bare, containing only a few blankets, a tub of oil, a few spears, a crossbow, and three-score bolts. Orlim and Serna are paranoid of catching some disease from Larweln's svartlings and have soaked the floor surrounding the door leading to the loft with a prodigious amount of oil to ward off the fleas carried by the svartlings and giant rats. The oil slick will also cause anyone entering from that direction to slip unless a dexterity check is successfully made.

Part 3: Blacktop Vale

Random Encounters Near Blacktop Vale

Blacktop Vale has become a dangerous place since the sacking of Dolgrim's tower—a haven for humanoids and dangerous animals. The GM should roll for random encounters every hour spent in the valley, with encounters occurring 10% of the time. If an encounter is indicated, roll a d8 to determine its nature:

1. **Bison Herd (2 bulls, 7 cows, 2 calves):** AC 7; MV 150′; HD 4; hp 22 (bulls), 17 (cows), 9 (calves); #AT 2; D 1d6/1d6 (horns); SA bulls will charge for 2d6 damage if 30+ feet away; SZ L; ML 14; AL N

   The party surprises a herd of bison foraging in the snow. The bulls will charge and attack 75% of the time if the party is within 90′ of the herd. Otherwise, the animals will warily move away. If the party makes any aggressive movement, the bulls will charge with 100% certainty. Bison hides are worth 5 sp each, and will take one day to treat well enough to be transportable. Such hides can be tooled into excellent coats, turn-shoes, and cloaks.

2. **Rotting Skull Svartlings (4):** MV 90′; AC 8 (fur); HD 1-1 hp 4, 4 (javelin + knife), 3, 3 (short bow + knife); #AT 1; D 1d6 (javelin) or 1d4 (short bow) or 1d4 (knife); SZ S; ML 11; AL CE

   This group has been sent by Larweln to spy upon the activities of the Flayed Skin goblin tribe that has taken up residence in Dolgrim's tower. They will launch missiles at a party if it seems advantageous, but will retreat at the first sign trouble (new OSRIC™ creature, see description in the adventure Lake of Sorrows in *Footprints* #21.)

3. **Flayed Skin Goblins (4):** AC 8; MV 120′; HD 1-1; hp 5 (short bow + knife), 3, 3, 3 (javelin + knife); #AT 2 (bow) or 1 (javelin or knife); D 1d4 (short bow) or 1d6 (javelin) or 1d4 (knife); SZ S; ML 11; AL LE

   These goblins are patrolling the region and are bored of holing up with their brethren in Dolgrim's tower. They possess few items of worth, but the leader has a silver-plated torc (3 sp).

4. **Pack of Wolves (6):** AC 7; MV 180′; HD 2+2; hp 12, 11, 9, 9, 8, 7; #AT 1; D 1d4+1 (bite); SZ S; ML 12; AL N

   A ravenous pack of timber wolves has been attracted by the carrion stench that hangs over Blacktop Vale. If a single wolf is killed the pack will immediately retreat. Wolf pelts may be sold for 5 sp if treated.

5. **Snow Leopard:** AC 6; MV 180′; HD 3+2; hp 17; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite); D 1d3/1d3/1d6; SA rear claws will do an additional 1–4/1–4 damage if both font paws successfully hit; SZ M; ML 13; AL N

   The snow leopard's pelt is worth 5 gp if expertly removed, treated, and scraped. The snow leopard attacks the last character in the party, attempting to suffocate its target. If its attack is noticed by the party, the cat will attempt to hamstring the intended victim and then slink away to await developments.

6. **Juvenile Brown Bear:** AC 7; MV 120′; HD 3+3; hp 19; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite); D 1d3/1d3/1d6; SA hugs for 2d4 on successful paw hit of 18 or higher; SZ L; ML 13; AL N

   This brown bear woke from hibernation a month early and will attack the party out of sheer hunger.

7. **Gorshump the Ogre:** AC 5; MV 90′; HD 4+1; hp 17; #AT 1; D 1d8+3 (large spear); SZ L; ML 13; AL CE

   Unaware of recent events, Gorshump has descended from his mountain fastness with the intention of stealing a few of Dolgrim's goats. An opportunist, the ogre will follow a party during the day and attempt to surprise a single, unwary character at night. In his stupidity, Gorshump believes that he can escape into the dark if things go poorly.

8. **Gnolls of the Poisoned Barb (3):** AC6 (studded leather); MV 150′; HD 2; hp 12, 11, 10; #AT 2 (bow) or 1; D d8 (great bow) or 2d4 (bardiche); SZ M; ML 12; AL CE

   Three hunters of the Poisoned Barb pack have been sent to investigate the recent movement of goblins in the mountains. Happy to kill anything that moves, the gnolls are not above collecting the heads of a few humans and will attack on sight. Strung through each gnoll's belt is an assortment of dwarf, human, goblin, orc, and svartling skulls—all highly polished and inscribed with profane symbols. Hörlenholt dwarves will gladly reward those who return remains of their kin (5 gp/skull).

Meeting Grüldin Fasselstock

As Blacktop Vale's forest begins to thin , a short, stocky figure steps from behind a tree and onto the trail, only twenty yards ahead. The party likely expects to be stopped before entering the Vale proper, but the manner of this meeting is peculiar. Walking into the middle of the path, where the day's light cuts through the deep tree cover, Grüldin Fasselstock steps toward a lit area and raises his arms palms up, indicating that he means no harm.

The fellow is of typical mountain dwarf stature, but he is young and has a beard of only moderate length. Wearing a padded gambeson and eschewing a shield, the dwarf has both a "hand-and-a-half" axe and a large poniard tucked into the girdle at his waist. Just visible over the fellow's shoulder is a heavy crossbow, to be readied by the cock-hook that swings pendulously before his loins. Also tied to the busy girdle is a small quiver containing about a dozen bolts:

Grüldin Fasselstock (Dwarf F2): AC 8 (padded); MV 120′; hp 15; #AT 1 (hand axe or dagger) or ½ (crossbow bolt); D 1d6+1 (hand axe) or 1d4+1 (dagger) or 1d6+1 (bolt); S16 I11 W12 D10 C16 Ch9; AL NG

Grüldin possesses 13 cp, 4 sp, and 2 gp in a coin purse hidden beneath his armor. Four silver and gold pins (2 gp each) decorate the dwarf's well-groomed beard, and his belt is trimmed with silver studs worth a total of 13 sp.

Grüldin is an emissary of Ordovar, chief of the Hörlenholt Clan of dwarves, and Ordovar's regular messenger to Dolgrim. He is also a friend to Dolgrim the Warlock. The youngish dwarf reached Blacktop Vale two days earlier

and has spent his time assessing the situation. Grüldin will escort the party to the forest's edge, some two hundred yards ahead. Grüldin takes on a somber tone as he relates the following to the party in thickly accented common:

- Damage must have occurred to the tower's foundation. This would occur if a sinkhole opened, or if water saturated the ground under the structure. Grüldin knows, however, that the *Magul Torm* (Mage's Tower) was built upon bedrock not prone to erosion.
- The stream has not shifted and undercut the tower, so something must have happened below ground level. Although the entire valley has been overrun by humanoids, the filthy creatures did not attack the tower with some kind of siege engine—Grüldin has twice investigated near the tower and those blocks that have fallen from the battlements did not obscure any of the creatures' spoor. The tower's near-collapse must have occurred before the humanoids' arrival.
- About Dolgrim's familiar and how it strangely continues to circles above the tower, Grüldin will opine that he has seen dogs and ponies hover near sick and injured companions in a similar manner. Grüldin knows that the raven, Syl, has an unusual connection to the warlock, and he does not think it would leave unless Dolgrim were dead. Thus, Grüldin concludes that the warlock is likely still alive inside the tower and that he and the party should attempt a rescue.
- Goblins are most active at dusk and dawn and are most lethargic at the height of day. Any assault should take place near noon.

