

A magazine for old school fantasy roleplayers



Issue Number 8

Summer 2012

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The Lands of Ara, Mini-adventures, Monsters,
Rules, Cartoons, Reviews, Art, Fiction & more...

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- 4 Tales from Hell**
- 5 Editorial**
- 5 The Maslow Dungeon**
- 6 Monster Club #14**
The Death Gate
- 8 The Lands of Ara – Special Feature**
Rodian Player Characters, Trolls of Ara
- 12 Newland Campaign Setting**
Part III: Factions in the Forest
- 15 Monster Club #15**
Newland Bestiary: Part II
- 16 The Kobold & Goblin Resistance**
A Labyrinth Lord Mini-Adventure for 3rd to 5th Level Characters
- 19 Moot Point**
A Meeting Place in the Great Forest
- 20 The Bloodbeard Bugbears**
A Bugbear Settlement in the Great Forest
- 24 The Burnt Tree Clan**
An Ogre Settlement in the Great Forest
- 27 Monster Club #16**
Dungeon Random Encounter Tables: Levels 7-8
- 30 Goblin Quest**
- 32 Fanzine Frenzy!**
- 35 Found Familiar**
The Cat
- 37 What's in the Oubliette?**
Reviews of: Random Dungeon Generator as a Dungeon Map, OSRIC A5, Designers & Dragons, and The Walking Dead
- 40 Mouse Watch**
- 41 The Song of Sithakk**
Our Epic Dwarven Serial. Part 8: The Pursuit

E-mail: oubliettemagazine@yahoo.co.uk

Blog: oubliettemagazine.blogspot.com

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Rodian Adventurer p9 © K.Green, *Swamp Troll Encounter* p11 © K.Green)

Play-testing: R. Depper, C. Kitchener, A. Alonso, M. Regan and P. Regan

All rulebook page number references are shown as:

(LL p##) *Labyrinth Lord Revised Edition 2009*

(AEC p##) *Advanced Edition Companion 2010*

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Tales from Hell - The Fantasy Trip

The Science



Magic Roundabout



Meltdown



Big Box



Little Box



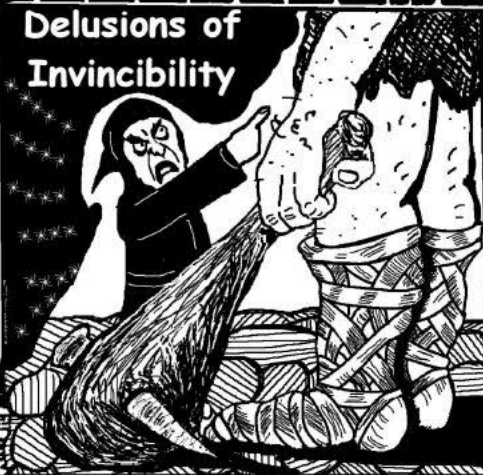
Euphoria



Dungeon Munchies



Delusions of Invincibility



GAME OVER



Just say "No!", Kids.



Editorial

When I started work on the first Issue of *Oubliette* just over 2 years ago, I had a long list of ideas for articles, features and adventures. Now, as I put the finishing touches to this landmark eighth issue, that list is many times longer. It now also contains ideas for supplements, books, games and all manner of other things. My medium-term goal with *Oubliette*, was to publish eight issues, regardless of their critical and financial success. Thankfully, they were well received by the OSR community, and *Oubliette* now reaches a far wider audience than I originally thought would be possible.

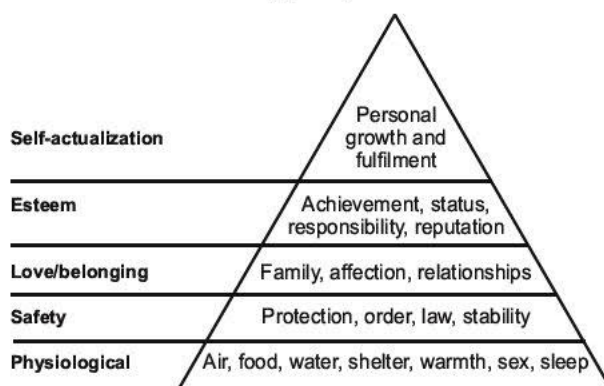
By the time this issue is published, I will already have made a start on the next one. I may make a few changes for the next set of four issues (I plan them in sets of four to make producing the printed compilations easier), but I'm very keen to keep the overall look and feel of the magazine consistent. Most importantly, I want to continue publishing a magazine that, when I pick it up and look at it in 20 years, gives me the same rush of nostalgia that I get now from my old gaming books and magazines from the 1980's.

Finally, I'd like to offer special thanks to Carter Soles and Spawn of Endra from *The Lands of Ara* blog, for allowing me to include material from their recently-produced *Compendium* in this issue. I'll continue to include guest features or articles in future issues, and I'm always on the lookout for new ideas, material, and collaborators.

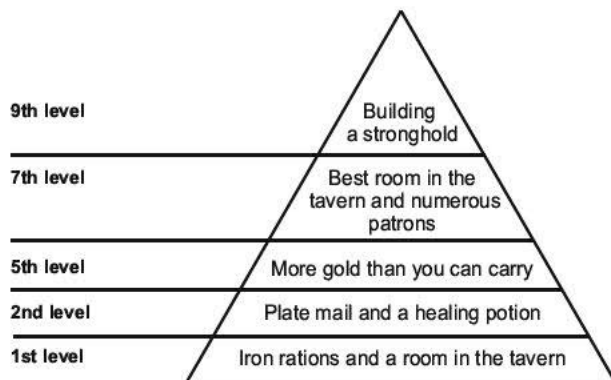
Peter Regan, Editor

The Maslow Dungeon

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is a staple of psychology and business courses around the globe. It was created by Professor Abraham Maslow in 1943, as part of his paper *A Theory of Human Motivation*. Although Maslow never used a pyramid to illustrate his theory, the sort of representation shown below has become typically associated with it.



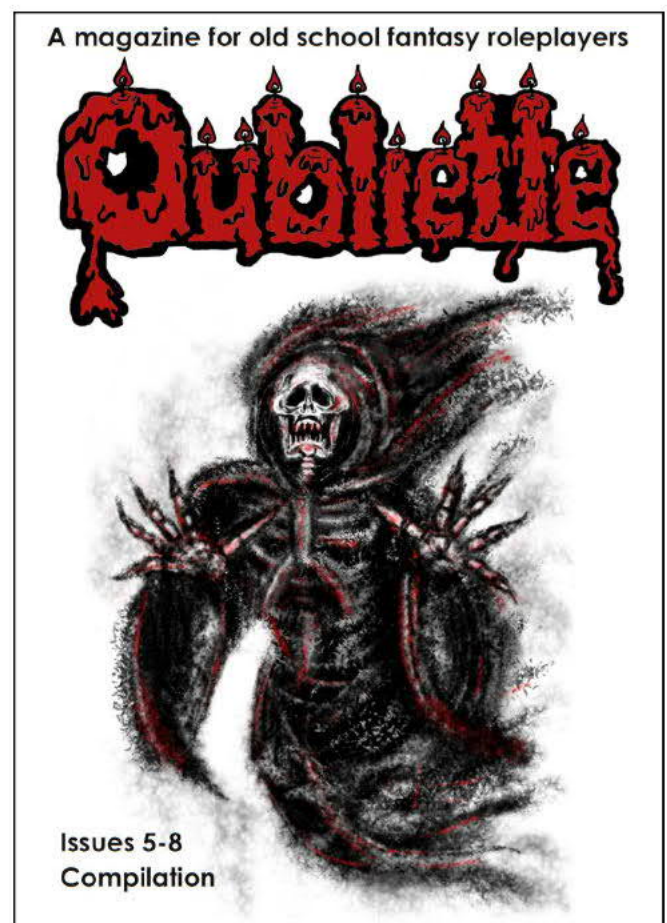
It essentially groups needs into progressive stages, and suggests that somebody must satisfy most, if not all of the needs at one stage, before he has any desire to satisfy those on the next level. As Maslow probably never got an opportunity to venture into the depths of a megadungeon, I've taken the liberty of tweaking his categories to reflect the needs and wants of a typical adventurer.



Issues 5-8 Compilation

Every issue of *Oubliette* is available in printed form as well as PDF. In addition to printed editions of individual issues, compilations of four issues are also available. The *Oubliette Issues 1-4 Compilation* has been our best selling publication to date. The *Oubliette Issues 5-8 Compilation* will be released at the end of June, 2012. For all printed editions please visit:

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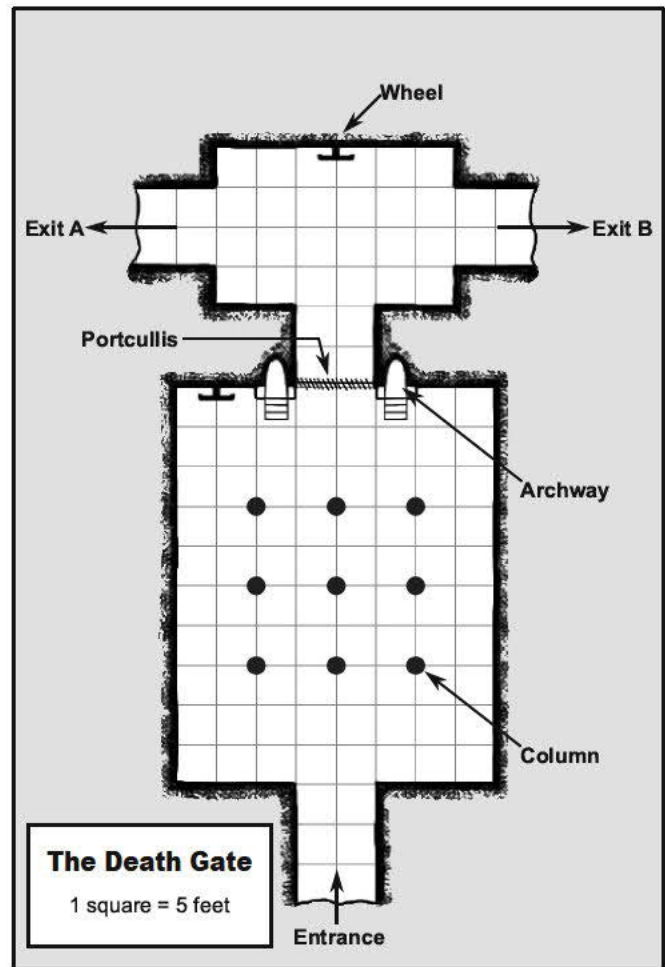
Monster Club #14

The Death Gate

Ancient tales tell of a powerful Necromancer who practised his dark art in a converted underground crypt. It is said that anyone attempting to venture into his lair, will be taken by the dead before he even passes through the entrance

This location is designed to be either dropped into a section of an existing dungeon, or used as the start of a self-contained mini-dungeon. Who – or what – the Necromancer is, and whether he still resides in a crypt just beyond the area shown on the map, is up to you.

The Death Gate is a portcullis made of black iron. It measures nearly 10 feet across, and is too heavy and secure for even a dozen strong men to lift. (Even with the aid of magical strength it cannot be lifted). On each side of the gate, a flight of steps leads to an identical raised archway. Each archway is completely filled with a single slab of polished black stone. This gives the archways the appearance of great black mirrors set in stone frames. If a character holding a light source gazes into one, he will see a twisted and contorted reflection of himself. He must then make a save versus Petrification, or else suffer the effect of a *cause fear* spell (as if cast by a 12th level evil cleric) compelling him to run away, hysterical, at full movement for the following 12 rounds. The archways, and the mirror-like slabs set within them, radiate evil and magic.



The Gate can only be raised by turning a large, rusting iron wheel, which protrudes from the wall some 10 feet to the left of the gate. Two people working together may turn this wheel, but they must make strength checks (roll under strength on a d20) every round to raise the gate or hold it in place. If both make a successful strength check, the wheel will turn and the gate will be raised 6" that round. If only one of them succeeds in a strength check, then the gate will not move. If they both fail, the gate lowers 6", and so on for every round the wheel is operated. On the other side of the gate, some 30' away, is another identical wheel protruding from a wall. It works in exactly the same way as the first one. This means that once the gate is raised with the first wheel, characters may pass under the gate and take the strain by holding the second wheel in place. Provided that a party has sufficient numbers, and enough successful strength checks are made, this approach should allow all of them to pass under the open gate.

The operation of the gate may appear to be no more than an inconvenience for a party of adventurers. However, its use will release an ever increasing force of skeleton* guardians. The skeletons will attack anyone nearby unless they have clothing, shields, or other objects which bear the mark of the Necromancer (red flames on a black background). If one of the wheels is turned and the gate is raised, one skeleton will step out of the polished black stone slab in each archway and

attack. The archways will continue to produce one skeleton each on subsequent rounds, until either the gate is lowered to the ground, or a total of 20 skeletons are released. The gate will magically reset itself after 24 hours, giving the potential for a further 20 skeletons to be released. If the gate and/or wheels are somehow wedged or propped open, any skeletons released will set about clearing the obstruction to close the gate. They will then stand guard by the gate. The black, mirror-like stone set within the archways is completely impenetrable and resists all physical blows and magical effects. However, if *dispel magic* is cast on an archway it will close the portal effect so that no more skeletons can emerge from it (one casting is required to block each archway).

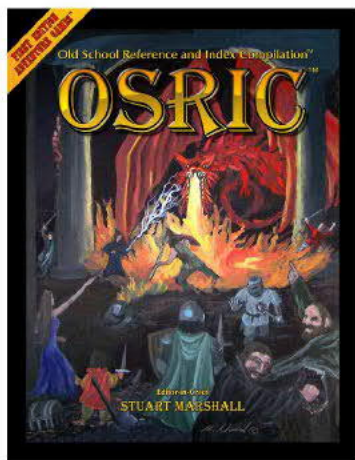
20 Skeletons Move 120' (40') AC7 HD1 HP5, 1, 8, 2, 3, 3, 7, 1, 2, 6, 7, 3, 4, 5, 6, 2, 4, 4, 5 Assorted hand weapons 1d6 damage

**I have used skeletons as the default guardians of the gate, but they may easily be swapped for more powerful undead, or could be given platemail armour to up the ante. Incorporeal undead, such as wraiths, might prove particularly effective in a high level dungeon, as they would not be held back by lowering the gate! Alternatively, the arches could spew out lemures or other Devilish/Demonic minions.*

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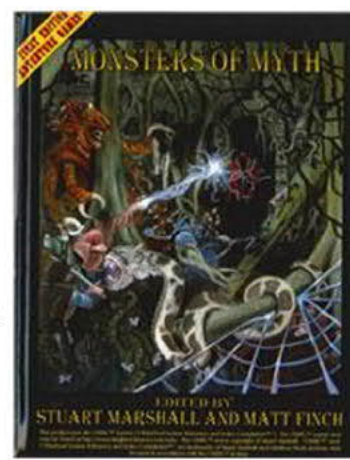
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MONSTERS OF MYTH



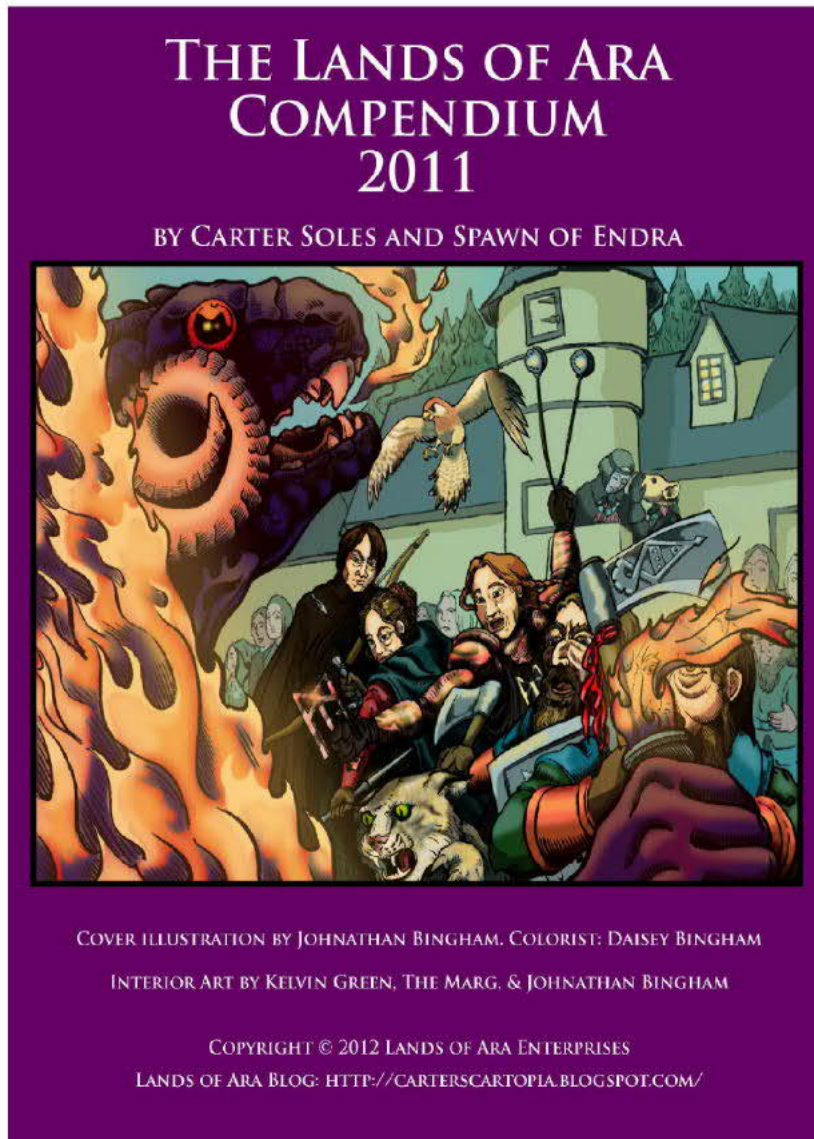
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The Lands of Ara – Special Feature



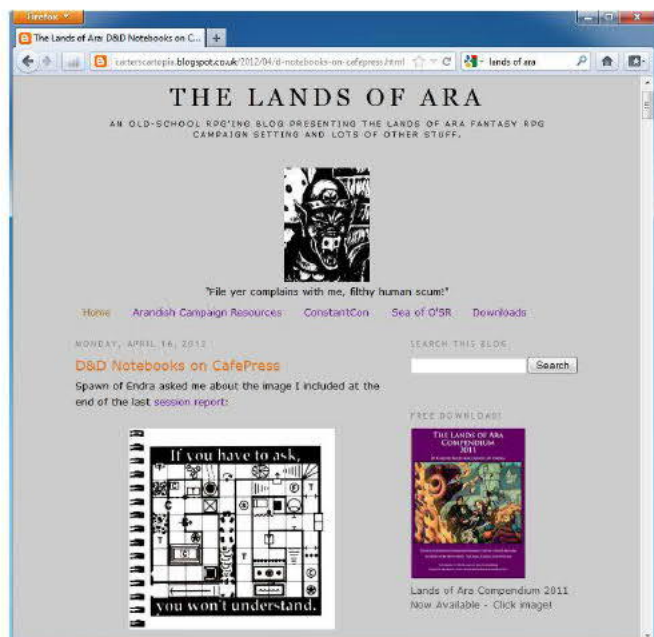
The Lands of Ara is a blog run by Carter Soles with contributions from the enigmatic Spawn of Endra. Since September 2009, they have offered up dozens of posts featuring rules and background from their *Lands of Ara* Labyrinth Lord campaign. They have now taken their blog entries and collated them in *The Lands of Ara Compendium 2011*. This 42-page PDF is available as a free download from *The Lands of Ara* blog. The *Compendium* is packed with great material, and all of it is ripe for lifting and dropping into other campaigns and adventures. The *Compendium* also features some smashing old-school art, with a cover by Johnathan and Daisey Bingham, and interior illustrations by Kelvin Green, Johnathan Bingham, and *Oubliette's* house artist, The Marg.

The following four pages contain samples from the new character and new monster sections of the *Compendium*. A full contents list can be found on page 10 of this issue.

You can find *The Lands of Ara* blog and a download link for the *Compendium* at:

<http://carterscartopia.blogspot.com/>

The Lands of Ara Blog



Rodian Player Characters

Requirements: DEX 9

Prime requisite: DEX

Hit Dice: 1d6

Maximum level: 8

Rodians are small, ratlike humanoids who constitute the third most numerous race in the Lands of Ara (after humans and dwarves). The rodian race originated in elder days when the Arandish sorceress Awra was travelling the known world, increasing her knowledge and magical power. On a rounding of the southern tip of Rakar's Peninsula aboard a Noffellian sailing ship, a storm struck which threatened to sink Awra's vessel. The crew weathered the storm, but the ship was irreparably damaged, and drifted for weeks. Many died by starvation. To save herself and the ship, Awra used her powers to magically meld the surviving Noffellian sailors with onboard rats, thinking thereby to create beings that could better survive the ravages of being cast adrift at sea. Miraculously, the newly created beings made landfall on a forested island a few weeks later. The race prospered and grew; in time the island was named Suhl.

Rodians first came to Ara many generations ago, establishing a few small (and now largely defunct) colonies and one large city, New Port, along the Arandish west coast. Unfortunately, this is land that the elves of Aldoria also consider to be theirs, and a bloody conflict has raged between the elves and rodians there for some years now. Suhlian rodians have also made contact by sea with the kingdoms of Noffel, Blint, and Kaladar, and a prosperous trade has grown between the Suhlians and these Arandish nations.

Rodians (whether Race-as-Class or Advanced) are seafaring folk who demonstrate a distinct tendency toward sea piracy and con-artistry. Any rodian character may originate from the rodian home island of Suhl, located at the extreme southeastern end of the Bay of Noffel. Rodian characters may also come from any region available to Arandish humans, although rodians from Telengard and northern Achelon are quite rare. The majority of mainland-born rodians (i.e., those born anywhere other than Suhl) come from the Free City of Kaladar, or one of the Suhlian-governed coastal cities on Ara's far western seaboard (e.g., New Port).

Rodians have all the same basic abilities and level progression as Labyrinth Lord halflings (LL pp11-12). Rodians make excellent use of urban camouflage and can hide in shadows, or behind other cover, when in cities or underground labyrinths on a roll of 1-2 on 1d6, though they must remain silent and still.

They are highly dexterous, and get a bonus of +1 to initiative rolls when alone or in a party composed only of rodians. They have keen coordination that grants them +1 on any missile attacks. Due to their small size, rodians have a lower armor class (-2) when attacked by creatures greater than human sized. Rodians may not use large or two-handed weapons.

Disease resistance: All rodians save at +2 vs. poison to resist any disease, including *mummy rot* and *lycanthropy*.

At 3rd level and thereafter, rodians have Thief skills at two levels below the rodian's level.



Advanced Edition Rodians have four class options: Rogue, Duelist, Illusionist, and Invoker. They have all the same benefits (e.g., urban camouflage and disease resistance) and limitations (e.g., no two-handed weapons) as Race-as-Class rodians except that they do not level as Halflings, nor do they automatically gain Thief skills at 3rd level and beyond. Also note other class-based restrictions and requirements below:

Rodian Rogue - Levels as LL Thief

Requirements: DEX 10

Prime requisite: DEX

Hit Dice: 1d4 (as opposed to 1d6-1 for human thieves)

Maximum level: None

The Rodian Rogue gains abilities as a Labyrinth Lord Thief.

Rodian Illusionist - Levels as LL AEC Illusionist

Requirements: INT 15, DEX 16

Prime requisite: INT

Hit Dice: 1d4

Maximum level: None

Rodian Illusionists mostly come from Suhl, where they study at the remote and mysterious Black Cloister. There are now some rodian Illusionist teaching centers in rodian-frequented port cities like Jakama and The Free City of Kaladar, but high-level (level six and above) rodian Illusionists must return to the Cloister every other level (every even level from six upward) for specialized teachings and initiation rites.

Rodian Duelist - Levels as LL Fighter

Requirements: STR 9, DEX 9

Prime requisites: STR, DEX

Hit Dice: 1d6

Maximum level: 10

Rodian Duelists may use any light weapons to personal taste but tend to use cutlasses (treat as scimitar) and/or dueling rapiers (treat as short sword) in melee combat and to prefer crossbows as ranged weapons.

