

Lost In the Dark

A One-Round Dungeons & Dragons® Living Greyhawk™ Highfolk Regional Adventure

Version 1.0

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Everyone knows that dwarves can see in the dark, so how can a dwarf lose something within it? The only way is if they really do not want to find it in the first place. Find out what the dwarves of Dargas Mor have lost in the dark. A one-round Highfolk Regional adventure set underground near Dargas Mor for characters level 1-13 (APLs 2-10). This is Part 2 of the “Don’t Run With Sickles” series.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

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For questions specific to this document, please e-mail your Triad at contact.hig@iuzlg.com; for LIVING GREYHAWK campaign questions email rpgahq@wizards.com.

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This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2008.

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If you are planning on playing this adventure, stop reading now. The rest of the information in this adventure is for the DM only. If you read farther than this section, you'll know too much about its challenges, which kills the fun. Also, if you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, reading beyond this point makes you ineligible to do so.

PREPARING FOR PLAY

To get the most out of this adventure, you need copies of the following D&D rule books: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the MM.

Throughout this adventure, text in ***bold italics*** provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Refer to Appendix 1 for full information on NPCs and monsters. For your convenience, Appendix 1 is split by APL.

Along with this adventure, you'll find a RPGA session tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this sheet to your senior GM directly after play. You'll also

find a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure record (AR). You need one copy of this for each participating player.

AVERAGE PARTY LEVEL (APL)

See Chapter One of the *Living Greyhawk Campaign Sourcebook* for details on APLs. If the APL of your group is an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they would like to play the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or five 1st-level characters may find the challenge of an APL 2 adventure difficult. Suggest the following to these groups to help increase their chances of success:

1. Enlist a sixth player.
2. Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them and fight for them.

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard Regional adventure, set in Highfolk. Characters native to that region pay 1 Time Unit per round; all other characters pay 2 Time Units per round.

More information about Lifestyle and Upkeep can be found in the *Living Greyhawk Campaign Sourcebook*.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Dargas Mor was once a part of a much more vast dwarven kingdom that stretched on for miles beneath the Clatspur range. Over 3000 years ago, an event of cataclysmic proportions known as the Sundering caused a massive collapse of most of the cavern tunnels, sealing the dwarves of Dargas Mor in their immediate area. It was soon discovered that they were essentially alone, and that any remaining tunnels only lead down into the Deep.

While the clerics of the other clans called for aid through prayer, the dwarves of the Lorekeeper clan used their arcane powers to command aid from the elemental planes. The Lorekeeper clan lived in an isolated part of Dargas Mor called Thamek Mor. Using four powerful magic items known as elemental keys, the dwarves of Thamek Mor tried to open portals to the para-elemental planes but failed. Instead they opened a portal to a place where aberrations ruled. Thamek Mor was overrun by aberrations and the Lorekeeper clan was all but destroyed. The dwarves of Dargas Mor sealed off Thamek Mor, containing the aberrations and the arcane magic that caused the creatures to appear.

The duergar who plague Dargas Mor recently discovered a passage into Thamek Mor. Thinking to gain an advantage against the dwarves of Dargas Mor, the duergar sent an expedition into the formerly sealed area. The expedition was destroyed. With Thamek Mor now unsealed, the aberrations have emerged from a place that was lost in the dark.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The PCs are attacked by duergar while traveling underground.

1: I NEED A HERO

The PCs find out what they are doing.

2: BURNING PINES

The PCs talk to the Servant, a red dragon disciple. The PCs are asked to find out why the duergar and kobolds have not crushed Dargas Mor.

3: BALANCE OF SCALES

This encounter only occurs if there is a Dragon Disciple that violates the Balance of Scales.

4: RANDOM ENCOUNTER

This random attack or trap actually takes place at an appropriate time during encounter 5.

5: WE'RE NOT IN HIGHFOLK ANYMORE

The PCs explore an alien landscape.

6: RELEASE THE RUNEHOUNDS

While crossing a river of worms, the PCs are attacked by runehounds.

7: SPQTM

The PCs explore Thamek Mor's gallery depicting its might and glory.

8: GHOST TALK

The PCs speak with the ghost of a dwarven defender who was slain the day Thamek Mor fell.

9: LOREKEEPERS

The PCs are attacked by the Lorekeepers, who are aberrant blooded dwarves.

CONCLUSION

The PCs are confronted by a force of dwarves from Dargas Mor. The dwarves take the PCs into custody and escort them back to Dargas Mor. Once in Dargas Mor, the PCs must plead their case to the thane.

PREPARATION FOR PLAY

LEGENDARY DEEDS

At the beginning of the scenario, each player must determine the recognition of their player character's Legendary Deeds. Roll percentile dice for each player and

compare it to the total percentile value for all the Legendary Deeds the player character has accumulated. If the roll is less than or equal to the percentage total, then randomly choose one of the deeds from the player character's pool. For the entirety of the event, NPCs recognize the player character for the deeds they accomplished, and the benefit listed on the deed may be used. After the scenario, the deed is marked "USED".

THE BALANCE OF SCALES

If any PC is present that possesses the Dragon Disciple prestige class and does not have Highfolk regional documentation giving them access (that is, they possess levels in the class from another region or they took access exercising the core option), they are attacked. See Encounter 3.

Judge preparation for play includes the following:

- Familiarize yourself with the contents of the New Rules section.
- Duergar warriors have 120 feet darkvision and not 60 feet darkvision as indicated in the MM.
- Runehound's damage for their bite attack is 1d6+7 not 1d6+5 as indicated in MM III.
- Familiarize yourself with grappling, *Player's Handbook* page 155-157. Grappling is used heavily in Encounter 9.
- Before you start the adventure, draw the map for the combat that takes place immediately in the Introduction.

Finally, there is a bit of a time warp (or flashback) in this adventure. Be prepared to explain this to the players. For you the judge, this means you run the combat in the Introduction and put the rest of the encounter on hold. You then run Encounter 1 and Encounter 2. After Encounter 2 is finished, return to the Introduction to finish it. After the rest of the Introduction is finished, proceed with Encounter 3 (if Balance of Scales is in play) or Encounter 4 (if Balance of Scales is not in play).

INTRODUCTION

Ahead the tunnel opens into a cavern littered with rocks and debris. You pause for a moment wondering when you will reach your destination. Your trek underground has been uneventful so far, but then you notice the bodies of dead kobolds lying on the cavern floor.

PART I

Have everyone roll for initiative as the adventure starts with a combat against duergar. Have the players put their PCs into a marching formation at the entrance of the cavern (refer to **DM Map – Duergar Battle**).

The players likely have questions about where their PCs are and what they are doing. Tell them the answers to these questions are forthcoming after the combat is completed. If the players are insistent about getting their

questions answered, you may run Encounter 1 before running this combat. If it matters to someone, the PCs have been together for 6 days.

Once combat finishes, you should go to Encounter 1 so the PCs can find out why they are here and what they are doing. Once these questions are answered, return here to finish this encounter. See Part 2 below.

PART 2

Start here when you return from Encounter 2.

The duergar have recently fought a band of kobolds here (within the past 2 hours). There are 11 dead kobolds, many of whom were slain with crossbow bolts, and 1 unconscious kobold (stabilized at -5 hp), who the duergar left for dead. There are 3 dead duergar warriors stashed down one of the tunnels. All the dead kobolds and duergar have been stripped of their possessions. A duergar was sent back to the main camp with these possessions and to report their battle with the kobolds.

The kobolds are all wearing red-dyed leather armor. If a PC participated in the battle for Verbeeg Hill (**HIG6i-04 The Velverdyva Gambit**), they recognize the kobolds are wearing the same kind of armor.

When the PCs search the cavern, have the unconscious kobold moan or move to gain the PCs' attention. If the PCs choose to kill the kobold before questioning it, the PCs do not receive the Servant's Favor (see conclusion for more information).

Once the PCs finish this encounter, proceed to **Encounter 3: Balance of Scales** if the Balance of Scales comes into play or **Encounter 4: Random Encounter** if the Balance of Scales does not come into play.

CREATURES

The duergar are similar in appearance to normal dwarves except they have a gray skin tone. The duergar warriors are armored in lusterless black chainmail, bear a shield, wield a warhammer and light crossbow. The duergar fighter is armored in lusterless black full plate and wields a dire pick instead.

APL 2 (EL 1)

Duergar warrior 1 (1): hp 9; MM 91.

APL 4 (EL 3)

Duergar warrior 1 (3): hp 9 each; MM 91.

APL 6 (EL 5)

Duergar warrior 1 (2): hp 9 each; MM 91.

Duergar Sergeant (1): hp 28; Appendix.

APL 8 (EL 7)

Duergar warrior 1 (4): hp 9 each; MM 91.

Duergar Master Sergeant (1): hp 45; Appendix.

APL 10 (EL 9)

Duergar Sergeant (2): hp 28 each; Appendix.

Duergar Lieutenant (1): hp 62; Appendix.

Tactics

The duergar use their 120 feet darkvision to their advantage and start the combat with their light crossbows. If the duergar fighters have *screaming bolts*, they try to affect as many PCs as possible. The duergar fighters use poison on their melee weapons in this combat. The duergar use their spell-like abilities to *enlarge person* themselves before they enter melee combat. If a duergar is injured badly, they use their spell-like abilities to turn *invisible* and then flee. The duergar can also turn *invisible* and go after the spellcasters in the rear.

When a duergar warrior uses his spell-like ability *enlarge person*, his stats change to this: large-sized; AC 15, touch 8, flat-footed 15; warhammer +2 (2d6+2/x3); grapple +6; space 10 ft., reach 10 ft.; Str 15, Dex 9.

The duergar fighters have a power-up suite listed in their stat block in the Appendix. Since the duergar fighters have the feat Stoneback, they keep near a wall at all times unless there is no other option. The duergar fighters also have the feat Tunnel-fighting that lets them fight without penalty while squeezing. The duergar fighters use the cavern's features to squeeze into spots where only one PC can melee with them at a time.

Also note that much of the cavern is difficult terrain, except where noted. This terrain prevents the PCs from moving easily about and from charging.

Treasure: The PCs can gain the following treasure here:

APL 2: Loot 18 gp; Total 18 gp.

APL 4: Loot 54 gp; Total 54 gp.

APL 6: Loot 231 gp; Magic 30 gp; *potion of cure light wounds* (4 gp each), *potion of resurgence* (4 gp each), *screaming bolt* (22 gp each); Total 261 gp.

APL 8: Loot 301 gp; Magic 129 gp; *potion of cure light wounds* (4 gp each), *potion of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), *potion of magic weapon* (4 gp each), *potion of remove blindness/deafness* (62 gp each), *potion of remove fear* (4 gp each), *potion of resurgence* (4 gp each), *screaming bolt* (22 gp each), *universal solvent* (4 gp each); Total 430 gp.

APL 10: Loot 778 gp; Magic 207 gp; *potion of bull's strength* (25 gp each); *potion of cure light wounds* (x3) (12 gp each), *potion of cure serious wounds* (62 gp each), *potion of magic weapon* (4 gp each), *potion of remove blindness/deafness* (62 gp each), *potion of remove fear* (4 gp each), *potion of resurgence* (x3) (12 gp each), *screaming bolt* (22 gp each), *universal solvent* (4 gp each); Total 985 gp.

DEVELOPMENT

If a PC dies during this encounter, resolve the PC's death according to the LGCS.

If the PC is to be raised from the dead treat it as if the entire adventuring group returned with the dead body, had the PC raised and returned back here to this point. Continue with Encounter 1.

If the PC is not to be raised from the dead, the player has the option of playing Encounter 1 to find out what his PC is doing here. If the player decides to play Encounter 1, after the encounter is complete the player may not participate any further in this adventure.

If any duergar are captured and interrogated (treat as hostile), he pretends he only understands dwarven and undercommon, and knows the following.

- He is part of a patrol looking for the opportunity to ambush any dwarves of Dargas Mor, kobolds or aberrations they come across.
- He and others recently fought a battle with kobolds. He thinks all the kobolds were slain and that none escaped. Three of his battle brothers were slain. He points out the tunnel in which the bodies are stashed.
- The kobolds were supposed to help them fight against Dargas Mor, but something happened. Now the kobolds are the enemy and they are to be killed.
- He does not know the source of the aberrations.
- He does know there must be many more of them now after a large group of duergar never returned from a raid.
- Another group of raiders used a newfound passage that led to a secret entrance into Dargas Mor. He surmises the raiders were all slain by the dwarves of Dargas Mor. The duergars' mission now is to keep the kobolds away from this newfound passage.
- He does know where this newfound passage is located, but does not want to go there because he believes it is an obvious Dargas Mor trap.
- There is a large number of duergar massing to attack the kobolds. He does not know when or where the attack is going to take place, but he surmises it is happening soon.
- A single duergar with a pack lizard was sent back to the main camp with the possessions of the dead kobolds and dead duergar. He is also reporting their battle with the kobolds.

If the PCs heal the kobold, the PCs can interrogate him (treat as hostile). The kobold knows the following:

- He is part of a patrol sent out to ambush dwarves of Dargas Mor, duergar or aberrations.
- The duergar were supposed to help them fight against Dargas Mor, but something happened. Gixarytiss ordered them to attack duergar whenever and wherever they are found.
- There are a large number of kobolds massing to attack the duergar. He does not know when or where the attack is going to take place. He surmises it is happening soon. Their goal is to dislodge the duergar from an area and hold it.
- Gixarytiss is at the camp, organizing the kobolds and red dragonspawn for an attack on the duergar.
- He does not know about the duergars' newfound passage that supposedly leads to Dargas Mor.

If the PCs interrogate a duergar or a kobold prisoner, the PCs can determine the kobolds and duergar are fighting each other. This is the information the Servant wants. Anything else is a bonus.

If the duergar are captured and forced to lead the PCs to their camp, the duergar deliberately mislead the PCs and take the first opportunity they can to escape. The kobold does the same. If the duergar see an opportunity to get one of the PCs severely hurt or killed, the duergar take that opportunity also.

The PCs can take this opportunity to safely rest, regaining spells and hit points before continuing with the adventure. Do not prompt them to take this opportunity.

1: I NEED A HERO

You are not sure where you heard it first. Maybe it was a whisper in your ear, a rumor told over a friendly drink or somebody's drunken ramblings. Strange creatures have been sighted, strange creatures that some call aberrations. The aberrations are causing havoc in field and forest.

Being heroes, you find yourself on the Quagflow Road heading north, looking for a chance to put an end to any aberrations you come across. The mid-afternoon sun shines brightly on this glorious spring day; any vestiges of winter have long since disappeared.

This is a good time for character introductions. Once they are complete, continue:

Coming into view ahead is a group of people. In the midst of them is a cart being pulled by a pair of horses and in the front leading the group is a middle-aged woman. She is armored in a chain shirt with a scimitar at her side and is wearing a green cloak. As you get closer you can see she is a half-elf and has a holy symbol around her neck. The holy symbol depicts a scimitar in front of an oak tree.

Next to her is a short, wiry half-orc garbed in dark leather armor. He has a pair of short swords at his side and a bracer of daggers across his chest. He is toying with a small brooch.

Once you are within hailing distance, the woman smiles, "May the blessings of the Woodshaper be on you this day. I am Verlia Riverstone. Who am I addressing?"

The PCs are traveling on the Quagflow Road in the northern Highvale where they come across Verlia Riverstone, high priestess of the Golden Harvest Temple. She and her companions are returning to the temple after destroying a pair of ettercaps who had been preying on farms in the area.

A DC 5 Knowledge (religion) check reveals the holy symbol is that of the god Phyton. A worshipper of Phyton automatically makes this skill check. A Devoted of the Green and White PC receives a +4 circumstance bonus. If the PCs make a DC 15 or higher skill check, they may reference the LG *Deities Document* entry.

A DC 10 Knowledge (local: Iuz's Border States MR) relates the following about Verlia Riverstone. A Devoted of the Green and White PC receives a +5 circumstance bonus.

- Verlia Riverstone is the high priestess of the Golden Harvest Temple which is dedicated to Phytan, the Sulioise god of nature, farming and natural beauty.
- The temple is located in the northern Highvale, a mile or so southeast of the junction of the Quagflow Road and Clatspur Trail.
- The temple's goals include keeping the Highvale safe from monsters and renegade druids, and teaching others how to efficiently farm the land.

After the PCs introduce themselves, she answers or relates the following.

- What takes you away from the temple today? *"My companions and I are returning from being out on the hunt. We tracked down and killed a pair of creatures known as ettercaps. They have been raiding farms in the area, slaughtering livestock."*
- What is in the cart? *"The bodies of the ettercaps. We are returning them to the Golden Harvest Temple and from there they are being sent to Highfolk town."*
- Can we see the bodies of the ettercaps? *"Yes, you may."* The PCs are shown the bodies of the ettercaps. A DC 15 Knowledge (dungeoneering) confirms they are ettercaps and they are aberrations. A DC 10 Heal check reveals they were slain by crossbow bolts earlier this day. Many of her companions carry crossbows.
- Why are you sending them to Highfolk town? *"They are being sent as proof that these and other strange creatures have been threatening the northern part of the Highvale. Hopefully this gets the powers that be off their collective duffs and gets them doing something about these creatures."*
- Why are the powers that be not dealing with the threat? *"So many people and so many groups are all wrapped up in the dispute over who is the next heir to House Rellen. They are not paying attention to anything else going on around them."*
- Why do you not go there yourself and deal with it? *"Then who would go out on the hunt after the creatures around here? Plus I am the high priestess of Phytan and there are these temple matters to always deal with."*
- Who do you support as the next heir to House Rellen? *"It is strictly an elven matter and they should not be dragging anyone else into it. The elves should get together and make a decision. The quicker they get it over with the better off everyone else will be. In any case, it matters not to me who will be the next heir to House Rellen, so I support neither."*
- What can we do to help? *"A few followers of the Woodshaper have tracked the aberrations and determined they are coming from the Clatspur Mountains. You can go there and find out why these creatures have suddenly appeared."*
- What do you think is going on? *"I do not know. All I know is that someone has to put a stop to this before it is too late."*

- What is in it for us? *"You get to make Highfolk a safer place for us all by stopping these monsters from making it a dangerous place. If you are looking for money, you are barking up the wrong tree, but if you do this, I will make sure you are rewarded with something; I just do not know what yet."*
- Who is your half-orc companion? *"His name is Alarex. He came to me with an interesting story, and he also has been helping me kill aberrations."*
- What is Alarex's story? *"He can tell you himself."* See below for what Alarex answers or relates to the PCs.

Alarex answers or relates the following to the PCs as appropriate:

- What is your story? *"Well, I was working for a group of prospectors doing some surveying up north near a place called Dargas Mor. That underground dwarven city you know. They hired me to help them explore old mines and underground passages. Never seen so many aberrations. There was this one that looked like a spider but it can spit its fangs at you and the fangs are attached to a tendril. If it hits you with the fang, it acts like a harpoon. After it harpoons you, it pulls you down and back to it and then it bites you. Oh yeah, its bite is poisonous too. And it can do this all in the blink of an eye. So glad to be out of there."*
- Why were you exploring old mines and underground passages? *"The prospectors claimed they were looking for mithril and adamantine the dwarves had missed or deemed impractical to mine. By itself that was not suspicious, but there was something wrong about it all."*
- Why do you think something was wrong? *"We kept going to areas that are not good places to mine. The prospectors also kept referring to a map they had and I heard them talking about how much had changed since the sundering. I am not sure what this sundering was, but it sounds bad."* A DC 15 Knowledge (local: Iuz's Border States MR) reveals that over 3000 years ago, an event of cataclysmic proportions known as the Sundering caused a massive collapse of most of the cavern tunnels, sealing the dwarves of Dargas Mor in their immediate area (Dwarves of Dargas Mor automatically make this skill check, while Devoted PCs receive a +5 circumstance bonus).
- Did you ever see this map? *"Well, after I became suspicious, I did some snooping around and got my hands on the map. I even made a copy of it just in case. It had the makings of a dwarven map, but usually dwarven maps are put on stone or metal. This one looked like someone made a copy of one."*
- Can I see the map? *"Sure you can."* Alarex produces the map and shows it to the PCs. If the PCs can read Dwarven, they can readily identify where the city of Dargas Mor is located. A DC 10 Knowledge (geography) check confirms it is a copy of a dwarven

style map. The map indicates that Dargas Mor had an extensive network of passages connecting it to a series of outposts. Likely the outposts were set up for a specific purpose, such as mining.