If the characters linger near the forest's edge for more than an hour, Dolgrim's prescient familiar will fly to their location. Perching upon a high branch, Syl will cautiously investigate the party's doings for the better part of an hour. If unmolested, she will eventually glide down to Grüldin and land upon the dwarf's shoulder, pecking the warrior in the forehead in seeming admonishment. This will draw blood, but the dwarf will be unconcerned by the raven's act:

Syl (Raven Familiar): AC 6; MV 30′/360′ (flying); HD 1; hp 3; #AT 1; D 1 (peck); SA exceptional vision (double that of human); SZ S; ML 11; AL N

Indeed, Grüldin will use the raven's actions to underscore his conclusions and restate his desire to lead the party in an attack upon the tower. Assuming that they choose to
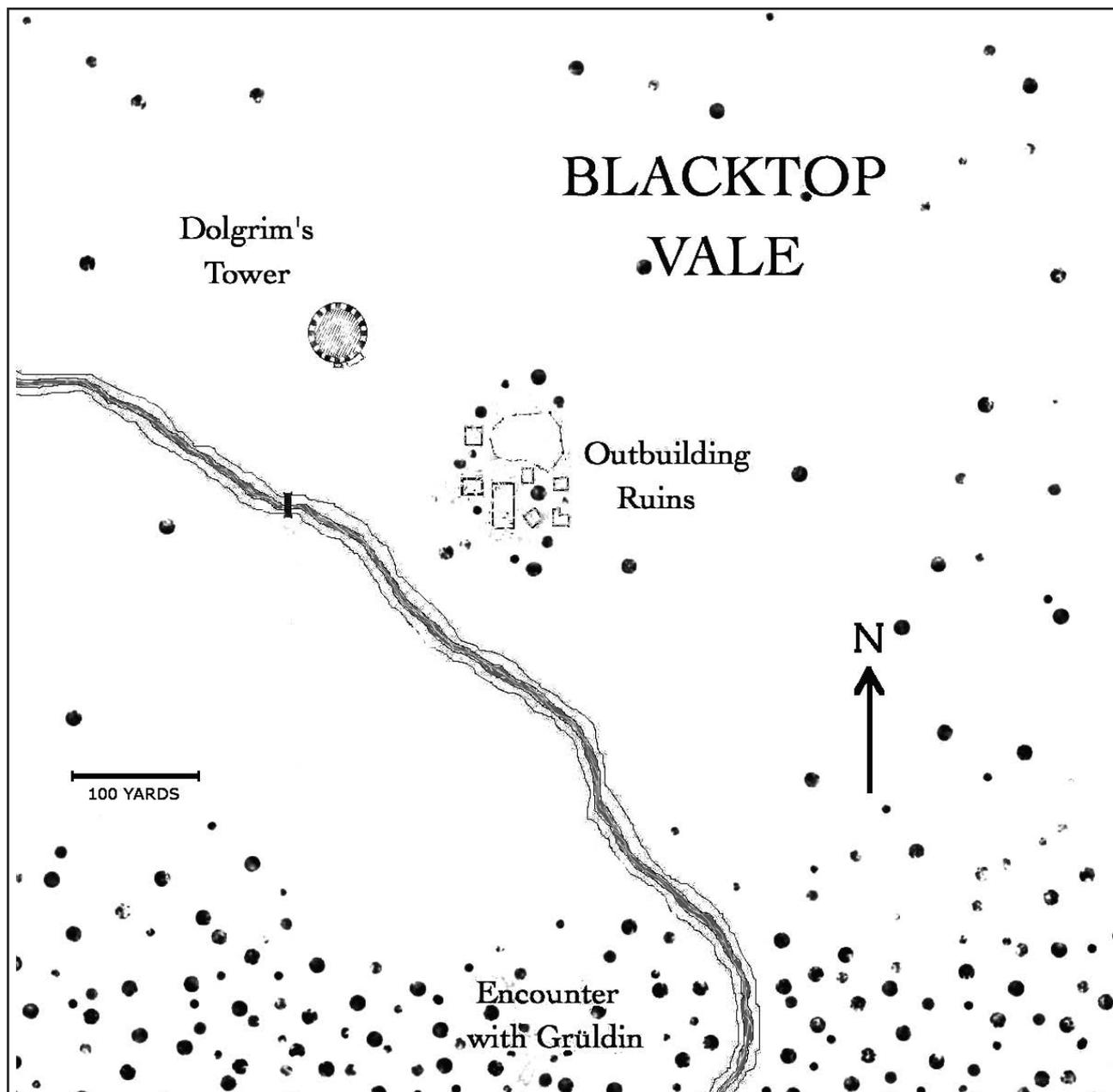
infiltrate Dolgrim's tower or the ruined outbuildings, the companions will probably choose to approach it from the southeast and crawl through the 3 to 4 foot-deep gully that parallels the southern road. This should shield the party from any but the most astute goblin observer; a drawback is that the melt water flowing in the ditch will drench the characters and waterlog some gear. Syl will shadow the party from this point forward, staying out of sight but popping up whenever some action has been concluded.

Razed Outbuildings

The remnants of several wooden buildings are located 100 yards southeast of Dolgrim's tower. Previously occupied by Dolgrim's retainers and servants, the collapsed and charred dwellings, workshops, and barns are now deserted, and only a pair of twisted corpses are visible in the ruins. In truth, the outbuildings are home to a swarm of newly hatched carcass creepers and the haunting spirit of Abelard Gontrell, Dolgrim's former herdsman.

Two goblin corpses lie a dozen yards apart. If the PCs investigate the bodies, they it will find that one was killed within the last few days while the other has been exposed to the elements for more than a week. The goblin corpses bear no real treasure, just some crudely made javelins and knives. However, it is evident that the goblins had their necks broken before being casually tossed aside. Spending more than one turn searching the bodies and ruins draws the attention of Abelard's tormented soul, which will attack a random male character.

When the humanoids first attacked Blacktop Vale, Abelard attempted to reach the dwelling that he shared with his young daughter. Having instructed his child to hide within their root cellar if anything ever threatened, the herdsman intended to retrieve his daughter and then flee to the relative safety of the woods. Killed just a hundred feet from his home, Abelard's soul-wrenching anguish at failing to reach the girl has caused his confused spirit to remain on the material plane—still intent upon reaching her:

Haunting Spirit (Abelard Gontrell): MV 60′; AC 0; HD 5; hp 23; #AT 1; D 2 point dexterity drain or special; SA each hit drains 2 points of dexterity against neutral or good targets, possessing the character at 0 DEX, will choke those of evil alignment for progressively higher damage of 1, 2, 4, 8, etc. for each round (new OSRIC™ creature; see Appendix 1); SZ M; ML 12; AL NG

Abelard is compelled to possess the body of one of the party's male characters and will take an ephemeral, humanoid shape in order to strike at a target with its hands. If the character is of good or neutral alignment, the haunting spirit will attack with the intent of draining its victim of all dexterity points. If the target turns out to be of evil alignment, the haunting spirit will attempt to choke the character to death. If Abelard's spirit drains a character of dexterity, the ghost-like manifestation will suddenly become diaphanous and then merge with the character's body. Rising quickly, the possessed body will mutter incoherently about "Mara" and a "cellar" and then dash to Abelard's former home.