Rodian Invoker - Levels as LL Elf

Requirements: INT 14, DEX 9

Prime requisite: INT

Hit Dice: 1d4

Maximum level: 10

The Rodian Invoker levels and obtains spells as a Labyrinth Lord Elf, but with Magic-user weapon and armor restrictions.

The Trolls of Ara

The Lands of Ara play home to many types of trolls, of which the regular LL troll (dubbed the "Hill Troll") is but one variety. What follow are statistics for the four main troll types encountered in the Lands of Ara: the "standard" Hill Troll, the northern Arandish Tree Troll, the even more vicious and deadly Rock Troll, and the huge, amphibious Swamp Troll.

Hill Troll

No. Enc: 1d8 (1d8)
Alignment: Chaotic
Movement: 120' (40')
Armor Class: 4
Hit Dice: 6 + 3
Attacks: 3 (2 claw, 1 bite)
Damage: 1d6/1d6/1d10
Save: F6
Morale: 10
Hoard Class: XIX
XP: 680



Hill Trolls can be found anywhere in Ara, and are identical to a standard Labyrinth Lord troll (LL p100).

Tree Troll

No. Enc: 1d6 (3d6)
Alignment: Chaotic
Movement: 120' (40')
Armor Class: 5
Hit Dice: 3
Attacks: 3 (2 claw, 1 bite)
Damage: 1d4/1d4/1d8
Save: F4
Morale: 8
Hoard Class: X
XP: 65



A smaller and more mischievous cousin to the larger trolls of Ara, tree trolls are in fact extremely rare EXCEPT in the forests of Northern Ara, especially in Achelon, where they seem to proliferate. Tree Trolls are not typically keen on direct attacks, preferring instead to soften their foes with tricks, psychological warfare, and rope or vine snares, before attacking in large groups. Unlike, say, rock trolls, who tend to fight to the death once they smell blood, tree trolls will retreat in the face of particularly strong foes and/or combat circumstances that turn against them. Tree trolls have the same regeneration abilities and susceptibilities to acid and fire as their larger brethren. Tree trolls live in treetops and hollow stumps and logs.

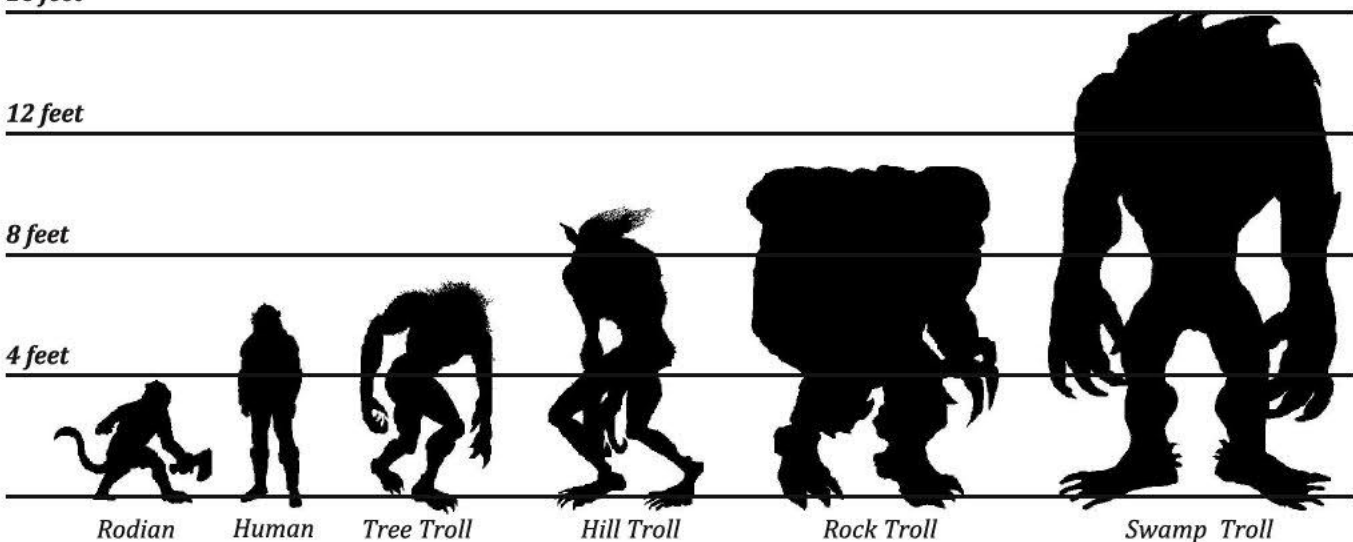
Trolls of Ara Size Comparison Chart

16 feet

12 feet

8 feet

4 feet



Rodian

Human

Tree Troll

Hill Troll

Rock Troll

Swamp Troll

Full Compendium Contents

Alternate PC Races & Classes

Rodians; Rodian Classes; Ogre PCs; 2d6 Bardery/Basic Arandish Bard; Bard Variant: The Jongleur

Monsters

Blaag; Sleestak; **Trolls of Ara:** Hill Troll, Tree Troll, Rock Troll, Swamp Troll; Homed Cyclops; **Dragons of Ara:** Krakko the Iron Drake, Razgar the Red Dragon, Bublar the Black Dragon; **Dimetrodons:** Dimetrodon, Fire-Breathing Dimetrodon, Aquatic Dimetrodon, Flying Dimetrodon; Tree Wilden (Sloth of Death); Eyepecker; Swamp Tiger; Undead Stirge; Undead Yeti

Traps & Items

Ogre Acid Pool; Triple Fire Trap Room; Holy Water Bolas; Gunger Beykr's Chime of Infallible Wayfaring; Alaxxx's Penny of Retrieval; +1 Crowbar

Arandish NPCs

Beastarr the Bobcat; Rogath the Swamp Ranger; Rabbit-Head (an erratic Swamp Guide); Elzar the Horrid; Hokka and His Crew; Hokka (Seafarer Captain); Felda Barris; Zigg and Higbar Karibekian; Barnacle-Head; Saladari Xaelar

Erstwhile Petty Gods

St. Ainless of Inocks; Dozentit – Goddess of Perfunctory Inquiry

Spells

Stickyfoot; Troglodyte Stench Burst; Cannibal Curse; Vomitus Deluge; Scumbrella; Alaxxx's Zib Flobble; Alaxxx's Zib Floogle; Dunce-Face; Symbol of Porn

Rock Troll

No. Enc: 1d6 (1d6)
Alignment: Chaotic
Movement: 120' (40')
Armor Class: 3
Hit Dice: 8 + 3
Attacks: 3 (2 claw, 1 bite)
Damage: 1d8/1d8/1d10
Save: F8
Morale: 11
Hoard Class: XIX
XP: 1060



Swamp Troll

No. Enc: 0 (1d4)
Alignment: Chaotic
Movement: 120' (40')
Swim: 180' (60')
Armor Class: 4
Hit Dice: 9 + 3
Attacks: 3 (2 claw, 1 bite)
or trample
Damage: 1d8/1d8/1d12
or 3d8
Save: F9
Morale: 8
Hoard Class: XIV
XP: 1700



Dwelling in the eastern mountain ranges as well as the Frey Mountains of northern Noffel, the deadly rock troll is rarely seen and greatly feared. It loves the thrill of the hunt, and has been known to toy with its victims before devouring them. A rock troll has very keen senses and is difficult to surprise. Rock trolls have a hard, rocky hide that gives them a lower AC (AC 3) than their other trollish cousins. In addition to their tougher hide and slightly larger size (a typical adult rock troll stands 10' tall), rock trolls possess all the same regenerative abilities, and susceptibilities to acid and fire, as hill trolls do (*LL p100*). Rock trolls are often found in deep dungeon levels.

The most dreaded of all trolls, the gigantic swamp troll inhabits the Great Western Swamp, lying in wait for prey, its leathery, muck-encrusted back sticking out of the water like a small island. When something gets close enough, the troll rises to its full height of 16 feet, striking with terrible, sharp, 3-foot claws. The swamp troll knows little fear, and will not hesitate to attack small boats and other swamp-going craft. Swamp trolls are nomadic, going where the hunting is good. They are excellent swimmers, and if forced to flee will dive into the swamp-water and swim away from danger. Swamp trolls are amphibious and can hold their breath under water for very long periods (many hours). Swamp trolls have all the same regenerative abilities, and susceptibilities to acid and fire, as hill and rock trolls do (*LL p100*).



A rodian adventurer faces off against a dreaded swamp troll

Newland Campaign Setting

Part III: Factions in the Forest

The forest is denser now. The canopy above blocks out the midday sun, leaving in every direction, a dim view of endless trees and undergrowth in the half light. There are other features to this covered land: hollows, dips, and fissures left over from seismic events centuries ago. This makes navigating a route difficult. You've yet to find anything that could be called a path – just occasional short trails left by other creatures in the forest. Some of the footprints are unfamiliar to even the most experienced outdoorsman in the party, and they are of a size that leave you hoping that you never encounter whatever might have left them.

Your base is now several hours behind and soon the time will come to decide whether you should head back or risk a night out in the forest. Suddenly, a signal comes from your leader to take cover. He has heard or seen something. A few moments later, you can all hear the deep, guttural voices of large humanoid who are moving through the forest with seemingly little care or attention. Three ogres pass by without noticing you crouched a mere 40 feet away. Once they can no longer be seen or heard, you advance to where they crossed in front of you. They have come from a north-westerly direction. The footprints show that they have used this route before. Though not a heavily-used path, it is relatively clear and offers a means of upping the pace for those willing to risk taking it

This instalment of the Newlands campaign setting opens up an area of the Great Forest for sandbox play. The map extends from the southern edge of the forest near the Northern Watch Tower, all the way north to the rift itself. Within the forest, there are several factions operating in varying degrees of conflict and cooperation with each other. Each of these factions has some form of camp or base from which they operate. Most have marked their territory in some way, making it easy for an exploring party to work out where different groups might be located. The followings sections cover each of the main numbered locations on the map (see p13).

1 North Tower The North Tower serves as a hub for getting supplies to the Temple base camp. The guards at the North Tower keep hawks, enabling them to send messages to Trago Hall and have a reply within a few hours. The party may also fall back to the Tower if their base camp is overrun, but it is too small to accommodate them for more than a couple of nights.

2 Base Camp It is assumed that the party will continue to use the ruined snake temple as their main base camp. Each night that the party spends at the Temple, they risk being discovered by one of the humanoid factions in the forest. The base chance is a cumulative 5% per night. (e.g. After 5 nights 25%, 6 nights 30%, etc.) If the camp is discovered, an attack against it will take place within 48 hours. The chance of discovery may be modified according to the actions of the party. If they stomp through the forest leaving a trail of corpses, then it will greatly increase the chance of their base being discovered.

3 The Snake King's Tomb If the party's base camp is compromised, and they cannot safely reach the North Tower, they may use the Tomb for shelter. If the cover to the entry shaft was left open at the end of their last visit, then the party may find several snakes waiting for them inside the tomb. If they closed the cover to the entry shaft, moving it will trigger the sleeping gas trap and summon 1-2 giant constrictor snakes in 2d6 rounds (see *Oubliette Issue 7, p21* for full details of the Tomb).

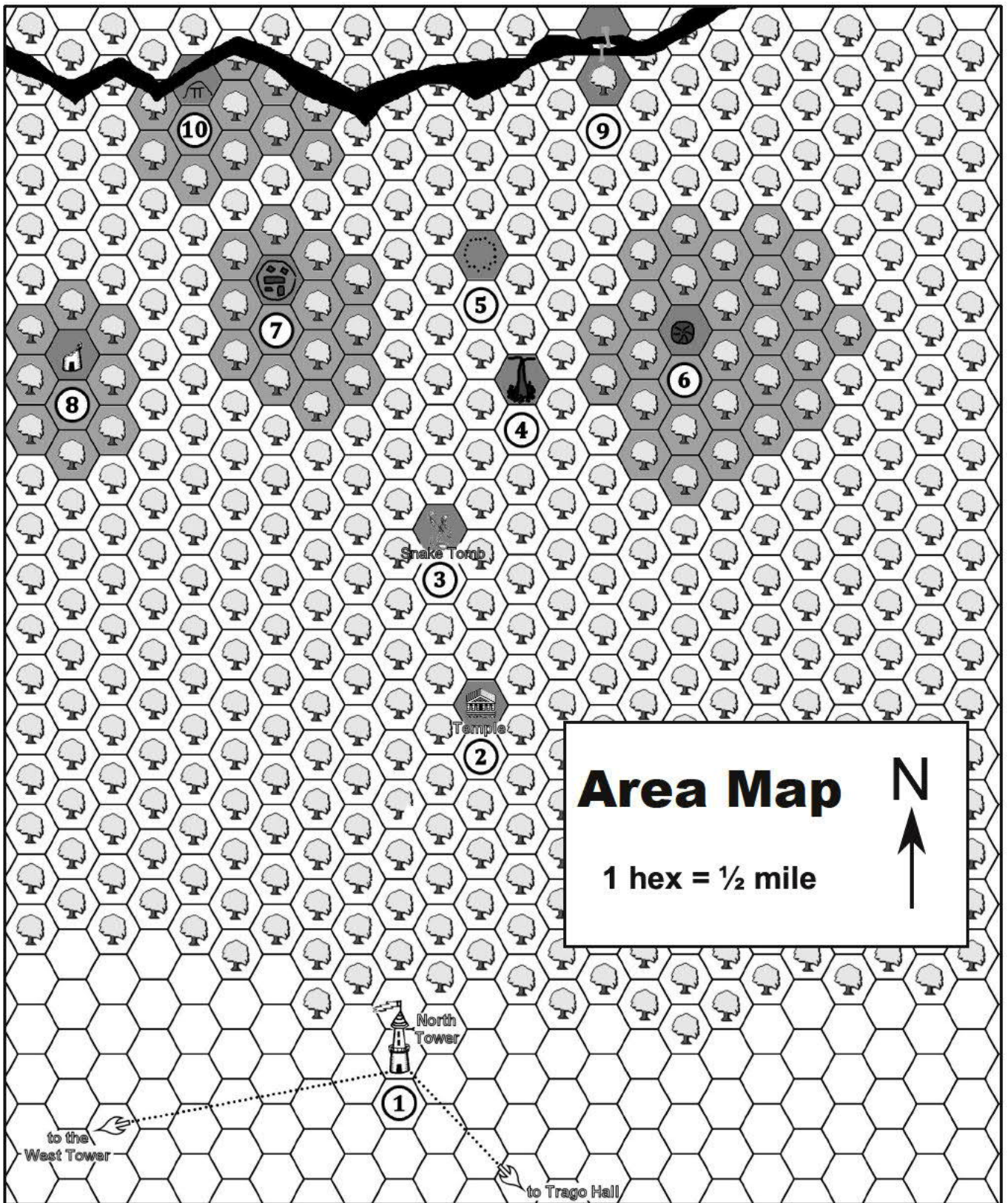
4 The Kobold and Goblin Resistance This area of the map shows the location of the Kobold and Goblin Resistance's secret base. The Resistance will do their best to avoid any interaction with an adventuring party. However, if their base is compromised and the party survive the many traps set at its entrance, the Resistance will negotiate a truce and may offer information and some treasure, in exchange for their lives. Full details of the Kobold and Goblin Resistance can be found on pp16-18 of this issue.

5 Moot Point This is a crossroads where paths leading to all the main territories in the forest interconnect. Here, trees have been felled to create a meeting area big enough for scores of ogre-sized creatures to assemble in the open. A map of the clearing and further details can be found on p19 of this issue.

6 The Bloodbeard Tribe (Bugbears) The fearsome Bloodbeards are the only bugbears south of the Rift. They own a large territory, and have marked sundry trees on the perimeter of it with three parallel claw marks cut into the bark and painted red. Even the ogres with whom they have a loose alliance, know better than to pass these markers unescorted. At the centre of their territory, the bugbears have a walled settlement of wooden huts. Full details of the Bloodbeards' village can be found on pp20-23 of this issue.

7 The Burnt Tree Clan (Ogres) The Burnt Tree Clan is the largest of the ogre clans. Each tree surrounding their territory has a large circle of bark cut away from it. The bare tree wood has then been scorched, leaving a blackened scar on the trunk. The Burnt Tree Clan live in a clearing, circled by a wall of felled trees. They have modest shelters and a large wooden longhouse. For an as yet unrevealed reason, they have ceased hostilities with their old enemies and neighbours, the Bloodbeard bugbears. This alliance is fragile at best and even a small act of hostility could break it. Full details of the Burnt Tree Clan's settlement may be found on pp24-26 of this issue.

8 The Castle Clan (Ogres) The Castle Clan ogres live in a ruined tower. They are a tight unit of fighters but have far fewer numbers than either of the other ogre clans. The trees which mark their territory have a large X carved into the trunk. The Castle Clan have partly trained a nearby pack



of dire wolves, and they will often work together when hunting, raiding, or dealing with a threat. Full details of the Castle Clan's lair can be found on pp24-25 of this issue.

9 Overbridge This marks the location of a large wooden bridge which spans the rift. It is guarded by the ettin Thugore and his minions. The ogres and bugbears on the southern side of the rift all live in fear of Thugore. He calls their leaders to the monthly Gathering at Moot Point to issue orders and receive tribute from them. Full details of Overbridge will be included in *Oubliette Issue 9*.

10 The Golden Cave Clan (Ogres) The Golden Cave Clan live in a cave complex close to the edge of the rift. They are the most organised and best equipped of the ogre clans. Their weapons and armour are far superior to the other clans. They will trade with the other ogres, swapping their old weapons and bits of armour for food and treasure. They are lazy creatures and rely on orc slaves to hunt and work for them. The Clan takes its name from a large cave by the entrance to their lair which has walls covered with an iridescent golden moss. Full details of the Golden Cave Clan's lair will be included in *Oubliette Issue 9*.

Travel in the Forest

Travel in the forest is tough going. The map on p13 comprises hexes that are just half-a-mile each across. During the day, characters can cover ground at the rate of three hexes per hour on an outward journey, and four hexes per hour on a return journey that retraces their route. If the party travel on a path used by ogres or bugbears, then they may travel at five hexes per hour as there is less undergrowth to slow them. However, in addition to normal random encounter rolls there will be an additional 1 in 6 chance of the party encountering a group of ogres, or a bugbear patrol. The paths in the forest connect each of the ogre and bugbear settlements with Moot Point. Additionally, each clan/tribe have a path around their marked territory that they regularly patrol. Travelling through the forest at night requires a light source and progress will be slower (minus one hex per hour compared to daytime movement).

Plans of the Enemy

Based solely on the factions and adventures presented in this issue, it is difficult to ascertain the reason behind so many large humanoid groups having settlements in such close proximity to one another. More will be revealed in the next issue when the locations by the rift itself are covered in detail. If a party spends a few days scouting out this area of the forest, they will observe ogres and bugbears patrolling and hunting – but that is all. If a party is able to hide within earshot of a Gathering at Moot Point, they will hear the ettin Thugore issue orders to cease all raids on human caravans until further notice.

What Lies to the East?

East of the area shown the in map (p13) is spider territory. Travel is possible, but there are multiple nests of giant forest spiders. If the party decide to head into this region of the forest 1 in 4 of all random encounters will be with forest spiders and there will also be a 10% chance that such an encounter will be close by a forest spider nest site.

What Lies to the West?

The area to the West of that on the map (p13) is mostly home to savage orc tribes. These are descendants of the tribes that were driven north into the forest by the humans that settled in Newland. They are brutal and have long since lost the skill and knowledge to smelt iron and forge weapons. The tribes fight amongst themselves and also against groups of trolls that live further to the West again.

Random Encounters in the Forest

There is a 1 in 6 chance of an encounter per hour. At night, the chance increases to 2 in 6 per hour.

d100 Creatures Encountered

- 01-03** 1-3 Axe Beaks Move 180' (60') HD3 AC6 HP10, 16, 13
- 04-08** 1-6 Bees, Giant Killer Move 150' (50') HD½ AC7 HP3, 2, 4, 1, 3, 3
- 09-13** 1-6 Beetle, Giant Carnivorouss Move 150' (50') HD3+1 AC3 HP11, 15, 13, 11, 18, 13
- 14-17** 1-2 Black Bears Move 120' (40') HD4 AC6 HP21, 17
- 18-23** 4-6 Bugbears Move 90' (30') HD3+1 AC5 HP11, 17, 13, 19, 7 12
- 24-28** 2-8 Centipedes, Giant Move 60' (20') HD½ AC9 HP1, 1, 3, 3, 4, 4, 3, 1
- 29-30** 1-2 Cockatrices Move 180' (60') HD5 AC6 HP19, 18, 25, 26
- 31-34** 1 Insect Swarm Move 60' (20') HD2 AC7 HP8
- 35-39** 4-16 Kobolds Move 60' (20') HD½ AC7 HP4, 4, 2, 3, 2, 4, 1, 3, 2, 3, 1, 1, 3, 1, 4, 2
- 40-47** 3-4 Ogres Move 90' (30') HD4+1 AC5 HP18, 13, 22, 19
- 48-52** 2-8 Orcs Move 120' (40') HD1 AC6 HP4, 2, 4, 6, 1, 7, 5, 7
- 53-54** 1-2 Owlbears Move 120' (40') HD5 AC5 HP25, 20
- 55-59** 3-18 Rats, Giant Move 120' (60') HD½ AC7 HP1, 3, 2, 1, 3, 4, 1, 2, 1, 1, 3, 3, 2, 3, 1, 2, 1, 4
- 60-62** 1-6 Shield Bugs*, Giant Move 120' (40') HD2 AC3 HP6, 15, 9, 6, 5, 13,
- 63-64** 1-3 Snakes, Giant Pythons Move 90' (30') HD5 AC6 HP23, 17, 26
- 65-69** 1-6 Spiders, Giant Forest** Move 150' (50') HD3 AC6 HP17, 12, 20, 14, 8, 15
- 70-74** 1-10 Stirges Move 180' (60') HD1 AC7 HP4, 5, 2, 8, 3, 1, 6, 6, 2, 4
- 75-79** 2-8 Ticks, Giant Move 30' (10') HD2 AC3 HP10, 8, 5, 12, 3, 7, 9, 13
- 80-81** 1 Tree Demon*** Move 90' (30') HD6 AC4 HP30
- 82-83** 1-2 Trolls Move 120' (40') HD6+3 AC4 HP31, 29, 34
- 84-88** 1-6 Wasps, Giant Move 210' (70') HD4 AC4 HP14, 25, 15, , 22, 15, 22
- 89-93** 1-4 Wild Boars Move 150' (50') HD3 AC7 HP15, 12, 18, 9
- 94-95** 1-4 Wolverines, Giant Move 150' (50') HD4+4 AC4 HP22, 16, 22, 24
- 96-00** 2-12 Wolves Move 180' (60') HD2+2 AC7 HP13, 10, 7, 9, 15, 10, 11, 17, 6, 8, 9, 10

*Stats for Shield Bugs are on p15.

**Stats for Forest Spiders (those encountered will be hunters) are in Oubliette Issue 7 p17.

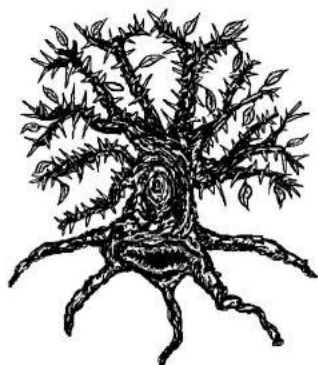
***Stats for a Tree Demon are in Oubliette Issue 7 p17.

Monster Club #15

Newland Bestiary: Part II

Archer Bush

No. Enc: 0 (1d20)
Alignment: Chaotic
Movement: 3' (1')
Armour Class: 7
Hit Dice: 2
Attacks: 1 (thorn spray)
Damage: 1d4
Save: F1
Morale: 12
Hoard Class: None
XP: 20



This creature looks like a small mound of brownish-green leaves. From its trunk, sprout several thick branches, each covered sparsely with leaves, and each sporting rows of needle-like thorns. Archer bushes also have distinctive, small, pale buds of gold and purple.

The archer bush is a subterranean, semi-mobile plant that gains sustenance from the blood of living creatures. Hidden beneath its trunk is the archer bush's mouth, which appears to be nothing more than a dark recess or cavity. Archer bushes can automatically sense the location of anything in contact with the ground within 60 feet.