- What do you need to part with this map? *"I think it is worth 50, um, what you call them around here, solars?"* In regards to selling the map, treat Alarex's initial attitude as indifferent. If his attitude is changed to friendly (requiring a DC 15 Diplomacy check), he parts with it for 25 gp. If his attitude is changed to helpful (requiring a DC 30 Diplomacy check), he parts with it for free.
- You said there were a lot of aberrations. What kind of aberrations were there? *"Chokers, those spiders I told you about, a gibbering moulder and other critters with tentacles I don't recognize. All very creepy."*
- Do you know where the aberrations are coming from? *"There seemed to be a lot of aberrations emerging from several tunnels located up in the Clatspur Mountains. The tunnels are twenty some miles from the dwarven city of Dargas Mor."*
- Are there any other hazards we should be aware of? *"You should be wary of duergar patrols and raiding parties. I understand the gray dwarves, duergar, are at war with the dwarves of Dargas Mor. I also found some dead kobolds. Looks like they were slain with dwarven weapons."*
- How do we find our way there? *"I have a survey map of the area you can use. I can mark it up for you."*
- Will you guide us there? *"Nope. I'm headed home to Highfolk town with these creatures. Once I am done there, it is back to Greyhawk City. I heard there is an opportunity to delve into the Greyhawk Ruins. How can I pass that up?"* Alarex cannot be convinced to guide the PCs.
- Can I join the Darkrunner's Guild? *"Sure you can. Come visit me in Greyhawk City. After you join, maybe you can set up shop in Highfolk."* If a PC is interested in joining the Darkrunner's Guild, after the adventure is over they can spend an additional 2 TU to do so. Devoted of the Green and White PCs have permission to do this and it does not violate their Devoted status.
- What is the small brooch you are toying with? *"This is my Darkrunner's emblem. I belong to the Darkrunner's Guild out of Greyhawk city. We sell our services as underground guides and explorers."* If asked to show the color of light his emblem glows, Alarex complies. The brooch glows blue, not red.

If the PCs want to know more about Darkrunners, they can learn the following with a Knowledge (local: Core) skill check.

- **DC10:** The Darkrunner is an explorer, guide, and spy who focuses his skills on the realm below.

- **DC 15:** Most Darkrunners belong to a powerful guild. This guild has chapter houses underground, including many in otherwise hostile cities; these houses are excellent places to rest and hide out if you happen to be allied with them.
- **DC 20:** All Darkrunners are expected to wear a magic badge that proclaims their allegiance to the guild. Some Darkrunners are dangerous, but one can tell them apart from others by the red glow their emblems emit. Someone who refuses to display his emblem even though he claims to be a Darkrunner is probably lying about something.

Once the PCs are finished asking questions, Verlia and Alarex take their leave and continue their journey back to the Golden Harvest Temple. Assuming the PCs do as Verlia Riverstone requests, i.e., go to Clatspur Mountains and find out why the aberrations are suddenly appearing, you can continue with the rest of this encounter.

During one of the nights the PCs are camping, some of the PCs receive dreams or visions during their sleep or reverie. This additional information is given in the form of Player Handouts (2A-2D). The information below is in the Player Handouts and is given here for the judge's convenience (or if the handouts are lost).

- **Caress of Angels:** You dream of place under the mountain. It is a dark place where tentacles appear and disappear at the corner of your vision. You spiral down a path which parts in four ways. At the end of each path is a locked chest. The first chest is being buffeted by a strong wind; the second chest is covered in dirt; the third chest is on fire; and the fourth chest is underwater. Behind you a dark figure arises. You catch a glimpse of it before you awake from your sleep (or reverie) with the thought you must recover the contents of the locked chest before the dark figure does.
- **Kiss of Devils:** A nightmare plagues your sleep. You are in a dark and vile place caught in the grasp of a multitude of slimy seething tentacles. The tentacles drag you down a spiral path which parts in four ways. At the end of each path is a locked chest. The first chest is being buffeted by a strong wind; the second chest is covered in dirt; the third chest is on fire; and the fourth chest is underwater. Behind you a dark figure arises. The tentacles throw you to the dark figure that then proceeds to rend you limb from limb before it begins to devour you. As it consumes the last of your body, you awake from your sleep (or reverie) with the thought you must possess the contents of the locked chests.
- **Born of the Vesve:** You dream of a dark place under the mountain. Your dream is interrupted by an elderly female voice. "I am the Seer of All Time. Seek the source of evil in this dark place and you will find the keys." With that you rouse from your reverie.
- **Devoted of the Green and White:** You dream of a dark place under the mountain. Before you step into the dark place, a tiny mote of light appears before you. The tiny mote speaks to you in a quiet whisper. "I am

the Dreamer of the Sea and Stars. Seek the keys in this dark place and you shall find the source of the evil." With that the tiny mote of light fades and you awake from your sleep (or reverie).

After the PCs receive the additional information contained in the Player Handouts, continue with Encounter 2.

CREATURES

The creatures are described in the boxed text above.

Alarex: Male half-orc ranger 4/darkrunner 1; AL N.

Verlia Riverstone: Female half-elf cleric 6/radiant servant of Phyton 1; AL CG.

DEVELOPMENT

If a player decides his PC would not participate in this adventure, they receive the gold and experience points earned in the Introduction. The PC does not receive any other access.

2: BURNING PINES

You begin your ascent into the foothills of the Clatspur Mountains, heading towards your destination.

Ahead on the path, you see a three glowing balls of fire streak to a copse of pine trees. The balls of fire explode, setting the pine trees ablaze. As the pine trees burn, a humanoid figure wearing deep crimson robes steps forth from the flames and smoke.

Folding back the hood of his robe, you see a human man. His bald head is covered in a strange pattern, perhaps that of scales. With a false smile painted on his face, he plainly states, "Now that I have shown you my peaceful intentions, you will listen to me."

A PC may recognize him if they have played the adventure **HIG2-03 Fires of Vengeance**.

Ask the PCs if they are going to listen to the red robed figure. If the PCs refuse to listen to him, the red robed figure states:

"How unbelievably stupid of you." The red robed figure turns and walks back into the fire and smoke, disappearing from view.

If the PCs attack the red robed figure, they discover it is an illusion (project image) and the red robed figure reacts:

The red robed figure sneers, "Why look, I am just an illusion. You are indeed fools, each and everyone one of you." With that the red robed figure disappears from view.

If the PCs indicate they are listening to the red robed figure, continue:

"Excellent. It is an intelligent decision on your part. You may call me the Servant. You may wonder why I am talking to you instead of killing you. You see, I do not like that oaf Gixarytiss. You know who he is, don't you? The one that led the horde to victory over Verbeeg Hill and burned it? He is now the favorite of my dread mistress since his victory at Verbeeg Hill, supplanting me. I desire to be my dread mistress' favorite once again and you will help me do so."

The Servant answers or relates the following:

- What do you want us to do? *"Gixarytiss has taken command of my dread mistress' kobolds here in the Clatspurs. He is supposed to ally with the duergar and together they are to crush Dargas Mor before the dwarves side with the Children of the Dawn. This has not happened. Find out why."*
- Why should we help you? *"Well, for one...I will allow you to live. If I were to regain my dread mistress's favor, I would see to it that the prisoners that were taken at Verbeeg Hill would successfully escape."*
- What prisoners? *The bald figure rolls his eyes sarcastically. "Are you sure you are from around here? The ones my dread mistress took when she crushed the forces defending that poor excuse for a town and sunk your precious floating den of weakness."*
- You are lying to us. *"So suspicious. What kind of assurances do you desire?"* Since the Servant is communicating through a projected image, the PCs are unable to discern if the Servant is lying or not. The Servant agrees to any reasonable PC demand.
- It is a crime to burn trees in Highfolk! *The Servant's demeanor changes quickly and his voice rises abruptly. "Your silly town's laws do not apply out here in the wilds, especially not to me or my dread mistress! Do you think it an accident that my power destroyed mere trees instead of your rag-tag lot?" He quickly regains his composure.*
- Who are the Children of the Dawn? *"Why, the elves are the Children of the Dawn, well, at least the Oronodel are."*
- Who is the Dawn? *"She is my dread mistress's enemy though any open conflict is prohibited by the Balance of Scales."*
- What is the Balance of Scales? *It is an agreement made by my dread mistress and other dragons to not fight each other, at least not openly. Disciples of those dragons who do not belong to the Balance of Scales are not allowed to remain in these lands. In many cases they are simply slain."*
- Is the Dawn another dragon? *The man smiles enigmatically, "She is that and more."* He does not elaborate further.
- Tell us about the Dawn. *"I expect you shall find out in due course all about her. I shall say no more about her for she might hear us speak of her. I*

suggest you do the same." He does not elaborate further.

- Who is your dread mistress? *"Surely you must have figured it out by now. Red dragonspawn, red colored kobolds, my red robes, what does this all add up to?"* If the PCs answer red dragon: *The man claps his hands in mock applause, "An astute observation on your part. There's hope for you yet."*
- Tell us about your dread mistress. *"She is powerful indeed and should not be trifled with. Her mate was slain in Verbeeg Hill many years ago and that is why her horde attacked that town. That and her desire to bring the fight to the Children of the Dawn."*
- How come you are not doing this? *The red robed man chuckles quietly, "Maybe I have other schemes I must attend to. Maybe my sources of information have dried up. Maybe I cannot trust my other agents. Maybe I just won't answer this question."*
- How did you find us? How did you come to be here? *The man says slyly, "Magic."* He does not elaborate further.
- Where should we meet to tell you this information? *"Come back to this spot and wait for me. I shall find you here within, let us say, the next ten days."*

The Servant is actually flying 200 feet overhead. He is invisible and using a *project image* to interact with the PCs. If the PCs refuse to listen, attack his image, or discover where he is located he teleports away. He teleports to a location that is proof against scrying. He is protected by a ring of mind shielding and an amulet of proof against location and detection.

Once this encounter is finished, return to the Introduction and start with Part 2 to finish the encounter. This allows the PCs to ask the right questions to their duergar and kobold prisoners.

CREATURES

The Servant is described in the boxed text above.

The Servant: Male human Sorcerer 12/Dragon Disciple 2; hp 74; Appendix.

DEVELOPMENT

If the PCs tell anyone about this encounter with the Servant, they are questioned intensely about what this person said. Afterwards, the PCs are thanked and sent on their way.

3: BALANCE OF SCALES

THIS ENCOUNTER ONLY OCCURS IF THE BALANCE OF SCALES COMES INTO PLAY.

The elemental only attacks the offending dragon disciple PC and no other PC unless they get in the way. This encounter takes place 1 hour after the combat that occurred in the Introduction or if the PCs rested, 1 hour after they broke camp.

The side of the tunnel erupts in a shower of stone and dirt. A vaguely humanoid form emerges from the very rock itself. It points one of its forelimbs at <name of dragon disciple PC>. In a gravelly, rough voice it speaks in Common saying, "You do not belong to the scaled ones. The balance must be kept. You must be cleansed!"

The earth elemental has been gated onto the prime material plane and cannot be blocked by a protection from chaos, evil, good or law spell. When the earth elemental is slain, it disappears returning to the elemental plane of earth.

CREATURES

The earth elemental can only speak the above phrase in Common otherwise it only speaks and understands Terran.

APL 2 (EL 3)

Earth Elemental, Medium (1): hp 30; MM 97.

APL 4 (EL 5)

Earth Elemental, Large (1): hp 68; MM 97.

APL 6 (EL 7)

Earth Elemental, Huge (1): hp 152; MM 97.

APL 8 (EL 9)

Earth Elemental, Greater (1): hp 199; MM 97.

APL 10 (EL 11)

Earth Elemental, Elder (1): hp 228; MM 97.

DEVELOPMENT

If the elemental is captured and interrogated (treat as hostile), it knows the following.

- It was gated in to the prime material plane.
- It was ordered by an unseen voice to slay the offending dragon disciple PC.
- It wants to return to the elemental plane of earth, but can only do so if it kills the offending dragon disciple PC or if it is killed itself.

The PCs can take this opportunity to safely rest, regaining spells and hit points before continuing with the adventure. Do not prompt them to take this opportunity.

Please note there are no experience points awarded for this encounter.

4: RANDOM ENCOUNTER

While running this adventure, you the judge can place a random encounter for the PCs wherever and whenever you deem appropriate. These random encounters should be only used in Thamek Mor.

Select one of the choices below or feel free to create one of your own using the creatures and traps listed. Please note that some of the choices below combine creatures and traps. If you make one of your own, the encounter should not exceed EL 3.

All APLs (EL 3)

1. One choker attacks the party. It first activates a separation wall trap (it is part of an old dwarven trap; 12 inches of stone, hardness 8, 180 hp). If a PC fails his Reflex save to avoid being separated, the choker attacks him. Perch the choker up high so it can only be attacked with reach or missile weapons. If the separation wall trap fails, the choker resets and tries again hoping someone is dumb enough to get caught.
2. One grick attacks the PCs. Effective at low APLs when few PCs have magic weapons.
3. One rust monster attacks the PCs, seeking to make a meal out of someone's armor.
4. One runehound attacks the PCs. This runehound can make hit and run attacks against the PCs using its vile spew (100 ft. range).
5. A PC falls into a pit trap. After landing on the bottom, one bat swarm, one rat swarm or two spider swarms attack the unlucky PC.
6. Two knockback boobytraps can be used in conjunction with the deep pit trap. The two knockback boobytraps are set up to bull rush two PCs onto the deep pit trap, triggering it. If both bull rushes fail, there is still a chance for the PCs to stumble onto the deep pit trap. Alternately, you can make the deep pit trap an uncovered hole, so the PCs approach unaware of the knockback boobytraps.
7. The PCs walk into a field of sticker boobytraps. Once the PCs find or are attacked by 6 of the traps, you can continue. Alternately you can spread these out all over.
8. A tripline boobytrap is used in conjunction with a sticker boobytrap. If the tripline boobytrap is successful in tripping a PC, the PC lands on a sticker trap. Since the PC fell, he is treated as prone (-4 armor class modifier) so the sticker trap has a better chance of successfully attacking him. You can put these together in one area or spread them out all over.
9. The PCs encounter a deeper pit trap.
10. A bat swarm attacks the PCs. Especially good for the PCs who are flying. When the PCs lands, one of them steps on a pit trap.
11. One locust swarm attacks the PCs. Have them descend on the PCs from above. This is good anytime.
12. Three spider swarms attack the PCs. Especially good for PCs who are climbing.

- **Bat Swarm (1):** hp 13; MM 237. The bat swarm is actually composed of aberrations similar to bats. Change the type from animal to aberration, add aberration traits and keep the rest of the stat block the same.
- **Choker (1):** hp 16; MM 34.
- **Grick (1):** hp 9; MM 139.
- **Locust Swarm (1):** hp 21; MM 239. The locust swarm is actually composed of aberrations similar to locusts. Change the type from vermin to aberration, change the vermin traits to aberration traits and keep the rest of the stat block the same.
- **Rat Swarm (1):** hp 13; MM 239
- **Rust Monster (1):** hp 27; MM 216.
- **Runehound (1):** hp 37; Appendix.
- **Spider Swarm (1):** hp 9; MM 239-240. The spider swarm is actually composed of aberrations similar to spiders. Change the type from vermin to aberrations, change the vermin traits to aberration traits and keep the rest of the stat block the same.

TRAP

If a Search check for a trap is DC 20 or less, anyone can search for them. All the traps below fall into this category.

- **Deep Pit Trap:** CR 2; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; DC 20 Reflex avoids; 40 ft. deep (4d6, fall); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20. Market Price: 1,000 gp.
- **Deeper Pit Trap:** CR 3; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; DC 20 Reflex avoids; 60 ft. deep (6d6, fall); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20. Market Price: 1,000 gp.
- **Knockback Boobytrap:** CR ½; mechanical device; touch trigger; no reset; heavy swinging weight makes a bull rush attempt as a Medium creature with 14 Strength; Search DC 15; Disable Device DC 15.
- **Pit Trap:** CR 1; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; DC 20 Reflex avoids; 20 ft. deep (2d6, fall); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20. Market Price: 1,000 gp.
- **Separation Wall Trap:** CR 1*; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; sliding wall (used to separate groups or to make traps more deadly; DC 20 Reflex save allows adjacent creature to jump to the opposite side of the wall before it seals); Search DC 20*; Disable Device DC 20*. Market Price: 1,000 gp.
- **Sticker Boobytrap:** CR ½; mechanical device; touch trigger; no reset; sharp spike (Atk +6 melee, 1d6); Search DC 15; Disable Device DC 15.
- **Tripline Boobytrap:** CR ½; mechanical device; touch trigger; no reset; trip cord makes a trip attempt as a Medium creature with 14 Strength; Search DC 15; Disable Device DC 15.

CREATURES

With the exception of the rat swarm, all the creatures are aberrations or have had their type change to aberrations.

5: WE'RE NOT IN HIGHFOLK ANYMORE

After following a worked passage for what seems like a mile, you go around a sharp corner in the tunnel. Ahead you see a dim light emanating from beyond. Continuing ahead, you emerge into an immense cavern. The dim light is coming from a huge hemisphere high overhead and there is a wet, fetid smell in the chill air. The ground below you is covered with a moss-like carpet and strangely you can feel it wriggle beneath your feet. All around you are segmented stalks of varying sizes, some standing as tall as two men high and are as thick as a burly man's forearm. Amongst the stalks you see the glints of metal. As your light plays on the stalks, you can see them shiver.

This encounter takes place four hours after the combat that occurred in the Introduction or if the PCs rested, 4 hours after they broke camp.

This cavern was once used by the dwarves of Thamek Mor to grow crops and raise livestock. Now, it is an alien landscape overrun with aberrations. The cavern is approximately two miles in diameter and rises to a height of 2000 feet. It is bisected by a dwarf-made river. Traveling across it takes 4-6 hours.

If the PCs investigate the glints of metal, they discover a trail of dropped weapons and equipment. The weapons and equipment are easily identified as dwarven-made (not dwarvencrafted). The weapons and equipment are from the failed duergar expedition mentioned in the background. This is what the duergar left behind when they fled from the onslaught of aberrations. The trail leads further into the cavern and is meant to lure the PCs into following it. All the weapons, shields and equipment are worthless due to corrosion. If the PCs wish to pick them up anyways, let them do so. Add details as necessary.

The huge hemisphere in the ceiling of the cavern is the source of the light. Treat the dim light as shadowy illumination provided by a candle, i.e. 5 feet. See PH 165 for more information. The dwarves of Thamek Mor harnessed the power of the elemental plane of fire to produce light and heat for their farms and livestock pens. This hemisphere is the result of their magic. The intensity of the light and heat has been reduced for the aberrations that now live in this cavern. A *detect magic* spell reveals strong conjuration magic.

The moss-like carpet is composed of fine-sized aberrations similar to normal worms, except they live above the ground instead of under it.

The segmented stalks (like bamboo) are also aberrations. If a PC digs up one of the stalks, they discover the "roots" are a writhing mass of tentacles. The stalks are also sensitive to light and they shiver in response to anything greater than shadowy illumination provided by a candle.

The moss-like carpet and segmented stalks pose no threat to the PCs and can be easily killed. If a PC eats any of these aberrations, treat it as a poison. The PC's body rejects the meal and expels it violently in the usual

manner. The PC must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or be sickened the next 24 hours (see DMG 301). The sickened condition can be removed with a *neutralize poison* spell or a similar spell.

The judge is encouraged to add other aberrant life forms. None of these aberrations should pose a threat to the PCs and the aberrations should be easily killed. Here are a few suggestions.

- A bag of jelly that uses tentacles to squirm around.
- Long stringy worms that dangle from the stalks and have a tendency to attach themselves to the PCs and their equipment.
- A mass of small wriggly snake-like creatures that crawls over the PCs feet leaving them smelly and slimy.