The herdsman's former dwelling consists of a tangle of charred timbers, upturned flagstones, and broken pottery shards. The body of any character possessed by the spirit will be forced to pull endlessly at the pile of charred timbers, and will continue to do so until it perishes. That body will suffer 1 hp of damage for each turn spent in such frenzied exertion and, by itself, will not be able to shift any of the massive beams. If the party discerns Abelard's intent, four characters must combine efforts in order to budge the timbers. After three turns spent shifting the charred beams, Abelard's root cellar will become evident once exposed to sunlight or some other source of illumination.

Opening the exposed double doors, the Abelard-possessed body will rush forward, into the small cellar's gloom. Ignoring the young carcass creepers that have been feeding upon the herdsman's daughter, the possessed PC will take two rounds to collect the girl's remains and flee for the forest. While ignoring the foul creatures, the possessed body will be subject to a -4 defensive penalty:

Carcass Creepers, Juvenile (5): MV 90′; AC 7; HD 1; hp 3; #AT 2; D 1; SA tentacles cause paralysis on a failed save (at +2 bonus); SZ M; ML 11; AL N

The carcass creepers will defend their food source to the death. Any character callous enough to search through the tattered clothing and small bones left behind by Abelard's haunted spirit will chance upon a simple silver locket that appears to be worth approximately 3 sp. If kept for more than a week, the locket will *curse* the character with -1 penalties to his wisdom and charisma scores until the locket is *blessed* and buried by a good cleric. Alternatively, if the locket is blessed and buried before a week has elapsed, the character doing so will gain +1 to each of those ability scores for one month. Good clerics and paladins that fail in this endeavor will suffer double the penalties.

An Abelard-possessed character will collapse after carrying the girl's remains to the edge of the forest. The character's DEX will be reduced to 3, though this will increase by one point for each turn spent in complete rest.

Dolgrim's Tower

1. Entry Ramp and Porch

The entry ramp curls around a third of the tower, sloping gently upward nine feet to a separate porch. Being unattached to the tower, the porch shifted and warped when the tower nearly collapsed. The party can bring some planks or logs to span the ten-foot gap between porch and ramp or clamber atop the porch in small groups (up to five
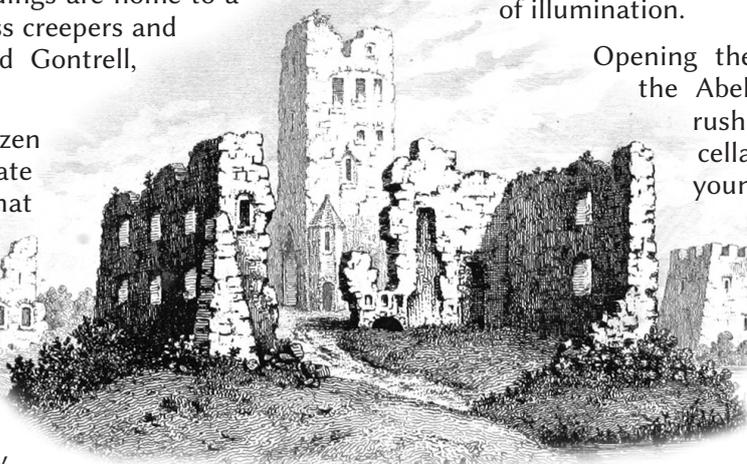
characters will fit at one time, though only three if pushing against the tower door). Any thief attempting to climb the tower walls will receive a +15% bonus if moving up the positive sloping surface, -30% along the inverted surface (see map of Dolgrim's tower).

The tower's main door has been heavily damaged but is reinforced by a bench wedged against it. Opening the door will require a successful bend bars/lift gates roll, and up to three PCs can combine their percentages when they attempt to force the door. This may be attempted once per round, and Grüldin will insist that he help in the effort, taking the lead if the party makes a frontal assault on the tower's great hall.

2. Great Hall

Within the hall are Gugg, the bugbear chieftain of the Rotting Skull goblin tribe, and six of his followers. Declining Larweln's invitation to merge with the wererat's band, Gugg has been mulling his options for the last two weeks. With little to do, and with two of his underlings having been killed by the mysterious force that haunts the outbuildings' wreckage, Gugg has recently decided to leave the tower within the next few days.

Held by the goblins are three beastlings (new OSRIC™ creature, see Appendix 1) that the humanoids recovered from Dolgrim's rooftop menagerie. Gugg and three of the goblins are sleeping while the others torment the creatures with their javelins. The tapestry, rug, and blanket fragments that make up the goblins' beds are piled into seven separate nests scattered about the floor, with Gugg and the two strongest goblins claiming positions nearest the smoldering fire. If the party gains surprise on the humanoids (requiring that the first bend bars roll is a success and is immediately followed by a successful surprise roll), the bugbear and three goblins will still be asleep. One goblin with a javelin and two with shortbows will be near the entrance to the kitchen, driving the caged beastlings into a frenzy.

If the party is detected before combat ensues, Gugg will don his helmet and, with the two strongest goblins, will position himself behind the room's stone pillars. His followers will pile the group's bedding into a barrier before ascending the staircase to take up positions there (providing +2 bonuses to AC). Gugg will then open the beastlings' cages and fling the creatures toward the party one at a time. Each beastling will: 50%—attack the party, 25%—turn upon the goblins, 25%—run past the party, escaping through the door and into the forest beyond.

Flayed Skin Goblins (6): MV 120′; AC 8 (6 behind cover); HD 1-1; hp 6, 6 (javelins), 4, 4, 3, 3 (short bows); #AT 2 (bow) or 1 (javelin or knife); D 1d4 (bow) or 1d6 (javelin) or 1d4 (knife)

Beastlings (3): MV 150′; AC 6; HD 1-1; hp 5, 4, 4; #AT 3 (bite/claw/claw); D 1d3/1d2/1d2; SD: 50% magic resistance

A beastling's bite may cause rabies or bubonic plague (50% chance for each) on failed saves versus poison (see Appendix 1 for the effects.)

Gugg, Chieftain of the Flayed Skins (Bugbear): MV 90′; AC 4; HD 3+1; hp 16 #AT 1 D 1d6+2 (thrown spear) or 1d8+2 (silver-plated morning star) SA: surprise 50% of the time; charge opponents with helmet

Gugg wears an enormous helmet fashioned from an auroch skull. With silver-plated horns that span six feet, this monstrous helmet lowers the bugbear's AC to 4 and serves as weapon of sorts. If 20′ or more from an opponent, Gugg may charge into any two opponents separated by 6′ or less. Each target takes 1d6+2 points of damage on a successful charge, and small and medium sized opponents must save versus paralyzation or be knocked down for 1d4 rounds. Gugg wears a pouch around his neck that contains a golden idol in the shape of a minotaur (6 gp), 14 sp, and four agates shaped like hen's eggs (4 sp total). Around Gugg's left arm is a dwarf-made electrum bracer that has the properties of a **periapt of health**.

Gugg's followers have amassed a small pile of treasure and collectively hold 27 cp, 11 sp, 2 gp, and a lump of silver that used to be a goblet (value 12 sp). Having used the last of the tower's furniture and books for fuel (except the dangerously deceptive pile in room 4, the library/study), Gugg and his followers have begun to grow tired of lugging firewood to the tower.

The Flayed Skins only recently become aware of the gall-trits in the strangely darkened cellar and now avoid going down there. If a battle goes badly for the group Gugg will summon his mate from the kitchen and flee. The bugbear will then either dash upstairs with the intention of escaping through the storage room's window (avoiding the brown mould in room 4) or charge directly out the tower's front entrance.