An archer bush attacks by firing a cluster of thorns at any creature that approaches it. It can fire three such clusters per day and each volley can hit 1d4 individual targets, providing they are within the 20-foot range of the thorns.

Bugbear Halfbreed

No. Enc: 1d4 (3d4)
Alignment: Chaotic
Movement: 90' (30')
Armour Class: 6
Hit Dice: 2+1
Attacks: 1
Damage: 1d8 or weapon
Save: F2
Morale: 8
Hoard Class: None
XP: 35



The bugbears of Newland are one of its most adaptable races. Whether tunnelling to create deep, dark dungeon lairs, or building huts in a forest village, they have always thrived. This is partly thanks to their somewhat relaxed attitude to interbreeding. A typical bugbear settlement will comprise two thirds pure-blood bugbears, with the remainder being made up of a mix of bugbear halfbreeds (the other halves usually being human, orc, or hobgoblin). These weaker halfbreeds are given servant, or in some cases, slave status in bugbear society. Whilst many will do no more than manual labour to earn their keep, some stronger specimens are trained to fight and hunt alongside their bugbear kin. In combat, they will fight fiercely to protect themselves and their community.

Ogre Blood Hulk

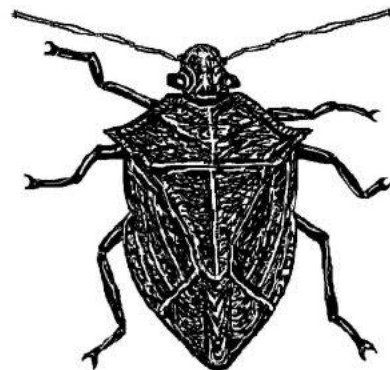
No. Enc: 1 (1)
Alignment: Chaotic
Movement: 60' (20')
Armour Class: 6
Hit Dice: 6
Attacks: 2 (2 fists)
Damage: 1d8/1d8
Save: F5
Morale: 12
Hoard Class: None
XP: 570



These tormented creatures are ogres that have contracted a rare blood disease which causes their bodies to swell with blood and drives them insane with rage. If they survive the early stages of the disease, their hearts and cardiovascular systems expand to cope with the stress. This gives them immense strength and, though their swollen fingers cannot hold weapons, their fists can deal heavy blows to opponents. In combat, they will always fight to the death, and their enhanced circulation allows them to continue fighting below 0 HP for 1d6 rounds. However, if they are reduced to -10 or less HP they are instantly slain.

Shield Bug, Giant

No. Enc: 1d6 (4d6)
Alignment: Neutral
Movement: 120' (40')
Armour Class: 3
Hit Dice: 2
Attacks: 1 (bite)
Damage: 2d4
Save: F1
Morale: 7
Hoard Class: None
XP: 38



This is a three-foot long beetle-like insect. It is the thick, shield-shaped carapace that gives the bug its name. The shield bug's carapace is green and brown, and has a texture that allows the bug to blend in with undergrowth on the forest floor.

Shield bugs are vegetarian and usually feed on tree sap. They have powerful jaws that allow them to easily cut through tree bark. Shield bugs will always hide whenever larger creatures are nearby. Characters have only a 1 in 6 chance of spotting a hiding shield bug. However, if anyone inadvertently steps on, or trips over a shield bug it will attack to protect itself. As a defence mechanism, a cornered or retreating shield bug will spray a cloud of stinking vapour into the air. Anyone within a 10' radius of the bug must make a successful saving throw versus Poison, or else suffer a -2 to hit penalty on all attack rolls, for the next 2d4 rounds.

Shield bugs thrive in the Great Forest but their numbers are kept in check by the forest spiders that rely on them as their main prey.

The Kobold & Goblin Resistance

A Labyrinth Lord Mini-Adventure for 3rd to 5th Level Characters

The Great Forest is a hostile environment for all its inhabitants, but particularly so for Kobolds and Goblins. Mostly, they will only be found there as servants or slaves to tribes of larger goblinoids. However, several years ago, a maverick kobold called Kamrun, formed an alliance between his tribe, and a group of goblins. Together, they escaped from their ogre masters.

After months hiding in the forest, the kobolds and goblins found a hidden cave complex that they have now adapted and extended. From there, they launch scavenging raids, stealing what they can from neighbouring tribes of ogres, buggbears and orcs. The goblin leader, Clug, is a fierce warrior, and his goblins are surprisingly well trained and equipped for goblins. Kamrun is an expert trap-maker, and, with the help of several apprentices, has heavily rigged the hidden entrance to the caves to deal with any unwanted visitors. The kobolds and goblins live in separate areas of the caves, and whilst they are happy to work together for common goals, they do not otherwise socialize. Sometimes in-fighting breaks out between them over food, treasure, or other resources, but it rarely leads to bloodshed.

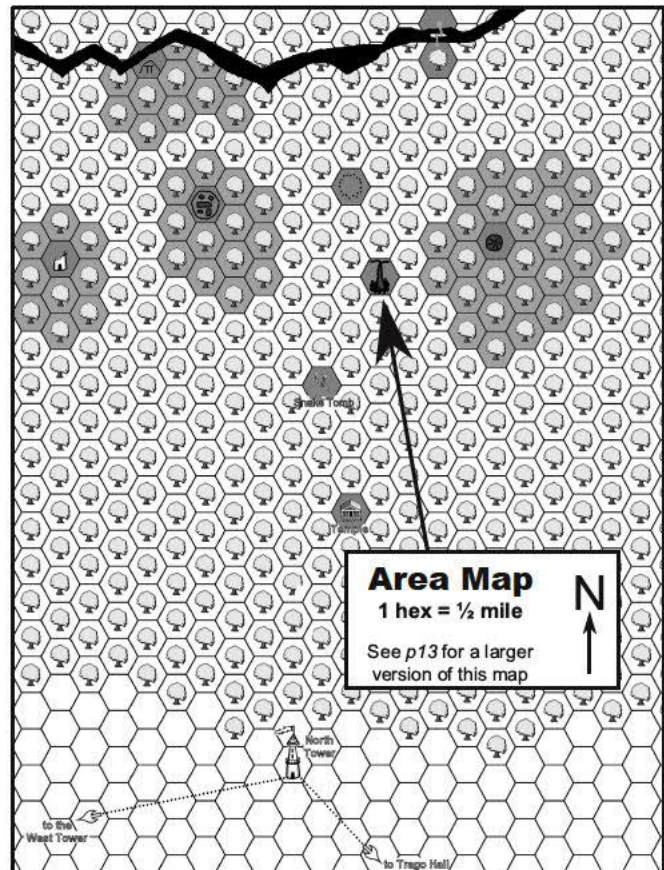
This adventure is one of the locations referred to in the **Factions in the forest (Newland Campaign Setting)** article on pp12-14. The notes there, used in conjunction with the map on p13 (and reproduced at a smaller size on this page for quick reference), explain how it fits into the campaign. The adventure is also ideal for dropping into any sandbox campaign. It may be played as a straight dungeon crawl, but it also has the potential for more, should the adventurers seek to interact with the kobolds and/or goblins – Assuming that the adventurers survive the extensive traps set at the entrance!

1 The thick trees and undergrowth suddenly stop here. A steep earth slope drops down about 20', and then the undergrowth resumes. Directly ahead, there is a cliff face about 80' tall. At its base, there is a narrow opening, no more than a couple of feet wide. A search of the area will reveal a concealed rope on the right side of the earth slope. It makes scrambling down the slope relatively easy. However, as soon as the first character treads on the ground at the bottom of the slope, the six archer bushes there will attack.

2 Well hidden, and about 12' up the cliff face, is a secret entrance to the caves.

3 A narrow passageway leads from the gap in the cliff for about 20', and then opens into a small cave. Ahead, there is a log fence with a crude wooden gate in the middle. Around 20' up, there is a concealed ledge that allows someone at **6** to discretely observe those below.

4 Beyond the fence, the stone walls have been roughly worked, and they open out into a small chamber. The



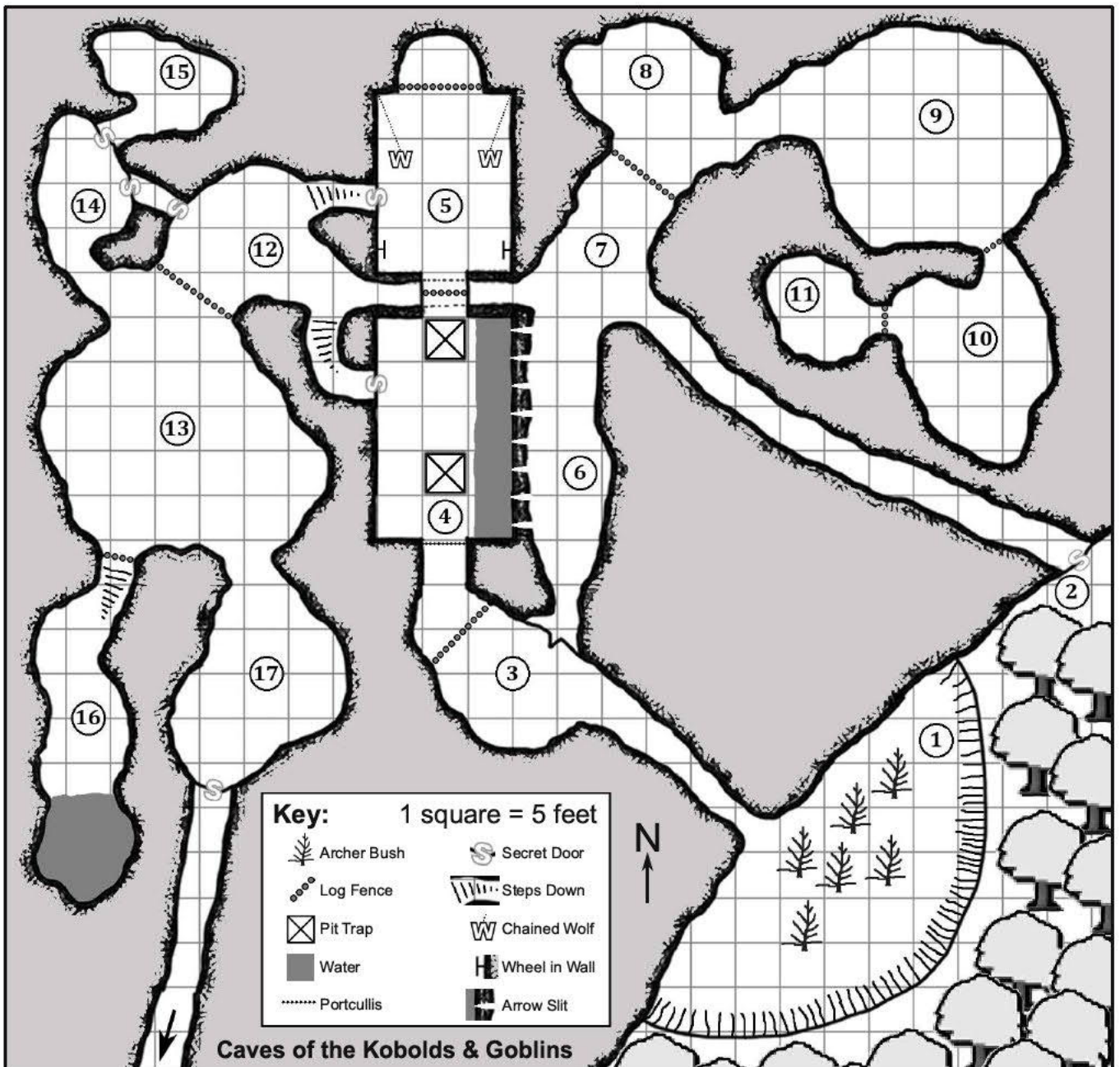
floor has a gentle slope and a stagnant body of water about 4' wide has collected along the right (lower) side. There are two pit traps (both 1d6 damage) in the room. The first is not very well made and should be quite easy for an observant character to spot. The second has been expertly concealed. Once the characters pass or trigger the first trap, a portcullis drops at the entrance to the room, blocking any retreat. High above, eight goblins with crossbows will start shooting at any characters below. If the characters stay in the water, the goblins cannot get line of sight to shoot them. However, the goblins will then pull a lever that releases four spitting cobras into the water.

4 Spitting Cobras Move 90' (30') AC7 HD1 HP5, 1, 2, 3 Bite 1d3 + poison or spit poison

The only visible exit to the room has another log fence and gate. The gate is fastened from the other side and may only be opened by cutting away some of the twine securing it (takes 2-4 rounds). On the left wall, there is a small secret door, beyond which is a narrow passageway with steps that lead up to area **12**.

5 At the rear of this chamber, covering most of the far wall, is a log fence with large double gates in the centre. On either side of these, is a ravenous wolf, secured by an iron collar and chain.

2 Wolves Move 180' (60') AC7 HD2+2 HP13, 7 Bite 1d6



In each corner, level with the entrance to the room, is a large wooden wheel, attached to a mechanism in the wall. These wheels retract the chains holding the wolves. The kobolds also have a release lever for the chains, and they will use at an opportune moment. If the double gates are opened, it is immediately clear that they are decoys, as there is no chamber beyond them – just a few feet of unworked cavern wall. However, opening the the gates will also cause six small buckets of oil to be tipped out, covering anyone within five feet of the gates. After this trap is triggered, the goblins and kobolds will prepare flaming arrows and crossbow bolts for their archers. On the left wall, there is a small secret door, beyond which is a narrow passageway with steps that lead up to area 12.

6 This cave serves as the shooting gallery that looks onto area 4. There are eight arrow slits which allow about 75% of the floor below to be targeted. There is also a lever here for releasing the snakes into water. At the end of the cave, there is a ledge that looks down onto area 3, some 20' below. The ledge has been cut to blend

in with the cavern wall, making it almost impossible to spot from below. At all times, there will be two kobolds near the ledge, and they will alert the rest of the community as soon as they notice any intruders.

2 Kobolds Move 60' (20') AC7 HD½ HP4, 2 Daggers 1d4-1

7 A large log fence has been built across this cave. There is a wooden gate that is held shut by a bar on the other side. The fence also has two small hatches (one each to each side of the gate). The cave has two passageways leading from it. The first crosses over the top of areas 4 and 5, and gives access to the kobold lair at 12. The other leads to the secret entrance to the caves at 2.

8 This cave is occupied by 2-4 goblins at all times. They guard the gate which opens into 7. They will defend against intruders, and call for reinforcements from 9 as required.

2 Goblins Move 60' (20') AC6 HD1-1 HP1, 3, 6, 5 Hand Weapons 1d6

9 This is where the bulk of the goblins spend their time. There will normally be 13-18 goblins here, of which 8 will be sent to area **6** in order to shoot any intruders if called upon to do so.

18 Goblins Move 60' (20') AC6 HD1-1 HP5, 4, 3, 7, 1, 3, 3, 2, 4, 1, 5, 4, 4, 7, 6, 1, 3, 1 Hand Weapons 1d6 (eight of them also have Crossbows 1d6)

10 This is Clug's private cave and he keeps the log gate at the entrance closed at all times. In the years since he helped free the other goblins from the captivity of the ogres, he has changed from being a hero figure and freedom fighter, into a cruel tyrant. He does not trust his fellow goblins and has secretly grown to despise the kobolds. He is also obsessed with hoarding food, treasure, and just about anything else he can drag to his cave. Strewn around the floor are various useless items including empty sacks, crates, broken armour, weapons etc..

Clug, Goblin Chief Move 60' (20') AC6 HD2 HP12 Battle Axe 1d8

11 The log gate leading to this cave is protected by a poorly-made trap (+30% on any detection roll). If the gate is forced, it will open with a 50% chance that the loaded crossbow (1d6 damage) inside the cave will be triggered. The cave is used by Clug to store his treasure and other items which he perceives as being of value. There are two badly-made wooden chests. (They will break if they are lifted without first being emptied). One contains 560gp, 867sp and a pouch with 20 gems worth 5gp each. The other is filled with 1,253cp. Hidden amongst the copper coins, is a smaller box which holds five, black iron keys that Clug stole from the ogres. The walls of the cave are covered with animal skins that, for the most part, are rotten – but there are a couple that might still be worth something. There is also a large leather pouch which hangs from a spike, and contains dozens of teeth which Clug has removed from various creatures.

12 This area marks the beginning of the kobold-inhabited section of the cave complex. A log fence, with just a small kobold-sized gate, seals it off from the main kobold cave at **13**. The cave's ceiling is rigged to collapse (2d8 damage or half with a successful save), but the kobolds will only trigger it as a last-ditch defence. A secret door to the right of the fence opens into a short, secret passageway that ends at the rear workings of another secret door. There are also two passageways, with steep steps, which lead down to the back of the secret doors in areas **4** and **5**.

13 This cave is where most of the kobold tribe are to be found. There will be 19-24 of them, and of these, four will be actively guarding the log fence which separates this cave from area **12**. The rest of the kobolds are eating, tinkering, squabbling, and getting up to all manner of koboldy shenanigans. There are three exits leading from this cave into other areas. Two of these exits are open, but the one at the rear of the cave is

covered by a wooden gate, held in place by several wooden bars. To the side of the gate, leaning against the wall, are a dozen, six-foot long, unlit torches.

24 Kobolds Move 60' (20') AC7 HD½ HP1, 3, 3, 3, 4, 2, 2, 3, 3, 2, 3, 2, 1, 1, 1, 3, 4, 1, 4, 4, 1, 3, 3, 2 Assorted Hand Weapons 1d4-1 and 1d6-1 (six also have short bows 1d6 and six have spears 1d6-1)

14 This is Kamrun's private cave which, by kobold standards, he keeps relatively clean and tidy. Normally, he will be found here, sleeping on a straw cot, or working on a new trap design. He has various trap-making tools and materials tucked away around the place. On his person, he carries an ornately-decorated short sword which has a coating of poison on the blade, a *potion of speed* with three doses remaining, and six small, silver keys. In combat, he is far more powerful than a rank and file kobold, and this should be reflected in his stats. There are two secret doors in the cave. One leads to Kamrun's treasure cave, and the other opens into a secret passageway that connects with area **12** via another secret door.

Kamrun, Kobold Leader Move 60' (20') AC7 HD1+2 HP9 Short Sword 1d6-1 + poison

15 Kamrun keeps the wealth of his tribe here in 3 identical, strongly-made, locked, wooden chests. The first contains 897gp, 362sp, 405cp and a pouch with 124pp in it. The second contains two spitting cobras in one compartment of the chest and a pouch with dozens of gems of many different types, worth in total about 3,000gp, in the other. Any of his six keys will open this chest, but five of them will also open the compartment containing the snakes. The third chest contains items which Kamrun has not been able to identify. There are several potions, a couple of maps, and a scroll case with several papers in it. (These are left to the GM's choice, or roll randomly to determine what they are).

16 The kobolds collect water from this cave. There are steep steps leading down into the cave, and the floor continues to slope down until it becomes submerged by water from an underground spring. There is a 50% chance of encountering 2-8 giant rats in this cave. The rats will wait until their prey nears the water's edge before attacking, and will flee under the water if badly wounded. The kobolds use long, wooden, flaming torches and food scraps to keep the rats at bay whenever they need to fetch water.

8 Giant Rats Move 120' (60') AC7 HD½ HP3, 1, 3, 2, 3, 4, 4, 4 Bite 1d3 + disease

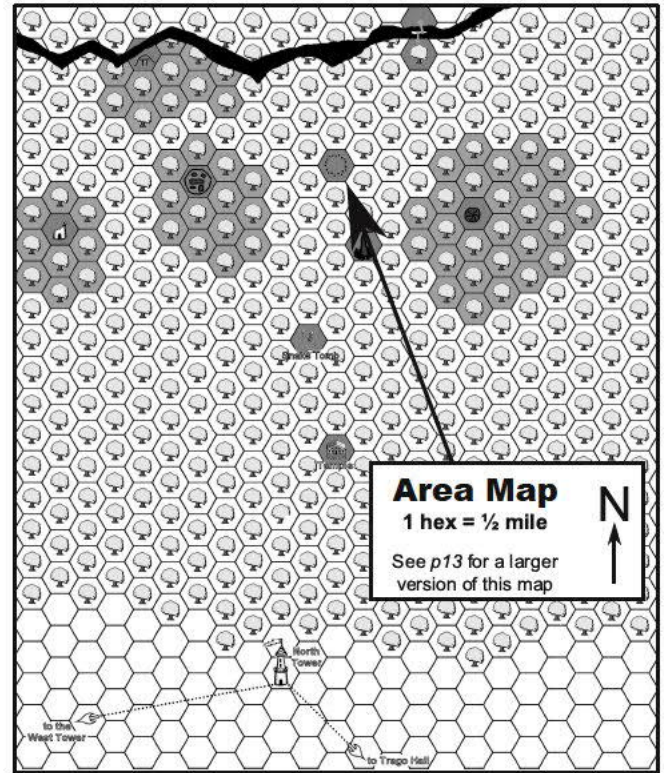
17 This cavern is used as a sleeping area by the kobolds. Their gear is strewn about the place, and the kobolds' filth and mess foul the air. At the back of the cave, there is a secret door which opens to reveal a narrow passageway with a low ceiling, just tall enough for a kobold. The passageway is the kobolds' escape tunnel. It runs in a straight line for about 80' and then ends at a secret door which opens onto the forest floor.

Moot Point

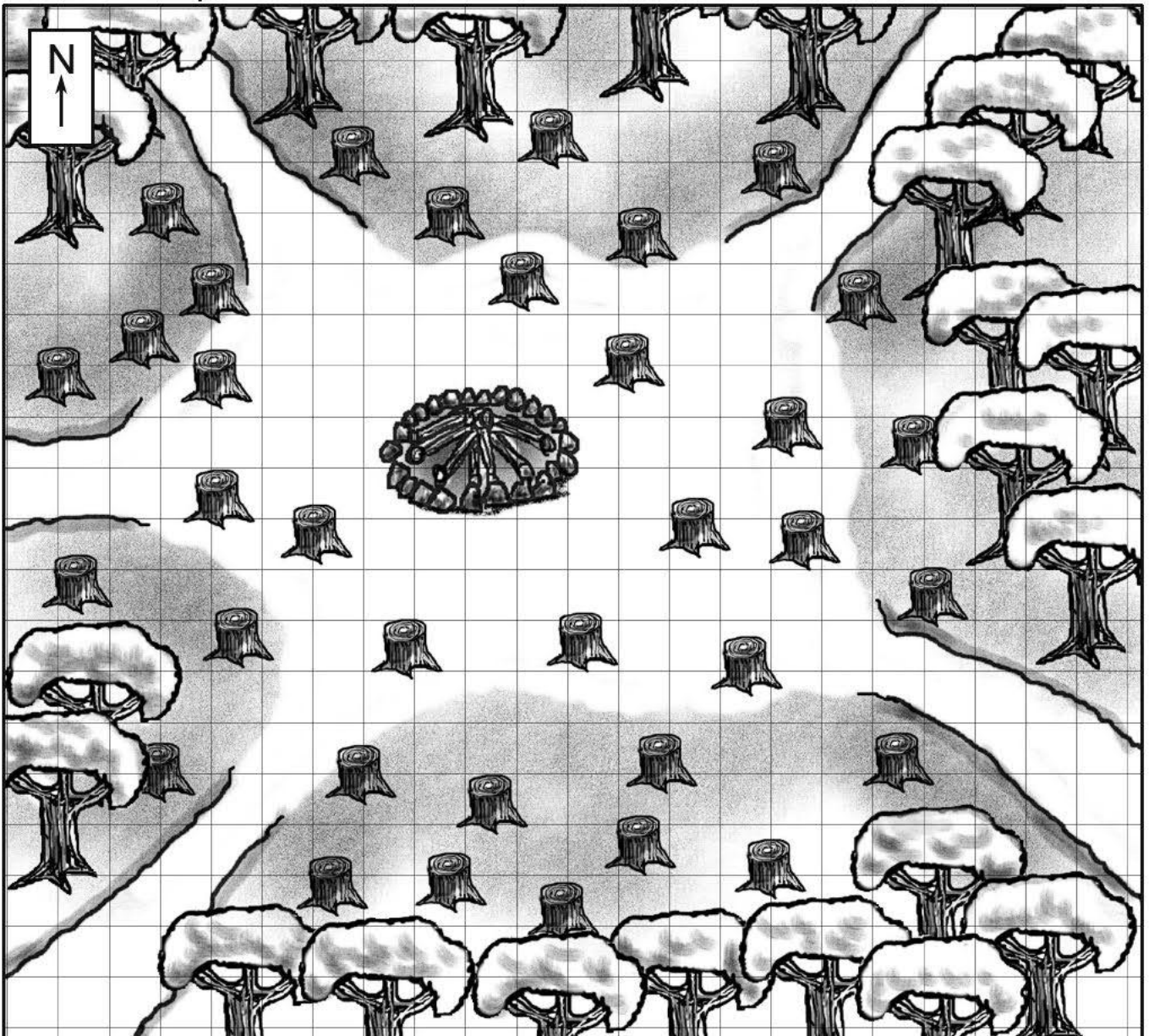
A Meeting Place in the Great Forest

Thugore the ettin and his followers made this clearing when the territories of the ogres and bugbears were first set. Each of the paths that converge in this clearing leads to a settlement of a different humanoid faction in the forest. In the centre of the clearing is a huge fire pit, and around it, stumps of felled trees have been left to serve as seats for far bigger beings than men.