The PCs can determine the following about the life forms in this cavern.

- A DC 10 Knowledge (nature) check reveals the life forms here are not natural.
- A DC 10 Knowledge (dungeoneering) check reveals the life forms here are all aberrations.
- A DC 10 Heal check reveals the life forms should not be eaten because they are poisonous and can make you sick.

Let the PCs explore the alien landscape for a little while, adding details as necessary. A few additional details are the following:

- There are niches in the walls and ceiling of the cavern. The PCs can reach them by climbing or flying. If the PCs investigate them, this is a good place for a random encounter. If climbing, the spider swarms attack and if flying, the bat swarms attack.
- There are huge bulbous structures made of a chitinous-like material. To investigate, the PCs must climb or fly. If the PCs investigate, this a good place for a random encounter. If climbing, the spider swarms attack and if flying, the bat swarms attack. The locust swarm is also a good choice.
- There are pools filled with a mucous-like substance. The PCs cannot see through this substance. If the PCs investigate the pool, this is a good place for random encounter.

When you are ready to continue, read the following.

A rustling sound followed by noisy squeaking catches your attention. As you search for the source of the sounds, you see a creature no bigger than your hand. It is covered in patchy fur, with beady eyes and its snout has long whiskers. It hops and scampers away in alarm as it finally notices you. You realize the creature is a rat.

The rat is one of the few normal creatures that can survive in this environment. Not only do the aberrations in the cavern prey on them, but the Lorekeepers eat them as their primary source of sustenance.

If the PCs follow the rat, it leads the PCs on a merry chase. See MM 278 for the stat block. The PCs can discover other rats in the area. Further searching uncovers the rats' nest. Nothing of value or interest can be found in the nest. If the PCs examine one of the rats, a DC 10 Heal check reveals it is sick from consuming the aberrations and living in this environment. Add other details as necessary.

If the PCs can communicate (treat them as indifferent) with the rats, they can learn the following:

- The light sources the PCs are using hurt their eyes.
- Some are hungry, thirsty and sick.
- There are things outside the nest that hunt them. Sometimes they come inside the nest. Some have four legs, some have two legs and some have many legs. The hunters come in all sizes and shapes.
- They can eat the things outside the nest, but sometimes it makes them sick.
- They do not have any treasure.
- They have lived here all their lives (and short, brutal ones at that).

A DC 10 Survival or Knowledge (nature) check reveals the rats can be safely eaten as long as the rats themselves are not sick.

As you move through the stalks following the trail of dropped weapons and equipment, you step into a small clearing that is littered with corroding armor, weapons, shields, and other equipment. Scattered amongst them are skeletal remains, likely the previous owners.

The PCs can discover the following here:

- A DC 10 Heal check identifies the skeletal remains as coming from duergar.
- A DC 15 Heal check determines they died about a year ago.
- A DC 15 Heal check determines the cause of death for many of the dwarves came from a bite, likely from a large-sized creature, and a few of them were killed by acid. There is no way to determine what kind of creature did this.
- All the armor, weapons, shields and equipment are ruined from corrosion.
- A DC 10 Craft (weaponsmithing) identifies the weapons as dwarven-made (not dwarvencraft). A DC 15 or higher identifies them as duergar made.
- A DC 10 Craft (armorsmithing) identifies the armor and shields as dwarven made, but are not dwarvencraft. A DC 15 or higher identifies them as duergar made.

Once the players are ready to continue, have them place their PCs into a marching formation and continue with Encounter 5.

DEVELOPMENT

If the PCs decide to camp in the cavern and rest overnight, the PCs must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or be *sickened* the next 24 hours (see DMG 301). The *sickened* condition can be removed with a *neutralize poison* spell or a similar spell.

If the PCs try to destroy the huge hemisphere providing light and heat to the cavern, they do so. This plunges the entire cavern into darkness. This also happens if an *anti-magic field* is used to nullify the magic of the huge hemisphere. If destroyed, within a day, the huge hemisphere reforms and again provides light and heat to the cavern at the levels indicated above. Unless the PCs use a *wish* or *miracle* to destroy the huge hemisphere, the hemisphere reforms within a day. The destruction of the huge hemisphere is outside the scope of this adventure. On a similar note, it also cannot be taken from the cavern.

If the PCs decide to scout the cavern by having one or more of them fly over it or use a spell (e.g. *prying eyes*) they can discover the following.

- The entire cavern is filled with the moss-like carpet and the segmented stalks. Other aberration life forms also roam the landscape.
- The irrigation canals that lead to the river of worms.
- The river of worms (see Encounter 4 for more details) cuts through the middle of the cavern. The river cuts through the cavern walls. The river terminates at a huge hemisphere embedded in the wall. It also radiates strong conjuration magic. This is a planar tap to the plane of water. Only water passes through the planar tap. It is similar to the huge hemisphere in the cavern (see above).
- On one of the walls of the cavern there is another huge hemisphere. This is the planar tap to the elemental plane of air. It is similar to the huge hemisphere in the cavern (see above).
- In the center of the cavern buried 300 feet under the surface is another huge hemisphere. This is the planar tap to the elemental plane of earth. It is similar to the huge hemisphere in the cavern (see above).
- The rune hounds are on the far side of the river. If the PCs scout the other side of the river and if a Spot check (APL 2-6 it is DC 15 and at APL 8-10 it is DC 11 due to the rune hounds' large size; modify the skill check by distance and conditions) is made, the rune hounds (see Encounter 4) can be spotted slinking through the segmented stalks near the river of worms.

6: RELEASE THE RUNEHOUNDS

You travel through the cavern's alien landscape, coming across pieces of gear, weapons and decomposed bodies. Around you things scuttle, crawl, squirm and wriggle. None of the things seem interested in you and anything that came too close was easily killed.

You move past a curtain made of long stringy red worms that are dangling from the segmented stalks and you see before you a stone causeway running parallel to a foamy white river. However, you can see the foam is not from churning water and is instead from something that is churning in the water. You realize the river is writhing with tiny white worms.

On the other side of the river, you spot several armor clad bodies, likely duergar.

The stone causeway runs parallel to the river and does not go across the river of worms. The PCs must cross the river of worms which is 30 feet wide and just as deep. Refer to **DM Map – Runehound Battle** for the layout.

The river was used by the dwarves of Thamek Mor to bring water to their farms and livestock pens. Now it is filled with fetid, stale water and fine-sized worms that are aberrations (DC 10 Knowledge (dungeoneering) identifies them as such). Needless to say the water is not fit to drink (a DC 10 Knowledge (nature) or Survival check) and the worms are not fit to eat (a DC 10 Knowledge (dungeoneering) or Survival check).

If any PC drinks the water, they must make a DC 16 Fortitude save or contract blinding sickness (DMG 292, incubation 1d3 days, 1d4 Str damage, may become permanently blind). If any PC fails their Swim check by 5 or more, they also must make the Fortitude save.

If any PC eats the worms, they must make a DC 14 Fortitude save or contract the slimy doom disease (DMG 292, incubation 1 day, 1d4 Con damage and failing a second save causes 1 Con drained).

If the PCs search along the riverbank, they discover irrigation canals. The gates to these canals are made of stone and metal. The gate is lifted by a lever that turns a gear. The gates are all closed. If the PCs raise all of the gates, the water and worms flow into the irrigation canals. This does not have any immediate effect on the river, but over the course of 24 hours the level of the river drops until it is only 5 feet deep (a rate of approximately 1 foot per hour). The irrigation canals are 25 feet deep and 5 feet across.

The PCs do not find a place where they can ford the river. The PCs do find a destroyed bridge that looks like something melted it. If a DC 15 Knowledge (architecture and engineering) or DC 10 Craft (alchemy) check is made, it is revealed the bridge was destroyed by powerful acid.

The PCs can swim across the river of worms. Normal swim checks apply. The PCs can likely come up with a different way to cross the river of worms, such as jumping or using the fly spell. Once at least half the PCs are across the river, the PCs are attacked by the runeounds (see below). The runeounds attack the PCs who have yet to cross the river.

The worms in the river do not attack the PCs and are by themselves relatively harmless. The worms do have a disturbing tendency to attach themselves to exposed flesh and find a way to get to the most inconvenient places. The danger the worms pose is they can transmit a disease to

the PC. The disease is transmitted via physical contact. The PC must make a DC 14 Fortitude save or contract the slimy doom disease (DMG 292, incubation 1 day, 1d4 Con damage and failing a second save causes 1 Con drained). Each time any PC swims in the river must make this Fortitude save.

Once the PCs defeat the runeounds and get to the other side of the river, they can examine the armor clad bodies. A DC 10 Heal check identifies them as duergar. The bodies are so badly decomposed it is impossible to determine the cause of death. The dead duergars' arms and armor are worthless due to their corrosion.

CREATURES

A runehound looks like a pale, slimy-skinned, hairless, headless wolf with a long, serpentine neck extending from the middle of its back and ending in a grotesquely oversized maw filled with teeth and dripping with bile.

Knowledge (dungeoneering) reveals the following.

- **DC 15:** Identifies the creature as an aberration known as a runehound. The runehound communicates in a limited language using clicks and squeals. They also understand Undercommon, but do not speak it. They are known to be cunning and tenacious.
- **DC 20:** Runeounds produce two noxious substances that they can spit with tremendous force. One is a stream of acid and the other is a glob of glutinous goo that can entangle you. The runehound cannot always muster enough of these noxious substances to spew them continuously.
- **DC 25:** Despite its size, the powerful serpentine neck gives it a greater reach than normal. It shrugs off damage from weapons unless they are made of silver and its wounds heal quickly.
- **DC 30:** Runeounds are blind, but perceive their surroundings with their supernatural senses out to a distance of 500 feet. With these same senses, the runehound easily thwarts and avoid melee attacks from all sides and can easily track thinking beings. The runehound has a much more difficult time tracking mindless creatures or creatures shielded against mental effects.

APL 2 (EL 4*)

Runehound (1): hp 37; *Appendix*.

APL 4 (EL 6*)

Runehound (2): hp 37; *Appendix*.

APL 6 (EL 8*)

Runehound (4): hp 37; *Appendix*.

APL 8 (EL 10*)

Advanced Runehound (1): hp 149; *Appendix*.

APL 10 (EL 12*)

Advanced Runehound (2): hp 149 each; *Appendix*.

* - the EL of this combat has been raised by one due to the terrain and environment

Tactics

The runeounds use the segmented stalks as concealment to approach. They hide and move silently through the stalks until they are 100 feet away from the PCs. If the PCs can see to this distance, they can make a DC 25 Spot check to detect the runeounds. The PCs can also make a DC 23 Listen check to hear the runeounds approach. If the PCs fail on both checks, the runeounds receive a surprise round.

The runeounds start off using their vile spew to spit a glob of glutinous goo to *web* (see PH 301 and DMG 300) a single PC. One at a time, roll the ranged attacks and have the PC make their Reflex saves. Once a PC is webbed (entangled, -4 Dexterity, -2 Reflex), the remaining runeounds attack the webbed PC using their vile spew to spit a stream of acid at them. If a PC is entangled, the runeounds continue to attack him, sensing that he is easier prey.

The runeounds do not close at first because they are trying to judge the strength of the ranged weapon attacks the PCs possess. If the PCs are strong with ranged weapons, the runeounds close using their extended reach and combat reflexes to create and take as many attacks of opportunity as they can. If the PCs are weak with ranged weapons, the runeounds maintain their distance (90-100 feet away), using their vile spew when they can and taking full cover to heal any injuries when they cannot. The runeounds also swim across the river of worms to the other bank forcing the PCs in choosing to cross the river to close with them or to engage in ranged combat. This is an especially good tactic if the PCs are weak in ranged combat.

If a runeound is badly injured (9 hp or less), it slinks off into full cover (further into the stalks or even into the river of worms) and if undisturbed, it fast heals (see DMG 293-294) until it fully recovers. It returns to combat at this point.

Remember the runeounds have 500 feet blindsight (see DMG 290-291) and cannot be flanked.

Once the PCs get across the river, they can search the bodies of the dead dwarves. The PCs discover the same things as they did in Encounter 5 (see above).

DEVELOPMENT

If the PCs are forced to retreat, the runeounds pursue them. If the PCs leave the cavern, the runeounds discontinue their pursuit. Allow the PCs to rest and regroup.

If the PCs return to this location and this adventure is being run at a convention or time is an issue, it is suggested that they be allowed to cross the river of worms unmolested by the runeounds. If this is a homeplay or time is not an issue, the judge can choose to have the PCs encounter the runeounds again. If the PCs do not encounter the runeounds again, they do not earn XP for this encounter.

If the PCs can communicate with a captured runeound (treat as hostile) the PCs can learn the following.

- They have lived here in this cavern all their life.
- Creatures like the masters came through the cavern. They killed and ate them.
- Their masters are dwarves who live further inside the lair.
- Their masters call themselves the Lorekeepers.
- They guard the cavern for the Lorekeepers and hunt rats to provide food for them.
- They do not have any treasure.
- If the PCs decide to rest in the cavern, before the PCs set out again, they must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or be sickened the next 24 hours (see DMG 301). The sickened condition can be removed with a *neutralize poison* spell or a similar spell.

7: SPQTM

The trail of weapons, equipment and the occasional dead duergar ends before an open stone gate. Beyond the stone gate you discern a passageway leading off into the darkness.

The dwarves of Thamek Mor connected the parts of their outpost together with stone passageways that are the standard 10 feet high and 10 feet wide and are buttressed every 10 feet. The main hub of these connecting stone passageways is the Gallery, a place where the dwarves of Thamek Mor and others may behold their glory and power.

When Thamek Mor was lost, many of these stone passageways were deliberately collapsed to prevent the aberrations from reaching other parts of the complex. Only two remain open, one going to the cavern and the other going to the Great Hall of Thamek Mor.

The stone passageway ends and opens into a large cavern. In the center of the cavern stands the statue of a scholarly dwarf studying an open book. There are a number of passages leading off from this junction, some of which are blocked by stone and rubble. On the cavern walls there are depictions carved into them showing dwarves summoning elementals and commanding them to perform tasks for them.

Four carvings are of particular note. They depict dwarves commanding powerful elementals to create huge spheres. These huge spheres are then embedded into a wall, ceiling or floor. These hemispheres are shown tapping into the elemental planes themselves providing heat, light, water and air to a vast cavern.

Strangely there is a cleared place on the wall as if another great task was meant to be portrayed, but work to depict it was never started.

A DC 10 Knowledge (religion) check reveals the statue of the scholarly dwarf studying an open book is Dugmaren Brightmantle, dwarven god of scholarship, discovery and invention. Dwarves receive a +5 circumstance bonus to the check.

Let the PCs explore the gallery. Other things the PCs discover include the following:

- If the PCs search the statue of Dugmaren Brightmantle, the open pages of the book contain writing extolling the tenets of the god (written in Dwarven runes).
- A DC 15 Search or a DC 20 Spot reveals depictions of spirals amongst the writings in the book.
- A DC 15 Craft (stonemasonry) or similar skill indicates the spirals were added after the statue was sculpted.
- If the spirals are noticed, a DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check indicates these are the symbols of Tharizdun, god of entropy and decay. Tharizdun is also associated with aberrations.
- A DC 20 Track check reveals the cavern has seen traffic in the past day from a medium-sized four-legged creature (a runehound) that was accompanied by two medium-sized two-legged creatures (a pair of Lorekeeper dwarves). They all came from one corridor and headed down the corridor where the alien landscape is located (hunting party).

If the PCs make a DC 15 or higher skill check, they may reference the LG *Deities Document* entry.

Once the PCs have explored the gallery for some time or when you deem appropriate, proceed to Encounter 8.

8: GHOST TALK

As you are investigating the large cavern, you see a luminous, semi-transparent humanoid figure emerging from one of the open passageways exiting this place. The humanoid figure is short and stocky, armored in full plate, wielding a shield and an axe.

The humanoid figure resolutely plants his armor shod feet in the middle of the stone passageway and bellows a challenge, "Who be you and what be you doing here?"

If there any PCs who are identified as dwarves, the challenge is issued in the Dwarven language otherwise Azent uses Common.

This is Azent Sharpaxe. In life he was a dwarven defender from Dargas Mor and now he is a ghost.

Unless one of the PCs is in the form of an aberration (or anything that looks like one), treat Azent's initial attitude as unfriendly as he is suspicious and thinks the aberrations are playing a trick on him. In the case one of the PCs looks like an aberration, treat Azent's initial attitude as hostile. If Azent's attitude is change to friendly or better through diplomacy, he is willing to talk to the PCs.

The following are circumstance modifiers that apply to the diplomacy check made by the primary speaker. The

PCs who aid apply the modifiers below to their check also.

- +5 if the PC can be identified as a dwarf of Dargas Mor
- +5 if the PC can be identified as a member of the Sharpaxe clan (this can be accomplished by the PC reciting his lineage)
- +2 if the PC can be identified as a dwarf, but is not a dwarf of Dargas Mor
- -2 if the PC can be identified as not being a dwarf
- -5 if the PC can be identified as an arcane spellcaster

Once Azent's attitude has been changed to friendly or better, he reveals the following.

- What is your name? ***"I am Azent Sharpaxe of Dargas Mor."*** If any PC is a Dwarf of Dargas Mor and is a Sharpaxe, they are distantly related to him.
- Are you a ghost? If you are, how did you die? ***"Yeah, I'm a ghost. Least I think I am. I remember holdin' back the aberrations in the passageway leadin' directly to Dargas Mor. I'm not sure what happened, but the last I remember was callin' on the gods to grant me the strength to hold this passageway until all the dwarves escaped from Thamek Mor. Methinks the gods answered me prayers. I guess ye just best be careful what you ask for. Then next thing I remember after that is being like this."***
- Do you know where your remains are located? Can we lay you to rest? ***"I don't ken where me body is located. It might be under some rubble down the passageway. I do ken I can't leave this passageway. As for laying me to rest, I guess all the dwarves have to escape Thamek Mor first."***
- Thamek Mor? Is that the name of this place? ***"This place is called Thamek Mor. It was the clanhold of the Lorekeepers and an outpost of Dargas Mor."***
- What happened to this place? ***"Thamek Mor was overrun by aberrations and I was ordered here to prevent the aberrations from doing the same to Dargas Mor."***
- Who were the Lorekeepers? ***"The Lorekeepers were a clan of dwarves, skilled in the arcane arts." Azent's face scrunches with obvious distaste.***
- What kind of arcane arts? ***"The Lorekeepers were known for summoning elementals and their knowledge of planar magics. They wrote much of their knowledge down on stone and metal tablets. What kind of dwarf writes? If it is worth knowing you should keep it in yer head."*** The dwarves of Dargas Mor have an oral tradition. Dwarves of Dargas Mor can confirm this while others can make a DC 15 Knowledge (geography). Devoted PCs receive a +5 circumstance bonus.
- What happened to the Lorekeepers? ***"There are Lorekeepers still alive though they're no longer real dwarves. In place of arms, some have tentacles while others have 'em sproutin' from their body. Over the time, this place musta changed'em. I***

don't ken how this happened, but I do ken they live down that passageway." Azent indicates one of the passageways leading out of this chamber.

- Do you know anything about keys? How about locked chests? *"Don't ken nuthin' about that."*

Assuming the PCs take the passageway to where the Lorekeepers reside, continue with Encounter 9.

CREATURES

Azent is male dwarf ghost armored in full plate, wielding a heavy shield and a waraxe.

Azent Sharpaxe: male dwarf ghost fighter 7/dwarven defender 1.

Treasure: To uncover Azent's body takes 24 hours. The PCs can gain the following treasure here by uncovering Azent's body:

All APLs: Magic 428 gp +1 full plate (137 gp each), +1 heavy steel shield (97 gp each), +1 dwarven waraxe (194 gp each); Total 428 gp.

DEVELOPMENT

If the PCs attack Azent, he fights the PCs to the best of his ability. Use the stats for an NPC 8th level fighter found on DMG117 along with the dwarven defender prestige class found on DMG186 and the ghost entry on MM116.

If the PCs explore the passageway where Azent appeared, they discover it is blocked with stone and rubble. If the PCs dig under the stone and rubble for 24 hours, they discover Azent's physical remains.