3. Kitchen

Gugg's mate spends her time in the tower's kitchen, butchering game the goblins bring in and scratching the bristled belly of her pet, "Babi." A consummate cook and quite insane, Jool Ya will attempt to backstab (at +2 to hit, if surprise is gained) a character that is engaged in combat near the kitchen entrance, with the intention of serving the victim as the evening's main course. If the bugbear matron does cut a character down, that unfortunate will be dragged into the kitchen for immediate cleaning (with her oversized, blood-caked falchion) and spitting. If threatened in her kitchen, Jool Ya's pet will rush forward to protect its momma:

Jool Ya (Bugbear Female): MV 90′; AC 5; HD 3+1; hp 12; #AT 1; D 1d8+1 (large falchion); SA surprise 50% of the time

Jool Ya possesses a necklace comprising three dwarf skulls strung through a crude rope. Mounted into the eye sockets of each skull are hen's-egg agates of the type found in Gugg's pouch (total, 6 sp). If the skulls are cleaned and treated with respect, Hörlenholt dwarves will offer 5 gp for each skull returned to their clan.

"Babi" (Juvenile Boar): MV 150′; AC 7; HD 1+1; hp 8; #AT 1; D 1d6 (tusks)

Jool Ya's baby only has enough space to charge opponents (at double damage) if it is rushing out of the kitchen. Within the kitchen's confines the young boar will ply his tusks to full advantage.

Jool Ya will respond to a summons by Gugg after one full round has elapsed. Rushing out of the kitchen, Jool Ya and Babi will charge through the party and follow her

husband. The kitchen is filthy and rancid smelling, bare of everything other than a stack of wood, half of Dolgrim's celestial sphere (now used as a bronze kettle), and Jool Ya's and Babi's sleeping pallet. Gore is splattered over every surface. Characters risk catching a blood disease (5% cumulative) for every round spent in the room engaged in combat.

4. Library/Study

When the foundation of the warlock's tower collapsed, Dolgrim's apprentice was hard at work in the library. Months before, Aeric had come across a small patch of peculiar, dun-colored mould that was growing within a cavern complex. Collecting a sample of the weird stuff, the young magic-user noticed that it absorbed heat from any nearby source and that it grew rapidly if placed near a candle's flame. Likewise, this intriguing "brown mould" shrank away from ice, snow, and sunlight.

The unfortunate apprentice was investigating how salted ice would affect the brown mould when Dolgrim unleashed the chaos below. At this, young Aeric tumbled against the library's southwestern wall and spilled the contents of the collection jar on himself. This proved fatal for the apprentice, and his cooling corpse was quickly engulfed by the dangerous mould (on the map, the X that is surrounded by debris). The expanded mould then was concealed by the bookshelves, tomes, desks, and chairs that slid and tumbled across the floor. Since that day, the brown mould has guarded a portion of the warlock's book collection.

When the first wave of goblins stormed the damaged tower, one of the humanoids was enervated by the mould before its kin understood what was occurring (marked with an X on the map). This caused the mould to expand to the very edge of the debris field and, once the goblins understood that they needed to give that corner of the library a wide berth, they were able to ransack Aeric's room by breaking through the wall between his apartment and the library.

Over the last two weeks, only the occasional rat, bird, roach, or fly has fallen prey to the mould, and the colony has been kept in check by sunlight streaming through the tower's open windows. As it is, the southwestern corner of the room is a death trap for any character failing to notice the pattern of corpses lying within 5′ of the pile of debris:

Brown Mould: MV 0′ (instantly expands 1d8 feet if a torch is brought within 5′, expands 1d4 feet if a humanoid moves within 5′); AC nil; HD nil; HP nil; #AT nil; D 3d4 automatic damage per round to any creature within 5′ of the pile—lower than normal because of intervening debris.

If characters are able to cause the brown mould to go dormant (cold-based spells make it dormant for 5d6 turns, piled snow for 1d4 turns), they will find that many of Dolgrim's mundane books have survived. Likewise, **Aeric's spellbook** will also be found in the debris (but will have to save versus spells at +2 bonus if a spell such as *ice storm* was cast over it). **Aeric's spellbook** is a massive, sealskin-bound tome adorned with a number of moderately valuable gems. It contains the spells *comprehend languages, detect magic, light, read magic, shocking grasp, electric arc* (new spell, see Appendix 2 for description), and *ray of enfeeblement*.

Attached to a leather thong secured around the neck of the preserved body is a strange monocle. Fashioned from an oblate piece of calcite and trimmed in bone and gold, this item is the **Oculus of Fa'al N'that**, a magical device that was given to Aeric by his uncle, a renowned magic-user. An object of great power (see description in Appendix 2), the monocle saw extensive use over Aeric's apprenticeship. In the apprentice's belt pouch are a tarot deck, a large finger ring made of amber, 7 sp, and a set of ebony dice (2 sp).

5. Dolgrim's Solar/Study

This room was picked clean by the goblin raiders, which then broke through the staircase and closet walls and proceeded to steal and smash everything in sight. Gaining entry to the tower's battlements, the humanoids slew or loosed most of the creatures that Dolgrim had housed there. One creature that avoided the goblin's blades and arrows was a large black widow spider that has since taken up residence in this room. This deadly creature spends its days hiding on the ceiling of Dolgrim's former treasure room (the small closet located in the southeastern portion of the solar), lurking in the dark shadows of that space. The spider will surprise any character entering the closet 50% of the time but, most active at night, will be found on the tower's battlements after the sun has gone down:

Spider, Large: MV 60′; AC 8; HD 1+1; hp 5; #AT 1; D 1+poison; SA save versus poisoned bite at +2 or die.

A secret compartment is located within the chamber's northwest support column. Removing two small bricks, will reveal two latches. Pulling both latches simultaneously opens the 2′ × 2′ compartment, but one latch is trapped with a paralyzing needle that will prick the character if a save is not made (like the iron cobra held within, the poison puts characters into a coma for 1d8 days). Once the compartment is opened, an iron cobra will strike whichever character is situated before the nook, catching the character by surprise 66% of the time. The metal golem will then remain coiled inside the compartment, lashing out at anyone who comes within five feet of the opening:

Iron Cobra: MV 120′; AC 0; HD 1; hp 8; #AT 1; D 1d3+poison; SA bite causes coma for 1d8 days on failed save; SD saves versus spells as a 12th level MU (new OSRIC™ creature, see Appendix 1 for description).

The iron cobra is attuned to Dolgrim's mind and cannot be controlled by anyone else. It was charged with guarding the warlock's stash of emergency items: an unusually wide amber ring; a falconer's glove; two **potions of healing**; a **potion of neutralize poison**; individual **scrolls** (caster level 7) of *web, shocking grasp, knock,* and *protection from evil*. Each scroll is rolled up and placed within a waterproof metal cylinder, sealed by wax imprinted with Dolgrim's stylized ring and lightning bolt sigil. Also in the compartment is a coin purse containing five gems (50 gp each), 12 gp, and 25 sp.
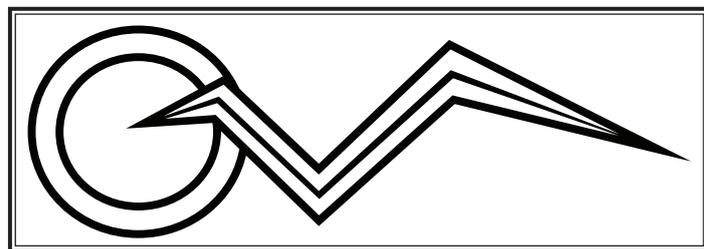
Dolgrim's Sigil

6. Ruined Battlements

Formerly home to Dolgrim's observatory and menagerie, the tower's battlements have been stripped of the bronze-cast armillary, theodolites, and celestial spheres that were once anchored in its crenellations. Likewise, the cages and tanks that the warlock once tended have all been destroyed and looted for their metal. All that remain of Dolgrim's efforts at animal research are a number of desiccated, web-shrouded husks. Those animals that managed to avoid the humanoids' spears and cook pots fell victim to the spider that lurks below (see location 5).