Thugore holds a Gathering here every month, which is attended by the leaders of all the groups in the forest south of the Rift. At these Gatherings, all parties offer tribute to Thugore in the form of provisions and treasures taken from raids on human caravans. All the groups, except the Golden Cave Clan of ogres, live in fear of Thugore. The leader of the Golden Cave Clan is almost equal to Thugore in status, and is said to have magical powers. The Golden Cave Clan are also the best equipped and armed of all the ogre clans. Thugore may have overall authority, but when addressing the leader of the Golden Cave Clan, he makes *requests* rather than issues *orders*.



Moot Point 1 square = 5 feet



The Bloodbeard Bugbears

A Bugbear Settlement in the Great Forest

The Bloodbeards are one of the groups referred to in the Newland Campaign Setting article *Factions in the Forest* on p12. The notes there, used in the conjunction with the map on p13 (and inset on this page), explain how the Bloodbeards fit into the campaign. This location is also ideal for dropping into any sandbox campaign.

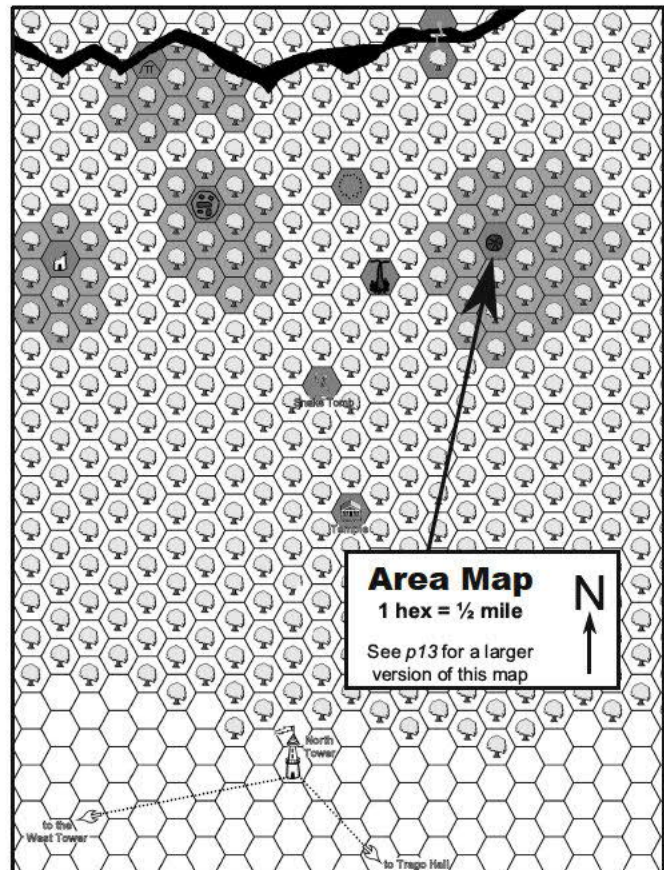
The Bloodbeards are huge tribe of bugbears who hold a large territory north of the rift. They mostly reside in an underground stronghold in the foothills beneath the mountains which surround the Ice Plate (see the main campaign map in *Oubliette Issue 6 p9*). For an as yet unknown reason, the Bloodbeards have formed an alliance with the Ogre Clans. Under the direction of the ettin Thugore, they have been raiding caravans on the northern road which runs along the edge of the Great Forest.

The Bloodbeards have built a compound in a forest clearing (see map, p21). With no underground lair available to them, they have built wooden huts, surrounded by a log wall with a watchtower at the main gates. The Bloodbeards are led by Kraga, a vicious brute even by bugbear standards. With him, are around 30 bugbear warriors and a dozen or so half-breed slaves. Also in the group is Slarkul, a bugbear Shaman with the power to control the beasts of the forest. Using his powers, he has drawn to the area a group of black bears, which he can then summon to fight alongside the tribe.

1 The forest path opens into a clearing. In the centre, is a settlement surrounded by a sturdy, 12-foot-high wall of logs. The path leads up to a pair of large, closed gates. To the right of the gates, there is a 30-foot-tall wooden watchtower. If the party survey the entire clearing they will find the back gate in the log wall at **11**. However, they will also have a chance of encountering black bears if they pass by area **12**. Every hour, there is a 1 in 6 chance that a patrol of bugbears will leave or return to the settlement.

2 A simple but sturdy, 30-foot-tall watchtower built from logs. The platform at the top is reached by a wooden ladder inside the compound. At all times, there will be two bugbears on the platform on look-out duty. A large horn hangs near the ladder which, if sounded, will wake the whole compound, and the entire bugbear force will be up and ready to fight within three rounds.

2 Bugbears Move 90' (30') AC5 HD3+1 HP12, 15 Pole Arm 1d10+1, Dagger 1d4+1



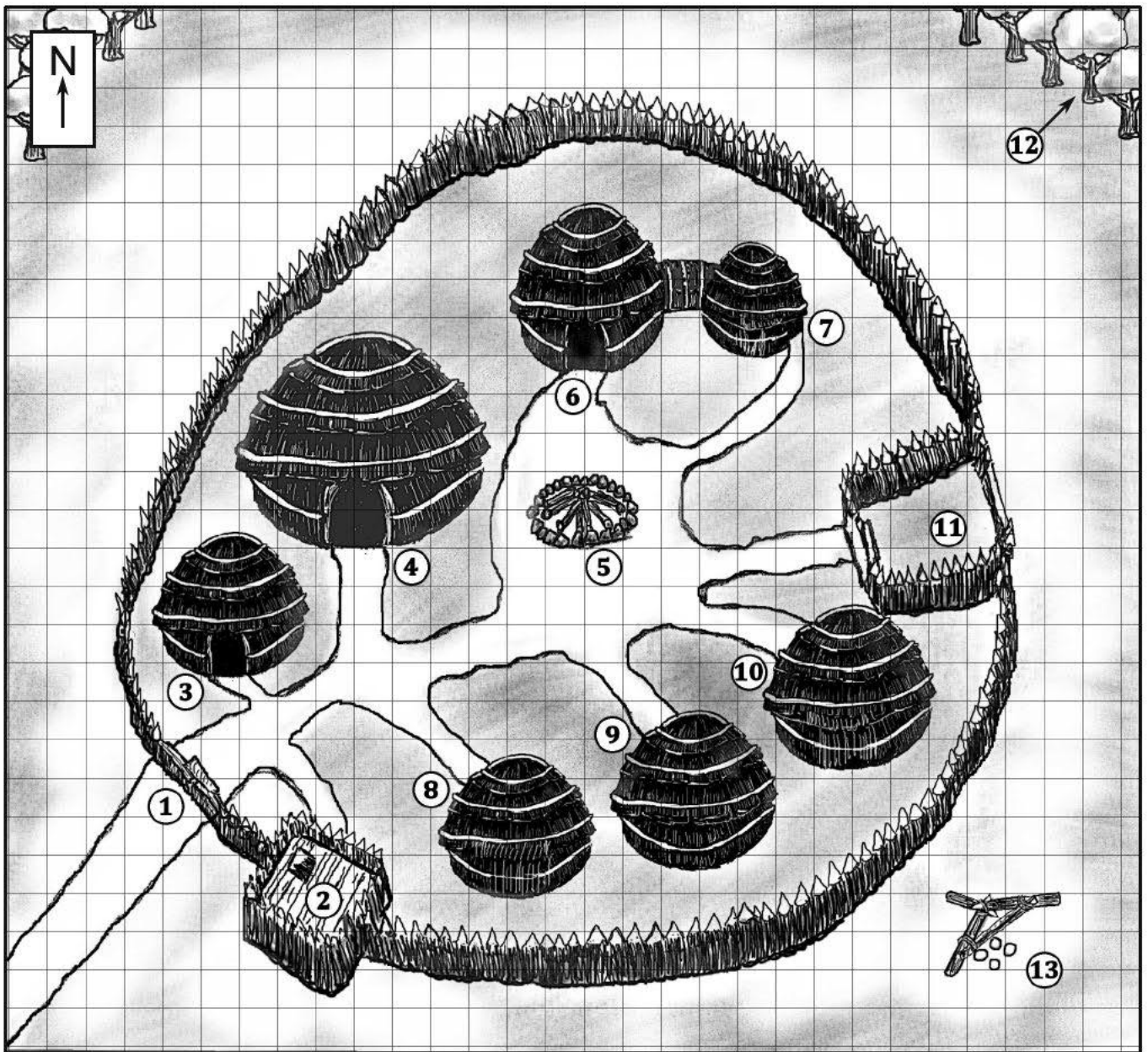
3 This small, wooden hut is home to the gatekeeper. He is on permanent duty, ready to open and close the gates, day and night.

1 Bugbear Move 90' (30') AC5 HD3+1 HP13 Heavy Crossbows 1d8, Javelins (12 between them) 1d6, Daggers 1d4+1

4 This is a communal hut in which the bulk of the bugbears reside. A total of 24 bugbears use this hut for resting. At any given time, there will only be 12 of them here. (Typically, another six will be sat around the firepit, and the final six will be out on patrol). All the bugbears here will have weapons within easy reach but, if the alarm is raised, it may take them a couple of rounds to wake up, grab their weapons, and emerge from the hut.

24 Bugbears Move 90' (30') AC5 HD3+1 HP11, 8, 13, 17, 17, 6, 11, 19, 15, 10, 12, 20, 17, 18, 12, 14, 11, 19, 15, 17, 19, 12, 8, 23 Hand weapons 1d8+1/1d6+1, Daggers 1d4+1





The Settlement of the Bloodbeard Tribe 1 square = 5 feet

5 In the centre of the bugbears' compound, is a large fire pit. The bugbears keep it lit day and night, but during daylight hours it is kept fairly small. Each evening, they fix a large spit over it and roast a wild boar or similar-sized creature. Next to the fire pit, chained to a post, is a dwarf prisoner. He has been beaten half to death, but if given aid, he will find the strength to tell his tale. He is Grundin, a dwarven ranger out of Midden Hold. He was part of a group which set out on a trek along the southern edge of the Rift, in order to learn more about enemy activity. Some of his group were taken by giant spiders. The remainder were ambushed by the bugbears and he is now the only survivor. He is very keen to get back to his people. If the party help free him, he will give them the location of a secret dwarven Travel Hold (this location will be featured in a future issue of *Oubliette*) some 10 miles north-east of the bugbears' compound.

Grundin the Dwarf Move 60' (20') AC9 Lv14 HP16 (but currently on 3) Unarmed

6 This is Kraga's hut. At all times, there will be a bugbear guard stationed outside the entrance. In the hut, the floor is covered with animal skins, and Kraga's collection of

weapons line the walls. Kraga will normally be in here, or with his females at 7. Kraga's favourite weapon is a black, two-handed sword. He doesn't know it, but it is actually a magical blade. If properly researched, its name, *Trollburner*, will be revealed. In combat, it is a normal sword unless the wielder's opponent is a troll, in which case the blade bursts into flames and deals an extra 2d6 points of fire damage every time it strikes, until the troll is dead. Hidden under the skins on the floor, Kraga has a small pouch containing gems worth 500gp. The hut also has two chests of dwarven origin. One contains 3,650sp and the other 1,970gp. The chests were spoils taken from a caravan of dwarven traders. Kraga has been using small amounts of the coins from them to pay his patrol leaders. If the ettin Thugore found out about the loot he would expect a big share of the coins.

Bugbear Guard Move 90' (30') AC5 HD3+1 HP21 Pole arm 1d10+1, Dagger 1d4+1

Kraga Bugbear Leader Move 90' (30') AC3 HD5 HP27 Two-handed sword 1d10+2, Short sword 1d4+2 (damage includes additional strength bonus)

7 This hut is home to Kraga's females. They will always be in here and Kraga is very protective of them. They each wear stolen jewellery worth 120gp and 200gp respectively. Skins line the floor and there are several crates of food and supplies which look like they came from a successful raid. There are also two half-full barrels of wine which Kraga visits frequently. Hidden in one of the barrels is a merchant's pouch, stuffed full with gems (total value 800gp).

2 Female Bugbears Move 90' (30') AC5 HD3+1 HP16, 14 Daggers 1d4+1

8 This hut is used by bugbear half-breed slaves. It is a cramped, filthy hut. At any given time, there will be six of them in here, and a further six outside, carrying out menial tasks around the compound.

12 Bugbear Half-breeds Move 90' (30') AC6 HD2+1 HP5, 4, 12, 5, 13, 10, 15, 7, 7, 8, 3, 13 Clubs 1d4, Daggers 1d4

9 This hut is used by Kraga's three patrol leaders. At any given time, two of them will be in here and the other will be out with his patrol. They each carry a large pouch containing 2d4 10gp gems, 50 silver bits, 1d6x10sp, and 1d20gp.

3 Bugbear Patrol Leaders Move 90' (30') AC5 HD3+1 HP17, 19, 21 Bastard Swords 2d4+1 Daggers 1d4+1

10 This hut is used by Slarkul, the bugbear's Shaman. Slarkul is revered among the bugbears as he has the power to control wild animals. He does not have any magical powers, but he is highly skilled at mixing elements to make powders which seem magical. Strewn about the hut are sacks, pouches, boxes, jars and various other containers. These contain all manner of vegetable, animal and mineral samples which Slarkul uses to make his powders. On a log table, there is a huge, stone mortar and pestle. Slarkul is standing over it busy grinding the contents into a powder. He wears a large, black bearskin and has an ornate, short sword with a curved blade in a jewelled scabbard (together worth 100gp). Around his neck, Slarkul wears a gold chain from which hang two keys. The larger of these opens the lock to the gate of the ritual supplies lock-up (see **11** below). The smaller key opens a the lock on a strongbox in the same location. Against the wall next to him, he has a staff which he will grab should anyone enter his hut unbidden.

Slarkul Bugbear Shaman Move 90' (30') AC5 HD3+1 HP17 Staff 1d6+1, Short Sword 1D6+1

When he has made a batch of powder, he seals it inside a clay ball. These *cloudballs*, as he calls them, may be thrown. They will break on impact and disperse the fine powder over a 10-foot radius. He colour codes the balls according to the effect they have (see the descriptions below). The *cloudballs* – and lots of fresh meat – are what he uses to control the bears and owlbears which live just outside the compound. In a large pouch on his belt, Slarkul has six *cloudballs* (1 red, 2 green, 2 yellow, and 1 black). Slarkul has been making his powders for years and is now totally immune to their effects. However, the other bugbears have built up no such resistance to them!

Red Cloudball

When thrown (same missile range as an oil flask), the *cloudball* will burst on impact. The powder inside will be dispersed over a 10-foot radius, forming a thick, red dust cloud. Anyone inside the cloud must make a saving throw versus Poison, or else be driven into a *bloodrage* which will last for one turn. Creatures in a *bloodrage* will attack the nearest creature to them with a +2 bonus to their to hit rolls. They also suffer a -2 penalty to their armour class for the duration of the *bloodrage*.

Green Cloudball

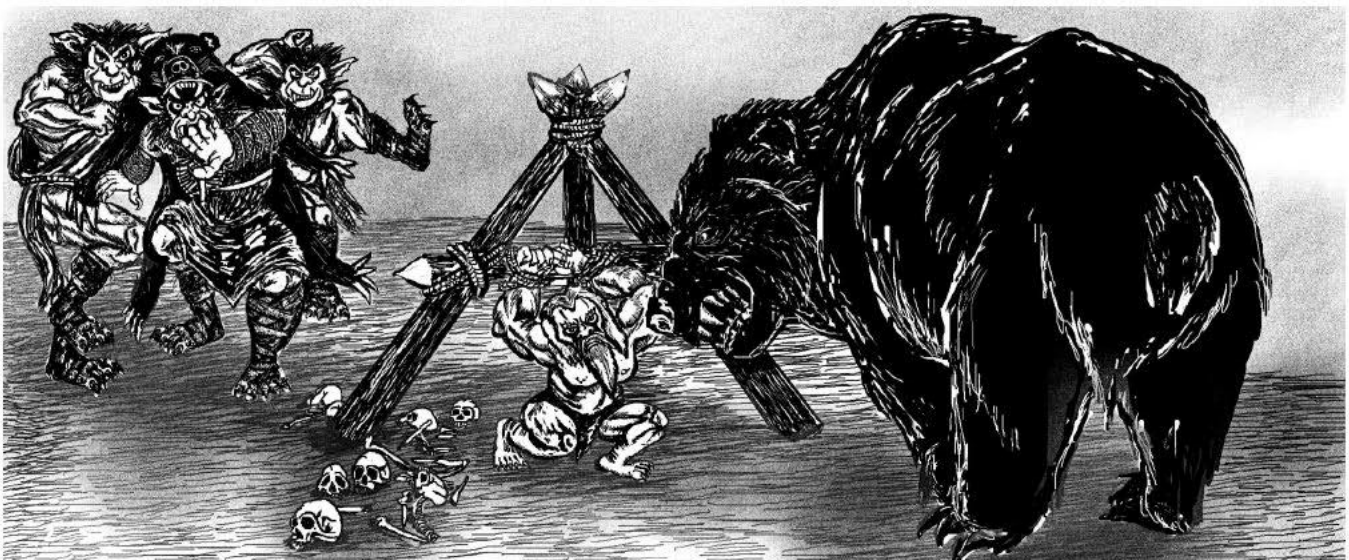
When thrown (same missile range as an oil flask), the *cloudball* will burst on impact. The powder inside will be dispersed over a 10-foot radius, forming a thick, green dust cloud. Anyone inside the cloud must make a saving throw versus Poison, or else become dazed for 2d4 turns. In this state they will be passive and very compliant. Any affected creatures in this state can not make attacks.

Yellow Cloudball

When thrown (same missile range as an oil flask), the *cloudball* will burst on impact. The powder inside will be dispersed over a 10-foot radius, forming a thick, yellow dust cloud. Anyone inside the cloud must make a saving throw versus Poison, or else instantly fall into a deep sleep for 2d4 turns. Sleeping creatures may be shaken awake but must then make a further saving throw to avoid falling asleep again after 1d6 rounds.

Black Cloudball

When thrown (same missile range as an oil flask), the *cloudball* will burst on impact. The powder inside will be dispersed over a 10-foot radius, forming a thick, black dust cloud. Anyone inside the cloud must make a saving throw versus Poison, or else be instantly killed by the lethal toxins in the cloud.





Slarkul the Bugbear Shaman

11 This area is a small, sectioned-off yard with an eight-foot-high log wall. It may be accessed from inside the compound through a locked gate. Only Slarkul, the Bugbear Shaman (see **10**), holds the key to this gate. Inside the yard, there is another more sturdy gate secured by a wooden beam. This gate exits the compound into the clearing, and a path leads to area **13**. At the top of the gate there is a gap of about 12" where the gate falls short of the wooden beam above it.

Inside the yard, there are two dozen wooden torches, a barrel, and a large, locked strongbox. The barrel has a loose lid. If removed, it reveals a sticky, foul-smelling liquid inside. This is an oil-based suspension which the bugbears dip their torches in. When lit, the smoke from the torches acts as a repellent to bears, owlbears and similar large animals. The large, locked strongbox, for which Slarkul (see **10**) also holds the key, contains a dozen each of his red, and green *cloudballs*.

12 Just beyond the tree line, a group of four black bears have made their day beds here. They have been drawn to the bugbear's compound by Slarkul the Shaman's narcotic *cloudballs* and a healthy supply of fresh meat. The bugbears will often take one to two drugged bears with them when they go on a raid.

13 Here the bugbears have built a simple, log framework to which they often tie sacrificial victims. If the bugbears capture any enemies, they will tie them here at dusk and rouse the nearby bears, who will happily oblige the bugbears by ripping the victims to shreds and devouring them. Grundin the dwarf is tonight's unfortunate victim!

Bugbear Sacks

Every bugbear (but not the half-breeds) carries a sack which contains 1d4 random objects. Many of the items will be spoiled and/or worthless, but some may be of use and/or value. To determine what they are, roll a d100 and consult the table below:

Random Bugbear Sack Contents Table

d100	Item/s Found
01-02	Human skull
03-05	2-pint tankard
06-12	Dried meat
13-14	Bundle of skins
15-29	3d6 silver bits
30-33	1d12 sp
34-35	1d4 gp
36-37	1d4 5gp gems
38-39	Pair of wild boar tusks
40-44	50' of rope
45-53	Horn, drinking
54-55	Horn, hunting
56-58	Small bundle of furs
59-64	Knife
65-67	1d6 iron spikes
68-70	Flask of oil
71-73	Tinder and flint
74-75	Leather straps with buckles
76-77	10' strong chain
78-82	Large pewter plate
83-84	Large earthenware pot full of honey
85-86	Half-eaten pack of dwarven trail rations
87-88	Dwarven hammer
89-90	Lantern
91-92	Small barrel of brandy
93-94	Giant snakeskin
95-00	Roll on the <i>Special Items Table</i> below

Special Items Table (roll a d8 and re-roll all repeat results)

d8	Item/s Found
1	Live, 3-day-old axe beak chick
2	Small mirror in a platinum frame worth 50gp
3	Small wooden box containing four gold rings worth 10gp each, but one is a ring of fire resistance
4	One red and one green clay cloudball taken from the Shaman's ritual supplies
5	Potion – roll randomly to determine type
6	+1 corset of dwarven chain mail
7	Bracers of armour AC6
8	Suede pouch containing dozens of small, uncut diamonds, total value 500gp

The Burnt Tree Clan

An Ogre Settlement in the Great Forest

The Burnt Tree Clan are one of the groups referred to in the Newland Campaign Setting article *Factions in the Forest* on p12. The notes there, when used in the conjunction with the map on p13 (and inset on this page), explain how the Burnt Tree Clan fit into the campaign. This location is also ideal for dropping into any sandbox campaign.

The ogres of the Burnt Tree Clan used to live wild in the Great Forest. That all changed with the building of the bridge over the rift. Thugore the ettin ordered the other ogre clans and the Bloodbeard bugbears to move forces south of the Rift, which in turn reduced the territory of the Burnt Tree Clan to a fraction of what it had been. The Burnt Tree Clan have no love for the other ogre clans, but they detest the forced alliance with the bugbears.

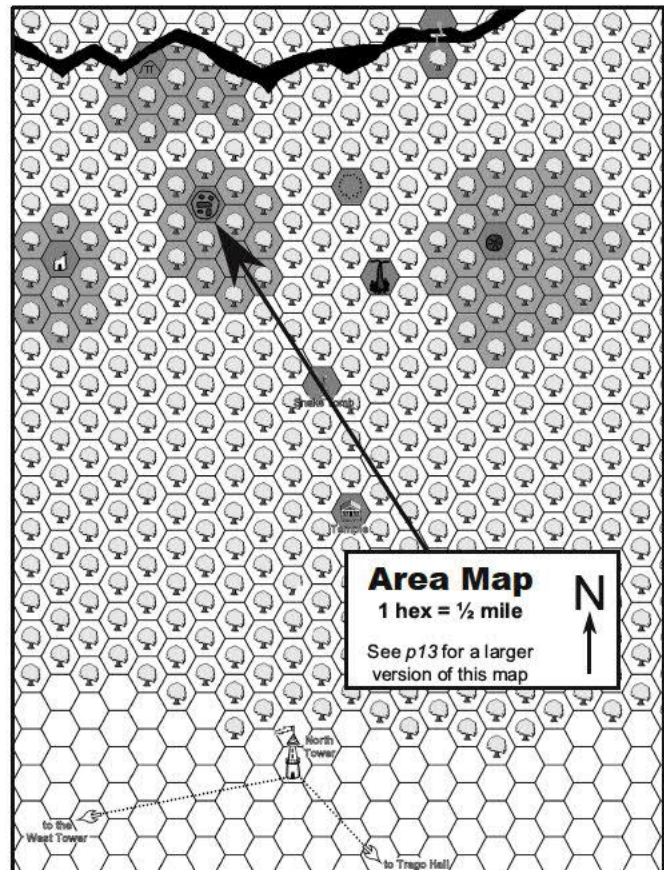
The Burnt Tree Clan is the largest of the three ogre clans, and unlike the other ogre and bugbear groups in this part of the forest, the whole clan, including females and young, resides in a single location. The head of the Clan is Grumba. He is a tough old ogre who loves to fight. He regards a day in which he does not kill another living thing as a waste. This makes him dangerous. He will use any excuse to start a fight – even with one of his kin. If it were not for the influence of Thugore, Grumba would declare war on the Bloodbeard bugbears in a heartbeat.