Azent silently observes the process of uncovering his body and once uncovered, asks the PCs to take his body back to Dargas Mor for a proper burial. He gives the possessions on his corpse to the PCs.

9: LOREKEEPERS

As you travel along the stone passageway, you notice signs of heavy use. Debris, garbage and refuse litter the stone floor. There are bas-reliefs on either side of you depicting a dwarf garbed as a wizard and holding a staff.

Refer to **DM Map – Lorekeeper Battle** for the layout.

Once the PCs start down the passageway, a permanent *alarm* spell is triggered, warning the Lorekeeper dwarves. If the Lorekeepers are warned, they cast preparatory spells (see below) and wait for the PCs to advance further down the hallway. If the PCs also cast preparatory spells, do the same for the Lorekeepers on a round for round basis.

If a PC makes a DC 40 Listen check, he has heard the preparatory spellcasting. In this case, adjust the encounter as required.

If the PCs search the passageway they can uncover the following with a DC 15 Track check:

- The stone passageway is heavily used by medium humanoids (dwarves).
- There are also signs of large four-legged creatures (runehounds).
- Both sets of tracks intermix, meaning the two travel together.

Once the PCs have moved 100 feet down the passageway, the Lorekeepers emerge from their hidden places and flank to attack the PCs. Read the boxed text below for the appropriate APL.

Four of the bas-reliefs cover secret doors (DC 25 Search). The secret doors are made of stone and are 4 inches thick (hardness 8, hp 60). The door is cleverly constructed to allow a person to open the door as a free action (and close as a move action), thus allowing the person to retain his standard action on the surprise round of combat. The secret door can be locked (DC 25 Open Locks) from the inside. The secret door also contains a peephole (DC 25 Search or DC 30 Spot to find) so the person behind the door can view the passageway.

Bas-relief secret door: 4 in. thick; hardness 8; hp 60; AC 5; Break DC 28.

APL 2:

The walls behind three of the bas-reliefs pivot open. Standing in the openings are three short, stocky humanoids. Two are clad in full plate armor wielding a shield and axe. You notice them both bending their arms in an unnatural way. The only way for an arm to bend like that is if it was broken. Since they are wielding shield and axe their arms cannot possibly be broken.

The third is not clad in armor nor is it wielding a shield or axe. You can see its arms are long and apparently can bend in more than one place.

APL 4:

The walls behind four of the bas-reliefs pivot open. Standing in the openings are four short, stocky humanoids. Three are clad in full plate armor wielding a shield and axe. You notice the three bending their arms in an unnatural way. The only way for an arm to bend like that is if it was broken. Since they are wielding shield and axe their arms cannot possibly be broken.

The fourth is not clad in armor nor is it wielding a shield or axe. In place of arms you see it has long, thick knotted tentacles ending with the remnants of fingers.

APL 6:

The walls behind four of the bas-reliefs pivot open. Standing in the openings are four short, stocky humanoids. Three are clad in full plate armor wielding a shield and axe. You notice the three bending their arms in an unnatural way. The only way for an arm to bend like that is if it was broken.

Since they are wielding shield and axe their arms cannot possibly be broken.

The fourth is not clad in armor nor is it wielding a shield or axe. In place of arms you see it has long, obscenely thick knotted tentacles ending with the remnants of fingers. A second set of tentacles uncoils from around its body and at the end of these are dirty brown claws.

APL 8–10:

The walls behind four of the bas-reliefs pivot open. Standing in the openings are four short, stocky humanoids. Three are clad in full plate armor wielding a shield and axe. You notice their armor has been modified to accommodate their incredibly long arms.

The fourth is not clad in armor nor is it wielding a shield or axe. In place of arms you see it has long, obscenely thick knotted tentacles ending with the remnants of fingers. A second set of tentacles uncoils from around its body and at the end of these are dirty brown claws.

If the Lorekeepers are not detected prior to this, they receive a surprise round action. In the surprise round, they open the door as a free action and attack the PCs.

CREATURES

The Lorekeeper dwarves have aberrant blood. This first manifests itself as flexible limbs that eventually lengthen becoming tentacles. An even further manifestation is the addition of another pair of tentacles sprouting from their body. When describing the combat to the players, play this up.

APL 2 (EL 4)

Lorekeeper Guardian (2): hp 19; Appendix.

Lorekeeper Arcanist: hp 21; Appendix.

APL 4 (EL 6)

Lorekeeper Guardian (3): hp 20; Appendix.

Lorekeeper Arcanist: hp 35; Appendix.

APL 6 (EL 8)

Lorekeeper Guardian (3): hp 20; Appendix.

Lorekeeper Arcanist: hp 46; Appendix.

APL 8 (EL 10)

Lorekeeper Guardian (3): hp 36; Appendix.

Lorekeeper Arcanist: hp 57; Appendix.

APL 10 (EL 12)

Lorekeeper Guardian (3): hp 51; Appendix.

Lorekeeper Arcanist: hp 68; Appendix.

Tactics

The Lorekeeper Guardians protect the Lorekeeper Arcanist so he can initiate a grapple. Once the other PCs

move up to attack the Arcanist, the Guardians grapple them in order to prevent them from attacking the Arcanist.

If a grappled PC is weak (your discretion), the Lorekeeper dwarves pull them into their hiding places in the walls. This requires a successful grapple check and they move at half speed. Once inside their hiding place, the Lorekeeper dwarves release the PC as a free action; close the secret door locking it in the process as a move action (no AO's); and try to grapple the PC again as a standard action.

Once the door is closed, the PCs must search for a means to open the secret door (DC 25 Search) and unlock it (DC 25 Open Locks). There are no traps on the secret doors.

APL 2: Once the Lorekeepers are warned about the intruding PCs, the Arcanist casts *mage armor* on himself. Before the PCs make it to the ambush point, the Arcanist casts *shield*, *fist of stone*, and *babau slime*. He saves *enlarge person* until needed.

APL 4: Once the Lorekeepers are warned about the intruding PCs, the Arcanist casts *mage armor* on himself. Before the PCs make it to the ambush point, the Arcanist casts *bull's strength*, *shield*, and *fist of stone*. He saves *enlarge person* until needed.

On his first round he casts *earth lock* to separate the PCs. On the second round he casts *balor nimbus*. On the third round he casts *fearsome grapple* as an immediate action and moves to grapple a PC.

Since the Arcanist has a 10 ft. reach, if he performs an attack of opportunity on a PC, he casts *fearsome grapple* as an immediate action beforehand.

APL 6: Once the Lorekeepers are warned about the intruding PCs, the Arcanist casts *mage armor* and *hamatula barbs* on himself. Before the PCs make it to the ambush point the Arcanist casts *arms of plenty*, *fuse arms* (3 pairs into 1; adds +8 Str) and *undulant innards*. He saves *enlarge person* until he steps out into the passageway. The Guardians also drink their potions at this time.

On his first round he casts *earth lock* to separate the PCs. On the second round he casts *balor nimbus*. On the third round he casts *fearsome grapple* as an immediate action and moves to grapple a PC.

Since the Arcanist has a 10 ft. reach, if he performs an attack of opportunity on a PC, he casts *fearsome grapple* as an immediate action beforehand.

APL 8: Once the Lorekeepers are warned about the intruding PCs, the Arcanist casts *mage armor* and *stoneskin* on himself. Before the PCs make it to the ambush point the Arcanist casts *arms of plenty*, *haste* and *undulant innards*.

On his first round he casts *earth lock* to separate the PCs. On the second round he casts *flame whips*. On the third round he attacks with the *flame whips*. He can also grapple with the *haste* action. If the PCs seem resistant to fire, he casts *babau slime* and grapples a PC, casting *fearsome grapple* as an immediate action beforehand.

Since the Arcanist has a 10 ft. reach, if he performs an attack of opportunity on a PC, he casts *fearsome grapple* as an immediate action beforehand.

APL 10: Once the Lorekeepers are warned about the intruding PCs, the Arcanist casts *mage armor* and *stoneskin* on himself. Before the PCs make it to the ambush point the Arcanist casts *gutsnake*, *haste* and *undulant innards*.

On his first round he casts *earth lock* to separate the PCs and the *gutsnake* attacks. On the second round he casts *flame whips* and the *gutsnake* attacks. On the third round he attacks with the *flame whips* and the *gutsnake* attacks. He can also grapple with the *haste* action. If the PCs seem resistant to fire, he casts *babau slime* and grapples a PC, casting *fearsome grapple* as an immediate action beforehand.

Since the Arcanist has a 10 ft. reach, if he performs an attack of opportunity on a PC, he casts *fearsome grapple* as an immediate action beforehand.

Treasure: The PCs find the **Dark Text of Tharizdun** on the Lorekeeper Arcanist's body. The PCs also gain the **Spell Lore**, granting them open access to the alternate class feature Focused Specialist. The PCs also find the **Lorekeepers Spellbooks (I-V)**. The spellbooks found depend on the APL. See the AR for more information. The PCs also gain the following treasure here:

APL 2: Loot 687 gp; Magic 118 gp: *cloak of resistance +1* (83 gp each), *scroll of mage armor* (2 gp each), *scroll of shield* (2 gp each), *wand of acid splash* (31 gp each); Total 805 gp.

APL 4: Loot 687 gp; Magic 350 gp: *cloak of resistance +1* (83 gp each), *scroll of bear's endurance* (12 gp each), *scroll of mage armor* (2 gp each), *scroll of resist energy* (12 gp each), *scroll of shield* (2 gp each), *tunic of steady spellcasting* (208 gp each), *wand of acid splash* (31 gp each); Total 1037 gp.

APL 6: Loot 687 gp; Magic 770 gp: *cloak of resistance +1* (83 gp each), *headband of intellect +2* (333 gp each), *potion of babau slime* (x3) (12 gp each), *potion of bull's strength* (x3) (75 gp each), *scroll of bear's endurance* (12 gp each), *scroll of mage armor* (2 gp each), *scroll of resist energy* (12 gp each), *scroll of shield* (2 gp each), *tunic of steady spellcasting* (208 gp each), *wand of acid splash* (31 gp each); Total 1457 gp.

APL 8: Loot 687 gp; Magic 1345 gp: *cloak of elemental protection* (x3) (249 gp each), *cloak of resistance +1* (83 gp each), *headband of intellect +2* (333 gp each), *potion of babau slime* (x3) (12 gp each), *potion of bear's strength* (x3) (75 gp each), *potion of bull's strength* (x3) (75 gp each), *scroll of bear's endurance* (12 gp each), *scroll of mage armor* (2 gp each), *scroll of resist energy* (12 gp each), *scroll of shield* (2 gp each), *tunic of steady spellcasting* (208 gp each), *vest of resistance +1* (x3) (249 gp each), *wand of acid splash* (31 gp each); Total 2032 gp.

APL 10: Loot 687 gp; Magic 3095 gp: *cloak of elemental protection* (x3) (249 gp each), *cloak of resistance +1* (83 gp each), *headband of intellect +4* (1333 gp each), *potion of babau slime* (x3) (12 gp each), *potion of bear's strength* (x3) (75 gp each), *potion of bull's strength* (x3) (75 gp each), *scroll of bear's endurance* (12 gp each), *scroll of mage armor* (2 gp each), *scroll of resist energy* (12 gp each), *scroll of shield* (2 gp each), *tunic of steady spellcasting* (208 gp each), *vest of resistance +2*

(x3) (999 gp each), *wand of acid splash* (31 gp each); Total 3782 gp.

DEVELOPMENT

If any Lorekeeper is captured and interrogated (treat as hostile), they know the following:

- Who are you? *"I shall not give you my name for it shall give you power over me, but I tell you I am a dwarf of Thamek Mor and a member of the Lorekeeper Clan."*
- Why did you attack us? *"You are invaders who must be captured or slain. Those captured will be given to the Great Masters who serve the Dark One."*
- Who are the Great Masters? *"The Great Masters are powerful creatures from someplace else that should not be. They are always and forever. To serve them is not only our duty, but also a great honor. They are the keepers of the Keys."* The latter refers to the Elemental Keys, but they do not know them by this name.
- What are the Keys? *"The Keys opened that which should not be opened and let the Great Masters come here."*
- Who is the Dark One? *"He who is darkness, trapped in darkness. He who will be free once again and will have his vengeance on those who imprisoned him. Your only choice is to serve him through the Great Masters."*
- Where are the Keys? *"The Keys are located in the Great Hall and are protected by the Great Masters. You cannot hope to face them and survive."*

CONCLUSION

If the PCs defeat the Lorekeepers in Encounter 9, you may read the following:

As you finish cleaning up after the battle, you hear the sound of metal on stone. In short order twenty dwarves appear in the corridor and halt before you.

One armored dwarf, bristling with weapons, steps forward and calls out, "In the name of Thane Urdred Ironstone IV, ruler of Dargas Mor, you are commanded to return with us to Dargas Mor immediately. Do you heed his command?"

The armored dwarf grips his waraxe as he awaits your response.

If the PCs are defeated by the Lorekeepers in Encounter 9, you may read the following:

As you recover from your fight, you hear the sound of metal on stone. In short order twenty dwarves appear in the corridor and halt before you.

One armored dwarf steps forward and calls out, "In the name of Thane Urdred Ironstone IV, ruler of Dargas Mor, you are commanded to leave this place

and return with us to Dargas Mor immediately. Do you heed his command?"

The armored dwarf grips his waraxe as he awaits your response.

The dwarves answer a few of the PCs questions before demanding the PCs answer.

- The dwarves are under Thane's orders to return the PCs to Dargas Mor and to bring them before the Thane to explain their presence.
- The dwarves have never been to Thamek Mor before.
- The dwarves do not know how the Thane knew the PCs were here.
- The PCs may keep their possessions, including the loot from the Lorekeepers bodies.

If the PCs decide to go with the dwarves back to Dargas Mor, the dwarves escort the PCs to an audience with Thane Urdred Ironstone IV, ruler of Dargas Mor. The PCs are given a chance to explain their presence in Thamek Mor. In this case treat the Thane's initial attitude as indifferent.

If the PCs decide to not go with the dwarves back to Dargas Mor, the PCs are captured and arrested by the dwarves unless they possess a spell (like *teleport*) or some special ability (hide in plain sight) that would allow them to escape capture. The PCs are forcibly returned to Dargas Mor, where they are imprisoned. Alter the boxed text below in this case.

They are taken before the ruler of Dargas Mor, Thane Urdred Ironstone IV. There the PCs have a chance to plead their case. In this case treat the Thane's initial attitude as unfriendly (see PH 72).

The twenty armored dwarves escort you back to Dargas Mor and lead you into a great hall. Sitting on his throne is a regally garbed dwarf with an iron crown on his brow. As you approach, a councilor at his side whispers into his ear. Nodding at the councilor's words he turns his attention to you and asks, "Why have you violated the edict prohibiting anyone from entering Thamek Mor? Are you after the elemental keys?"

The thane gives the PCs an opportunity to answer his questions and may even answer some of the PCs':

- What are the elemental keys? *"They are powerful magic items the Lorekeeper clan used to command elementals to do their bidding."*
- Who is the Lorekeeper clan? *"They were a clan of Dargas Mor dwarves who were skilled in the arcane arts. Their use of them led to their downfall."*
- What was their downfall? *"They opened a gate and through the gate came aberrations. These aberrations overwhelmed Thamek Mor and only through the bravery of the warriors of Dargas Mor were they stopped. Thamek Mor was sealed to*

prevent them from escaping. The seals are now broken."

- Who broke the seals? *"I believe it be the duergar."*
- Do you know The Servant? *"No, I do not know this person. Why do you ask?"*

Regardless, the PCs may use Diplomacy to improve the Thane's attitude. The following are circumstance modifiers that apply to the diplomacy check made by the primary speaker. The PCs who aid apply the modifiers below to their check also.

- -5 if the PC is an arcane magic user
- -5 if the PC lies and the lie is discovered (Sense Motive +15 backed up by a *discern lies* spell)
- -2 if the PC is an elf or half-elf or half-orc
- +2 if the PC is Devoted
- +2 if the PC is a dwarf, but not a dwarf of Dargas Mor
- +5 if the PC is a dwarf of Dargas Mor
- +5 for each influence point with the dwarves of Dargas Mor the PC uses
- +5 if the PC is a member of Clan Hammerstrike

After the Thane hears the PCs' pleas, he passes judgment upon them based on his final attitude towards them.

- Hostile: The Thane imprisons you for 6 TU and fines you 1000 gp. After serving your sentence and paying your fine, he releases you and returns your possessions.
- Unfriendly: The Thane imprisons you for 4 TU and fines you 750 gp. After serving your sentence and paying your fine, he releases you and returns your possessions.
- Indifferent: The Thane imprisons you for 2 TU and fines you 500 gp. After serving your sentence and paying your fine, he releases you and returns your possessions.
- Friendly: The Thane advises you to not trespass again and violate an edict prohibiting anyone from entering Thamek Mor. He releases you and returns your possessions.
- Helpful: The Thane apologizes for the misunderstanding. He releases you and returns your possessions.

If a PC is interested in joining the Darkrunner's Guild, after the adventure is over they can spend an additional 2 TU to do so. Devoted of the Green and White PCs have permission to do this and it does not violate their Devoted status. In this case, the player receives **Join Darkrunner Guild** on their AR.

The PCs are approached by an Abolisher from the Circle of the True at the behest of the Verlia Riverstone and the Temple of Phytan. Having heard of their fight against the aberrations they offer the PCs an opportunity to join their organization. If the PC accepts, they receive **Join Circle of the True** on their AR.

If the PCs return to the spot where they met the Servant and report to him their findings (the duergar and kobolds are fighting each other), he keeps his word. The

prisoners from the battle for Verbeeg Hill successfully escape. The PCs receive **The Servant's Favor**.

The End

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the experience award. Award the total value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

INTRODUCTION

Defeat the duergar.

APL 2	30 XP
APL 4	90 XP
APL 6	150 XP
APL 8	210 XP
APL 10	270 XP

4: RANDOM ENCOUNTER

Disable or survive the trap; defeat the monsters.

APL 2	90 XP
APL 4	90 XP
APL 6	90 XP
APL 8	90 XP
APL 10	90 XP

6: RELEASE THE RUNEHOUNDS

Defeat the runeounds.

APL 2	120 XP
APL 4	180 XP
APL 6	240 XP
APL 8	300 XP
APL 10	360 XP

9: LOREKEEPERS

Defeat the aberrant blooded dwarves.

APL 2	120 XP
APL 4	180 XP
APL 6	240 XP
APL 8	300 XP
APL 10	360 XP

STORY AWARD

Objective(s) met: Discover the aberrations are coming from Thamek Mor, discover the whereabouts of the elemental keys, and discover that Tharizdun is involved.

APL 2	45 XP
APL 4	90 XP
APL 6	135 XP
APL 8	180 XP
APL 10	225 XP

DISCRETIONARY ROLEPLAYING AWARD

APL 2	45 XP
APL 4	45 XP
APL 6	45 XP
APL 8	45 XP
APL 10	45 XP

TOTAL POSSIBLE EXPERIENCE

APL 2	450 XP
APL 4	675 XP
APL 6	900 XP
APL 8	1125 XP
APL 10	1350 XP

TREASURE SUMMARY

During an adventure, characters encounter treasure, usually finding it in the possession of their foes. Every encounter that features treasure has a "treasure" section within the encounter description, giving information about the loot, coins, and magic items that make up the encounter's treasure.

The loot total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if the foes are plundered of all their earthly possessions. Looting the bodies takes at least 10 minutes per every 5 enemies, and if the characters cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that characters can go back to loot the bodies, and those bodies are there (i.e., not carted off by dungeon scavengers, removed from the scene by the local watch, and so on), characters may return to retrieve loot. If the characters do not loot the body, the gold piece value for the loot is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

The coin total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if they take the coin available. A normal adventuring party can usually gather this wealth in a round or so. If for some reason, they pass up this treasure, the coin total is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

Next, the magic items are listed. Magic item treasure is the hardest to adjudicate, because they are varied and because characters may want to use them during the adventure. Many times characters must cast *identify*, *analyze dweomer* or similar spell to determine what the item does and how to activate it. Other times they may attempt to use the item blindly. If the magic item is consumable (a potion, scroll, magic bolts, etc.) and the item is used before the end of the adventure, its total is subtracted from the adventure totals below.