Dolgrim's familiar lands periodically upon the tower's battlements but flits away when the deadly spider notices her presence. Cagey and intelligent, Syl has managed to avoid falling prey to the fell thing. Characters seeking to enter the tower by climbing its outer wall have a 50% chance of being attacked by the lurking spider. Otherwise, the creature will be encountered in location 5, Dolgrim's Study/Solar.

7. Cellar

The reek that the party smelled above intensifies with every step downward, with the odors of urine, feces, and rancid, rotting flesh becoming recognizable. Large numbers of goblins have been using this darkened chamber as a latrine and cesspit.

The stairs grow dark as they descend. They are covered in slick bodily waste and open into a pitch-black room that is oblong and roughly half the size of the great hall above. If the party has torches the firebrands will steadily dim as the group inches its way toward the cellar's floor. This is not only the result of a lack of fresh air but the presence of some unnatural gloom. Once they move fully into the cellar, the characters will step into a layer of rank sewage and rotting offal. Shuffling through the floor's caked mess, the group will hear only the sucking sound of their own feet. Torches will only provide light out to five feet, but a *light* or *continual light* spell will provide illumination equal to a dusky evening out to ten feet.

After the sacking of Blacktop Vale, a family of galltrits slunk past the goblins above and took up residence in the fetid cellar. Having subsisted on the offal dumped down the stairs, the little bloodsuckers have become increasingly hungry as the supply of food has tapered off. Starving, the galltrits will swoop in, attacking the last character to enter the room. In the cellar's unnatural gloom, the galltrits will gain surprise 66% of the time and be unnoticed in their attacks, their bites accompanied by a type of anesthesia:

Galltrits (3): MV 180′; AC 2; hp 2; #AT 1; D 1d2; SA: bonus of +3 to attack if target is surprised; drain 1 hp/round; bite causes disease (terminal in one month) if saving throw failed; SD detected only in a 1 on 8 chance (1 in 6 for elves)

Stuffed into each lovely's navel is a personal treasure, a choice item gleaned from years of preying upon goblins and their ilk. The treasures are rather valuable despite their small size, but only close inspection of the galltrits will reveal the rewards: a gold nugget (3 gp), a raw garnet (2 gp), and a freshwater pearl (12 gp).

The remains of the warlock will not be found in the cellar, but as long as the main hall and cellar have been cleared, Syl, Dolgrim's familiar, will fly into the chamber and plaintively caw to the party.

Opposite the staircase, the raven will energetically hop from floor to wall, pecking a few times against the rusticated vertical stones and then fluttering back down. The bird will repeat this process time and again, occasionally glancing up at the group. A successful search of the wall will reveal that the stones are noticeably warped there, unlike the simple slanting that is evident above. As the cellar occupies less than half of the tower's square footage, it should be obvious that the cause of the structure's sinking is behind the wall.

Two small blocks project out slightly farther than their neighbors, aligned vertically at the waist and shoulder height. Extracting the blocks will expose black, horizontal metal rods. If these are manipulated, a character will find that the rods slide silently out by a fingers length and are coated with some type of lubricant. That section of wall is a dwarf-made concealed door that few would be able to find in the cellar's strange gloom. This door will open easily once the metal pins have been pulled out.

Moving ten feet along the revealed passage, the party will come to a large door constructed of solid iron. Looming in the darkness, the door looks impregnable as it has no obvious lock or handle. A polished gold plate is set at chest height and is the only thing giving a hint as to how to open the portal. If present, Syl will caw and peck at the construction, fluttering about in a very agitated fashion. A dwarf will recognize the portal as a type used in dwarven temples that require a ritual or dweomer to gain entry. If magic is detected for, the emanations streaming from the door will be found to be stronger than anything previously encountered by a low-level magic-user; the plate affixed to the door glows strongly to eldritch sight.

Scooting past the party, Syl will rap on the barrier with its beak and give off numerous caws, intermittently glancing at the party. If a character blows some chalk, soot, or fine dust upon plate's surface, some will stick and reveal the ring and lightning bolt of Dolgrim's sigil. Produced by the particles' adhering to remnants of lubricating fluid, tracing the sigil with a finger while the familiar pecks at the portal will cause the wizard-locked door to glide open. A modicum of the magic-user's essence resides in the raven and is sufficient to trigger the ritual that Dolgrim established for the iron portal.

If Syl is not present, then the only means of entry for a low-level party is a *knock* spell.

Once the portal is opened, a blinding light will burst from the doorway, accompanied by a feral roar. If the party loses surprise, a large shadow will instantly block much of the illumination streaming from the chamber, and the creature occupying Dolgrim's laboratory will attempt to grab the character closest to the entrance.

8. Laboratory

The party will be immediately set upon by the fiend that occupies the oddly shaped laboratory; the demon attempting to vent weeks of pent-up rage and hunger upon a single target. If surprised and hit by the monster's subsequent attack, the character closest to the doorway will be seized by the thing and then possibly bitten to death (see below).

Taller than any man and muscled like a sinewy beast, the demon has simian arms and attacks. Although it lacks a right foot and lumbers about on jagged, protruding bones, the monster skips forward with unnatural speed and seems oblivious to any pain. To the party, it appears that the thing's foot has been torn off.

The fiend is a shub demon, inadvertently called forth when Dolgrim spoke the word of release of the **Elven Mirror of Life Trapping** (unique magic item, see description in Appendix 2) that had come into the warlock's possession via Ordovar, his liege. The dwarves of Hörlenholt brought the wondrous mirror to Dolgrim, hoping that he would be able to shed some light upon its powers.

Speaking the word while testing the mirror's functioning, Dolgrim released the demon B'arloqfakitzt (B'arl) from its dimensional prison and onto the material plane. Caught off guard, the warlock did manage to direct a powerful lightning bolt at the demon, but the dangerous spell simply passed around the fiend's body. Scrambling under his laboratory bench to avoid the monster's deadly fists, Dolgrim glanced down and noticed one of the wands from his collection before him. Quickly formulating a plan to trap the demon, the warlock used the wand to briefly convert a portion of the tower's wall and ceiling near B'arl into mud.

Dolgrim's ingenious plan worked, but only for an instant as the resolidified stone closed around the demon's right foot. The demon, rendered insane by seven thousand years trapped within a closet-sized demi-plane, found that it couldn't use its teleportation ability to extricate itself and decided to simply rip its leg away from the offending foot.

About to die a horrible death, Dolgrim focused his attention on the cruel mirror and spoke the only other activation word that he had divined from his study of the thing. Hoping that it would shunt the demon back into its prison, Dolgrim was only half-surprised when the world dissolved around him. Dolgrim's use of the wand caused his tower to slump and precipitated the sacking of Blacktop Vale.