The Burnt Tree Clan's settlement (see map p25) lies in a clearing made by the ogres themselves. They left a dozen or so tree trunks standing to serve as posts, and horizontally fixed the trunks from the felled trees to these. Though messy in construction, the logs form a roughly circular wall, about eight feet in height. The main building in the settlement is a huge wooden longhouse. Other than that, there are only a few, simple, lean-to structures which use the main wall for support.

1 The entrance to the settlement is nothing more than a 20-foot-wide gap in the wall, between two tree trunks. About 50 feet beyond the entrance stands the Clan's longhouse. The entrance does not appear to be guarded. Every few minutes an ogre or two walks past it, giving little more than a glance towards the forest.

There is a reason that the entrance to the settlement does not have a gate. The area in front of the entrance is protected by a huge pit. The pit is 10 feet deep and over 20 feet square. Just inside the entrance there is a 25-foot-long, 4-foot-wide, wooden ramp made of split tree trunks, bound and nailed together. It takes four ogres to lift and extend the ramp over the pit. One of the walls in the pit has been dug out to make a cave-like shelter. This is where the ogres keep Blud. Blud used to be an ogre, but he contracted a disease that caused him to become an ogre blood hulk (see p15), a deformed and swollen monster of immense strength. He is a bit of a handful even for the ogres to control. They keep him in his pit and only allow him out when they need him to fight. If the camp is threatened, the ogres will throw the ramp into the pit. The following round, Blud will climb out of the pit, and he will be in a very, very bad mood.

Blud, Ogre Blood Hulk Move 60' (20') AC6 HD6 HP32 Fists(2) 2d8/2d8



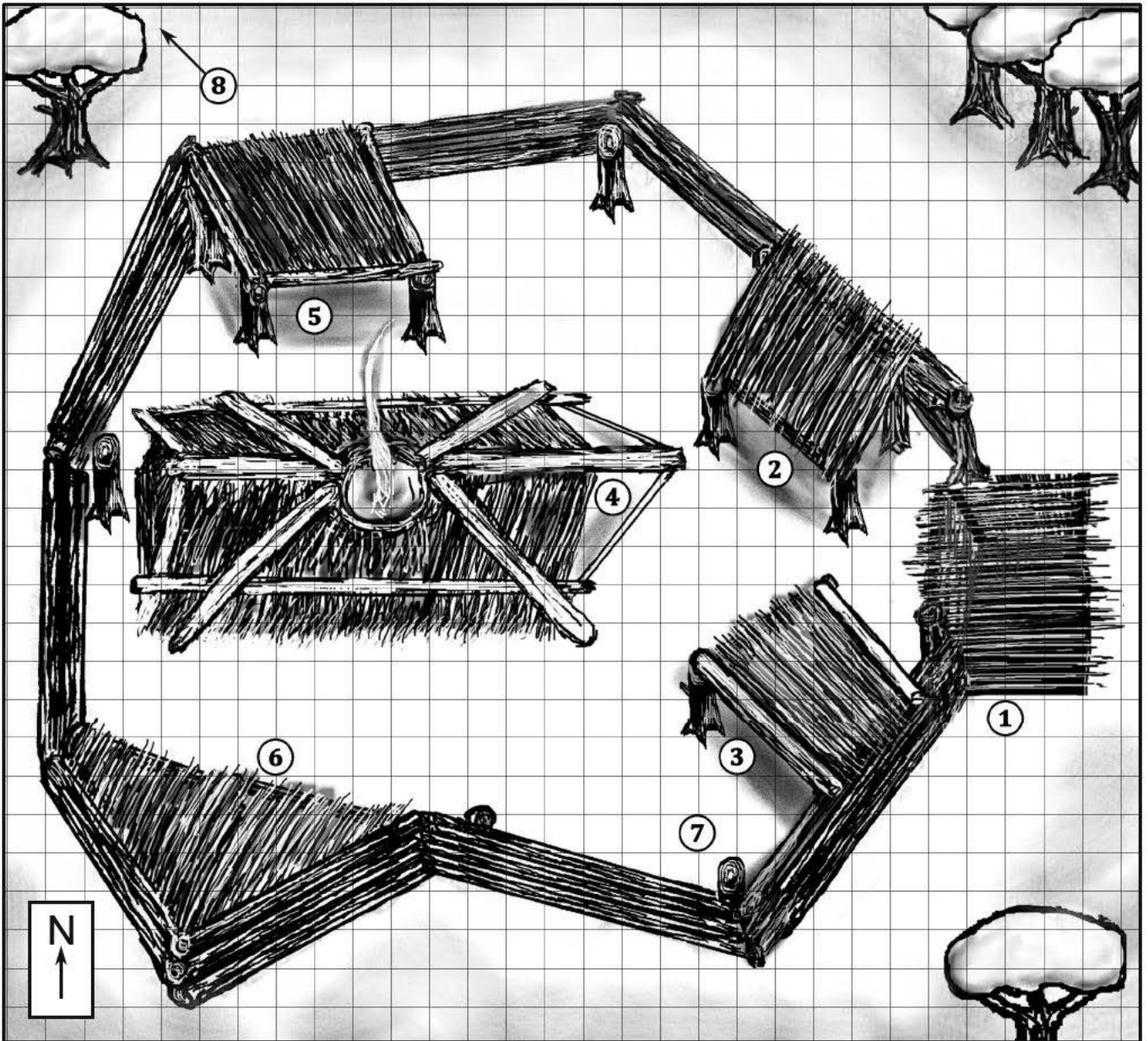
2 Under this lean-to shelter sit three ogre guards playing a game of chance, which involves sharp rocks, steady nerves, and bloodied fingers. They each have a spiked club, and leaning against the wall near them are a dozen heavy spears. The guards react to any disturbance at the gate. If attacked, they will retaliate by throwing spears and making enough noise to alert the whole settlement.

3 Ogre Guards Move 60' (20') AC5 HD4+1 HP24, 21, 12 Clubs 1d10, Spears 1d8

3 This shelter serves as an armoury of sorts. Inside there are dozens of clubs and spears, and a smaller number of axes and crude blades. They are all the work of Smithy, the Clan's weapons smith. Smithy has no forge to smelt iron. He makes wooden clubs and spear shafts and attaches sharpened stones to them. What metal weapons he has have either been taken during raids, or are cast-offs that the other clans have traded in exchange for food and treasure. Smithy will normally be here with his apprentice. Sometimes, a few goblins from 7 will also be here doing some mundane work.

Smithy and Apprentice, 2 Ogres Move 60' (20') AC5 HD4+1 HP20, 19 Clubs 1d10

4 This is Grumba's longhouse. It measures 60 feet long and is over 20 feet high at its apex. In its middle, a section of the roof has been cut out and smoke from the fire pit below rises through it. The back half of the longhouse is exclusively used by Grumba and his mate. The rest of the longhouse is home to the Clan warriors. There are 20 of them in all, and at any one time, 12 of them will be in here. There rest will be either out on patrol or elsewhere in the settlement.



The Settlement of the Burnt Tree Clan 1 square = 5 feet

20 Ogre Warriors Move 60' (20') AC5 HD4+1 HP16, 21, 22, 17, 14, 16, 21, 22, 23, 24, 8, 14, 17, 10, 27, 19, 18, 18, 24, 20 Clubs 1d10

Grumba's private section of the longhouse is partially screened off by large canvas sheets on either side of the fire. These look like they may have been used to cover the cargo on wagons in a past life. The floor of Grumba's area is covered with pelts from wolves and bears. Close to the fire, and positioned to look into the communal section of the longhouse, is Grumba's throne. It is little more than a dozen, large logs nailed together and covered in skins, but its basic, yet solid design sits well with the rest of the place. Grumba will normally be found here along with his mate.

Grumba, Ogre Leader Move 60' (20') AC3 (iron breastplate) HD5+1 HP35 Giant Battle Axe 1d10+2

Grumba's Mate, Ogre Female Move 60' (20') AC5 HD4+1 HP16 Large Knife 1d6

At the very back of the longhouse, under another pile of pelts, is Grumba's treasure pit. It is accessed by lifting a large wooden trapdoor. The pit measures 12 feet square and 10 feet deep. At the bottom of the pit are seven large

sacks. The sacks are protected by three pit vipers, which will attack anyone who climbs into the pit, surprising their victim on a roll of 1-4 on a d6. Leaning against the wall by the pit, is a 12-foot long pole. It has a large iron spike driven through it at one end, allowing it to be used to hook one of the sacks in the pit and lift it out. The sacks contain the following:

Sack 1: 500 silver bits.

Sack 2: 360 silver bits.

Sack 3: Two small barrels of brandy (one full, one almost empty) together worth 50gp.

Sack 4: A large quantity of silver cutlery worth 100gp.

Sack 5: A box containing two dozen pouches of rare herbs and spices. Grumba has sampled two of them as snuff, but the rest are unspoiled and worth 300gp.

Sack 6: A bundle of 10 books. Nine of them are ledgers full of tax and property records. The last one is a spell book containing 2d4 1st level, 1d4 2nd level, and 1d3 3rd level magic-user spells.

Sack 7: A cushion-lined box (locked) containing a jewelled, holy symbol worth 200gp and 12 vials of holy water.

3 Pit Vipers Move 90' (30') AC6 HD2 HP5, 6, 13 Bite 1d4 + poison

5 This shelter is home to the Clan's females and young. If threatened, they will raise the alarm, and attack with improvised clubs, normally used to fend off the giant rats from **8**. They have no items of value and spend most of their time sitting around a fire preparing and cooking.

6 Ogre Females Move 60' (20') AC5 HD4+1 HP16, 11, 18, 27, 15, 14 Improvised Clubs 1d6

10 Ogre Young Move 60' (20') AC7 HD2 HP5, 13, 8, 8, 8, 6, 14, 9, 10, 5 Improvised Clubs 1d4

6 This shelter is more secure than the others in the settlement. It houses the ogres' food supplies. There are a couple of wild boar carcasses hanging here, and there are sundry crates and barrels the ogres have brought back from their raids. The supplies are guarded by Fatog, who is a blood relative of Grumba. In return for keeping a constant watch over the supplies, Fatog gets to eat his fill. He is grossly fat and his immense girth slows his movement. The rats from **8** are constantly trying to steal supplies from this shelter. Fatog spends hours constructing vicious, improvised traps to catch them. Fatog can often be seen roasting a giant rat carcass over his small fire with a big grin on his face.

Fatog the Ogre Move 45' (15') AC5 HD4+1 HP22 Club 1d10

7 This corner is home to the Clan's 18 goblin slaves. They are not tied up or penned in, but they don't stray from this area for fear of a beating or worse. They all carry sticks which they frequently use to fend off attacks from the giant rats from **8**. The goblins spend most of their time fetching water from a nearby stream, and gathering firewood.

18 Goblins Move 60' (20') AC6 HD1-1 HP2, 6, 2, 4, 2, 6, 1, 2, 2, 1, 3, 6, 4, 2, 6, 2, 2, 6 Improvised clubs 1d3

8 In the forest about 100 feet north-west of the Clan's settlement, a large group of giant rats have built a nest. They constantly attempt to steal food and scraps from the ogres. The ogres have made the rat problem worse by often throwing stripped, animal carcasses over the wall, which, to the rats, are a banquet. There are dozens of giant rats in the nest but it is impossible to get an accurate count. If the rats are raiding the settlement, roll 3d6 to determine how many of them there are.

18 Giant Rats Move 120' (40') AC7 HD1/2 HP3, 4, 2, 4, 3, 1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 3, 2, 1, 2, 4, 1, 1, 4 Bite 1d3 + disease

Ogre Sacks

The Burnt Tree Clan have little wealth other than the items that Grumba keeps hidden. Most of the treasure they acquire is paid in tribute to Thugore the ettin, or is traded with the bugbears, or other ogre clans, for food and weapons. However, each ogre will still have some personal possessions, usually carried in a large sack. Warriors will have 1d4 random objects, whereas females and young will have 1d2 items. Most of the items will be spoiled and/or worthless. To determine what they are, roll a d100 and consult the table below:

Random Ogre Sack Contents Table

d100	Item/s Found
01-02	Large animal skull
03-09	Haunch of meat
10-11	Giant rat pelt
12-16	Wolf pelt
17-19	3d6 knuckle bones
20-21	Claws and teeth from a giant animal
22-26	Blanket
27-31	2d4 throwing rocks
32-46	3d6 silver bits
47-51	Hand axe
52-54	Small shovel
55-57	50' of rope
58-60	Drinking horn
61-62	2d6 coloured glass beads
63-64	Horse's saddle
65-67	Dry wood kindling
68-70	Flint and tinder
71-75	Knife
76-78	1d6 iron spikes
79-83	1d4 torches
84-85	Dessicated stirge corpse
86-88	Large earthenware jug
89-93	Empty waterskin
94-98	Full waterskin
99-00	Pair of giant beetle mandibles

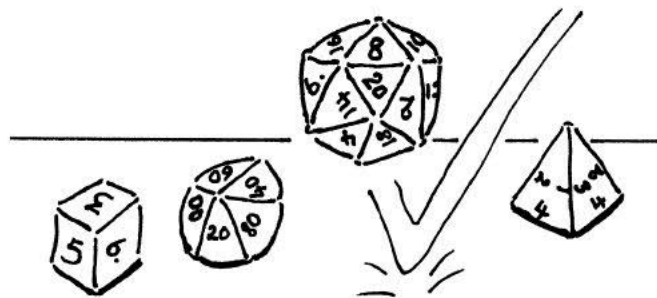


Fatog the Ogre

Monster Club #16

Monstermark Driven Random Encounter Tables For Labyrinth Lord: Part III Levels 7-8

This article picks up from where *Monster Club #12* in *Oubliette Issue 7* (p10) left off. In addition to Encounter Tables for levels Seven and Eight, I have also included a sub-table for each level. These tables are intended to be used when an encounter with a demon, devil or dragon is rolled on one of the main tables. Keeping these creatures on separate tables also makes it easy omit them entirely in games where encountering such a creature would be out of place.



Devil, Demon and Dragon Tables

d00	Creature Type	No. Enc.	Stats	Level Seven	Hit Points
01-07	Black Dragon	1-2	Move 240' (80')	HD 7 AC 2 Dam 2-5/2-5/2-20 + breath	35, 27
08-14	Blue Dragon	1-2	Move 240' (80')	HD 6 AC 0 Dam 2-7/2-7/3-30 + breath	30, 35
15-21	Brass Dragon	1-3	Move 240' (80')	HD 7 AC 2 Dam 1-4/1-4/4-16 + breath	28, 40, 26
22-28	Bronze Dragon	1-2	Move 240' (80')	HD 6 AC 0 Dam 1-6/1-6/4-24 + breath	20, 28
29-35	Copper Dragon	1-2	Move 240' (80')	HD 8 AC 1 Dam 1-4/1-4/5-20 + breath	38, 30
36-42	Green Dragon	1-2	Move 240' (80')	HD 8 AC 1 Dam 1-6/1-6/3-24 + breath	36, 43
43-49	Red Dragon	1	Move 240' (80')	HD 7 AC -1 Dam 1-8/1-8/4-32 + breath	27
50-56	Silver Dragon	1	Move 240' (80')	HD 7 AC -1 Dam 1-6/1-6/5-30 + breath	19
57-63	White Dragon	1-4	Move 240' (80')	HD 6 AC 3 Dam 1-4/1-4/2-16 + breath	25, 35, 33, 32
64-70	Dragonne	1	Move 150' (50')	HD 9 AC 2 Dam 1-8/1-8/3-18 or roar	44
71-77	Hydra, 10-headed	1	Move 120' (40')	HD 10 AC 5 Dam 1-10 x10	43
78-81	Nalfeshnee (Demon)	1	Move 120' (40')	HD 11 AC -1 Dam 1-4/1-4/2-8	53
82-86	Succubus (Demon)	1	Move 180' (60')	HD 6 AC 0 Dam 1-3/1-3 + level drain	29
87-90	Vrock (Demon)	1	Move 180' (60')	HD 8 AC 0 Dam 1-4/1-4/1-8/1-8/1-6	38
91-95	Barbed Devil	1	Move 120' (40')	HD 8 AC 0 Dam 2-8/2-8/3-12	24
96-00	Bone Devil	1-2	Move 150' (50')	HD 9 AC -1 Dam 3-12 or 2-8 + STR drain	41, 38

Level Eight

01-06	Black Dragon	1-4	Move 240' (80')	HD 7 AC 2 Dam 2-5/2-5/2-20 + breath	38, 37, 34, 31
07-12	Blue Dragon	1-2	Move 240' (80')	HD 6 AC 0 Dam 2-7/2-7/3-30 + breath	37, 20
13-18	Brass Dragon	1-4	Move 240' (80')	HD 7 AC 2 Dam 1-4/1-4/4-16 + breath	34, 31, 22, 20
19-24	Bronze Dragon	1-2	Move 240' (80')	HD 6 AC 0 Dam 1-6/1-6/4-24 + breath	33, 21
25-30	Copper Dragon	1-4	Move 240' (80')	HD 8 AC 1 Dam 1-4/1-4/5-20 + breath	39, 34, 33, 36
31-36	Gold Dragon	1	Move 240' (80')	HD 8 AC -2 Dam 2-8/2-8/6-36 + breath	32
37-42	Green Dragon	1-3	Move 240' (80')	HD 8 AC 1 Dam 1-6/1-6/3-24 + breath	25, 29, 43
43-48	Red Dragon	1	Move 240' (80')	HD 10 AC -1 Dam 1-8/1-8/4-32 + breath	43
49-54	Silver Dragon	1	Move 240' (80')	HD 10 AC -1 Dam 1-6/1-6/5-30 + breath	50
55-60	White Dragon	1-4	Move 240' (80')	HD 9 AC 3 Dam 1-4/1-4/2-16 + breath	49, 38, 46, 49
61-66	Hydra, 12-headed	1	Move 120' (40')	HD 12 AC 5 Dam 1-10 x12	63
67-71	Babau (Demon)	1	Move 150' (50')	HD 7+10 AC -3 Dam 2-5/2-5/2-8	48
72-76	Balor (Demon)	1	Move 150' (50')	HD 8+7 AC -2 Dam 2-9 or 1-6 + fire	43
77-81	Hezrou (Demon)	1	Move 120' (40')	HD 9 AC -2 Dam 1-3/1-3/4-16	42
82-86	Nalfeshnee (Demon)	1	Move 120' (40')	HD 11 AC -1 Dam 1-4/1-4/2-8	45
87-91	Vrock (Demon)	1-3	Move 180' (60')	HD 8 AC 0 Dam 1-4/1-4/1-8/1-8/1-6	42, 28, 36
92-96	Barbed Devil	1-2	Move 120' (40')	HD 8 AC 0 Dam 2-8/2-8/3-12	28, 18
97-00	Horned Devil	1	Move 150' (30')	HD 5+5 AC -5 Dam 1-4/1-4/2-5/1-3	22

Dungeon Random Encounter Table: Level Seven

d00	Creature Type	No. Enc.	Stats	Hit Points
01-05	Roll on the Level 6 Table			
06-07	Basilisk	1-4	Move 60' (20') HD 6+1 AC 4 Dam 1-10 + petrify	22, 26, 28, 30
08-10	Beetle, Giant Boring	2-12	Move 60' (20') HD 5 AC 3 Dam 5-20	26, 16, 20, 14, 27, 24, 22, 21, 26, 30, 24, 20
11	Black Pudding	1	Move 60' (20') HD 10 AC 6 Dam 3-24	39
12	Chimera	1-2	Move 180' (60') HD 9 AC 4 Dam 1-3/1-3/2-8/2-8/3-12	40, 43
13-14	Cyclops	1	Move 90' (30') HD 13 AC 5 Dam 3-30	59
15-19	Demon/Devil/Dragon Roll on the Demon/Devil/Dragon sub-table			
20	Djinni	1	Move 240' (80') HD 7+1 AC 5 Dam 2-16	27
21-22	Elemental*	1	Move 360' (120') HD 8 AC 2 Dam 1-8	47
23-25	Ettin	1	Move 120' (40') HD 10 AC 3 Dam 2-16/3-18	36
26-27	Giant, Fire	1-2	Move 120' (40') HD 11+2 AC 4 Dam 5-30	46, 60
28-29	Giant, Frost	1-2	Move 120' (40') HD 10+1 AC 4 Dam 4-24	41, 57
30-31	Giant, Hill	1-6	Move 120' (40') HD 8 AC 4 Dam 2-16	31, 34, 39, 46, 31, 38
32-33	Giant, Stone	1-3	Move 120' (40') HD 9 AC 4 Dam 3-18	43, 46, 37
34	Golem, Bone	1	Move 120' (40') HD 8 AC 2 Dam 1-8/1-8/1-8/1-8	36
35	Gorgon	1-2	Move 120' (40') HD 8 AC 2 Dam 2-12 or breath weapon	32, 36
36	Green Slime	1	Move 3' (1') HD 2 AC always hit Dam digest flesh	14
37	Groaning Spirit	1	Move 150' (50') HD 7 AC 0 Dam 1-8 + keening	34
38-40	Hell Hound	2-8	Move 120' (40') HD 6 AC 4 Dam 1-6 or breath weapon	18, 25, 21, 24, 27, 25, 35, 24
41	Invisible Stalker	1	Move 120' (40') HD 8 AC 3 Dam 4-16	31
42	Lamia	1	Move 240' (80') HD 9 AC 3 Dam 1-6	43
43	Lammasu	2-8	Move 240' (80') HD 7+7 AC 6 Dam 1-6/1-6	29, 32, 41, 42, 44, 39, 37, 46
44	Lurker Above	1	Move 90' (30') HD 10 AC 6 Dam 1-6 + suffocation	44
45-46	Lycanthrope, Werebear	1-3	Move 120' (40') HD 6 AC 2 Dam 2-8/2-8/2-16 + hug	35, 24, 34
47-48	Mimic	1	Move 30' (10') HD 7 AC 6 Dam 3-12	40
49-51	Mummy	1-6	Move 60' (20') HD 5+1 AC 3 Dam 1-12 + disease	20, 27, 15, 18, 25, 30
52	Naga, Spirit	1-3	Move 120' (40') HD 9 AC 4 Dam 1-3 + poison, gaze	36, 41, 33
53	Night Hag	1	Move 90' (30') HD 8 AC 9 Dam 2-12	34
54-58	NPC Party Move 120' (40') As class/race of each character			
59	Ogre Mage	1-4	Move 150' (50') HD 5+2 AC 4 Dam 1-12	24, 34, 25, 16
60-62	Otyugh, Advanced	1	Move 60' (20') HD 9 AC 0 Dam 2-12/2-12/2-8	34
63-64	Owlbear	1-6	Move 120' (40') HD 5 AC 5 Dam 1-8/1-8/1-8 + hug	20, 24, 25, 17, 28, 24
65-67	Roper	1-3	Move 30' (10') HD 10 AC 0 Dam 5-20	39, 40, 44
68-70	Salamander, Flame	2-5	Move 120' (40') HD 8 AC 2 Dam 1-4/1-4/1-8	37, 27, 38, 39, 35
71-73	Scorpion, Giant	1-6	Move 150' (50') HD 4 AC 2 Dam 1-10/1-10/1-4 + poison	21, 19, 18, 18, 21, 21
74-75	Slug, Giant	1	Move 60' (20') HD 12 AC 8 Dam 1-12 + spit acid	58
76-78	Spectre	1-4	Move 300' (100') HD 6 AC 2 Dam 1-8 + level drain	22, 25, 23, 32
79-81	Spider, Phase	1-4	Move 150' (50') HD 5+5 AC 7 Dam 1-6 + poison	23, 24, 30, 29
82-83	Trapper	1	Move 30' (10') HD 12 AC 3 Dam 1-6 + smothering	61
84-89	Troll	1-6	Move 120' (40') HD 6+3 AC 4 Dam 1-6/1-6/1-10	32, 33, 34, 29, 31, 25
90-91	Wasp, Giant	1-20	Move 210' (70') HD 4 AC 4 Dam 2-8/1-4 + poison	16, 17, 11, 16, 16, 11, 9, 20, 24, 15, 18, 15, 22, 22, 18, 19, 15, 10, 9, 20
92-93	Wyvern	1-2	Move 240' (80') HD 7 AC 3 Dam 2-16/2-16 + poison	36, 21
94-95	Yellow Mold	1-8	Move 0' (0') HD 2 AC always hit Dam 1-6	9, 4, 8, 9, 8, 9, 11, 11
96-00	Roll on the Level 8 Table			

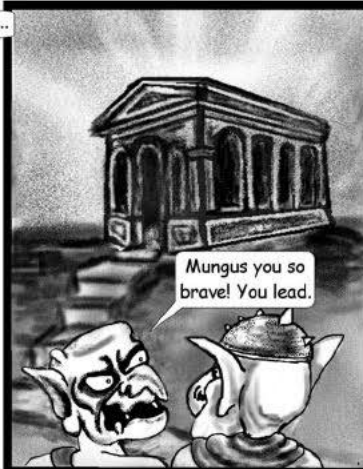
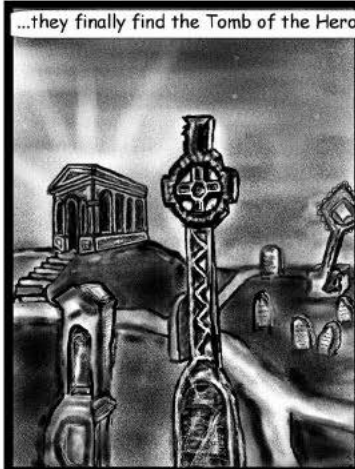
*Roll a d4 to determine which elemental type is encountered (1 = Air, 2 = Earth, 3 = Fire, 4 = Water), or simply select the most appropriate type for the environment.