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the GP Gained field of the adventure certificate.

Loot = Looted gear from enemy; Coin = Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables; Magic = Magic Items.

INTRODUCTION

APL 2: Loot 18 gp; Total 18 gp.

APL 4: Loot 54 gp; Total 54 gp.

APL 6: Loot 231 gp; Magic 8 gp; *potion of cure light wounds* (4 gp each), *potion of resurgence* (4 gp each), screaming bolt (22 gp each); Total 261 gp.

APL 8: Loot 301 gp; Magic 121 gp; *potion of cure light wounds* (4 gp each), *potion of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), *potion of magic weapon* (4 gp each), *potion of remove blindness/deafness* (62 gp

each), *potion of remove fear* (4 gp each), *potion of resurgence* (4 gp each), *screaming bolt* (22 gp each), *universal solvent* (4 gp each); Total 422 gp.

APL 10: *Loot* 778 gp; *Magic* 207 gp; *potion of bull's strength* (25 gp each); *potion of cure light wounds* (x3) (12 gp each), *potion of cure serious wounds* (62 gp each), *potion of magic weapon* (4 gp each), *potion of remove blindness/deafness* (62 gp each), *potion of remove fear* (4 gp each), *potion of resurgence* (x3) (12 gp each), *screaming bolt* (22 gp each), *universal solvent* (4 gp each); Total 985 gp.

8: GHOST TALK

All APLs: *Magic* 428 gp +1 *full plate* (137 gp each), +1 *heavy steel shield* (97 gp each), +1 *dwarven waraxe* (194 gp each); Total 428 gp.

9: LOREKEEPERS

APL 2: *Loot* 687 gp; *Magic* 118 gp: *cloak of resistance* +1 (83 gp each), *scroll of mage armor* (2 gp each), *scroll of shield* (2 gp each), *wand of acid splash* (31 gp each); Total 805 gp.

APL 4: *Loot* 687 gp; *Magic* 350 gp: *cloak of resistance* +1 (83 gp each), *scroll of bear's endurance* (12 gp each), *scroll of mage armor* (2 gp each), *scroll of resist energy* (12 gp each), *scroll of shield* (2 gp each), *tunic of steady spellcasting* (208 gp each), *wand of acid splash* (31 gp each); Total 1037 gp.

APL 6: *Loot* 687 gp; *Magic* 770 gp: *cloak of resistance* +1 (83 gp each), *headband of intellect* +2 (333 gp each), *potion of babau slime* (x3) (12 gp each), *potion of bull's strength* (x3) (75 gp each), *scroll of bear's endurance* (12 gp each), *scroll of mage armor* (2 gp each), *scroll of resist energy* (12 gp each), *scroll of shield* (2 gp each), *tunic of steady spellcasting* (208 gp each), *wand of acid splash* (31 gp each); Total 1457 gp.

APL 8: *Loot* 687 gp; *Magic* 1345 gp: *cloak of elemental protection* (x3) (249 gp each), *cloak of resistance* +1 (83 gp each), *headband of intellect* +2 (333 gp each), *potion of babau slime* (x3) (12 gp each), *potion of bear's strength* (x3) (75 gp each), *potion of bull's strength* (x3) (75 gp each), *scroll of bear's endurance* (12 gp each), *scroll of mage armor* (2 gp each), *scroll of resist energy* (12 gp each), *scroll of shield* (2 gp each), *tunic of steady spellcasting* (208 gp each), *vest of resistance* +1 (x3) (249 gp each), *wand of acid splash* (31 gp each); Total 2032 gp.

APL 10: *Loot* 687 gp; *Magic* 3095 gp: *cloak of elemental protection* (x3) (249 gp each), *cloak of resistance* +1 (83 gp each), *headband of intellect* +4 (1333 gp each), *potion of babau slime* (x3) (12 gp each), *potion of bear's strength* (x3) (75 gp each), *potion of bull's strength* (x3) (75 gp each), *scroll of bear's endurance* (12 gp each), *scroll of mage armor* (2 gp each), *scroll of resist energy* (12 gp each), *scroll of shield* (2 gp each), *tunic of steady spellcasting* (208 gp each), *vest of resistance* +2 (x3) (999 gp each), *wand of acid splash* (31 gp each); Total 3782 gp.

TREASURE CAP

APL 2: 450 gp
APL 4: 650 gp
APL 6: 900 gp
APL 8: 1,300 gp
APL 10: 2,300 gp

TOTAL POSSIBLE TREASURE

APL 2: 1,251 gp
APL 4: 1,519 gp
APL 6: 2,146 gp
APL 8: 2,841 gp
APL 10: 5,195 gp

ADVENTURE RECORD ITEMS

Dark Text of Tharizdun: You possess a tattered scroll written in a cryptic code. What can be deciphered extols the worship of Tharizdun.

Spell Lore: You gain Open access to the alternate class feature Focused Specialist (PHBII).

It's Good To Be Devoted: PCs that are Devoted of the Green and White change their access from Adventure to Regional for the items below marked '†'.

Join Circle of the True: You gain Open access to the prestige class Abolisher (Lords of Madness 182).

Join Darkrunner's Guild: You gain Open access to the prestige class Darkrunner. If you ever take a level in the Darkrunner prestige class, you receive access (any) to purchase the Darkrunner Emblem (Lords of Madness 186).

Lorekeeper's Spellbook

I: *babau slime*, *enlarge person*, *fist of stone*, *mage armor*, *shield*
II: *balor nimbus*, *bear's endurance*, *bull's strength*, *earth lock*, *expeditious retreat* (swift), *fearsome grapple*, *resist energy*
III: *arms of plenty*, *fuse arms*, *hamatula barbs*, *haste*, *undulant innards*
IV: *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *Evard's black tentacles*, *flame whips*, *resistance* (greater), *stoneskin*
V: *blink*, *enlarge person* (greater), *gutsnake*, *mass enlarge person*, *mass reduce person*, *telekinesis*, *wall of stone*

The Servant's Favor: You have the favor of the Servant. What this entails you do not know.

ITEM ACCESS

APL 2:

- *Dwarvencraft dwarven waraxe* (Adventure; 630 gp; RoS)
- *Dwarvencraft full plate* (Adventure; 1,800 gp; RoS)
- *Dwarvencraft heavy steel shield* (Adventure; 320 gp; RoS)
- *Lorekeeper's spellbook I* (Adventure, 500 gp) †
- *Wand of acid splash* (Adventure; 375 gp; DMG) †

APL 4 (all of APL 2 plus the following):

- *Lorekeeper's spellbook II* (Adventure, 1400 gp) †
- *Tunic of steady spellcasting* (Adventure; MIC) †

APL 6 (all of APLs 2-4 plus the following):

- *Carrion crawler brain juice* (Adventure; DMG)
- *Fast donning straps* (Adventure; RoS)
- *Lorekeeper's spellbook III* (Adventure, 1500 gp) †
- *Potion of babau slime* (Adventure; 50 gp; SpC) †
- *Potion of resurgence* (Adventure; 50 gp; SpC) †
- *Shield sheath* (Adventure; RoS)

APL 8 (all of APLs 2-6 plus the following):

- *Cloak of elemental protection* (Adventure; MIC) †
- *Lorekeeper's spellbook IV* (Adventure, 1900 gp) †
- *Screaming bolt* (Adventure; DMG) †
- *Universal solvent* (Adventure; DMG) †

APL 10 (all of APLs 2-8 plus the following):

- *Lorekeeper's spellbook V* (Adventure, 3900 gp) †

6: RELEASE THE RUNEHOUNDS

RUNEHOUND

CR 3

MM III

NE Medium Aberration

Init +2; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +1; Uncanny blindsight 500 ft.

Languages Undercommon (understand only)

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14
(+2 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 37 (5 HD); fast healing 3; DR 5/silver

Fort +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +5

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares), base movement 50 ft.

Melee bite +5 (2d6+7)

Ranged vile spew +5 ranged touch (5d6 or web)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +8

Abilities Str 20, Dex 14, Con 17, Int 5, Wis 12, Cha 8

SQ Damage reduction 5/silver, extended reach, fast healing 3, psychic scent, uncanny blindsight

Feats Combat Reflexes, Lightning Reflexes, Track

Skills Hide +5, Move Silently +3, Spot +5, Survival +1 (+21 when tracking), Swim +5

Vile Spew (Ex): A runehound can produce two noxious substances that it can spit with tremendous force. It can emit a stream of acid that deals 1d6 points of damage for every Hit Die the runehound possesses (5d6 for a typical specimen), with a DC 15 Reflex save halving this damage. Alternatively, it can spit a glob of glutinous goo that acts as a single-target web spell; a DC 15 Reflex save negates the effect. Both attacks have a range of 100 feet, require a successful ranged touch attack, and can be used once every 1d4 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Extended Reach (Ex): The serpentine neck is long and powerful giving the creature a reach of 10 feet with its bite attack; this reach also allows it to threaten a 10-foot-radius area. Because of the flexibility of its neck, the runehound can attack adjacent foes with no penalty.

Psychic Scent (Su): A runehound tracks by following psychic trails and aura traces. It gains a +20 bonus on all Survival checks made to track. It does not receive this bonus against mindless creatures or creatures shielded against mental effects.

Uncanny Blindsight (Su): Runehounds are blind but perceive their surroundings with their psychic senses. This ability provides a runehound with blindsight out to 500 feet. In addition, a runehound cannot be flanked.

9: LOREKEEPERS

LOREKEEPER GUARD

CR 1/2

Male dwarf warrior 1

CE Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init +1; **Senses** Listen +2, Spot +2; Darkvision 60 ft.

Languages Common, Dwarven, Undercommon

AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20
(+1 Dex, +8 armor, +2 shield)

hp 11 (1 HD)

Fort +5 (+7 against poison), **Ref** +1, **Will** +0; +2 racial bonus against spells and spell-like effects

Speed 20 ft. in heavy armor (4 squares), base movement 20 ft.

Melee dwarvencraft dwarven waraxe +4 (1d10+2) or spiked gauntlet +3 (1d3+2)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +1; **Grp** +5

Abilities Str 15, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 6

SQ Dwarf traits

Feats Aberration Blood (flexible limbs)

Skills Appraise +2, Craft (blacksmithing) +3, Craft (stonemasonry) +3, Listen +2, Spot +2

Possessions dwarvencraft dwarven waraxe, dwarvencraft full plate, dwarvencraft heavy steel shield, spiked gauntlet

LOREKEEPER ARCANIST

CR 3

Male dwarf monk 2 / wizard 1

CE Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init +1; **Senses** Listen +4, Spot +4

Languages Common, Dwarven, Terran, Undercommon

AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10
(+1 Dex,)

hp 21 (3 HD)

Fort +6 (+8 against poison), **Ref** +5 (evasion), **Will** +6; +2 racial bonus against spells and spell-like effects

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), base movement 20 ft.

Melee improved unarmed strike +2 (1d6+2) or quarterstaff +2 (1d6+3)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +1; **Grp** +9

Atk Options Flurry of blows is +1/+1 (1d6+2); Improved Grapple (+2 melee touch).

Combat Gear *scroll of mage armor*, *scroll of shield*, *wand of acid splash* (50 charges)

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 1st; transmutation specialist; Focused Specialist; barred schools enchantment, illusion and necromancy): 5/4

1st—*babau slime*, *enlarge person*, *fist of stone*, *mage armor*

0—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *light*, *resistance*, *touch of fatigue* (+2 melee touch, DC 12)

Abilities Str 14, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 6

SQ dwarf traits, evasion

Feats Aberration Blood (flexible limbs), Combat Reflexes, Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, Inhuman Reach, Scribe Scroll

Skills Appraise +2, Climb +4, Concentration +9, Craft (blacksmithing) +4, Craft (stonemasonry) +4, Jump +7, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +3, Listen +5, Spellcraft +3, Spot +5, Tumble +8

Possessions combat gear plus *cloak of resistance* +1, quarterstaff

Spellbook spells prepared plus 0—all, 1st—*shield*

Skills +2 Climb bonus (Inhuman Reach)

6: RELEASE THE RUNEHOUNDS

RUNEHOUND

CR 3

MM III

NE Medium Aberration

Init +2; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +1; uncanny blindsight 500 ft.**Languages** Undercommon (understand only)**AC** 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14

(+2 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 37 (5 HD); fast healing 3; DR 5/silver**Fort** +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +5**Speed** 50 ft. (10 squares), base movement 50 ft.**Melee** bite +5 (2d6+7)**Ranged** vile spew +5 ranged touch (5d6 or web)**Space** 5 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.**Base Atk** +3; **Grp** +8**Abilities** Str 20, Dex 14, Con 17, Int 5, Wis 12, Cha 8**SQ** Damage reduction 5/silver, extended reach, fast healing 3, psychic scent, uncanny blindsight**Feats** Combat Reflexes, Lightning Reflexes, Track**Skills** Hide +5, Move Silently +3, Spot +5, Survival +1 (+21 when tracking), Swim +5

Vile Spew (Ex): A runehound can produce two noxious substances that it can spit with tremendous force. It can emit a stream of acid that deals 1d6 points of damage for every Hit Die the runehound possesses (5d6 for a typical specimen), with a DC 15 Reflex save halving this damage. Alternatively, it can spit a glob of glutinous goo that acts as a single-target web spell; a DC 15 Reflex save negates the effect. Both attacks have a range of 100 feet, require a successful ranged touch attack, and can be used once every 1d4 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Extended Reach (Ex): The serpentine neck is long and powerful giving the creature a reach of 10 feet with its bite attack; this reach also allows it to threaten a 10-foot-radius area. Because of the flexibility of its neck, the runehound can attack adjacent foes with no penalty.

Psychic Scent (Su): A runehound tracks by following psychic trails and aura traces. It gains a +20 bonus on all Survival checks made to track. It does not receive this bonus against mindless creatures or creatures shielded against mental effects.

Uncanny Blindsight (Su): Runehounds are blind but perceive their surroundings with their psychic senses. This ability provides a runehound with blindsight out to 500 feet. In addition, a runehound cannot be flanked.

9: LOREKEEPERS

LOREKEEPER GUARD

CR 1

Male dwarf monk 1 / warrior 1

CE Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init +1; **Senses** Listen +4, Spot +4; Darkvision 60 ft.**Languages** Common, Dwarven, Undercommon**AC** 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20

(+1 Dex, +8 armor, +2 shield)

hp 19 (2 HD)**Fort** +7 (+9 against poison), **Ref** +3, **Will** +2; +2 racial bonus against spells and spell-like effects**Speed** 20 ft. in heavy armor (4 squares), base movement 20 ft.**Melee** dwarvencraft dwarven waraxe +4 (1d10+2) or unarmed strike +3 (1d6+2)**Space** 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.**Base Atk** +1; **Grp** +9**Atk Options** Improved Grapple (+3 melee touch)**Abilities** Str 15, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 6**SQ** Dwarf traits**Feats** Aberration Blood (flexible limbs), Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike**Skills** Appraise +2, Craft (blacksmithing) +3, Craft (stonemasonry) +3, Jump +1, Listen +4, Spot +4**Possessions** dwarvencraft dwarven waraxe, dwarvencraft full plate, dwarvencraft heavy steel shield

LOREKEEPER ARCANIST

CR 5

Male dwarf monk 2 / wizard 3

CE Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init +1; **Senses** Listen +5, Spot +5**Languages** Common, Dwarven, Terran, Undercommon**AC** 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10

(+1 Dex)

hp 35 (5 HD)**Fort** +8 (+10 against poison), **Ref** +6 (evasion), **Will** +7; +2 racial bonus against spells and spell-like effects**Speed** 20 ft. (4 squares), base movement 20 ft.**Melee** improved unarmed strike +3 (1d6+2) or quarterstaff +3 (1d6+3)**Space** 5 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.**Base Atk** +2; **Grp** +10**Atk Options** Flurry of blows is +2/+2 (1d6+2); Improved Grapple (+3 melee touch)**Combat Gear** *scroll of bear's endurance*, *scroll of mage armor*, *scroll of resist energy*, *scroll of shield*, *wand of acid splash* (50 charges)**Wizard Spells Prepared** (CL 3rd; transmutation specialist; Focused Specialist; barred schools enchantment, illusion and necromancy): 6/5/42nd—*balor nimbus*, *bull's strength*, *earth lock*, *fearsome grapple*1st—*babau slime*, *enlarge person*, *expeditious retreat* (swift), *fiat of stone*, *mage armor*0—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *light*, *message*, *resistance*, *touch of fatigue* (+2 melee touch, DC 12)**Abilities** Str 14, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 6**SQ** dwarf traits**Feats** Aberration Blood (flexible limbs), Combat Reflexes, Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, Inhuman Reach, Scribe Scroll**Skills** Appraise +2, Climb +4, Concentration +16, Craft (blacksmithing) +4, Craft (stonemasonry) +4, Jump +7, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +5, Listen +5, Spellcraft +5, Spot +5, Tumble +8**Possessions** combat gear plus *cloak of resistance* +1, quarterstaff, *tunic of steady spellcasting***Spellbook** spells prepared plus 0—all; 1st—*shield*; 2nd—*bear's endurance*, *resist energy***Skills** +2 Climb bonus (Inhuman Reach)

INTRODUCTION

DUERGAR SERGEANT**CR 4**

Male duergar fighter 2/ranger 1
LE Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init +1; **Senses** Listen +5, Spot +5; Darkvision 120 feet

Languages Common, Dwarven, Undercommon

AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20

(+1 Dex, +8 armor, +2 shield)

hp 28 (3 HD)

Immune paralysis, phantasms and poison

Fort +8, **Ref** +2, **Will** +0; +2 racial bonus against spells and spell-like effects

Weakness light sensitivity

Speed 20 ft. in heavy armor (4 squares), base movement 20 ft.

Melee mw dire pick +6 (1d8+2/x4) or short sword +5 (1d6+2/19-20)

Ranged light crossbow +4 (1d8/19-20/x2)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +5

Atk Options Shield sheath (draw short sword as a free action); Tunnel-fighting (does not take a penalty on attack rolls or armor class when squeezing into or through a tight space).

Power-up Suite With *enlarge person* cast: large-sized; **AC** 19, touch 9, flat-footed 19; mw dire pick +6 (2d6+3/x4); short sword +5 (1d8+3/19-20); space 10 ft., reach 10 ft.; Grapple +9; Str 17, Dex 10.

Combat Gear poison (1 dose of carrion crawler brain juice, DC 13, paralysis), *potion of cure light wounds*, *potion of resurgence*, *screaming bolt*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th):

2nd—*invisibility* (1/day)

1st—*enlarge person* (1/day)

Abilities Str 15, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 9

SQ Duergar traits

Feats Combat Reflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (dire pick), Stoneback, Track, Tunnel Fighting

Skills Appraise +1, Craft (blacksmithing) +1, Craft (stonemasonry) +1, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +1, Knowledge (geography) +1, Listen +5, Move Silently +1, Spot +5, Survival +4

Possessions combat gear plus armor spikes, fast donning straps, full plate, heavy steel shield, light crossbow and 20 bolts, locked gauntlet, mw dire pick, shield sheath, short sword

Favored Enemy (Ex): Humanoid (dwarf)

6: RELEASE THE RUNEHOUNDS

RUNEHOUND**CR 3**

MM III

NE Medium Aberration

Init +2; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +1, uncanny blindsight 500 ft.

Languages Undercommon (understand only)

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14

(+2 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 37 (5 HD); fast healing 3; DR 5/silver

Fort +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +5

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares), base movement 50 ft.