B'arl is wholly unnatural, as if sprung from a nightmare. It has become emaciated from weeks of starvation (water trickles through the collapsed wall), and its normal scarlet-ochre coloration has faded to a dull, rusty hue. The demon's waxen skin stretches across skeletal, misshapen features, and its gyrating eyes betray its insanity. Bellowing out of a fish-lipped mouth that is lined with black, pointed teeth, the shub demon will unconsciously assault all the characters' psyches by simultaneously broadcasting a hundred insane thoughts. A few words will stand out from this gibbering avalanche: *RAGE! KILL! HUNGER! EAT!*

B'arloqfakitzt (Shub Demon): MV 90′; AC 1; HD 5+1; hp 29; #AT 2 (fists) or 1 (bite); D 1d6+1/1d6+1 or 1d6; MR 40%; SA *darkness* (5′ radius), *fear* (by touch, as the 4th level MU spell); *fly* (per the 3rd level MU spell); *telekinesis* (100 lbs.) once per round

The shub's *teleport* and *gate* abilities do not work within Dolgrim's tower because the he added crushed diamonds and phase-spider ichor to the mortar of the structure. If the party allows B'arl to make its way out of the tower, the region will have an insane, teleport-capable force of chaos to deal with . . .one with the ability to gate in other demons on a daily basis (see OSRIC™ rule book for details). Like all lesser demons, B'arl is affected by the following attack forms: acid–full, cold–half, electricity–half, fire–half, poison gas–half, normal weapons–full; *magic missile*–full. B'arl is insane and will hold close the first character caught in its taloned hands, attempting to bite the person to death (automatic hit every round thereafter, causing 1d6 points of damage) and drink the victim's blood. While occupied with its first victim in this way B'arl will be oblivious to other attacks and will suffer a +4 penalty to its AC. If B'arl manages to kill a character in this fashion it will then calm enough to intelligently fight by using its innate magical abilities. If pressed, B'arl will attempt to flee the tower.

The laboratory is a confused mess of broken furniture, smashed glass, paper, rock, gravel, and mud. Two stones set into the chamber's ceiling magically illuminate the chaotic scene. Once combat ends, the characters will notice that Syl has flown into the room and stopped cawing. The raven will perch itself on the edge of a piece of metal that lies partially buried in a corner of the room and tap at its surface frantically. All of the laboratory's furniture and equipment is completely smashed and shattered, save for a small hoard of treasure that the demon has collected. This consists of a silver ingot (2 gp), a gold ingot (50 gp), a platinum ingot (100 gp), a small electrum dagger (1 gp), a **ring of warmth**, a **ring of weather prediction** (useable 1/day, per the 1st level druid spell *predict weather*), and an unbroken **wand of fire affectation** (14 charges, per the 1st level MU spell *affect normal fires*). Despite its insanity, B'arl instinctively collected those objects in the room that obviously hold power, save for four vellum pages (see below) that are mixed amongst the room's detritus. The demon has been attempting to destroy the **Elven Mirror of Life Trapping** over the last few weeks but has not been successful. If the party uses *detect magic* within the room's confines the spell will determine that the demon correctly identified all of the minor objects that hold traces of magic; the partially covered mirror will glow like the sun. Syl will not release the elven relic, maintaining its grip on the mirror even after a character picks it up.

The raven's attachment to the mirror should lead the party to conclude that Dolgrim has trapped himself within the device and that the warlock's tower was somehow damaged in a battle with the demon. The lava-like flow of rock that extends from ceiling to floor in the southwestern corner of the room did not occur naturally, and the broken foot-mould (empty now, as the shub ate its severed foot some time ago) within the solidified rock firmly places the fiend within the chamber when the tower slumped.

In the wreckage of the room, the party will come across hundreds of loose papers, including full sheets and torn scraps. Even though the demon has destroyed the majority of the warlock's various works, a careful sorting of the remaining pieces will reveal that four complete pages hold spells from **Dolgrim's ruined spellbook**. These include the spells *detect magic*, *hold portal*, *ventriloquism*, and *continual light*. Other pages and scraps include research notes on various investigations that the warlock has conducted over the years, and a few describe Dolgrim's attempts to activate the elven mirror. A sorting of the mundane writings will reveal, among other esoteric subjects, equipment lists, descriptions of the flora and fauna found in various climates, and excerpts from treatises on religious festivals.
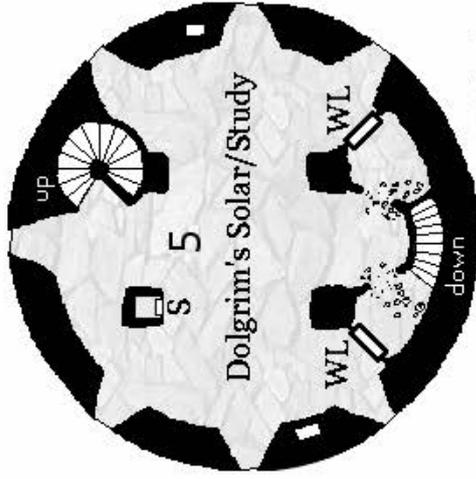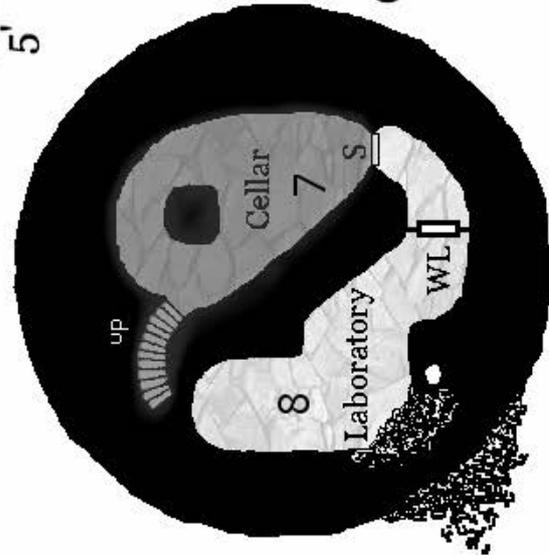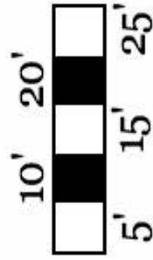
Dolgrim's Ruined Tower