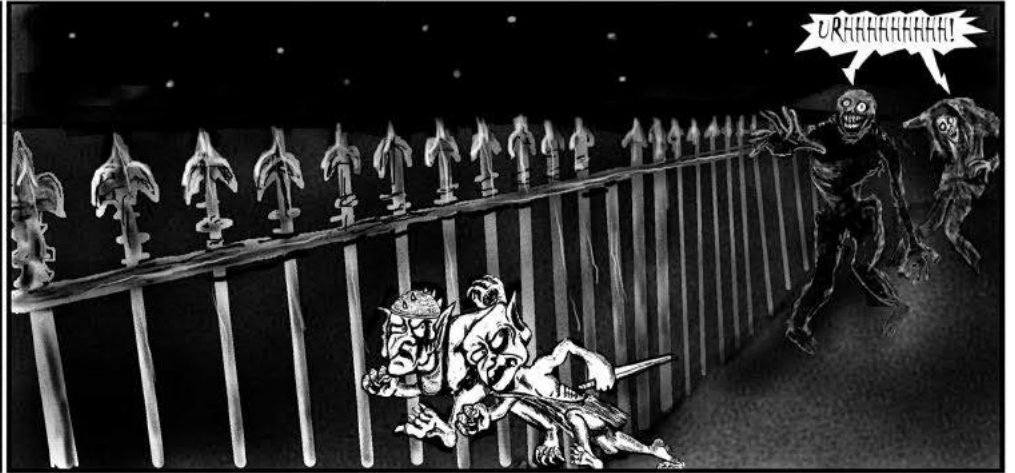
Dungeon Random Encounter Table: Level Eight

d00	Creature Type	No. Enc.	Stats	Hit Points
01-05	Roll on the Level 7 Table			
06-07	Basilisk	1-6	Move 60' (20') HD 6+1 AC 4 Dam 1-10 + petrify	30, 23, 29, 33, 16, 39
08-10	Beetle, Giant Boring	3-18	Move 60' (20') HD 5 AC 3 Dam 5-20	26, 19, 22, 24, 16, 22, 26, 20, 20, 21, 15, 31, 21, 30, 17, 31, 34, 28
11	Black Pudding	1	Move 60' (20') HD 10 AC 6 Dam 3-24	46
12	Chimera	1-3	Move 180' (60') HD 9 AC 4 Dam 1-3/1-3/2-8/2-8/3-12	37, 39, 48
13-15	Cyclops	1	Move 90' (30') HD 13 AC 5 Dam 3-30	65
16-20	Demon/Devil/Dragon	Roll on the Demon/Devil/Dragon sub-table		
21	Efreeti	1	Move 240' (80') HD 10 AC 3 Dam 2-16	45
22-23	Elemental*	1	Move 360' (120') HD 12 AC 0 Dam 2-16	47
24-26	Ettin	1-2	Move 120' (40') HD 10 AC 3 Dam 2-16/3-18	51, 42
27-31	Giant, Fire	1-3	Move 120' (40') HD 11+2 AC 4 Dam 5-30	53, 62, 52
32-35	Giant, Frost	1-3	Move 120' (40') HD 10+1 AC 4 Dam 4-24	56, 54, 48
36	Golem Amber	1	Move 180' (60') HD 10 AC 6 Dam 2-12/2-12/2-20	56
37	Golem Clay	1	Move 60' (20') HD 11 AC 7 Dam 3-30	53
38	Golem Stone	1	Move 60' (20') HD 14 AC 5 Dam 3-24	80
39-40	Gorgon	1-2	Move 120' (40') HD 8 AC 2 Dam 2-12 or breath weapon	45, 39
41	Green Slime	1	Move 3' (1') HD 2 AC always hit Dam digest flesh	5
42-44	Hell Hound	2-8	Move 120' (40') HD 7 AC 4 Dam 1-6 or breath weapon	40, 38, 40, 36, 35, 28, 36, 30
45	Lurker Above	1	Move 90' (30') HD 10 AC 6 Dam 1-6 + suffocation	47
46-47	Lycanthrope, Werebear	1-4	Move 120' (40') HD 6 AC 2 Dam 2-8/2-8/2-16 + hug	29, 29, 35, 23
48-49	Mimic	1	Move 30' (10') HD 10 AC 6 Dam 3-12	50
50	Naga, Guardian	1-2	Move 150' (50') HD 11 AC 3 Dam 1-6/2-8 + spit poison	46, 60
51	Night Hag	1	Move 90' (30') HD 8 AC 9 Dam 2-12	28
52-56	NPC Party	3-8	Move 120' (40') As class/race of each character	
57-58	Ogre Mage	1-6	Move 150' (50') HD 5+2 AC 4 Dam 1-12	26, 23, 28, 22, 16, 13
59-61	Otyugh, Advanced	1	Move 60' (20') HD 12 AC 0 Dam 2-12/2-12/2-8	70
62-63	Purple Worm	1	Move 60' (20') HD 15 AC 6 Dam 2-16/1-8 + poison	85
64-66	Roper	1-3	Move 30' (10') HD 12 AC 0 Dam 5-20	70, 45, 51
67-69	Salamander, Frost	1-3	Move 120' (40') HD 12 AC 3 Dam 1-6/1-6/1-6/1-6/2-12	48, 52, 45
70-72	Shambling Mound	1-3	Move 60' (20') HD 8 AC 0 Dam 2-16/2-16 + smothering	24, 48, 35
73-74	Slug, Giant	1	Move 60' (20') HD 12 AC 8 Dam 1-12 + spit acid	51
75-77	Spectre	1-6	Move 300' (100') HD 6 AC 2 Dam 1-8 + level drain	33, 28, 33, 23, 34, 25
78-79	Trapper	1	Move 30' (10') HD 12 AC 3 Dam 1-6 + smothering	70
80-86	Troll	1-8	Move 120' (40') HD 6+3 AC 4 Dam 1-6/1-6/1-10	18, 26, 35, 33, 32, 31, 24, 27
87-88	Vampire	1-4	Move 150' (50') HD 7 AC 2 Dam 1-10 + level drain	36, 25, 35, 31
89	Will O Wisp	1	Move 180' (60') HD 9 AC -8 Dam 2-16	46
90-91	Wyvern	1-4	Move 240' (80') HD 7 AC 3 Dam 2-16/2-16 + poison	29, 26, 36, 21
92-93	Yellow Mold	1-8	Move 0' (0') HD2 AC always hit Dam 1-6	7, 10, 16, 9, 11, 12, 7, 11
94-95	Xorn	1-2	Move 90' (30') HD 7+7 AC -2 Dam 1-3/1-3/1-3/6-24	44, 32
96-00	Roll on the Level 9 Table			

*Roll a d4 to determine which elemental type is encountered (1 = Air, 2 = Earth, 3 = Fire, 4 = Water), or simply select the most appropriate type for the environment.

Goblin Quest





THE END!

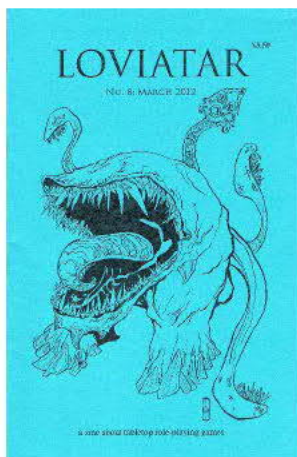
Fanzine Frenzy!

A new column that looks into to the wave of fanzines currently sweeping the OSR.

When I started work on the first issue of *Oubliette*, the sort of publication I had in mind was an A5-sized 16-24 page fanzine that I could publish every month or two. With the aid of a duplex laser printer, and a long arm stapler, producing a publication like that is quick and efficient. I even got to the stage of starting to lay out the first issue, but then I did some thinking about who the customers would be. Even back then, it was clear that they were going to be predominantly located in the United States. A quick look on the *Royal Mail* website, and the printed fanzine that I had conceived was instantly put to rest. Airmail postage rates from the U.K. just don't make it viable because they are more than double what it costs to post an equivalent item from the States to the UK.

However, U.S. OSR publishers don't have the same barriers as they are primarily mailing to the domestic market (and as I have mentioned the *U.S. Postal Service* has far more reasonable Airmail rates than the *Royal Mail*). Over the last year, a steady stream of new fanzines has been emerging. Some of them are print only. Others have a PDF option, and there are even a couple that are purely digital. This article will highlight a few of the ones that I've seen/heard of so far, but even as I write, I am aware that there are probably several new ones gearing up for launch.

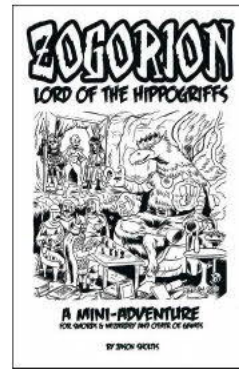
I have also included a column (see p33) on fanzines from the early 1980s, most of which I gleaned from browsing my back issues of *Imagine Magazine*. I never followed them back then, but I would love to get my hands on some now, to see how they compare to their OSR descendants.



Loviatar #8

With *Loviatar*, Christian Walker is probably single-handedly responsible for the current wave of digest-sized print zines. In *Issue 8* he adds another hex (hex 004) to his ongoing campaign. Apart from Christian's editorial, all 24 pages of the issue are given over to detailing locations, characters and adventures in this six-mile hex. Earlier adjacent hexes were featured in previous issues, but the material could easily be dropped into your own campaign, or just mined for ideas. *Loviatar* is a print-only publication, and Christian also offers six-issue subscriptions.

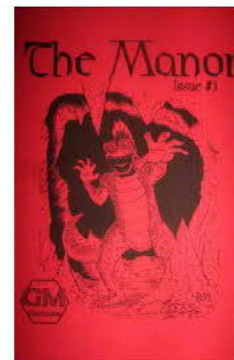
loviatarzine.blogspot.com



Zogorion – Lord of the Hippogriffs

This is really more an adventure module than a zine. But it is very zinic in style and format, and doesn't look out of place next to the other titles here. It's written for *Swords & Wizardy*, but, as with nearly all OSR material, it can easily be used with other games. The zine/module is a 16-page, digest-sized mini-adventure that features the lair of the Mighty Zog, an ancient wizard reincarnated as a hippogriff. It comes with a separate card cover that has a lovely gate-fold map printed on the inside.

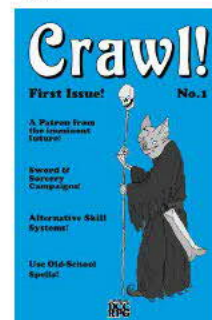
alligatorking.blogspot.com



The Manor #1

This is a new print and PDF zine written by Tim Shorts. It is a great first issue and features a good mix of articles, including a short adventure. My favourite bit is the table *There's Something Shiny in the Troglodyte Dung Heap*, where players get to roll twice if they "are willing to roll up their sleeves and really dig in". At the time of writing, Tim is already blogging about the next issue, so it should be along soon.

gothridgemanor.blogspot.com



Crawl #1

This is another new zine that is dedicated to the *DCC* (*Dungeon Crawl Classics*) game. I haven't seen a copy of this one yet, but I am already kicking myself for not pre-ordering the first issue. The initial print run included a limited number of copies with black card covers printed with black ink – very *Spinal Tap* and very funny. Having only just got my hands on a copy of the *DCC* rulebook, I'll try and catch up on this one next time.

crawlzine.blogspot.com



Delve! #1

This is a new zine which, at the time of going to press, is just about to launch its first issue. It is produced by Johnathan Bingham whose art has graced numerous OSR releases. Provisionally, it looks like it will be published in print and PDF formats.

xyanthon.blogspot.com

FIGHT ON!

Fight on! #14

For some mystic reason, the fates conspire to ensure that new issues of *Fight on!* and *Oubliette* are always published within days of each other. It's never planned that way. It just seems always to happen. Anyway, as I'm writing this, announcements on the *Fight on!* forums say that the next issue is very nearly ready, so there's a good chance that you will have already got it, or be about to get it. *Fight on!* draws together a wide range of articles, adventures, rules, and artwork, all submitted by OSR fans. These are then edited into an 88-page (sometimes longer) zine, and released in PDF and print-on-demand versions. The material varies greatly in style, but as there is so much crammed into each issue, you are bound to find plenty of things that you can use in your game.

www.fightonmagazine.com

Dead but not Forgotten

Some zines have a relatively short life. Others are only produced sporadically. Given the amount of work that is required to produce even the shortest publications featured in this article, it is completely understandable that some of them only manage a few issues before closing. Thankfully, the internet means that old zines don't have to be buried when they die, and many of them can still be obtained months or years after their publication has ceased. A good starting place to find out what zines (new or old) are available is Matthew Schmeer's blog *Rended Press*, which has a page dedicated to zines with shopping/download links for dozens of them.

rendedpress.blogspot.com

If you have a zine that you would like me to include in the next issue of *Oubliette* (Winter 2012) please get in touch. I'm happy to receive print and/or PDF copies for review – or you can just drop me a line with details of your zine and a cover image.

oubliettemagazine@yahoo.co.uk

They Don't Make Them Like They Used to:

If you look at the entry about RPG Fanzines on Wikipedia you will find that it is very short, and not particularly flattering:

"Another sizable group of fanzines arose in role-playing game (RPG) fandom, where fanzines allowed people to publish their ideas and views on specific games and their role-playing campaigns. Role-playing fanzines allowed people to communicate in the 1970s and 1980s with complete editorial control in the hands of the players, as opposed to the game publishers. These early RPG fanzines were generally typed, sold mostly in an A5 format (in the UK) and were usually illustrated with abysmal or indifferent artwork."

In *Imagine Magazine* during the early 1980s, there was a regular fanzine column, and reading it again made me think that, even though our technology has changed everything, I'm sure the desire to share our gaming ideas, opinions, and humour is still pretty much the same. Below, are the covers of a few zines which caught my eye.



The Acolyte #56



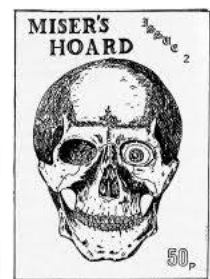
Imagine #9



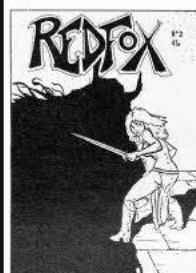
Drune Kroll #1



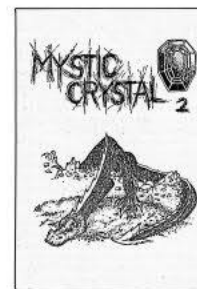
Shadowfire #2



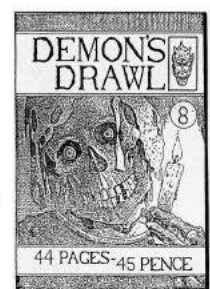
Miser's Hoard #2



Red Fox #2



Mystic Crystal #2



Demon's Drawl #8

Oubliette Back Issues

The grid displays 28 individual issues of Oubliette magazine, each with a cover illustration and a corresponding teaser panel. The issues are arranged in 7 rows and 4 columns:

- Row 1:**
 - Cover: "A magazine for old school fantasy roleplayers" (Issue 1)
 - Teaser: "Holding Proof Fence" (Issue 1)
 - Teaser: "Holding Proof Fence" (Issue 1)
 - Teaser: "Mandrill" (Issue 1)
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- Row 3:**
 - Cover: "A magazine for old school fantasy roleplayers" (Issue 3)
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- Row 5:**
 - Cover: "A magazine for old school fantasy roleplayers" (Issue 5)
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- Row 6:**
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- Row 7:**
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 - Teaser: "Mandrill" (Issue 7)

Individual Issues can be ordered as PDFs or as Printed Editions
 Printed Compilations of Issues 1-4 and 5-8 are also available

For PDFs visit:
www.RPGNow.com

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www.lulu.com

Found Familiar

Practical Petcare for Magic-Users

When a magic-user casts the spell *summon familiar* (AEC p78), depending on its success and the type of creature summoned, it can have a dramatic effect on the game. This series of articles examines the capabilities, advantages, and disadvantages of the various creatures that can become familiars.

The Cat

No. ENC: 1
ALIGNMENT: Neutral
MOVEMENT: 150' (50')
ARMOUR CLASS: 6
HIT DICE: 1 (2d4)
ATTACKS: 3
DAMAGE: 1-2/1-2/1
SAVE: F1
MORALE: 12
HOARD CLASS: None
XP: 10



When summoned, a cat familiar is likely to be a nearby feral cat, which will physically be the same as a regular domestic cat. Cats typically weigh 8-11 pounds, though both smaller (as light as 3 pounds), and larger (as heavy as 25 pounds) breeds exist. Normally, a domestic cat might have a life expectancy of around 15 years. However, under the protection of its master, a cat familiar might expect to live for 20 years or even longer.

Cats make excellent familiars as their characteristics make them equally useful in environment as diverse as a busy city street, to the deepest, darkest dungeon.

Vision

Cats have slightly inferior vision to humans in normal, daylight conditions. However, in dark or dim conditions, their vision is up to seven times more sensitive. This effectively gives the cat a *darkvision* range in a dungeon of an additional 60 feet beyond the normal range for humans, whatever the light source. For example, if a member of the party were carrying a torch, then he would be able to see areas up to a distance of 30 feet away. A cat would be able see areas up to a distance of 90 feet from the torch. Cats are partially colour blind, and have trouble distinguishing colours at the red end of the spectrum.

Hearing

Generally, cats have hearing that is no more sensitive than human hearing. However, they are able to hear higher frequency sounds (ultrasounds), such as those made by bats. As an option, you might also have certain magical items and/or effects that emit ultrasounds. Another advantage cats have over humans is the ability to move each ear independently. This allows them to pinpoint sound sources with a high degree of accuracy.

Sense of Smell

Cats have a superb sense of smell, which is many times more efficient than that of humans. They may use it to follow trails, locate prey, and ascertain if food and water is safe to consume.

The magical link between a familiar and its master grants them the ability to communicate telepathically. The master of a familiar is also granted access to the familiar's senses. In practice, there are a variety of ways to approach this, and, depending on how it is handled, it can have a drastic effect on gameplay. When a magic-user gains a familiar, the Labyrinth Lord should set some basic rules for the player as to the scope of any abilities the familiar grants them. As a guide, here are the rules I apply to them in my own games:

Whilst the cat is within 120' its master, the character's own eyesight will be improved in dark or dim conditions. This gives the character the same *darkvision* ability as the cat, allowing him to see an additional 60 feet beyond the normal human range for that light source.

If a cat's master spends 1d6 rounds concentrating, he can then link minds with the cat for 1d6 rounds and see, hear, smell, etc. everything the cat can. For the duration of this process, the character may not move, converse, or take any other actions. The link may only be maintained whilst the cat is within 120' of its master. If either master or cat is attacked, or subjected some other shock or distraction, the link is broken. To a cat, a distraction might be spotting a potential predator, or noticing a mouse or other similar-sized creature for it to play with. A cat will also react quickly when startled by an unfamiliar sight and/or sound, by quickly jumping clear and running to a safer location.

A cat has a base morale of 6. However, whilst it stays within 120' of its master it has an effective morale of 12.

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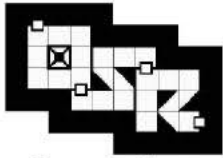


We also have budget playing copies to help keep your coin pouch from getting too light. These classic items have seen plenty of use. Some look as if they may have fended off a hydra attack, but they are ready and willing to challenge another adventuring party.

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WIS <input type="checkbox"/> _____ modifiers _____		
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What's in the Oubliette?

A regular review column featuring roleplaying game material, with frequent diversions into other games and the odd book, film or TV show. Product submissions for review are welcomed.



Random Dungeon Generator as a Dungeon Map

by Paul Hughes

Poster Print \$15.00

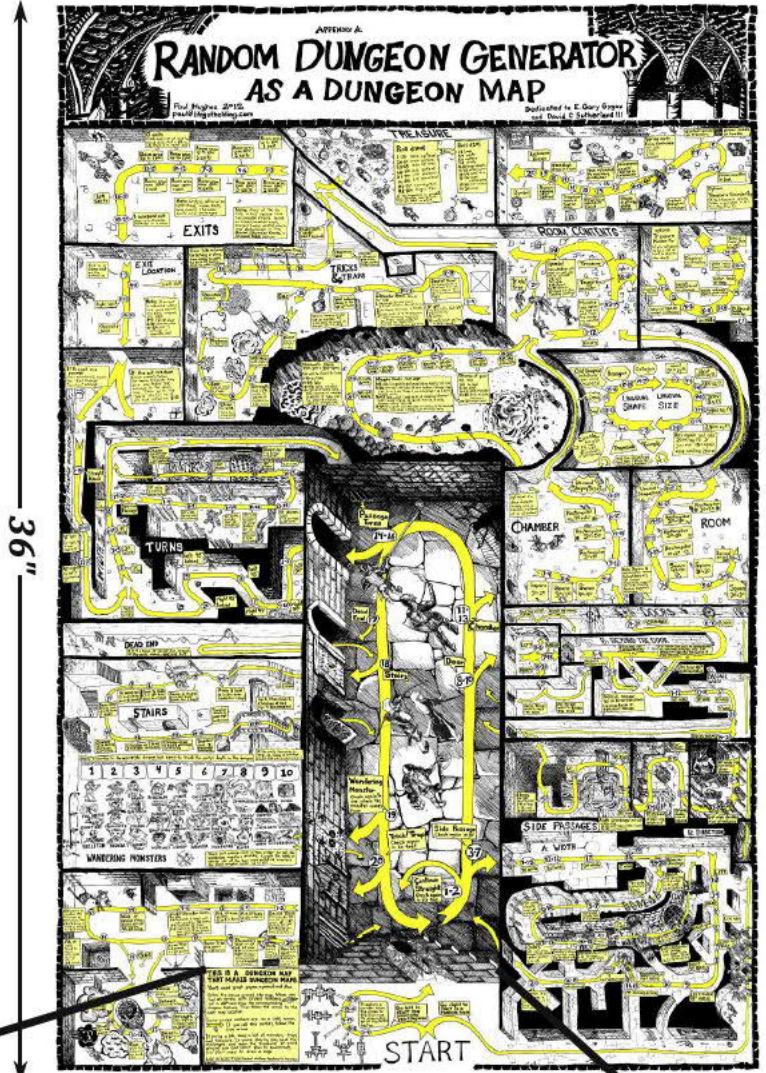
Available from GameSalute.com

Paul Hughes of *Blogofholding.com* fame has a talent for drawing insane posters, seemingly crammed with a whole book's worth of content. Last year, he produced an 18" by 24" *OD&D Wandering Monster Poster* and was flooded with orders for it.