Melee bite +5 (2d6+7)

Ranged vile spew +5 ranged touch (5d6 or web)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +8

Abilities Str 20, Dex 14, Con 17, Int 5, Wis 12, Cha 8

SQ Damage reduction 5/silver, extended reach, fast healing 3, psychic scent, uncanny blindsight

Feats Combat Reflexes, Lightning Reflexes, Track

Skills Hide +5, Move Silently +3, Spot +5, Survival +1 (+21 when tracking), Swim +5

Vile Spew (Ex): A runehound can produce two noxious substances that it can spit with tremendous force. It can emit a stream of acid that deals 1d6 points of damage for every Hit Die the runehound possesses (5d6 for a typical specimen), with a DC 15 Reflex save halving this damage. Alternatively, it can spit a glob of glutinous goo that acts as a single-target web spell; a DC 15 Reflex save negates the effect. Both attacks have a range of 100 feet, require a successful ranged touch attack, and can be used once every 1d4 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Extended Reach (Ex): The serpentine neck is long and powerful giving the creature a reach of 10 feet with its bite attack; this reach also allows it to threaten a 10-foot-radius area. Because of the flexibility of its neck, the runehound can attack adjacent foes with no penalty.

Psychic Scent (Su): A runehound tracks by following psychic trails and aura traces. It gains a +20 bonus on all Survival checks made to track. It does not receive this bonus against mindless creatures or creatures shielded against mental effects.

Uncanny Blindsight (Su): Runehounds are blind but perceive their surroundings with their psychic senses. This ability provides a runehound with blindsight out to 500 feet. In addition, a runehound cannot be flanked.

9: LOREKEEPERS

LOREKEEPER GUARD

CR 2

Male dwarf monk 1 / fighter 1
CE Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init +1; **Senses** Listen +4, Spot +4; Darkvision 60 ft.

Languages Common, Dwarven, Undercommon

AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20

(+1 Dex, +8 armor, +2 shield)

hp 20 (2 HD)

Fort +7 (+9 against poison), **Ref** +3, **Will** +2; +2 racial bonus against spells and spell-like effects

Speed 20 ft. in heavy armor (4 squares), base movement 20 ft.

Melee dwarvencraft dwarven waraxe +4 (1d10+2) or unarmed strike +3 (1d6+2)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +1; **Grp** +9

Atk Options Combat Expertise; Improved Grapple (+3 melee touch)

Combat Gear *potion of babau slime*, *potion of bull's strength*

Abilities Str 15, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 6

SQ Dwarf traits

Feats Aberration Blood (flexible limbs), Combat Expertise, Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike

Skills Appraise +2, Craft (blacksmithing) +3, Craft (stonemasonry) +3, Hide -1, Jump -1, Listen +4, Move Silently -1, Spot +4, Tumble -1

Possessions combat gear plus dwarvencraft dwarven waraxe, dwarvencraft half plate, dwarvencraft heavy steel shield

LOREKEEPER ALCANIST

CR 7

Male dwarf monk 2 / wizard 5

CE Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init +1; **Senses** Listen +5, Spot +5

Languages Common, Dwarven, Terran, Undercommon

AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10

(+1 Dex)

hp 46 (7 HD)

Fort +8 (+10 against poison), **Ref** +6 (evasion), **Will** +8; +2 racial bonus against spells and spell-like effects

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), base movement 20 ft.

Melee improved unarmed strike +4 (1d6+2) or quarterstaff +4 (1d6+3) or tentacle claw +4 (1d4+2) or tentacle claw +4/+4 (1d4+2) or improved unarmed strike +4 (1d6+2) and tentacle claw -1/-1 (1d4+1)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +13

Atk Options Flurry of blows +3/+3 (1d6+2); Improved Grapple (+4 melee touch)

Combat Gear *scroll of bear's endurance*, *scroll of mage armor*, *scroll of resist energy*, *scroll of shield*, *wand of acid splash* (50 charges)

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 5th; transmutation specialist; Focused Specialist; barred schools enchantment, illusion and necromancy): 6/6/5/4

3rd—*arms of plenty*, *hamatula barbs*, *haste*, *undulant innards*

2nd—*balor nimbus*, *bull's strength*, *earth lock*, *fearsome grapple*, *fuse arms*

1st—*babau slime*, *enlarge person*, *expeditious retreat* (swift) (x2), *fist of stone*, *mage armor*

0—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *light*, *message*, *resistance*, *touch of fatigue* (+2 melee touch, DC 12)

Abilities Str 14, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 17, Wis 10, Cha 6

SQ dwarf traits

Feats Aberration Blood (flexible limbs), Combat Reflexes, Craft Wondrous Item, Deepspawn, Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, Inhuman Reach, Scribe Scroll

Skills Appraise +2, Climb +4, Concentration +18, Craft (blacksmithing) +5, Craft (stonemasonry) +5, Jump +7, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +8, Listen +5, Spellcraft +6, Spot +5, Tumble +8

Possessions combat gear plus *cloak of resistance* +1, *headband of intellect* +2, quarterstaff, *tunic of steady spellcasting*

Spellbook spells prepared plus 0—all; 1st—; 2nd—*fox's cunning*, *resist energy*; 3rd—

Skills +2 Climb bonus (Inhuman Reach)

INTRODUCTION

DUERGAR MASTER SERGEANT CR 6

Male duergar fighter 4/ranger 1
LE Medium humanoid (dwarf)
Init +1; **Senses** Listen +5, Spot +5; Darkvision 120 feet
Languages Common, Dwarven, Undercommon

AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20
(+1 Dex, +8 armor, +2 shield)
hp 45 (5 HD)
Immune paralysis, phantasms and poison
Fort +9, **Ref** +3, **Will** +3; +2 racial bonus against spells and spell-like effects
Weakness light sensitivity

Speed 20 ft. in heavy armor (4 squares), base movement 20 ft.
Melee mw dire pick +9 (1d8+3/x4) or short sword +8 (1d6+3/19-20)
Ranged light crossbow +6 (1d8/19-20/x2)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +5; **Grp** +8
Atk Options Shield sheath (draw short sword as a free action); Tunnel-fighting (does not take a penalty on attack rolls or armor class when squeezing into or through a tight space)
Power-up Suite With *enlarge person* cast: large-sized; **AC** 19, touch 9, flat-footed 19; mw dire pick +9 (2d6+4/x4); short sword +8 (1d8+4/19-20); space 10 ft., reach 10 ft.; Grapple +12; Str 18, Dex 10.
Combat Gear poison (1 dose of carrion crawler brain juice, DC 13, paralysis), *potion of cure light wounds*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of magic weapon*, *potion of remove blindness/deafness*, *potion of remove fear*, *potion of resurgence*, *screaming bolt*, *universal solvent*
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th):
2nd—*invisibility* (1/day)
1st—*enlarge person* (1/day)

Abilities Str 16, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 9
SQ Duergar traits
Feats Combat Reflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (dire pick), Iron Will, Stoneback, Track, Tunnel Fighting
Skills Appraise +1, Craft (blacksmithing) +1, Craft (stonemasonry) +1, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +1, Knowledge (geography) +1, Listen +5, Move Silently +1, Spot +5, Survival +4
Possessions combat gear plus armor spikes, fast donning straps, mw full plate, mw heavy steel shield, light crossbow and 20 bolts, locked gauntlet, mw dire pick, shield sheath, short sword

Favored Enemy (Ex): Humanoid (dwarf)
Skills +2 racial bonus on Appraise, Craft (blacksmithing) and Craft (stonemasonry); +1 racial bonus on Spot and Listen; +4 racial bonus on Move Silently

6: RELEASE THE RUNEHOUNDS

ADVANCED RUNEHOUND CR 9

MM III
NE Large Aberration
Init +3; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +1; uncanny blindsight 500 ft.
Languages Undercommon (understand only)

AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 15
(-1 size, +3 Dex, +6 natural)
hp 149 (13 HD); fast healing 3; DR 5/silver
Fort +11, **Ref** +6, **Will** +10

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares), base movement 50 ft.
Melee bite +19 (3d6+16)
Ranged vile spew +11 ranged touch (13d6 or web, DC17)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.
Base Atk +9; **Grp** +25
Atk Options Deft Opportunist (bite +23); Large and in Charge
Special Actions Vile Spew

Abilities Str 33, Dex 16, Con 24, Int 5, Wis 14, Cha 6
SQ Damage reduction 5/silver, extended reach, fast healing 3, psychic scent, uncanny blindsight
Feats Combat Reflexes, Deft Opportunist, Large and in Charge, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Track
Skills Hide +2, Move Silently +4, Spot +12, Survival +2 (+22 when tracking), Swim +11

Vile Spew (Ex): A runehound can produce two noxious substances that it can spit with tremendous force. It can emit a stream of acid that deals 1d6 points of damage for every Hit Die the runehound possesses (5d6 for a typical specimen), with a DC 15 Reflex save halving this damage. Alternatively, it can spit a glob of glutinous goo that acts as a single-target web spell; a DC 15 Reflex save negates the effect. Both attacks have a range of 100 feet, require a successful ranged touch attack, and can be used once every 1d4 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Extended Reach (Ex): The serpentine neck is long and powerful giving the creature a reach of 10 feet with its bite attack; this reach also allows it to threaten a 10-foot-radius area. Because of the flexibility of its neck, the runehound can attack adjacent foes with no penalty.

Psychic Scent (Su): A runehound tracks by following psychic trails and aura traces. It gains a +20 bonus on all Survival checks made to track. It does not receive this bonus against mindless creatures or creatures shielded against mental effects.

Uncanny Blindsight (Su): Runehounds are blind but perceive their surroundings with their psychic senses. This ability provides a runehound with blindsight out to 500 feet. In addition, a runehound cannot be flanked.

9: LOREKEEPERS

LOREKEEPER GUARD

CR 4

Male dwarf monk 2 / fighter 2
CE Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init +1; **Senses** Listen +5, Spot +5; Darkvision 60 ft.

Languages Common, Dwarven, Undercommon

AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20

(+1 Dex, +8 armor, +2 shield)

hp 36 (4 HD)

Fort +9 (+11 against poison), **Ref** +4, **Will** +3; +2 racial bonus against spells and spell-like effects

Speed 20 ft. in heavy armor (4 squares), base movement 20 ft.

Melee dwarvencraft dwarven waraxe +6 (1d10+2) or unarmed strike +5 (1d6+2)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +11

Atk Options Combat Expertise; Improved Grapple (+5 melee touch)

Combat Gear *potion of babau slime*, *potion of bear's strength*, *potion of bull's strength*

Abilities Str 15, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 6

SQ Dwarf traits

Feats Aberration Blood (flexible limbs), Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, Karmic Strike

Skills Appraise +2, Craft (blacksmithing) +3, Craft (stonemasonry) +3, Hide +0, Jump +4, Listen +5, Move Silently +0, Spot +5, Tumble +2

Possessions combat gear plus dwarvencraft dwarven waraxe, dwarvencraft half plate, dwarvencraft heavy steel shield

LOREKEEPER ARCANIST

CR 9

Male dwarf monk 2 / wizard 7

CE Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init +1; **Senses** Listen +5, Spot +5

Languages Common, Dwarven, Terran, Undercommon

AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10

(+1 Dex,)

hp 57 (9 HD)

Fort +10 (+12 against poison), **Ref** +9 (evasion), **Will** +11; +2 racial bonus against spells and spell-like effects

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), base movement 20 ft.

Melee improved unarmed strike +5 (1d6+2)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +12

Atk Options Flurry of blows +4/+4 (1d6+2); Improved Grapple (+5 melee touch attack)

Combat Gear *scroll of bear's endurance*, *scroll of haste*, *scroll of mage armor*, *scroll of resist energy*, *scroll of shield*, *wand of acid splash* (50 charges)

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 7th; transmutation specialist; Focused Specialist; barred schools enchantment, illusion and necromancy): 6/7/6/5/4

4th—*Evard's black tentacles*, *flame whips*, *greater resistance* †, *stoneskin*

3rd—*arms of plenty*, *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *hamatula barbs*, *haste*, *undulant innards*

2nd—*balor nimbus*, *bear's endurance*, *bull's strength*, *earth lock*, *fearsome grapple*, *fuse arms*

1st—*babau slime*, *enlarge person*, *expeditious retreat* (swift) (x2), *fist of stone*, *mage armor*, *shield*

0—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *light*, *message*, *resistance*, *touch of fatigue* (+2 melee touch, DC 12)

† Already cast

Abilities Str 14, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 18, Wis 10, Cha 6

SQ dwarf traits, evasion

Feats Aberration Blood (flexible limbs), Combat Reflexes, Craft Wondrous Item, Deepspawn, Eschew Materials, Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, Inhuman Reach, Scribe Scroll

Skills Appraise +2, Concentration +20, Climb +4, Craft (blacksmithing) +5, Craft (stonemasonry) +5, Jump +7, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +10, Listen +5, Spellcraft +8, Spot +5, Tumble +8

Possessions combat gear plus *headband of intellect* +2, quarterstaff, *tunic of steady spellcasting*

Spellbook spells prepared plus 0—all; 1st—; 2nd—*fox's cunning*, *resist energy*; 3rd—; 4th—

Skills +2 Climb bonus (Inhuman Reach)

INTRODUCTION

DUERGAR SERGEANT**CR 4**

Male duergar fighter 2/ranger 1
LE Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init +1; **Senses** Listen +5, Spot +5; Darkvision 120 feet

Languages Common, Dwarven, Undercommon

AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20

(+1 Dex, +8 armor, +2 shield)

hp 28 (3 HD)

Immune paralysis, phantasms and poison

Fort +8, **Ref** +2, **Will** +0; +2 racial bonus against spells and spell-like effects

Weakness light sensitivity

Speed 20 ft. in heavy armor (4 squares), base movement 20 ft.

Melee mw dire pick +6 (1d8+2/x4) or short sword +5 (1d6+2/19-20)

Ranged light crossbow +4 (1d8/19-20/x2)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +5

Atk Options With *enlarge person* cast: large-sized; AC 19, touch 9, flat-footed 19; mw dire pick +6 (2d6+3/x4); short sword +5 (1d8+3/19-20); space 10 ft., reach 10 ft.; Grapple +9; Str 17, Dex 10. Tunnel-fighting (does not take a penalty on attack rolls or armor class when squeezing into or through a tight space). Shield sheath (draw short sword as a free action).

Combat Gear poison (1 dose of carrion crawler brain juice, DC 13, paralysis), *potion of cure light wounds*, *potion of resurgence*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th):

2nd—*invisibility* (1/day)

1st—*enlarge person* (1/day)

Abilities Str 15, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 9

SQ Duergar traits

Feats Combat Reflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (dire pick), Stoneback, Track, Tunnel Fighting

Skills Appraise +1, Craft (blacksmithing) +1, Craft (stonemasonry) +1, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +1, Knowledge (geography) +1, Listen +5, Move Silently +1, Spot +5, Survival +4

Possessions combat gear plus armor spikes, fast donning straps, full plate, heavy steel shield, light crossbow and 20 bolts, locked gauntlet, mw dire pick, shield sheath, short sword

Favored Enemy (Ex): Humanoid (dwarf)

Skills +2 racial bonus on Appraise, Craft (blacksmithing) and Craft (stonemasonry); +1 racial bonus on Spot and Listen; +4 racial bonus on Move Silently

DUERGAR LIEUTENANT**CR 8**

Male duergar fighter 6/ranger 1

LE Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init +1; **Senses** Listen +5, Spot +5; Darkvision 120 feet

Languages Common, Dwarven, Undercommon

AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20

(+1 Dex, +8 armor, +2 shield)

hp 62 (7 HD)

Immune paralysis, phantasms and poison

Fort +10, **Ref** +4, **Will** +4; +2 racial bonus against spells and spell-like effects

Weakness light sensitivity

Speed 20 ft. in heavy armor (4 squares), base movement 20 ft.

Melee +1 dire pick +11 (1d8+4/x4) or short sword +10 (1d6+3/19-20)

Ranged light crossbow +8 (1d8/19-20/x2)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +7; **Grp** +10

Atk Options Tunnel-fighting (does not take a penalty on attack rolls or armor class when squeezing into or through a tight space). Shield sheath (draw short sword as a free action).

Power-up Suite With *enlarge person* cast: large-sized; AC 19, touch 9, flat-footed 19; mw dire pick +11 (2d6+4/x4); short sword +10 (1d8+4/19-20); space 10 ft., reach 10 ft.; Grapple +14; Str 18, Dex 10.

Combat Gear poison (1 dose of carrion crawler brain juice, DC 13, paralysis), *potion of bull's strength*, *potion of cure light wounds*, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of magic weapon*, *potion of remove blindness/deafness*, *potion of remove fear*, *potion of resurgence*, *screaming bolt*, *universal solvent*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 14th):

2nd—*invisibility* (1/day)

1st—*enlarge person* (1/day)

Abilities Str 16, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 9

SQ Duergar traits

Feats Close Quarters Fighting, Combat Reflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (dire pick), Iron Will, Power Attack, Stoneback, Track, Tunnel Fighting

Skills Appraise +1, Craft (blacksmithing) +1, Craft (stonemasonry) +1, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +1, Knowledge (geography) +1, Listen +5, Move Silently +1, Spot +5, Survival +4

Possessions combat gear plus armor spikes, fast donning straps, mw full plate, mw heavy steel shield, light crossbow and 20 bolts, locked gauntlet, mw dire pick, shield sheath, short sword

Favored Enemy (Ex): Humanoid (dwarf)

Skills +2 racial bonus on Appraise, Craft (blacksmithing) and Craft (stonemasonry); +1 racial bonus on Spot and Listen; +4 racial bonus on Move Silently

6: RELEASE THE RUNEHOUNDS

ADVANCED RUNEHOUND

CR 9

NE Large Aberration

Init +3; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +1; uncanny blindsight 500 ft.

Languages Undercommon (understand only)

AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 15

(-1 size, +3 Dex, +6 natural)

hp 149 (13 HD); fast healing 3; DR 5/silver

Fort +11, **Ref** +6, **Will** +10

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares), base movement 50 ft.

Melee bite +19 (3d6+16)

Ranged vile spew +11 ranged touch (13d6 or web, DC17)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Base Atk +9; **Grp** +25

Atk Options Deft Opportunist (bite +23); Large & in Charge

Special Actions Vile Spew

Abilities Str 33, Dex 16, Con 24, Int 5, Wis 14, Cha 6

SQ Damage reduction 5/silver, extended reach, fast healing 3, psychic scent, uncanny blindsight

Feats Combat Reflexes, Deft Opportunist, Large and in Charge, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Track

Skills Hide +2, Move Silently +4, Spot +12, Survival +2 (+22 when tracking), Swim +11

Vile Spew (Ex): A runehound can produce two noxious substances that it can spit with tremendous force. It can emit a stream of acid that deals 1d6 points of damage for every Hit Die the runehound possesses (5d6 for a typical specimen), with a DC 15 Reflex save halving this damage. Alternatively, it can spit a glob of glutinous goo that acts as a single-target web spell; a DC 15 Reflex save negates the effect. Both attacks have a range of 100 feet, require a successful ranged touch attack, and can be used once every 1d4 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Extended Reach (Ex): The serpentine neck is long and powerful giving the creature a reach of 10 feet with its bite attack; this reach also allows it to threaten a 10-foot-radius area. Because of the flexibility of its neck, the runehound can attack adjacent foes with no penalty.

Psychic Scent (Su): A runehound tracks by following psychic trails and aura traces. It gains a +20 bonus on all Survival checks made to track. It does not receive this bonus against mindless creatures or creatures shielded against mental effects.

Uncanny Blindsight (Su): Runehounds are blind but perceive their surroundings with their psychic senses. This ability provides a runehound with blindsight out to 500 feet. In addition, a runehound cannot be flanked.

9: LOREKEEPERS

LOREKEEPER GUARD

CR 6

Male dwarf monk 4 / fighter 2

CE Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init +1; **Senses** Listen +5, Spot +5; Darkvision 60 ft.

Languages Common, Dwarven, Undercommon

AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20

(+1 Dex, +8 armor, +2 shield)

hp 51 (6 HD)

Fort +11 (+13 against poison), **Ref** +6, **Will** +5; +2 racial bonus against spells and spell-like effects

Speed 20 ft. heavy armor (4 squares), base movement 20 ft.