First Level

1

Great Hall
2

Kitchen
3

up

down

Second Level

Storage

Library/Study
4

Aeric's Room

down

up

Third Level

Dolgrim's Solar/Study
5

S

WL

WL

up

down

Battlements

6

WL

Cellar Level

Cellar
7

Laboratory
8

S

WL

up

Scale: 5' 10' 15' 20' 25'
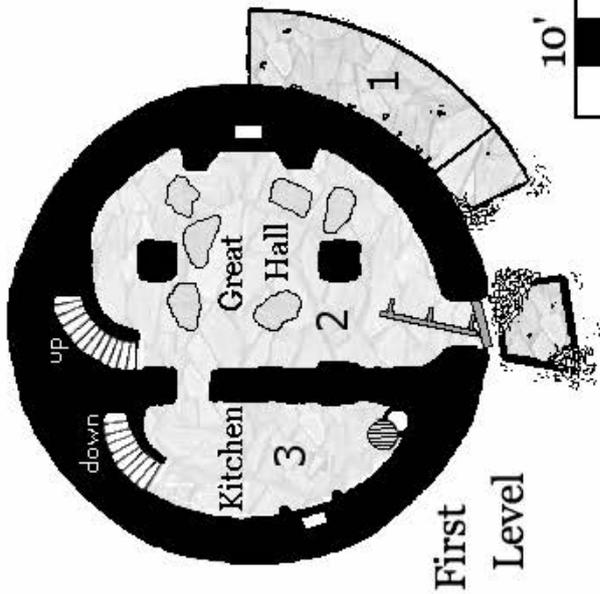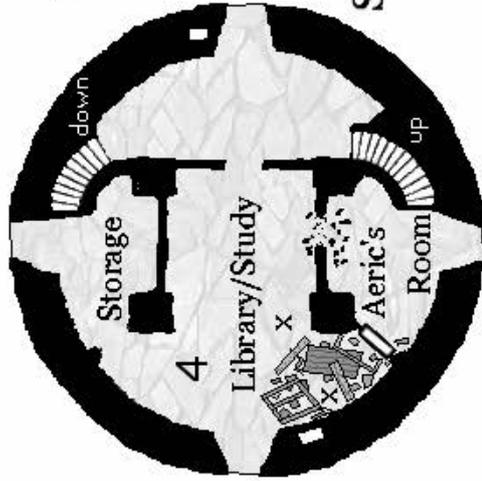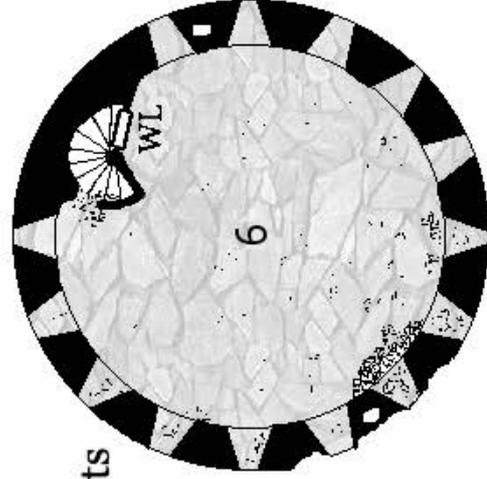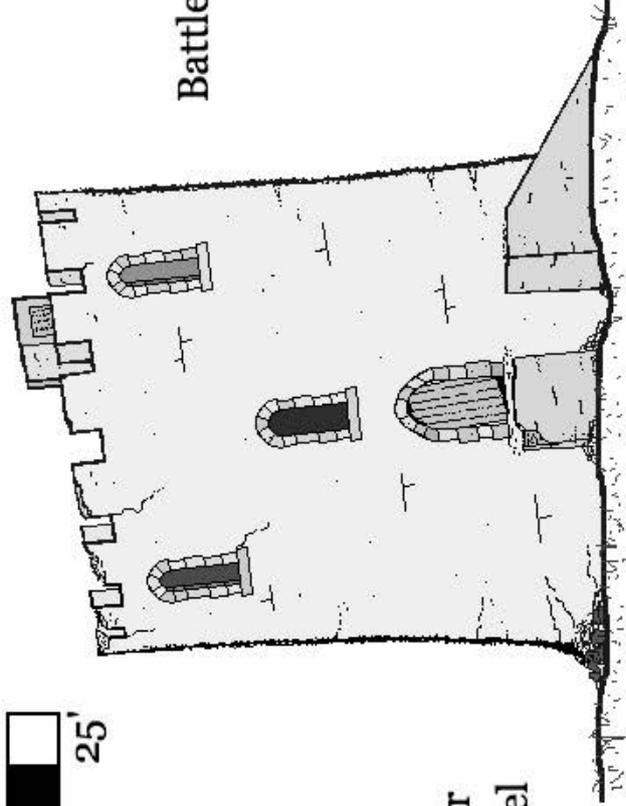
Appendix 1: New OSRIC™ Creatures

Beastling

Frequency: Rare
No. Encountered: 1d8
Size: S (2 ft. tall)
Move: 150 ft.
Armor Class: 6
Hit Dice: 1-1
Attacks: 3 (bite/claw/claw)
Damage: 1d3/1d2/1d2
Special Attacks: Disease
Special Defenses: None
Magic Resistance: 50%
Lair Probability: 50%
Intelligence: Semi-
Alignment: Neutral (Evil)
Level/XP: 2/20 + 2 per hp

Bred unwisely to cleanse a wizard's domain of enemies' familiars and of unwanted animals, packs of feral beastlings now lurk amongst the boughs and thickets of many temperate forests. The size of large raccoons but living in predatory packs, these semi-intelligent creatures normally hunt small to medium-sized game. However, they are not above attacking small groups of humans or a sleeping party.

Launching themselves from overhead branches and darting out from strands of low-growing brambles, beastlings have a 4-in-6 chance of gaining surprise on a normal target. Going for a mark's throat or for the tendons at the heel or behind the knee, several beastlings will pounce upon the same individual—their combined attacks devastating to anyone not wearing a gorget or mail.

Engineered to defeat an opponent's magical attacks and defenses, beastlings have an innate resistance to magic that makes them difficult to kill with spells such as *magic missile.* Additionally, many beastlings are carriers of either rabies or the bubonic plague (50% chance of carrying one or the other). Targets bitten by an infected beastling must save versus disease or become sick after two weeks of dormancy. Afflicted characters will permanently lose one hit point per day until they are cured or die. Once the disease manifests, characters infected with rabies also lose one constitution point per day; those infected by plague lose one point of charisma per day. These losses are permanent even if the disease is cured.

Beastlings collect shiny, stringy objects (e.g., bracelets and necklaces) and, if living near human or demi-human settlements, will fill their tree nests with an assortment of jewelry. They live 10–15 years and communicate with one another through a complex language of high-pitched yips and subdued growls, sounding much like a pack of hyenas.

Haunting Spirit

Frequency: Very rare
No. Encountered: 1
Size: M
Move: 60 ft/victim's rate
Armor Class: 0/victim's AC
Hit Dice: 5/victim's hit points
Attacks: 1/1, as 5 HD creature
Damage: See below/per victim
Special Attacks: Possession
Special Defenses: See below
Magic Resistance: None
Lair Probability: NA
Intelligence: Non-
Alignment: Any
Level/XP: 4/170 + 5 per hp

A haunting spirit is the physical manifestation of a soul that perished while leaving an urgent task unfinished. Biding its time within 60′ of the location of its death, it manifests in one of two ways: as a wafting, luminous ball of light or as a diaphanous and ghostlike humanoid figure. The haunting spirit's sole purpose is to possess a living body and finish the imperative task, and, upon completion, the soul of the haunting spirit will depart the material plane and move on to its final destination.

Like shadows, haunting spirits drain their victims' ability scores upon successful attacks, draining two points of dexterity per hit. A spirit's victim will feel increasingly numb and cold. Once the targeted human or demi-human is completely drained of dexterity, the haunting spirit will step into the victim's body, possessing him or her with the intent of completing the compelling task. Upon possession, the victim's dexterity returns to normal.

Once the task is completed the haunting spirit moves on to the next plane of existence and leaves the victim behind, with a dexterity of 3. Complete rest will return the victim's dexterity at a rate of one point per turn, but if the victim's body is slain while under possession the haunting spirit will exit the host and wait for another—always remaining within 60 feet of the latest victim.If an intended host has an alignment opposite to that of the haunting spirit (on the good versus evil spectrum), rather than draining dexterity and seeking to possess its opponent, the soul will wrap its ghostly hands about the victim's neck and squeeze until the victim is dead. This attack begins with a successful to-hit roll and causes automatic damage that doubles each round: 1 point the first round, 2 during the second, 4 during the third, and so on.

If not in possession of a body, haunting spirits may only be harmed by weapons that are magical or silver in nature or by fire—and even then, only sparingly. Weapons cause haunting spirits only one hit point of damage per strike (plus any magical bonuses). Normal fire causes only one hit point of damage per die to a haunting spirit, but magical fire does full damage. If a haunting spirit is damaged beyond its ability to maintain its physical form the compelled soul will fade away, only to re-form one week later.

Attacks upon a possessed character will damage the victim's body but cause no damage to the haunting spirit. Only a clerical *exorcism* or a *hold person* spell can remove a haunting spirit from a victim's body, with the spirit given a save versus paralyzation to avoid being cast out.