Spurred on by the response generated by that poster, he decided to run a *Kickstarter* campaign to fund his next poster project. The new poster was pitched as a 24" by 36" *Random Dungeon Generator as a Dungeon Map*. The project's goal was to raise \$2,000 which it met and surpassed in the first 48 hours after launch. After that, the project repeatedly smashed through whatever stretch goal was put in front of it, and by the end of the campaign, it had reached a whopping \$27,789!

The image to the right shows the end result, but the poster really has to be seen at full-size to appreciate (or even read) it. You really could make dungeon after dungeon using the simple flow-charted design of the poster. Even if random dungeons aren't your thing, you will still be both delighted and inspired by the fantastic illustrations on the poster.

If you missed out on the *Kickstarter* campaign, copies of the poster can still be ordered from GameSalute.com. As part of the campaign Paul is producing all sorts of extras over the next few months, but I'm sure it won't be too long before he dreams up a new insane project for us to enjoy.



THIS IS A DUNGEON MAP THAT MAKES DUNGEON MAPS.

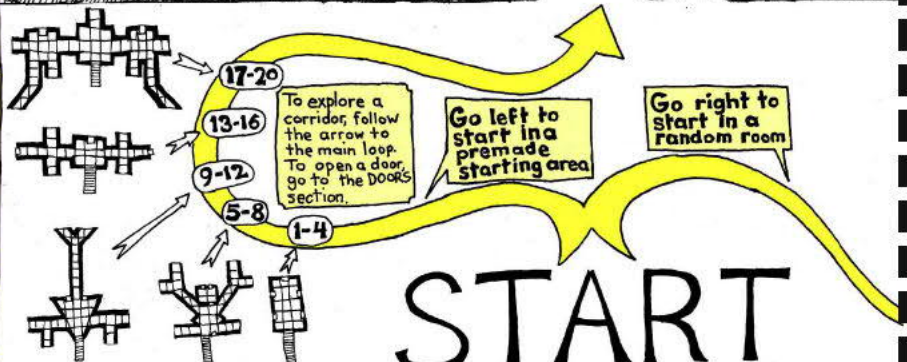
You'll need graph paper, a pencil, and dice.

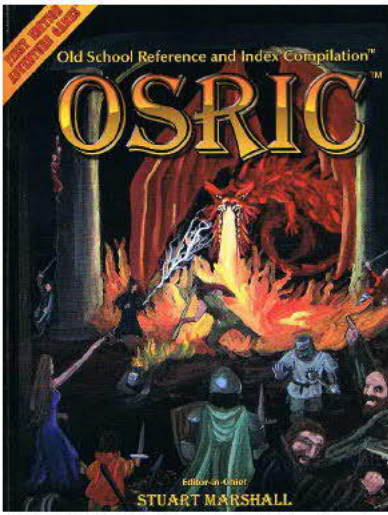
Follow the arrows around the map. When you find an arrow with circled numbers, roll a d20 and draw the corresponding dungeon feature. Then follow the arrow to the next map location.

Some circled numbers are on a side arrow. If you roll this number, follow the side arrow.

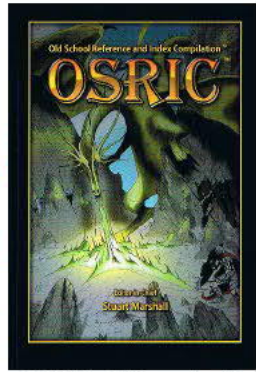
If you're a DM, keep a list of monsters, traps, and treasure. If you're playing solo beat the challenges and gain the treasure! If you're playing solo and don't plan to backtrack, you don't need to draw a map.

USE DISCRETION! Select whatever features fit the map.

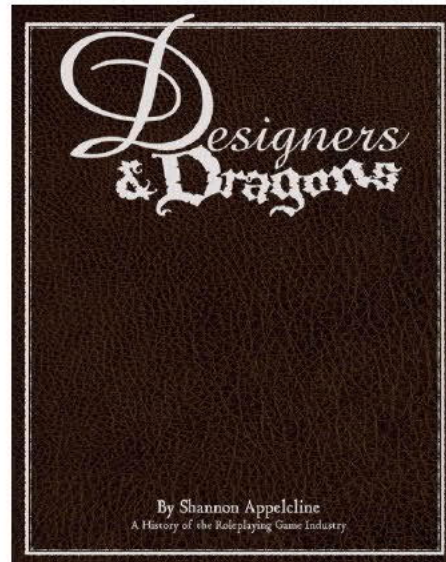




OSRIC U.S. Letter 11x8.5" Hardback



OSRIC A5 Paperback



OSRIC A5 (Compact Edition) - by Stuart Marshall
Paperback RPG Rules \$13.50/£8.42
www.lulu.com

I'm sure that most readers will be familiar with *OSRIC* (*Old School Reference and Index Compilation*) as the retroclone that emulates the First Edition *Advanced* rules of *The World's Most Popular Fantasy Roleplaying Game*. Even though I play basic and prefer the Labyrinth Lord approach to advanced material, I still like to keep a copy of *OSRIC* handy as a reference. PDFs of *OSRIC* are free to download. There are also several print-on-demand options available from Lulu.com, and a beautifully bound edition by *Black Blade Publishing*. I already own a hardback copy of *OSRIC*, but when I spotted a new A5-sized version of the revised version, I couldn't resist grabbing one.

In its compact form, the book is pretty much the same size as a thick paperback novel, making it far easier to lug about, and less intrusive to use during a game. The layout has been handled by James D. Kramer and a fine job he's made of it, too. I'm not sure if the layout has been reworked from the source files, or whether the pages have simply been reduced and had their margins cropped, but despite the reduced text size, everything is still surprisingly legible. Of course, prolonged reading will still result in the same eyestrain one could expect from gazing too long upon the original First Edition books, but as a handy reference, this book fits the bill perfectly.

Designers & Dragons by Shannon Appelcline
Hardback Book \$49.99/£34.99 PDF \$29.99
Mongoose Publishing

I received a copy of this book as a Christmas gift from one of my gaming friends. It is a book that I probably would not have considered buying for myself – and that would have been a big mistake! As a forty-something gamer and publisher, I have found the content of this book utterly fascinating.

The material in the book has been gathered meticulously by Appelcline, who began the project as a database of roleplaying products back in 2005. This then became the RPGNet Gaming Index. In 2007 he began editing and extending the content for a book, and four years later *Designers & Dragons* was published.

The book is a hefty 442-page hardback volume, and almost none of the internal space is given over to artwork. This might lead one to expect that it will be a stuffy, laborious text, but it's actually surprisingly easy to browse and read. The content is organised chronologically and by company, which makes it easy to track the rise and fall of a given company over time. Many entries also have gamebook-style links with tips on what to read next. These really help you follow a trail of events in the industry. I'm not sure how they are handled in the PDF edition, but I'd be surprised if it doesn't have extensive bookmarking and hyperlinks built-in.

You can read all about how Gary and Dave's game (and the wargames that led to it) got things started, and the turbulent history that ensued. With the benefit of hindsight, some of the business decisions made by gaming companies were shockingly bad, and they are all laid bare here. But the tone is not smug or judgemental. It simply sets out to document what happened, based on the information available. Profiles are included for dozens of companies, giving insights into the developments and events that make up the history of our hobby, and the people and organisations behind them.

The book touches on the Old School Renaissance and includes an all-encompassing entry about retroclones. However, publishers such as Goblinoid Games and Lamentations of the Flame Princess aren't big enough (yet) to get entries in their own right. I don't know what will remain of our forums and blogs in 20 years' time, but I hope somewhere out there, someone is keeping a big folio of notes in preparation for a second volume of this book.

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The Walking Dead: Seasons 1 & 2 - TV Show
amc (Season 3 scheduled for October 2012)

This excellent zombie drama is based on the comic book series of the same name by Robert Kirkman, Tony Moore and Charlie Adlard. Adapted and developed for television by Frank Darabont, *The Walking Dead* concerns the lives of a group of survivors in the aftermath of a zombie apocalypse.

Each tightly-plotted episode charts the attempts of the group, led by Deputy Sheriff Rick Grimes, to remain alive in the face of an overwhelming and relentless foe – Predatory, dead, rotting, walking corpses (known as *walkers* or the *walking dead*) are intent on devouring any living thing, and their infectious bite is enough to turn the victim into a zombie within hours.

From what I've read in the gaming Blogosphere, *The Walking Dead* is very highly thought of. This is a contemporary dungeon adventure, with recognisable player characters. There is some dissension about the alignments of the members of Rick Grimes group, but there appears to be a general consensus as to Rick Grimes' own alignment. He is *Lawful Good*. He may be relied upon to do the right thing, no matter the cost to himself, or to those around him.

My father gave a speech at my twenty-first birthday in which he said "We all make each other". By this he meant, that every interaction we have with any human being, impacts on that individual as surely as one might mould plasticine. The indentation may be light or heavy, but all exchanges mark and change us in some way.

When I look at the character development arcs in *The Walking Dead*, I think of my father's words. Over the last two seasons, I have watched how the interactions of the group have slowly deformed all of the members. For example, Rick Grimes, is constantly subjected to the doubts and worries of his wife, and his decisions are frequently challenged by his best friend, which in turn encourages disunity in the rest of the group. Faced with unrelenting opposition and discord, Rick is continually called upon to justify the very instincts and abilities which have brought him (and indeed the group) back from the brink of death on many occasions. Being

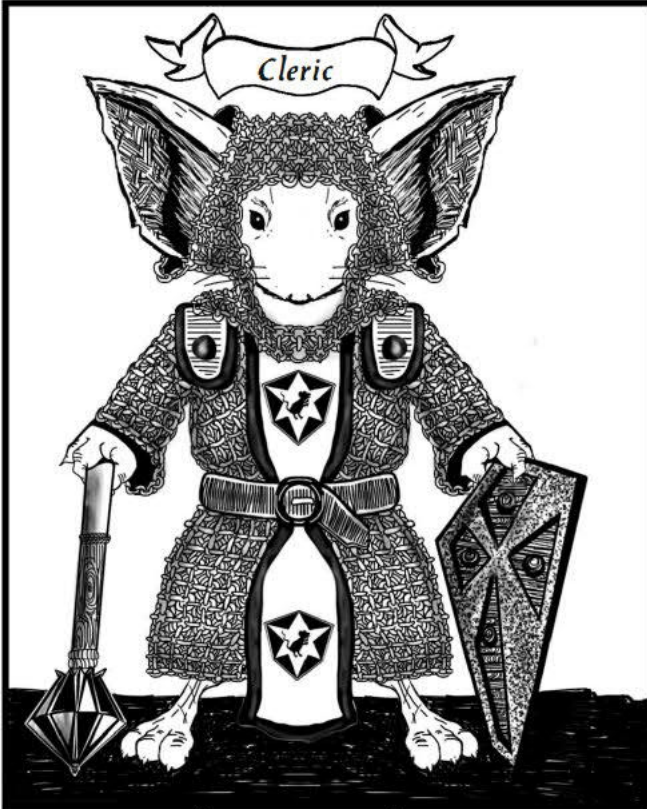


forced to continually rationalise his intuitions has slowly changed Rick from a man keen to preserve the common good, in terms of decency and righteousness, to a more insular man, now able to kill other humans unreservedly, in order to preserve those closest to him.

The Walking Dead is a rare thing. The makers have managed to retain its integrity by allowing its characters to slowly lose theirs. I am really looking forward to season three, and no doubt will watch most of it from behind the sofa, asking if the zombie killing frenzy is over or shouting at the terrible decisions made by my favourite characters. After the Season 2 finale, one thing is certain: Nothing may be taken for granted.



Old School Mouse Watch



THE SONG OF SITHAKK

Translated By Elk Runnymede



PART VIII: The Pursuit

A long table they improvised in the barn, while outside, the daylight, having gathered itself into the red rose of sunset, faded and spread wide on the western horizon. Then came Eorthsong and Wudu-bled scattering oil lamps down the length of the table, while Wolfpliht and Stanriht followed the Old One and Reafwuldor, all bearing steaming cauldrons of aromatic vegetable stew. Haaken and Emnihtman staggered in with a large urn of sweet-smelling mead, followed once again by Wudu-bled, balancing a pile of deliciously crusted loaves on her head. Before she sat down, Eorthsong lit a short, beeswax candle, and placed it at the feet of a small stone statue, hewn from the side of a large mass of weathered granite which jutted out of the floor in one corner of the barn. Then, in the scented light of the dancing flames of the oil lamps, the company together broke bread, gave thanks, ate, and drank.

Eorthsong sat at the head of the table with Sithakk to her right and enquired of his history, as convention dictates. He told her, directly and without embellishment, of his lineage, of his father – dead at Vepenvasser, of the sudden manifestation of the Death Snake, of Hengelgar the Shaman, whose words gave rise to his quest, of Maglic, of imprisonment and escape, of the fate of the Sylvmortan trecentpak, of the Soul-cloud, of his comrades, and of the likelihood that they were pursued.

"It would seem that where you go, Death goes also," said Eorthsong gently.

"I am a warrior," said Sithakk with a muted gesture of acceptance. He glanced across the table at Wudu-bled, who was watching him intently, before turning to Eorthsong once more: "And may I ask of your own story, for your presence here surprises us."

Eorthsong took a deep breath and cast her gaze into the descending darkness. Like her mother before her, she had inherited the Gift and been trained as a Druid. Her family were farmers who grew wheat and oats and had for generations lived south-west of Grasstoun. She had married a farmer, Harfestflod, a sensitive and intelligent man who held life sacred, as did she. He had a much older brother who had been apprenticed to a Warlock, but, through innate talent and meditative focus, soon surpassed his Master, read much, and travelled widely before returning home to establish himself as Athelgeist – greatest of all the Warlocks.

Harfestflod disapproved of his brother's warlocking on grounds of its proneness to corruption, and suggested that Athelgeist was wedded to fame, dabbling in the garden of the Gods. Then came the war with Sylvmorta and its allies, threatening annihilation of Dwarvish culture, threatening

enslavement of whoever survived – and Athelgeist went north to the land of the Barreldwarves and the border with Sylvmorta, seeking to heal the sick and wounded, and also to influence the course of the war by combatting the interference of other Warlocks in the conflict. Constrained by familial ethics, he determined only to use lethal force against invaders on Dwarvish soil. Since Vepenvasser resulted from a surprise attack by an elite force of principally Barreldwarves deep into Sylvmortan territory, he knew nothing of it till the slaughter was complete. He felt he had contributed nothing to the peace that followed, and by his lack of involvement had seen the best and noblest of his generation sacrifice themselves. In shame, he departed for the frozen North, never to be seen again. Eorthsong paused.

The wheat husks whispered on the floor near the barn door where the night breeze caught them. Like thoughts they fluttered towards a new resolution, then lay still. The comrades sat rapt and motionless.

Then Eorthsong spoke into the silence. "Some seven years ago, my husband decided to seek out his brother and persuade him to return. I went with him, and Wudu-bled as well, for there seemed little danger. I had taught myself to cast a spell that can conceal a moving party of three people almost instantly."

They set off for Blackfell where Athelgeist had last resided, made tribute to Hengelgar the Shaman, and enquired of him where the brother, Athelgeist, might be found. Hengelgar had no certain truth, but in trances in the night, oft-times he had scaled the sacred tree that reaches to the Heavens, calling his friend through the mists of mind in the vastness, and gradually, gradually, part vision, part feeling, part words, as the evening dew may collect as droplets which at last coalesce into a pool, so an enigma enunciated itself:

"Where guides the Circle-Star, white pillars hold the Lake of Ice aloft," began Eorthsong. And Sithakk broke in quietly, "There from fog and fire descended sits Athelgeist the Warlock."

"Indeed," said Eorthsong with a wistful smile. "We seek the same destination."

She described how they had set off, and, after travelling slowly for a number of days, they had come upon a Sylvmortan flung from his horse and lying in a clearing, by a granite outcrop, some distance from the track. She dropped the cloak of invisibility to tend him, and they revived him and fed him. It was then he revealed himself to be Dyrunga, the most powerful warlock in Sylvmorta, the hater of dwarves, malice incarnate, deservedly dwarfloathen.

At that moment, there was an exclamation from Reafwuldor, who dropped his tankard, clattering, to the floor. "Your pardon!" cried Selliksun in his lisping Eastern Dwarvish. He cast an embarrassed look at Eorthsong, and those at the head of the table. "But I see it too. The statue weeps!"

Wudu-bled's hand flew to her breast as if to calm her pounding heart, while Eorthsong with bloodless face sprang to her feet, and through the long and flickering shadows, approached the statue. Sithakk followed, and all the awestruck company.

It was true. Despite the dimness of the unsteady light, it was clear for all to see. The statue wept. Eorthsong reached out and seized Wudu-bled's hand. "We have not waited in vain," she said softly.

Sithakk looked at the statue. It was an amazing creation. Portraying a handsome dwarf, it stood six or seven handsbreadths tall, and was perfect in every detail. The eyes brimmed and the cheeks were wet with tears



which trickled down the stone tunic, and glistened in the wavering flame of the guttering candle.

The phenomenon lasted but a short space, and in that time no-one moved, nor spoke further.

Later, the dwarves brought chairs and lamps, and all sat around the statue. Then Eorthsong said: "Fill your tankards. I will finish my story"

And so she began again: "'You have been kind to me. I will bless you in the Sylvmortan manner,' said Dydrunga. And out of respect we waited while he said words in the language of Old Sylvmorta. But while we listened without understanding, he called up his familiar, and in a blinding flash of light, my husband was transformed into a statue, carved out from the mass of granite you see before you. 'Move an hour's march from this spot and he dies,' said Dydrunga And here we have been these seven years. We built the barn around the stone to protect my husband from the elements."

Wudu-bled took up the story: "I called on a raven, for I have a particular talent with birds and sundry animals, asking that he took a note to Hengelgar telling all, and asking what we might do to help my father. And in the Spring, the bird returned with the message:

"'He must be rescued by his own - Stone men alone can save him.'

"This seemed to offer no hope. How can stone men - statues we thought - come to our aid? And yet, this year, my mother, scrying, foretold their arrival." She spread her arms: "And behold - you are here - and by his tears I know my beloved father lives."

"Tomorrow," said Sithakk addressing his hosts, "if the Gods smile upon us, we shall set this good man's statue free from the rock, and you will come with us and seek Athelgeist to restore him."

The stone men clashed their tankards in salute. Wudu-bled and Eorthsong replenished the lamps, for much mead remained to be drunk.

Despite the night's festivities, Sithakk and the dwarves arose early, in order to check their battle-gear and finish replenishing the stock of arrows spent in the encounter with the trecentpak. Later, Stanriht and Reafwuldor

inspected the statue in the barn, to determine how best it might be separated from the bedrock of its origin. Eventually they elected to chip around it, leaving a large base, and watching carefully for fault-lines. If none were found, then the base could be easily reduced without risk.

Eorthsong hovered in the background, preparing for the journey, yet still keeping a watchful eye on proceedings. "I have spoken with Wudu-bled," she said to Sithakk. "Go with her. She will tell you whether you are pursued, and how closely." Sithakk frowned in puzzlement. Eorthsong seized his arm and whispered quietly: "She is remarkable far more gifted than I. It is as if the isolation has sharpened her awareness. She perceives a world that is here and now, yet beyond your imagination," Wudu-bled emerged, smiling, from the barn. "Go," said Eorthsong. "Both of you."

Sithakk followed Wudu-bled through the gate, across the track, and into the forest. Behind them, all evidence of the farm dissolved in the soft morning light. After two hundred paces or so, Wudu-bled selected a large oak. "What is this?" enquired Sithakk. But Wudu-bled sought his silence, placing a finger to her lips. She stood facing the base of the tree, her feet well separated on two gnarled roots, spread her arms in embrace, leant, pressed her body against the trunk, and with eyes closed, rested the side of her head gently on the mossy bark. Slowly, she moved around the tree, her face peaceful as that of a child in a dreamless sleep. At last, having in this manner made a circuit of the tree, she stepped back, brushing a hint of moss from her cheek as she did so.

"Four, five hundred men Maybe more And some horses," she said. "Come. We shall know more in a little while."

"But when will they be near?" asked Sithakk, an urgency in his tone.

"Not soon, but not long either. Come. We shall know more."

Sithakk followed Wudu-bled deeper into the forest, perhaps three hundred paces further. She embraced another oak and moved slowly around it as before. Eventually, she stepped back. "There are many men. They come in two groups from the south. In total, maybe five hundred men walking, and twenty - perhaps as many as fifty horses. The first group cannot reach us before midday. The others? Five hundred to a thousand paces behind."

"Of course, they may not take the track to the farm," Sithakk cut in, thinking aloud.

"There is more. From the north, and a little west - the main track once again Roughly forty horses - further away, but moving swiftly south."

They walked rapidly back to the farm. "How can you know these things?" he asked. "How can you be sure?"

"The forest is more oak than pine," responded Wudu-bled. "The roots of the oaks touch," She spread her fingers, stretched out her arms. "It is like a great net, and as a net speaks to a fisherman when there are fish, so the oaks speak to me."

"The oaks speak to you?"

"Of course not. I feel a faint vibration in my body, and hear a noise as when a breeze catches my ear, and what is like a picture forms in my head though I could not draw it I know only what it means." She smiled, helplessly.

By the time they arrived back at the farm, the dwarves had largely finished packing. Neither Eorthsong nor her daughter had any attachment to things material, and the Old One and Emnihtman easily loaded the women's few belongings onto a horse.

"What's this? Sand?" asked the Old One as he sought to

secure a single sack that was unexpectedly heavy, on the horse's rump. Eorthsong smiled.

The company waited restlessly while Stanriht and Reafwuldor, having released the statue that was Harfestflod, trimmed the base and smoothed it before Eorthsong gently wrapped it in a curtain of moss and a large blanket before seeing it carefully loaded onto a horse.

It was mid-morning when the company turned their faces to the north, and once more took up the minor road that led past the farm.

"Where is Wudu-bled?" asked Sithakk, noticing her horse was riderless at the end of the column.

"She went into the forest. She said she wished to say farewell," answered Eorthsong. "She will return swiftly, I am sure."

Sithakk urged Ethelwynn forward through the nearest gap in the foliage, then halted. Sixty paces away, through the trees, he saw Wudu-bled hold close two, small, pale, slim figures that reached to about her shoulder. Sithakk saw their black, close-cropped hair and wide eyes as they started back. Slowly, silently, they trailed their arms through the fingers of Wudu-bled's outstretched hands, and then quite suddenly, they were gone.

Wudu-bled turned. "I am coming," she said.

The farm was soon left far behind. The warm air became increasingly misty, and gave way to a warm, enveloping fog, that suddenly cleared, then billowed up once more. They crossed streams where the water was warm to the touch and the vapour rose from the surface dense and white, and with quiet vigilance they passed through barren clearings with black pits at their centre, and saw the black smoke that trickles to the surface through cracks in the pit sides.

In the afternoon rest period, Skipmakker the Sylvmortan came to Sithakk in some agitation. "This is a part of my country where people seldom go. They fear the mists which have been here since the beginning of time. It is a land of ghosts and demons, where there is fire in the night, and it is said the streams can run so hot that a man who falls in may scald to death. Strange creatures live here, and monsters Had I known, I would not have joined you on this journey."

Wudu-bled, sitting nearby, heard him speak. "Fear not," she said with a smile. "My animal friends tell me that the area is quiet with few predators. And I have listened to the birds all day, yet heard nothing of fright or alarm. Believe me, you have no cause to worry."