Melee dwarvencraft dwarven waraxe +7 (1d10+2) or unarmed strike +6 (1d6+2)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +13

Atk Options Combat Expertise; Improved Grapple (+6 melee touch), Karmic Strike

Combat Gear *potion of babau slime*, *potion of bear's endurance*, *potion of bull's strength*

Abilities Str 15, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 6

SQ Dwarf traits

Feats Aberration Blood (flexible limbs), Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, Inhuman Reach, Karmic Strike

Skills Appraise +2, Climb +4, Craft (blacksmithing) +3, Craft (stonemasonry) +3, Hide +2, Jump +4, Listen +7, Move Silently +2, Spot +7, Tumble +4

Possessions combat gear plus *cloak of elemental protection*, dwarvencraft dwarven waraxe, dwarvencraft half plate, dwarvencraft heavy steel shield, *vest of resistance* +1

Skills +2 Climb bonus (Inhuman Reach)

LOREKEEPER ARCANIST

CR 11

Male dwarf monk 2 / wizard 9

CE Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init +1; **Senses** Listen +5, Spot +5

Languages Common, Dwarven, Terran, Undercommon

AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10 (+1 Dex)

hp 68 (11 HD)

Fort +8 (+10 against poison), **Ref** +7 (evasion), **Will** +9; +2 racial bonus against spells and spell-like effects

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), base movement 20 ft.

Melee improved unarmed strike +7 (1d6+2)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +13

Atk Options Flurry of blows is +5/+5 (1d6+2)

Combat Gear *scroll of bear's endurance*, *scroll of haste*, *scroll of mage armor*, *scroll of resist energy*, *scroll of shield*, *wand of acid splash* (50 charges)

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 9th; transmutation specialist; Focused Specialist; barred schools enchantment, illusion and necromancy): 6/7/7/6/5/4

5th—*greater enlarge person*, *gutsnake*, *telekinesis*, *wall of stone*

4th—*Evard's black tentacles*, *flame whips*, *greater resistance* †, *mass enlarge person*, *stoneskin*

3rd—*arms of plenty*, *blink*, *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *hamatula barbs*, *haste*, *undulant innards*

2nd—*balor nimbus*, *bear's endurance*, *bull's strength*, *cat's grace*, *earth lock*, *fearsome grapple*, *fuse arms*

1st—*babau slime*, *enlarge person*, *expeditious retreat* (swift) (x2), *fist of stone*, *hold portal*, *mage armor*, *shield*

0—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *light*, *message*, *resistance*, *touch of fatigue* (+2 melee touch, DC 12)

† Already cast

Abilities Str 14, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 20, Wis 10, Cha 6

SQ dwarf traits, evasion

Feats Aberration Blood (flexible limbs), Combat Reflexes, Craft Wondrous Item, Deepspawn, Eschew Materials, Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, Inhuman Reach, Scribe Scroll

Skills Appraise +2, Concentration +15, Craft (blacksmithing) +4, Craft (stonemasonry) +4, Jump +7, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +9, Listen +5, Spellcraft +7, Spot +5, Tumble +8

Possessions combat gear plus *headband of intellect* +4, *quarterstaff*, *tunic of steady spellcasting*

Spellbook spells prepared plus 0—all; 1st—; 2nd— *fox's cunning*, *resist energy*; 3rd—; 4th—; 5th—

Skills +2 Climb bonus (Inhuman Reach)

ALTERNATE CLASS FEATURES

FOCUSED SPECIALIST

Every wizard who calls himself a specialist takes pride in wielding his preferred form of magic. Those who are exceptionally pure of purpose take this specialization to an entirely new level, disdaining breadth of skill in favour of even greater focus.

Class: Wizard

Level: 1st

Special Requirement: You must be a specialist wizard.

Replaces: You lose one spell slot from each level of wizard spells you can cast. If you later gain the ability to cast higher level wizard spells, you lose one spell slot from each new level of spells you can cast.

You must choose another prohibited school of magic which can't be divination.

Benefit: You can prepare two additional spells of your specialty school per spell level each day. These extra spells are in addition to those normally granted to a specialist wizard. This benefit doesn't apply to spells gained from classes other than wizard.

Source: *Player's Handbook II*

FEATS

ABERRATION BLOOD [ABERRANT]

One of your ancestors was an aberration and has passed the taint of its aberrant physiology down through the generations to you. This taint manifests physically in your appearance in some noticeable way.

Prerequisite: Humanoid.

Benefit: You gain a physical feature that grants you a racial bonus on one type of check; once you select the check to which this bonus applies (as well as the corresponding feature) you cannot change it later. The bonus must be chosen from the following list:

- Bulging eyes is a +2 bonus on Spot checks
- Flexible limbs is a +2 bonus on Grapple checks
- Segmented eyes is a +3 bonus on Search checks
- Slimy skin is a +4 bonus on Escape Artist checks
- Sticky fingers is a +3 bonus on Climb checks
- Tail is a +4 bonus on Balance checks
- Webbed hands is a +4 bonus on Swim checks

Special: You can select this feat more than once. Each time you select this feat, choose a different aberrant feature and gain the bonus associated with it.

Source: *Lords of Madness 178.*

CLOSE QUARTERS FIGHTING [GENERAL]

You are skilled at fighting at close range and resisting grapple attempts.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +3.

Benefit: You gain an attack of opportunity whenever an enemy attempts to grapple you, even if

the enemy has a feat or special ability that would normally bypass the attack. If you deal damage with this attack, the enemy fails to start the grapple unless it has the Improved Grapple feat or a special ability such as improved grab. If the enemy has such ability, you may add the damage you deal as a bonus on your opposed check to resist being grappled. This feat does not give you extra attacks of opportunity during a round or allow you to make an attack of opportunity when you would be denied one for being surprised, helpless, or in a similar situation.

For example, an ogre attempts to grapple Tordek. Tordek gains an attack of opportunity, hits, and causes damage. Since the ogre does not have any sort of grappling special ability or feat, it fails to start a grapple. Then an ankheg—a creature with the improved grab special ability—attempts to grapple Tordek. He takes an attack of opportunity, hits, and deals 10 points of damage to the Creature. Tordek then adds +10 to his opposed check to resist being grappled.

Normal: Creatures with Improved Grapple, improved grab, or similar feats or special abilities do not provoke attacks of opportunity when they attempt to start a grapple.

Special: A fighter may select Close-Quarters Fighting as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Source: *Complete Warrior 97.*

DEEPSPAWN [ABERRANT]

The abnormalities of your aberration-tainted heritage grow more pronounced. Your body undergoes a shocking degeneration into something that is strikingly inhuman.

Prerequisites: Aberration Blood, one other aberrant feat.

Benefit: Two short but powerful tentacles sprout from your waist. You gain two tentacle natural attacks that each deal 1d4 points of damage (for a Medium creature) plus your Strength modifier. The tentacle attacks are treated as primary weapons. You can attack with weapons and also make tentacle attacks, but your tentacle attacks are treated as secondary weapons: The attacks are made with a -5.

Source: *Lords of Madness 179.*

DEFT OPPORTUNIST [GENERAL]

You are prepared for the unexpected.

Prerequisites: Dex 15, Combat Reflexes.

Benefit: You get a +4 bonus on attack rolls when making attacks of opportunity.

Source: *Complete Adventurer 106.*

HOLD THE LINE [GENERAL]

You are trained in defensive techniques against charging opponents.

Prerequisites: Combat Reflexes, base attack bonus +2.

Benefit: You may make an attack of opportunity against a charging opponent who enters an area you threaten. Your attack of opportunity happens immediately before the charge attack is resolved.

Normal: You only get an attack of opportunity against a character that exits a square you threaten.

Source: *Complete Warrior* 100.

INHUMAN REACH [ABERRANT]

Your arms elongate, allowing you to touch the floor with your hands. In addition, you can bend them in strange and unnatural ways. The arms may vary in appearance, perhaps seeming scaly and snakelike, or slimy like tentacles; conversely, they may resemble normal but longer arms with a second elbow joint. Unless you wear a large cloak to conceal these deformities, you are disturbing to behold.

Prerequisite: Aberration Blood.

Benefit: You gain an additional 5 feet of reach. For most Small and Medium creatures, this benefit increases natural reach to 10 feet. If you already have a reach of more than 5 feet for some reason, this feat extends your reach by another 5 feet. As described on page 112 of the *Player's Handbook*, a reach weapon doubles your normal reach; for example, if you have this feat and you wield a longspear, you can attack targets 15 or 20 feet away. Your elongated arms also grant you a +2 bonus on Climb checks.

Special: Due to the disfigured nature of your new limbs, you take a -1 penalty on all melee attack rolls.

Source: *Lords of Madness* 180.

LARGE AND IN CHARGE [GENERAL]

You can prevent opponents from closing inside your reach.

Prerequisites: Natural reach of 10 feet or more, size Large or larger.

Benefit: When you make a successful attack of opportunity against an opponent that is moving inside your threatened area, you can force the opponent back to the 5-foot space it was in before it provoked the attack of opportunity. After you hit with your attack of opportunity, make an opposed Strength check against your opponent. You gain a +4 bonus for each size category larger than your opponent you are, and an additional +1 bonus for every 5 points of damage you dealt with your attack of opportunity. If you win the opposed check, your opponent is pushed back 5 feet into the space it just left. An opponent you push cannot move any farther in this round.

Source: *Draconomicon* 71.

STONEBACK [GENERAL]

You have studied the techniques of fighting underground and you can protect yourself from the

dangers of multiple attackers whenever you can put your back to a solid wall.

Prerequisites: Shield Proficiency, Tunnel Fighting.

Benefit: If you have a ready shield with which you are proficient and one side of your space is entirely in contact with a solid wall, you cannot be flanked.

Source: *Races of Stone* 144.

TUNNEL FIGHTING [GENERAL]

You are adept at maneuvering and fighting in tight spaces and underground passages.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: You do not take a penalty on your attack rolls or to Armor Class when squeezing into or through a tight space.

Normal: Each movement into or through a narrow space counts as if it were 2 squares and while squeezed in narrow space a character takes -4 penalty on attack rolls and a -4 penalty to AC. See page 148 of the *Player's Handbook* for more information on squeezing through tight spaces.

Source: *Races of Stone* 145.

ITEMS

CLOAK OF ELEMENTAL PROTECTION

Price (Item Level): 1,000 gp (4th)

Body Slot: Shoulders

Caster Level: 3rd

Aura: Faint; (DC 16) abjuration

Activation: Immediate (command)

Weight: 1 lb.

This white cloak is embroidered with runes representing the five energy types in metallic thread.

When you activate a cloak of elemental protection, you gain resistance 10 against a single energy type of your choice (acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic). This protection lasts until the start of your next turn.

A cloak of elemental protection functions once per day. You must wear a cloak of elemental protection for 24 hours before you can access its abilities. If it is taken off, it becomes inactive until worn for an additional 24 hours.

Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous Item, resist energy.

Cost to Create: 500 gp, 40 XP, 1 day.

Source: *Magic Item Compendium*, 87.

TUNIC OF STEADY SPELLCASTING

Price (Item Level): 2,500 gp (7th)

Body Slot: Torso

Caster Level: 3rd

Aura: Faint; (DC 16) transmutation

Activation: —

Weight: 1 lb.

This earth-colored tunic is sturdy, though the material is as soft as silk. Around the neck, wrists, and hem are runes of stability stitched in gold thread.

You gain a +5 competence bonus on Concentration checks. Despite the name, the tunic's bonus applies on all Concentration checks, not just those made to cast spells.

Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous Item, bear's endurance.

Cost to Create: 1,250 gp, 100 XP, 3 days.

Source: *Magic Item Compendium*, 144.

SPELLS

ARMS OF PLENTY

Transmutation

Level: Sorcerer/wizard 3

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Target: One creature

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

Two clawed arms grow out of the subject's body. The arms are roughly humanoid, but are either scaly or furred and end in sharp talons. The spell transforms any clothing or armor worn by the creature to accommodate these additional arms; when the duration ends the creature's clothing and armor return to normal.

The arms grant the subject two primary claw attacks. A hit from one of the claws deals slashing damage equal to 1d6 points (1d4 if Small) plus the creature's Strength modifier. The claws cannot be used to wield weapons or manipulate objects. Since the claws are primary attacks, you can attack with them in addition to making your weapon attacks without penalty. The claws count as magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction. If both claw attacks hit the same target, the arms can rend the target for extra damage equal to 2d6 points plus 1-1/2 times the subject's Strength modifier.

Multiple castings of *arms of plenty* on a creature do not stack; the duration simply resets.

Material component: A xill's claw.

Source: *Lords of Madness* 209.

BABAU SLIME

Transmutation

Level: Abyss 3, druid 1, sorcerer/wizard 1

Components: V, S, M/DF

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Target: Creature touched

Duration: 1 minute/level

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

This demon-inspired transmutation causes the subject to secrete a slimy red layer of jelly that coats its skin, armor and equipment. A creature that strikes a slime-protected subject with an unarmed strike, a touch attack (including a touch spell), or a natural weapon takes 1d8 points of acid damage. Any creature in a grapple with the target of *babau slime* takes 1d8 points of acid damage on its turn.

Arcane Material Component: A drop of babau slime.

Source: *Spell Compendium* 23.

BALOR NIMBUS

Transmutation

Level: Abyss 4, cleric 2, sorcerer/wizard 2

Components: V, S, M/DF

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: 1 round/level

The flames caused by this spell do not harm you or any equipment you carry or wear. Each round, the flames deal 6d6 points of fire damage to any creature grappling you (or any creature you grapple) on your turn.

Arcane Material Component: A pinch of soot.

Source: *Spell Compendium* 24.

EARTH LOCK

Abjuration [Earth]

Level: Sorcerer/wizard 2

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target: One 1-foot length of tunnel with a diameter of up to 10 feet

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

You scribe a spiral in the air with the diamond-tipped bit of charcoal, chanting the words of the spell, immediately the sides of the cavern begin to contract, sealing the passage behind you. You cause a 1-foot length of subterranean tunnel to constrict, "locking it against others who might wish to traverse its length. This spell affects only naturally occurring tunnels or worked tunnels that are surrounded on all sides by unworked, natural, subterranean earth. You can affect any tunnel whose diameter does not exceed 10 feet. A square-sided or rough tunnel can also be affected, as long as its diameter at the point where the spell is cast does not exceed 10 feet.

The constriction takes 1 round to complete. Any Large or smaller object or creature that partially blocks the constriction point is pushed, unharmed, to one side or the other. (A creature can decide which way to move; an object moves randomly.) A Large or larger

object or creature that blocks the constriction point prevents the spell from working until moved.

You can freely pass through tunnels that you have secured with this spell. (The constriction opens and closes on your command taking 1 round for either process). A tunnel secured with earth lock can be bypassed by others in several ways. A DC 20 Escape Artist check allows the creature making the check to squeeze through the constriction but leaves it intact.

A DC 25 Strength check breaks the constriction and ends the spell. A successful dispel magic or knock spell opens the constriction—the former by ending the spell and the latter by suppressing it for 10 minutes. If a creature burrows through the earth lock, the spell ends. The constricted tunnel can also be dug out normally.

Identifying a tunnel secured with earth lock (as opposed to a tunnel that just ends) requires a DC 20 Search check.

Material Component: A diamond chip worth at least 50 gp, embedded in a piece of charcoal.

Source: *Spell Compendium* 75.

ENLARGE PERSON, GREATER

Transmutation

Level: Sorcerer/wizard 5

Range: Touch

Duration: 1 hour/level (D)

This spell functions like *enlarge person* (PH 226), except as noted above.

EXPEDITIOUS RETREAT, SWIFT

Transmutation

Level: Bard 1, sorcerer/wizard 1

Components: V

Casting Time: 1 swift action

Duration: 1 round

This spell functions like *expeditious retreat* (PH228), except as noted above.

Source: *Spell Compendium* 85

FEARSOME GRAPPLE

Transmutation

Level: Sorcerer/wizard 2

Components: V

Casting Time: 1 immediate action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: 1 round/level

You grow two tentacles that grant you a +4 circumstance bonus on grapple checks. These tentacles cannot attack, hold objects, manipulate items, or perform any other action than grappling. If your caster level is at least 9th, you grow four tentacles instead, and the circumstance bonus increases to +8.

Source: *Spell Compendium* 90.

FIST OF STONE

Transmutation [Earth]

Level: Sorcerer/wizard 1

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: 1 minute

You transform one of your hands into a mighty fist of living stone, gaining a +6 enhancement bonus to Strength for the purposes of attack rolls, grapple checks, or breaking and crushing items. In addition, you gain the ability to make on natural slam attack, dealing 1d6 points of damage + your new Strength bonus (1-1/2 times your Strength bonus if you make no other attacks in that round). You can make the slam attack as a natural secondary attack with the normal -5 penalty or a -2 penalty if you have the Multiattack feat (MM304), as part of a full attack action. However, you cannot gain more than one slam attack per round with this spell due to a high base attack bonus (+6 or higher).

Your fist undergoes no change in size or form, remaining as flexible and responsive as it would normally be while under the spell's effect.

Arcane Material Component: A pebble inscribed with a stylized fist design.

Source: *Spell Compendium* 94.

FLAME WHIPS

Transmutation

Level: Sorcerer/wizard 4

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Personal

Effect: Flaming whips

Duration: 1 round/level (D)

Your forelimbs transform into flaming whips. You gain two melee touch attacks with a 15-foot reach that each deals 6d6 points of fire damage. Attacks with these flaming whips replace any natural attacks you had with those limbs.

While this spell is in effect, you cannot cast spells with material components, nor can you carry items with your forelimbs. Any items worn on your forelimbs cease functioning while the spell is active.

Source: *Spell Compendium* 95.

FUSE ARMS

Transmutation

Level: Cleric 2, sorcerer/wizard 2

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Target: Creature with at least two arms or tentacles touched

Duration: 10 minutes/level

You cause a creature's multiple arms or tentacles to fuse together into a single pair of stronger limbs. Only limbs that the creature can use as arms or grasping limbs are affected by this spell (so basilisks and monstrous centipedes, neither of which use their limbs to attack or manipulate objects are unaffected).

For every set of limbs fused into the primary set of limbs, the creature gains +4 to Strength when using those fused limbs (affecting activities that would use those limbs, but not activities relying on its bite, legs, and so on). For example, a girallon under the effect of this spell would have one pair of arms and Strength 26 for the purpose of using those arms. A behir, which has three pairs of limbs that it can use as arms, would end up with one pair of arm-limbs with a +8 bonus to Strength for those arms (its six legs would be unaffected).

The loss of limbs might reduce the number of attacks available to the subject.

If the subject has only two arms or tentacles, they are fused into a single limb, and the creature gains a +4 bonus to Strength on attack rolls made with that limb.

Source: *Spell Compendium* 100.

GUTSNAKE

Transmutation

Level: Sorcerer/wizard 5

Components: V, S, F

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: 1 round/level (D)

The tentacle created by the *gutsnake* spell is equivalent to a giant constrictor snake (MM280) except that it is completely obedient to you and moves as you command. The snake has hit points equal to your own full normal total. Attacks against the snake cause you no discomfort and do not disrupt your spellcasting. If it is "killed", the tentacle disappears without causing harm to you. The tentacle does not interfere with spellcasting in any way.

Once each round as a free action, you can have the tentacle attack a creature up to 10 feet away with its bite attack, and if it successfully hits, the tentacle can use the snake's improved grab ability to deal damage through constriction.

In each round when the *gutsnake* is constricting a target, you cannot move more than 5 feet away from that target, unless the *gutsnake* makes a successful grapple check to carry the opponent with you when you move (see PH 155 for grappling rules). This is the only way in which the tentacle restricts movement.

While the snake is present you can use its Balance and Climb skill modifiers instead of your own, and you gain a climb speed of 20 feet.

Focus: A fang from any reptile.

Source: *Spell Compendium* 108.

HAMATULA BARBS

Transmutation

Level: Cleric 3, sorcerer/wizard 3

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Target: Creature touched

Duration: 10 minutes/level

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

Any creature hitting the subject of this spell with a handheld weapon or a natural weapon takes 1d8 points of slashing and piercing damage from the subject's barbs. This damage does not apply to attackers using reach weapons, such as longswords. The subject itself is not harmed by its own barbs.

Arcane Material Components: A barb from a hamatula.

RESISTANCE, GREATER

Abjuration

Level: Bard 4, cleric 4, druid 4, sorcerer/wizard 4

Duration: 24 hours

This spell functions like *resistance* (PH 272), except as noted here. You grant the subject a +3 resistance bonus on saves.