Iron Cobra

Frequency: Very Rare
No. Encountered: 1
Size: S (6 ft. long)
Move: 120 ft
Armor Class: 0
Hit Dice: 1
Attacks: 1 (bite)
Damage: 1d3
Special Attacks: Poison
Special Defenses: See below
Magic Resistance: See below
Lair Probability: N/A
Intelligence: Non-
Alignment: Neutral
Level/XP: 3/88 + 1 per hp

Fabricated from meteoric iron worked by the greatest of dwarven smiths and ensorcelled with great magic, iron cobras are complex metal constructs that are animated by the same spells that power iron golems. Created to indefinitely protect a particular passage or treasure or to act as a magic-user's indefatigable and loyal bodyguard, these valuable mechanisms fetch an enormous price on the open market as long as their command words are known.

An iron cobra will possess a permanently programmed number of commands equal to two times the level of its creator, who was a magic-user of 12th level or higher. A command is a simple sentence that consists of nothing more complicated than one action, one direct object, and a modifying participle. Uttering a new command overrides any previous command and typically resembles: "attack anything opening this chest", "attack that being", "attack anything entering this passage", "stop", "move forward slowly", "move forward quickly."

Iron cobras have no minds and are not affected by spells or effects that influence a brain. They are also not affected by magical or mundane webs, as they are able to slither effortlessly through them. Nonmagical weapons only inflict half damage upon an iron cobra, and such constructs are able to hide in shadows as well as an 8th level thief.

Iron cobras are able to inject venom into the first three targets they hit, with some magic-users preferring to fill their cobras' fangs with sleeping venom rather than lethal toxins. Regardless of the type of venom used, creatures bitten by an iron cobra's fangs save versus poison at a -2 penalty in addition to suffering the normal 1d3 points of damage.

Against magical spell attacks iron cobras save as their creator (a magic-user of 12th level or higher). Relying upon an altered version of the *locate object* spell when given a command to track down a particular victim, iron cobras can be thrown off a victim's trail through certain magical means.

Appendix 2: New Items and Spells

Elven Mirror of Life Trapping

Created by a cabal of evil elves, this insidious artifact is more than eight thousand years old. Devised to trap, and permanently hold, the most elite magic-users and clerics of the elven race, this 2′ × 4′ speculum was used only when its creators' demonic masters actually entered the material plane . . . and then only by a group of good magic-users that captured it.

The mirror is linked to eighteen interdimensional prisons, each a demi-plane tied to one of the beveled facets circumscribing its main reflective surface. Eight of the facets are currently occupied and contain: #1: a ghast; #2: a leucrotta; #3: a dretch; #4: a young blue dragon; #6: a neutrally aligned human warlock named Dolgrim; #8: a mature white dragon; #10: a bone devil; #18: an evil, insane elven archmage.

This item's interdimensional prisons are hierarchical and increase in strength exponentially (numbered according to their ability to hold increasingly powerful creatures). Unlike a typical **mirror of life trapping**, which traps anything nearby that gazes at its surface, this device allows a powerful magic-user to imprison other creatures according to the following mechanism:

When the reflection of a creature is seen in the mirror's surface, the magic-user speaks the ancient elf word for sealing a portal – *nŭin*. Only creatures of fewer hit dice than the magic-user's level may be trapped in the mirror, and then only if the creature fails to roll higher than the magic-user's level on a d20. The powerful mirror does not allow victims any normal saving throw, but targets possessing magic resistance avoid a d20 roll if that resistance proves efficacious (treat the mirror as an 18th level magic-user for MR purposes). If a creature's magic resistance holds up then the user has a chance of becoming imprisoned. This occurs if the mirror fails to overcome the target's magic resistance and the magic-user subsequently fails to roll less than or equal to his level on a d20. Likewise, a magic-user that speaks the word of imprisonment without gazing at the reflection of a target creature will be pulled into the mirror if he fails this same roll.

If a facet is already occupied by a creature (must be of similar hit dice or level), then the previous occupant will be released when the new prisoner is trapped. This makes trapping creatures of similar levels quite problematic, and possibly dangerous, as the previous occupant will not view the user favorably. Thus, a 3rd level magic-user could theoretically imprison an enemy with 1 or 2 HD in the first

facet, but this would release the ghast that was trapped there millennia ago. A creature may also be released from the mirror if they possess fewer hit dice or levels less than the magic-user. This is done by visualizing the creature in question and speaking the elven word of opening—*athás*. If no creatures held within the mirror are known to the magic-user, then the creature most comparable to the magic-user will be released.

The mirror's third activation word, *reláthos*, opens a gate to a layer of the Abyss for a period of one turn. Useable only by magic-users of 12th level or higher, this function of the mirror was intended to allow the cabal's demon masters to take possession of enemies that had been trapped within the device. The power was never used, and it is unknown which demon lord's realm the gate connects to.

The mirror's activation words are found along its platinum frame. Filigree patterns along the frame spell out the elven words but are not obvious to anyone not versed in archaic versions of that language. Users of the mirror will find that all of the current occupants of the mirror, save Dolgrim, have been trapped for eight thousand years and were driven insane long, long ago.

The Oculus of Fa'al N'that

This macabre monocle is an oval piece of polished calcite that has been fully framed by a gold-trimmed ring of bone. Once the right orbital socket of Fa'al N'that, a sage who lived one thousand years ago, the bony ellipse has a circumference comparable to that of a hen's egg and grants the lens it holds a most remarkable power. Imbued with a small portion of that worthy's long-departed soul, this magical device provides its user with the means to become knowledgeable beyond most mortal's ken.

When concentrated upon, the necromantic monocle will compel Fa'al's fractured soul to perform. That is, the oculus will grow warm and refract any objected writing within its calcite crystal—twice, with one set of characters being transmitted through the transparent mineral unchanged, while the other is converted into a (seemingly) flawless translation. The user of the oculus must interpret the translation, as Fa'al's soul converts the writing into one of the languages the sage once knew (Ancient Kharluni, common elvish, Old Samarran, Old dwarven; Proto-Volgari), not a modern tongue. Possessing semi-consciousness, the portion of the sage's soul that resides in the oculus does not like to be used in such a manner and strives to produce false translations out of spite. Thus, 10–20% of the words that are transcribed will be incorrect.

It is rumored that Fa'al N'that's left orbital socket was also ritually removed from the man's (still living) body and that it was fitted with a translucent aquamarine that acts a **gem of seeing**. Magicians' tales have it that, if the two monocles are brought together, then Fa'al's spirit will be made whole and spring forth as a vengeful ghost.

Electric Arc (Arcane Evocation)

Level: 2
Range: 0
Duration: Instantaneous
AoE: 10′ × 10′ × 10′
Components: V,S,M
Casting Time: 2 seg.
Save: Half

Quite effective against opponents in an enclosed space, this spell has the drawback of requiring the magic-user to manipulate a substantial number of material components. To cast an electric arc safely, the magician must be wearing a large, nonconducting glove that reaches nearly to the caster's elbow and is fabricated from either thick leather or some similar material. This falconer's-type glove prevents electrical charges from traveling back up the practitioner's arm as he flings forth a handful of powdered metal.

The charges that course through this component originate from a large amber ring fitted over one of the caster's gloved fingers. Cascading through the cloud of powdered metal, the arcing electricity forks hundreds of times, shocking all creatures within a 10′ × 10′ × 10′ cubical space. The orientation of the volume of effect relative to the ring is up to the caster's discretion, as long as the magician has freedom to move his arm and fling the metal component outwards. The magician may also elect to disperse the powdered metal about himself, but he will then be subject to the spell's 1d4 hit points of electrical damage per caster level. All creatures within the affected volume not entirely encased in full plate or chain mail will suffer full damage unless a save versus magic is made, whereupon they will suffer half damage. Those encased in full plate or chain mail will suffer only half damage as the electricity coruscates around the wearer's protective shell, and will suffer no damage if a save is made.

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