"It is said," continued Skipmakker, "that the Gremmini live here – horrid goblins who watch and wait and steal, and have the power to turn a man's hair white in a single night. And those who would hunt them are found dead, pierced through with a short arrow, and never a sign of the assailant. My uncle told me of these things. He was hunted by the King's Guard for speaking loudly of the unfair taxes which we suffer in the north and he returned home through these haunted foglands, heard the Gremmini whispering in the night, passed through the Vale of the Longdead – strewn with the bones of giants, skirted the Heights of Vallach, and made his way home to the northern coast."

"But he was not killed," said Sithakk good-humouredly, "for he lived to tell the tale."

"True," replied Skipmakker, "but when he returned, his hair was white as the snows of winter, though he was still a young man."

"Do not worry, my friend," said Sithakk. "All will be well, as it was for your uncle. It was worry which turned his hair white, not a ghost or a demon – and why not – Unlike you, the man had no comrades to drink with in the wilderness!"

Skipmakker smiled somewhat reluctantly, and walked

off to rejoin Reafwuldor and his other friends, who were having a quiet tankard of mead.

"These farmers," said the Old One, "can be a superstitious lot."

Eorthsong gave a little smile. "And yet there is a grain of truth in his ramblings. Speak to no-one of this but you should hear it We may indeed be watched." She paused as Wudu-bled excused herself and walked quietly into the forest. "As their own legends tell, the Sylvmortan have not been here forever. They have been here seven hundred years – perhaps a little more. A thousand years before them, another people came and settled here – the Thorastrins – descendants of the Priests of Thorastria. They were Fireworshippers – devotees of the God who lives underground and manifests himself in hot streams and smoking, boiling black pits – who shows himself in flame when the lightning strikes, and will not cede his sacred land to winter. The Sylvmortans wiped out the Thorastrins almost completely, and the few survivors retreated to the homeland of their God. They hid here among the mists and fed all manner of superstition among the Sylvmortans, who call them the Gremmini. And so they are left alone. Not only is" She broke off as Wudu-bled returned.

"I am surprised," said Wudu-bled. "I have listened to the oaks. Our pursuers have diverged to the track past our farm and are moving as fast as we are. It is surely unusual for so large a group of soldiers to move so swiftly."

"Indeed," said Sithakk. "The horsemen from the north have perhaps persuaded them that we must have shunned the main routes, and that this track is the only option remaining. Who knows? They are coming, and we must go." He stood up and gave the signal to depart.

Sithakk urged the comrades north. If Wudu-bled's assessment were correct, two trecentpaks of Sylvmorta's fittest and finest soldiers followed them at a forced march. It seemed that the track the dwarves had taken led more or less directly to the Heights of Vallach, and Eorthsong, for reasons not fully disclosed, was particularly keen that this be the favoured route.

The day wore on towards evening, and occasionally, when the comrades broke clear of the mist and fog, they would be granted a tantalizing glimpse of the Heights of Vallach. From behind surging cloud banks, gargantuan cliffs might suddenly dominate the horizon, only to disappear once more into the swirling mistiness.

The sun was setting when Feththord climbed yet again to the upper branches of a tall pine tree to look for the Soul-cloud. Once more, he had nothing to report. However, none derived significant comfort from his efforts, since the fogs that hid the party for much of the time might just as easily conceal the Soul-cloud.

The travellers were tired though uncomplaining, and twilight was giving way to night when Sithakk gave direction they should make camp, well-concealed, a short distance from the track. And after the nightwatch had been organised, and the horses tended, it was time to eat. "No fires," Sithakk instructed. "We are too closely pursued." It was decided that the comrades would be woken by the watch at the first appearances of dawn, and eat only when riding, to ensure that the least possible time should be lost.

So it was that Sithakk was awoken by a hand on his shoulder when only a hint of greyness rimmed the horizon, and the morning star hung above it like a bright promise, undimmed against the velvet black of a surprisingly clear sky. Sithakk was on his feet instantly, sought out a tall pine, and as quietly as possible, climbed to a height where, swaying silently against a sprinkling of stars, he could see above the surrounding forest canopy. To the north, the

Heights of Vallach were a dark, devouring emptiness, devoid of detail, floating above a thin ribbon of mist. On all sides, the forest spread out before him, the half-seen tree-tops forming dimly-perceived, swirling patterns, drained of colour – like wheat grains strewn thickly on a monstrous, flat table when the miller has gone home for the night. And in the stillness of the morning air, steam from hot pools and cratered clearings rose vertically towards the heavens. He eased himself silently round to face south, and froze. The smoke of forty camp fires ascended straight into the air like the shafts of forty spears driven into the heart of the forest, driven into the hearts of those he would keep safe. The nearest fires – twenty or so – must be no more than two thousand paces distant the others, little more than a thousand paces further. The Sylvmorten must have continued their pursuit until perhaps midnight. What threats or rewards inspired their efforts? He listened already they were stirring.

The comrades departed with haste. Sithakk reasoned that they could most easily gain distance on the Sylvmorten by keeping to the same track until the soldiers began their forced march once more. Thereafter, the dwarves would seek out a minor track, should there be one, and perhaps travel east. If fortune smiled, the Sylvmortan trecentpaks might continue fruitlessly north.

The sun had just cleared the horizon when Sithakk asked Wudu-bled to listen to the oaks. She returned quickly with the news that those who hunted them were not only fully mobile, but proceeding with haste, perhaps as little as four thousand paces distant. Sithakk turned to Eorthsong: "Is it not possible," he asked, contriving to look calmer than his racing thoughts, "for you to cast a spell of invisibility that might cloak us all?"

"That is not possible," she responded. "When I am well practised, I am able to render invisible a party of up to three, who are in motion. I can conceal a much larger, fixed area such as the farm, but that takes days of preparation." Sithakk nodded. "However," said Eorthsong. "I may be able to slow them down or even lead them astray. Give me a just a little time."

The group continued, searching with increasing desperation for possible routes to the east. Sithakk had no intention of veering off into the dense forest with its tangled undergrowth, unless danger was imminent, for it promised little more than the possibility that they might become immobilized and surrounded.

"Those of you who ride," he demanded, "keep watch on the sky. Remember that the Soul-cloud still seeks us."

Eorthsong suddenly requested the company should pause. They had just passed a point where a muddle of furze and blackberry spilled out of the forest on both sides, and narrowed the track for a couple of hundred paces. Eorthsong leapt down from her horse, seized her staff, and, muttering rhythmically, marched back to where the track had first narrowed. She raised her arms to the sky, and, where she brought her hands together so that the relaxed fingers of both almost touched, a dense and milky mistiness appeared. Then, arching her back and on tip-toe, she spread her arms wide and pulled them down with great strength below the level of her shoulders, so that for a moment she looked like a swallow ascending to the heavens after a great, sweeping dive. Straightway, a thick mist descended, rolling over the track behind her. Eorthsong strode back, trailing the tip of her staff through the brambles and furze, exhorting them into growth. Sithakk watched in amazement as tendrils of blackberry reached and writhed across the track, and the furze leapt higher, only to over-grow its natural height and fall on top of the brambles.

So Eorthsong returned, to support herself shuddering with fatigue against her horse. Behind her, the track was an impenetrable mass of brambles and vicious spines, creaking and settling in the midst of a milky-white mist.

Sithakk bowed his head. "Machter," he said, "we are in your debt." Eorthsong gave a tired smile. Sithakk helped her onto her horse, and the journey began again.

A little before midday, they observed that the track was crossed more or less east to west by what appeared to be the dried-up bed of a stream. Sithakk signalled a halt, and the company rested very briefly, while he took Ethelwynn to inspect.

"If you decide to follow the old stream," said Wudu-bled, "Mother and I can cause the plants to grow, so as to hide the signs of our passage."

Sithakk nodded. Perhaps the concealment would work. At the very least they might split the Sylvmortan forces who followed them. There had been no better opportunity. Tracks were clearly few and far between. Skipmakker had spoken truly when he suggested that the superstitious Sylvmorten seldom came to this area. It seemed that it was rare for Sylvmorten to live here, and that the few tracks were simply to enable occasional transit of this land of fog and mystery.

"Let us follow the old stream-bed," he said, pointing to the east. His men quickly complied. Wudu-bled and a tired Eorthsong immediately set about filling the edges of the main track with new, fresh, undisturbed bushes so as to hide the comrades' point of departure from the main track. They similarly filled the rocky stream bed with vegetation for a short distance in either direction. Sithakk was well satisfied with the concealment. He moved with great care through the undergrowth to join his comrades and the women.

A thousand paces into the new route, the mists returned, drifting in quietly from the north. The old stream must at one time have been a torrent. It soon joined with several other dry streams, and this wider, grander remnant



of a considerable river drainage continued. Surprisingly, the land fell away rapidly to the north so that the southern bank of what was now a dry river bed, became a cliff, nearly the height of a full-grown pine. They kept to the northern bank of the extinct river so as to afford themselves some cover in the forest, if the Soul-cloud should appear.

Wudu-bled was intensely absorbed with the trees, bushes, and flowers of their surroundings, though Sithakk could see nothing of interest or significance.

Suddenly, Strengorm's beefy bass rumbled loudly at the head of the column: "By Hrath! I have never seen its like in my worst dreams!" His sentiments were echoed by the more reedy accents of Skipmakker, who sought protection of his Gods.

"Quiet!" hissed Sithakk. Those at the front of the column had stopped, and the companions quickly formed a group.

"Look!" urged Skipmakker, pointing at the cliff opposite which was re-emerging from the mist. "We have stumbled into the Vale of the Longdead." Protruding from the lower part of the cliff opposite was a huge skull with jagged teeth. Below, ripples in the rock like immense prison bars suggested the creature's rib-cage, and further along, the imprint of its hind leg, tall as a rearing horse, was clearly visible imprinted in the rock.

"You see! You see!" muttered Skipmakker through gritted teeth. "My uncle spoke truly! He lived, but we are doomed!"

"Down here!" called Stanriht who had moved further ahead. "There must be at least six or seven more!"

"Enough!" said Sithakk, sharply. "This is a graveyard. These creatures are encased in rock. There is nothing to fear."

As he spoke, there was a sudden roar – a Sylvmortan battle-cry from six hundred paces distant. Whilst they had been speaking, a contingent of Sylvmortan cavalry, forty to fifty strong, had rounded a bend to the rear and, in anticipation of triumph, announced their arrival.

In an instant, Sithakk understood. The two trecentpaks had combined their cavalry components and sent them on ahead. Someone – perhaps an officer – knew the lie of the land, and had realised that the entrance to the stream-bed had been recently concealed.

Sithakk, seizing his bow, instantly ordered the women into the forest, and despatched two of the comrades to tend to the horses.

"Wulfpliht! Emnihtman! Wrecansith! To me centre of the river bed!" Sithakk's rapid commands echoed back, crackling from the cliff face.

"Strengorm! Gosman! Fehthord! Guthfana! Stanriht! Shoot from the trees to my left! Selliksun! Haselweard! Emnihtman! Goldstapa! Reafwuldor! From behind the rockfall 'neath the skull! Red arrows first. Closer than 350 paces, use only white!"

Disciplined warriors, the dwarves were in position by the time the cavalry had drawn their longswords and closed to 450 paces. This enabled each of the dwarves to release two or three red-flighted arrows into the advancing cavalry. The madness hit horses and men alike by 250 paces. Those cavalymen wounded by red-flighted arrows attacked the closest thing that moved in an orgy of mindless butchery. They made no distinction between their compatriots and their horses – all were fair game.

A shower of white arrows brought down the first rank of horses, causing others to tumble over them. By 100 paces, more than half the cavalry were unhorsed, dead, wounded, or mad and dying. On Sithakk's signal, he and the three dwarves with him dashed into the trees to continue the attack, as the remnants of the cavalry stormed past.

A hundred paces past the dwarves, the cavalry wheeled, and headed back whence they had come. They sought to join the remnants of those unhorsed in the initial charge, who had taken up a position behind a fall of large rocks at the base of the cliff, some 400 paces from the dwarves. Red arrows found their mark in the backs of two or three cavalymen as they retreated, ensuring a grim re-union for the survivors.

Sithakk reckoned that only 15 or 16 of the enemy remained in fit condition to mount another attack. He doubted that they had the inclination – a belief that gained credence as horses were left to graze at the edge of the forest, while the Sylvmorten dug in to await the arrival of a probable 450 foot soldiers. He took a quick look at the Sylvmortan position, and was rewarded by the thud of an arrow into the trunk of the oak behind which he sheltered. Not bad for a cavalryman. He took another quick look and was rewarded with another hushed thud..

"It comes!" roared Fehthord in the unnatural silence. He pointed to the sky and took cover.

Sailing over the edge of the cliff just forward of the Sylvmortan position, came the Soul-cloud. Black as pitch, larger than ever before, its shadow spread over the horrified Sylvmorten, who babbling, hid their faces and beseeched it in horror. The cloud paused, then drifted slowly east, down the river bed, searching for the dwarves and their friends, hidden in the undergrowth. It paused again, interminably it seemed, and then drifted off, following the cliff round, further east, in a lazy curve.

At that moment, four hundred and fifty Sylvmortan foot soldiers announced their arrival. Their roaring battlecry shook the oaks, and as they advanced, their comrades sheltering in the rocks, stood up to cheer. Doubtless acting on information from the Cavalry, a hundred soldiers snaked off into the forest, anticipating the possibility of the dwarvish party attempting to disperse into the dense woodland.

Then the lightning struck. Twice. With extreme ferocity. And the Soul-cloud sailed heavenwards, depleted, and seeking the sun. There came a strange, unearthly noise, deep and resonant, long, harsh, enraged, hostile, malevolent and so unbearably loud that loose stones were dislodged from the cliff face and showered the advancing soldiers.

Around the bend from the east, came two enormous creatures, two thirds the height of the cliff itself. Perfectly formed, their flesh quivered tautly over their immense musculature and they shimmered with an otherworldly energy. "By Hrath!" bellowed Strengorm. "The Soul-cloud has raised the monstrous dead! If these incarnations of evil do not rend and swallow us, the Sylvmortans will butcher us!" He cut himself short, steadied himself:

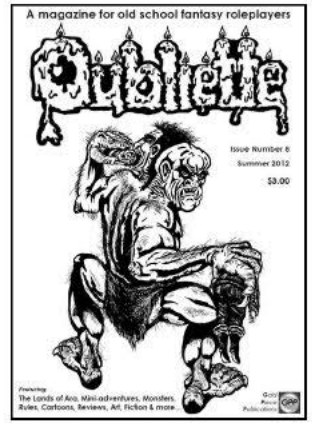
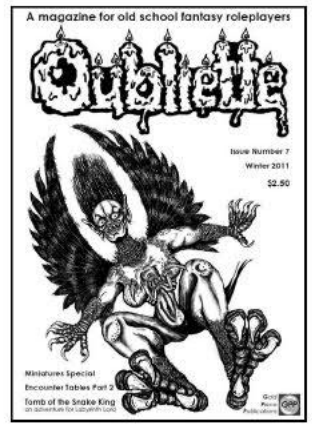
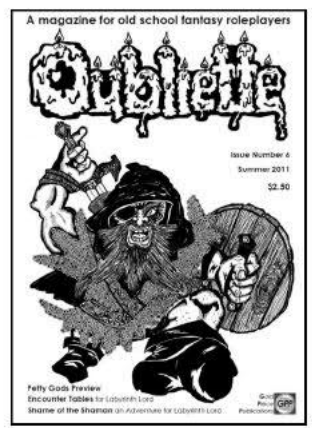
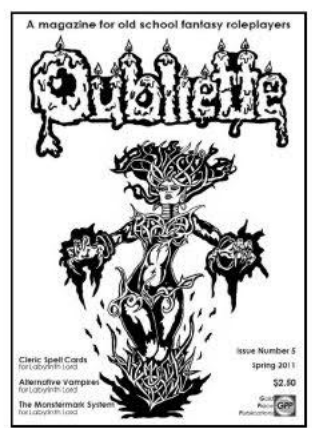
"I shall die well!" he roared into the tumult. It was an avowal of identity, a declaration of faith, an acceptance of the inevitable, the key to unleashing his total self into a moment of incandescent destiny.

The dwarves drew their swords and kissed them where hilt meets blade, and their defiant call rose from the forest floor to echo in the very Halls of the Gods: "We shall die well!"

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Dungeon Random Encounter Table: Level Seven

d	Creature Type	No. Enc.	Stats	Hit Points
	Roll on the Level 6 Table			
	Basilisk		Move 60' (20') HD 6+1 AC 4 Dam 1-10 + petrify	
	Beetle, Giant Boring		Move 60' (20') HD 5 AC 3 Dam 5-20	
	Black Pudding		Move 60' (20') HD 10 AC 6 Dam 3-24	
	Chimera		Move 180' (60') HD 9 AC 4 Dam 1-3/1-3/2-8/2-8/3-12	
	Cyclops		Move 90' (30') HD 13 AC 5 Dam 3-30	
	Demon/Devil/Dragon		Roll on the Demon/Devil/Dragon sub-table	
	Djinni		Move 240' (80') HD 7+1 AC 5 Dam 2-16	
	Elemental*		Move 360' (120') HD 8 AC 2 Dam 1-8	
	Ettin		Move 120' (40') HD 10 AC 3 Dam 2-16/3-18	
	Giant, Fire		Move 120' (40') HD 11+2 AC 4 Dam 5-30	
	Giant, Frost		Move 120' (40') HD 10+1 AC 4 Dam 4-24	
	Giant, Hill		Move 120' (40') HD 8 AC 4 Dam 2-16	
	Giant, Stone		Move 120' (40') HD 9 AC 4 Dam 3-18	
	Golem, Bone		Move 120' (40') HD 8 AC 2 Dam 1-8/1-8/1-8/1-8	
	Gorgon		Move 120' (40') HD 8 AC 2 Dam 2-12 or breath weapon	
	Green Slime		Move 3' (1') HD 2 AC always hit Dam digest flesh	
	Groaning Spirit		Move 150' (50') HD 7 AC 0 Dam 1-8 + keening	
	Hell Hound		Move 120' (40') HD 6 AC 4 Dam 1-6 or breath weapon	
	Invisible Stalker		Move 120' (40') HD 8 AC 3 Dam 4-16	
	Lamia		Move 240' (80') HD 9 AC 3 Dam 1-6	
	Lammasu		Move 240' (80') HD 7+7 AC 6 Dam 1-6/1-6	
	Lurker Above		Move 90' (30') HD 10 AC 6 Dam 1-6 + suffocation	
	Lycanthrope, Werebear		Move 120' (40') HD 6 AC 2 Dam 2-8/2-8/2-16 + hug	
	Mimic		Move 30' (10') HD 7 AC 6 Dam 3-12	
	Mummy		Move 60' (20') HD 5+1 AC 3 Dam 1-12 + disease	
	Naga, Spirit		Move 120' (40') HD 9 AC 4 Dam 1-3 + poison, gaze	
	Night Hag		Move 90' (30') HD 8 AC 9 Dam 2-12	
	NPC Party		Move 120' (40') As class/race of each character	
	Ogre Mage		Move 150' (50') HD 5+2 AC 4 Dam 1-12	
	Otyugh, Advanced		Move 60' (20') HD 9 AC 0 Dam 2-12/2-12/2-8	
	Owlbear		Move 120' (40') HD 5 AC 5 Dam 1-8/1-8/1-8 + hug	
	Roper		Move 30' (10') HD 10 AC 0 Dam 5-20	
	Salamander, Flame		Move 120' (40') HD 8 AC 2 Dam 1-4/1-4/1-8	
	Scorpion, Giant		Move 150' (50') HD 4 AC 2 Dam 1-10/1-10/1-4 + poison	
	Slug, Giant		Move 60' (20') HD 12 AC 8 Dam 1-12 + spit acid	
	Spectre		Move 300' (100') HD 6 AC 2 Dam 1-8 + level drain	
	Spider, Phase		Move 150' (50') HD 5+5 AC 7 Dam 1-6 + poison	
	Trapper		Move 30' (10') HD 12 AC 3 Dam 1-6 + smothering	
	Troll		Move 120' (40') HD 6+3 AC 4 Dam 1-6/1-6/1-10	
	Wasp, Giant		Move 210' (70') HD 4 AC 4 Dam 2-8/1-4 + poison	
	Wyvern		Move 240' (80') HD 7 AC 3 Dam 2-16/2-16 + poison	
	Yellow Mold		Move 0' (0') HD 2 AC always hit Dam 1-6	
	Roll on the Level 8 Table			

*Roll a d4 to determine which elemental type is encountered (1 = Air, 2 = Earth, 3 = Fire, 4 = Water), or simply select the most appropriate type for the environment.

Dungeon Random Encounter Table: Level Eight

d	Creature Type	No. Enc.	Stats	Hit Points
Roll on the Level 7 Table				
	Basilisk		Move 60' (20') HD 6+1 AC 4 Dam 1-10 + petrify	
	Beetle, Giant Boring		Move 60' (20') HD 5 AC 3 Dam 5-20	
	Black Pudding		Move 60' (20') HD 10 AC 6 Dam 3-24	
	Chimera		Move 180' (60') HD 9 AC 4 Dam 1-3/1-3/2-8/2-8/3-12	
	Cyclops		Move 90' (30') HD 13 AC 5 Dam 3-30	
	Demon/Devil/Dragon		Roll on the Demon/Devil/Dragon sub-table	
	Efreeti		Move 240' (80') HD 10 AC 3 Dam 2-16	
	Elemental*		Move 360' (120') HD 12 AC 0 Dam 2-16	
	Ettin		Move 120' (40') HD 10 AC 3 Dam 2-16/3-18	
	Giant, Fire		Move 120' (40') HD 11+2 AC 4 Dam 5-30	
	Giant, Frost		Move 120' (40') HD 10+1 AC 4 Dam 4-24	
	Golem Amber		Move 180' (60') HD 10 AC 6 Dam 2-12/2-12/2-20	
	Golem Clay		Move 60' (20') HD 11 AC 7 Dam 3-30	
	Golem Stone		Move 60' (20') HD 14 AC 5 Dam 3-24	
	Gorgon		Move 120' (40') HD 8 AC 2 Dam 2-12 or breath weapon	
	Green Slime		Move 3' (1') HD 2 AC always hit Dam digest flesh	
	Hell Hound		Move 120' (40') HD 7 AC 4 Dam 1-6 or breath weapon	
	Lurker Above		Move 90' (30') HD 10 AC 6 Dam 1-6 + suffocation	
	Lycanthrope, Werebear		Move 120' (40') HD 6 AC 2 Dam 2-8/2-8/2-16 + hug	
	Mimic		Move 30' (10') HD 10 AC 6 Dam 3-12	
	Naga, Guardian		Move 150' (50') HD 11 AC 3 Dam 1-6/2-8 + spit poison	
	Night Hag		Move 90' (30') HD 8 AC 9 Dam 2-12	
	NPC Party		Move 120' (40') As class/race of each character	
	Ogre Mage		Move 150' (50') HD 5+2 AC 4 Dam 1-12	
	Otyugh, Advanced		Move 60' (20') HD 12 AC 0 Dam 2-12/2-12/2-8	
	Purple Worm		Move 60' (20') HD 15 AC 6 Dam 2-16/1-8 + poison	
	Roper		Move 30' (10') HD 12 AC 0 Dam 5-20	
	Salamander, Frost		Move 120' (40') HD 12 AC 3 Dam 1-6/1-6/1-6/1-6/2-12	
	Shambling Mound		Move 60' (20') HD 8 AC 0 Dam 2-16/2-16 + smothering	
	Slug, Giant		Move 60' (20') HD 12 AC 8 Dam 1-12 + spit acid	
	Spectre		Move 300' (100') HD 6 AC 2 Dam 1-8 + level drain	
	Trapper		Move 30' (10') HD 12 AC 3 Dam 1-6 + smothering	
	Troll		Move 120' (40') HD 6+3 AC 4 Dam 1-6/1-6/1-10	
	Vampire		Move 150' (50') HD 7 AC 2 Dam 1-10 + level drain	
	Will O Wisp		Move 180' (60') HD 9 AC -8 Dam 2-16	
	Wyvern		Move 240' (80') HD 7 AC 3 Dam 2-16/2-16 + poison	
	Yellow Mold		Move 0' (0') HD 2 AC always hit Dam 1-6	
	Xorn		Move 90' (30') HD 7+7 AC -2 Dam 1-3/1-3/1-3/6-24	
Roll on the Level 9 Table				

*Roll a d4 to determine which elemental type is encountered (1 = Air, 2 = Earth, 3 = Fire, 4 = Water), or simply select the most appropriate type for the environment.