Source: *Spell Compendium* 108.

UNDULANT INNARDS

Transmutation

Level: Sorcerer/wizard 1

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft. / 2 levels)

Target: One creature

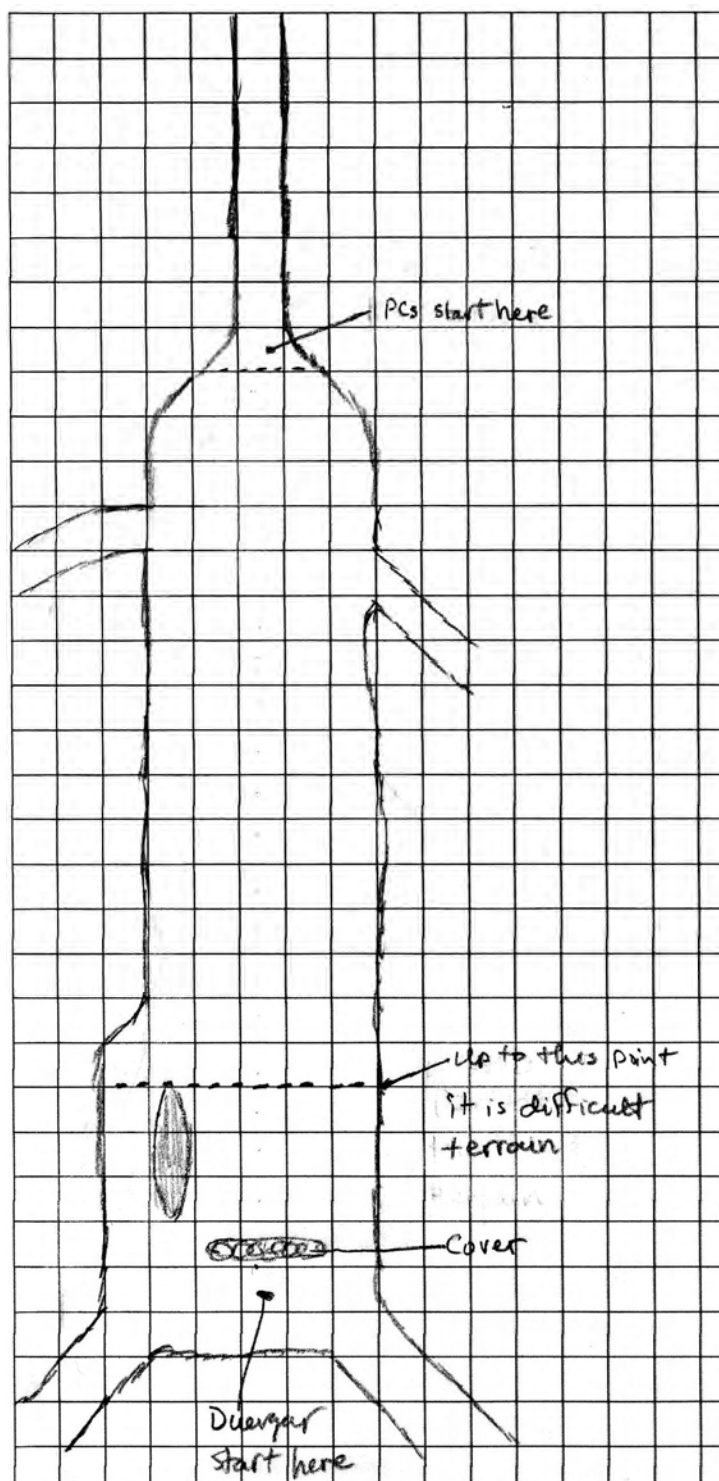
Duration: 1 round/level

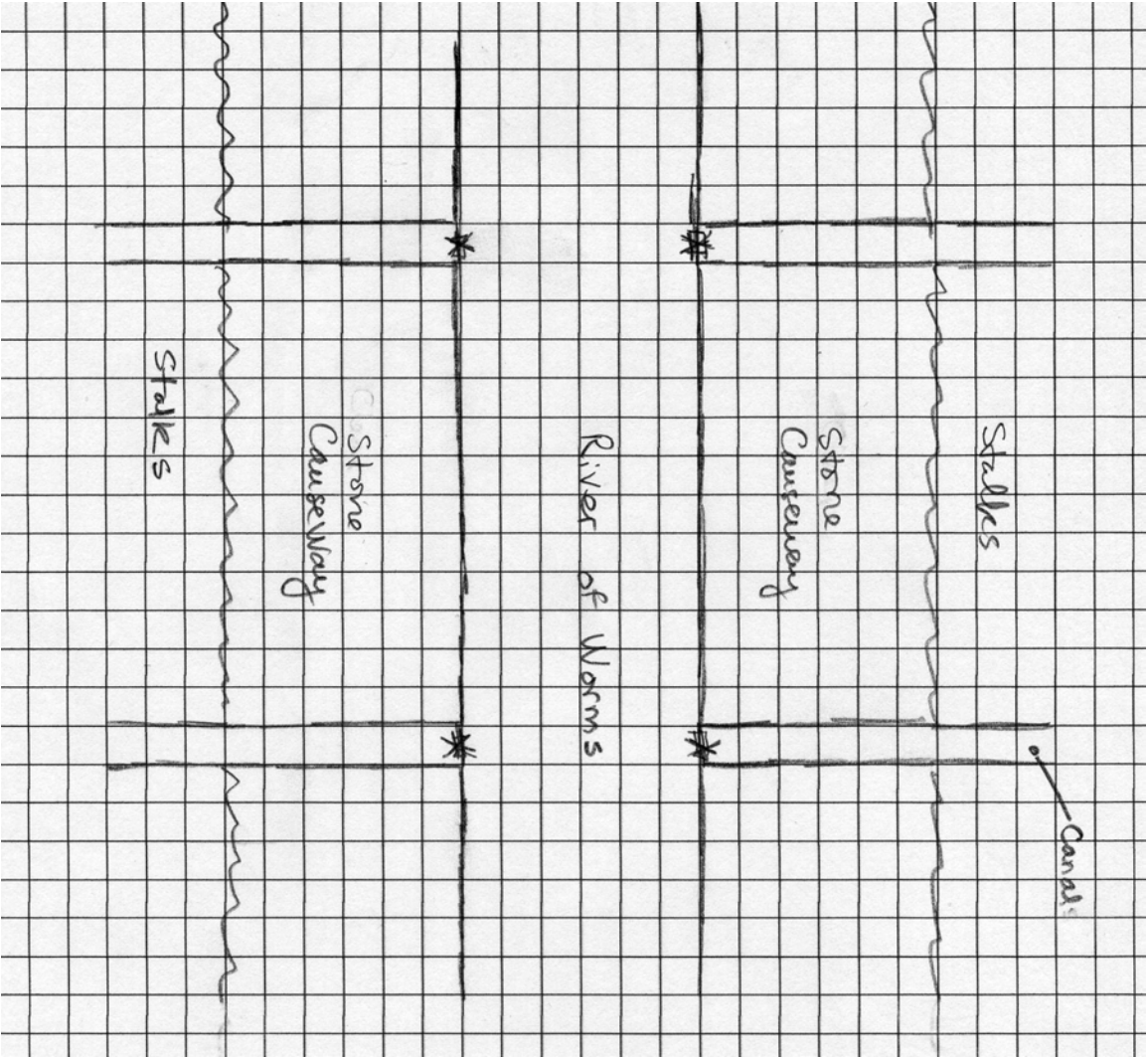
Saving Throw: None

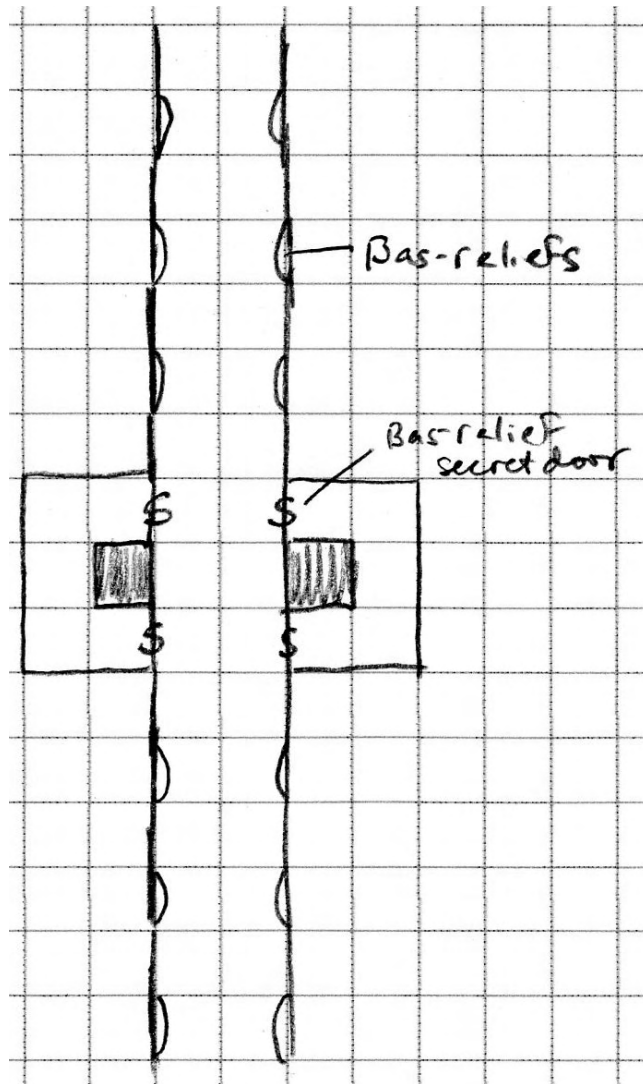
Spell Resistance: No

This spell causes a powerful transformation in the target creature. Outwardly, the target doesn't appear any different. On the inside, the creature's internal organs constantly seethe and slither about, and actively avoid being struck at by weapons. For the duration of the spell, the target is immune to extra damage from critical hits and sneak attacks. Additionally, the target takes the minimum possible damage from falls and gains +4 enhancement bonus on all saving throws against poison, disease and paralysis.

Source: *Lords of Madness* 213.







DM AID: A SHORT PRIMER ON DARGAS MOR

LOCATION

Dargas Mor (a name meaning “Forge Home” in the Common tongue) is located in an enormous cavern, deep beneath the Clatspur Mountains, west of the Highvale and north of Highfolk. The city itself is made mostly of granite and other stones found in the general area. The dwarves have mines that were once commonly in operation only 2-3 miles from the city, but those have since fallen into disuse, and are havens for monsters.

CITY FEATURES

The city has over 4000 inhabitants, almost all of who are mountain dwarves (there are some elementals that live within the city as well). The most prominent features include the All-Father’s Temple, a multi-level complex devoted to Moradin (as well as the other non-evil deities of the dwarven pantheon), the all of Ancestors (the throne of the city’s ruler, as well as the meeting place for his advisory council), the Sacred Gate (a giant stone ring that is used as a calling focus for *planar ally* spells), the Hammerstrike Forge (the hottest and most active forge in the city), and the Wheel of Inevitability (a large stone time wheel surrounded by a lake, fed by an underground river). In addition, just outside the walls of the city, in the four corners, stand the Guardians of Dargas Mor, stone golems mystically linked to the city from the evils of arcane magic.

THE INHABITANTS

Dargas Mor is populated by mountain dwarves who, long ago, lost contact with the surface world. They continue their existence, despite the threat of invasion by creatures of the Deep (which most know as the Underdark). The dwarves of Dargas Mor call themselves Dargakind, or Children of the Forge, and they are staunch traditionalists. While other dwarven societies may have been influenced to some degree by the outside world, these dwarves have been separated from that influence for hundreds of generations, and have instead fallen back on their ancient traditions to give them strength. They call this the Path of the Righteous, and almost every citizen follows it, although some are much more serious about it than others. The Path is like a code of conduct, and it includes the following: behave in a manner epitomizing law and good, honor and cherish the family, respect both elders and their wisdom, work hard at developing a craft, show courage in the face of adversity, and avoid any dealings with arcane magic. The Dargakind believe very strongly that the duergar strayed from the Path to become what they are now. In fact, more so than giants or goblins, the duergar are the Dargakind’s mortal enemy (although many pity them for their choice of existence).

Dargakind males and females who have not undergone the Rite of Bearding are clean-shaven to denote their status as children. Dargakind women wear short, neatly trimmed beards, while Dargakind men wear their beards long and in different customs dependant on their clan. Their hair tends towards reds and browns, and their eye color is almost always brown (although rarely, green is found – mostly in females). The Dargakind tend to be in good shape physically, as most of their time is spent pursuing a craft that usually carries some physical demands (such as stonecarving or weaponsmithing). While they do not disdain knowledge, the Dargakind have a strong oral tradition, and do not often write things down (although most of the society is literate).

The dwarves have divided themselves into clans, basically extended families that generally (though not always) follow a certain trade. The six clans are the Ironstone (the ruling clan and clan of nobles), the Keygate (the clan of elementalists and priests), the Hammerstrike (the clan of master craftsmen), the Deepcavern (the lore keepers and farmers), the Darkdelver (the scouts and trap makers), and the Sharpaxe (the warriors and guards).

ELEMENTALS

More than any other creature, perhaps more than even other dwarves, the Dargakind have a very strong bond with elementals from the four elemental planes (air, earth, fire, and water). Long ago, the dwarves found that an allegiance with the elemental lords from those planes was most beneficial to them, and ever since, they have had an equitable relationship, paying them in either favors or material for the services they provide to the city. In fact, the greatest of the elementals, the Sacred Four (elemental elders), are integral to the city survival. Shooousshh the elder air elemental controls and directs the flow of air circulation and soot removal. Fezalezu, the elder fire elemental, stokes the greatest forge in the city, keeping it hotter than all others. Wugullag is the water counterpart who keeps the great Wheel of Inevitability moving constantly, allowing the dwarves to keep time in their skyless domain. Lastly, Murwag (also called the Keeper of Lore) the elder earth elemental teaches the dwarves his secrets of the earth and the magic it holds (such as the creation of stone golems and the discipline of the stonelords). He is looked upon as the greatest of the Four. Some other elementals, closely tied to the four prime elementals have also come through the Sacred Gate, such as walking walls and thoqquas.

The Sacred Gate itself is vital to contact with the elementals, and it is used as a focus for all *planar ally* spells cast by the clerics. All elementals are brought to Dargas Mor through the Sacred Gate; in fact, it has become so intrinsically tied with those spells that the clerics cannot cast the *planar ally* spells without using

the gate as a focus. The gate always seems to call elementals to it – never outsiders.

HISTORY

Dargas Mor was once a part of a much more vast dwarven kingdom that stretched on for miles beneath the Clatspur range. Over 3000 years ago, an event of cataclysmic proportions known as the Sundering caused a massive collapse of most of the cavern tunnels, sealing the dwarves of Dargas Mor in their immediate area. It was soon discovered that they were essentially alone, and that any remaining tunnels only lead down into the Deep. Eventually, the clerics called for aid, and after a long time spent in prayer, received help in the form of an earth elemental named Murwag. The elder elemental helped the dwarves to build the Sacred Gate, and he was instrumental in making peaceable bargains with other elementals that were called to the dwarves. After numerous conflicts with the duergar, Murwag helped the dwarves construct the Guardians of Dargas Mor, the stone golems that protect the city from arcane magic. After a while, he retreated to a life of enigma, speaking only to certain dwarves known as the Chosen. The dwarves continued their existence, finding their ties to the elementals they called through the Sacred Gate growing. In order to keep their society from crumbling into chaos, they established the Path of the Righteous, a code of conduct to govern their behavior. All this time, their enemies, the duergar, were growing in numbers and cunning. Less than a century ago, the duergar struck a telling blow to the Dargakind by raiding and destroying their entire mining operation. As time goes on, it is becoming clear to the Council of Wisdom (the advisors to the ruler) and the Thane (the ruler of Dargas Mor) that something needs to be done soon, or their whole civilization will fall to the duergar.

DM AID: HIGHFOLK INFLUENCE CHARTS

REGIONAL INFLUENCE POINTS

The following lists are the Highfolk region's Influence Points (abbreviated "IP"), and their uses in the region. Influence Points are normally gained through scenarios, and are a way of keeping track of favors that others owe the hero. Some influence may also be purchased with gold.

In addition to the uses listed below, certain events may have special opportunities for characters to use accumulated Influence Points. Heroes may also pool influence to receive a better effect. Adventuring Companies receive additional benefits with certain Influence Point uses. Influence points may be turned in during any Highfolk Regional as follows.

CHURCH OF EHLONNA

While not an overly religious people, the folk of the Faidrells do favor certain deities, most agricultural or nature-oriented. Ehlonna is most revered of all, as her areas of emphasis mesh well with the lifestyle of the people in the Highfolk region.

1 Influence Point (purchase price: 40 gold)

- Lodging at the temple in Highfolk or Quaalsten for one scenario (lifestyle cost halved)
- Requirement for 3rd- or 4th-level spells to be cast, except *reincarnate* (see the Judge Guidelines for more details)

3 Influence Points (purchase price: 160 gold)

- Requirement for 5th-level spells to be cast, also *reincarnate* (see the Judge Guidelines for more details)

6 Influence Points (purchase price: 400 gold)

- Requirement for 6th-level spells to be cast (see the Judge Guidelines for more details)

10 Influence Points (purchase price: 1600 gold)

- Requirement for 7th-level spells to be cast (see the Judge Guidelines for more details)

FOLLOWERS OF THE SELDARINE PANTHEON

The elves are everywhere in the Faidrells, and their gods walk with them. Second only to the Church of Ehlonna in religious followers, the clerics who follow the Seldarine can bestow gifts on the people of Highfolk as well (for a price).

General Note: Humans, Halflings, and Gnomes must pay one level higher to purchase these perks. Dwarves must pay two levels higher. Half-Orcs may not purchase anything from this list. Elf Friend status negates this penalty (although Half-Orcs still cannot use this list).

1 Influence Point (purchase price: 50 gold)

- Requirement for 3rd- or 4th-level spells to be cast, except *reincarnate* (see the Judge Guidelines for more details)

3 Influence Points (purchase price: 200 gold)

- Requirement for 5th-level spells to be cast, also *reincarnate* (see the Judge Guidelines for more details)

6 Influence Points (purchase price: 500 gold)

- "Elf Friend" status can be gained by any PC (except dwarves and half-orcs), allowing the PC to freely travel to Flameflower (Influence cannot be purchased)
- Requirement for 6th-level spells to be cast (see the Judge Guidelines for more details)

10 Influence Points

- "Elf Friend" status can be gained by any dwarven PC, allowing the PC to freely travel to Flameflower (Influence cannot be purchased)

15 Influence Points

- Entry can be gained into the Lands of the Tree for a short while (e.g., one scenario)

GNOMISH CONSORTIUM OF MERCHANTS, MONEYLENDERS, MINERS, AND GEMCUTTERS

The gnomes are well regarded in the Highfolk region as the race with the most business acumen. The Gnomish Consortium embodies that ideal. Having "family" seemingly all over the region, these wily gnomes deal in goods otherwise hard to come by. They also are strong advocates of acceptance for all races (including half-orcs).

1 Influence Point (purchase price: 50 gold)

- Trade license in Gildenhand (PC must also possess 4+ ranks in Craft or Profession skill that he/she is seeking license for)
- Letter of introduction, useful for one scenario

3 Influence Points (purchase price: 200 gold)

- Backing of PC for Town Council position

6 Influence Points (purchase price: 500 gold)

- Consortium Membership (20% discount on all standard PH alchemical items purchased in Gildenhand)

GUILDSMEN OF THE HIGH ART

Arcane spellcasters are relatively common in and around Highfolk, and recently, they have decided to share some secrets with each other. Even though it is somewhat cliquish and chaotic, the magical might they collectively possess cannot be denied.

General note: All services are only performed within the town of Highfolk.

1 Influence Point (purchase price: 50 gold)

- Requirement for 3rd- or 4th-level spells to be cast (see the Judge Guidelines for more details)

3 Influence Points (purchase price: 200 gold)

- Requirement for 5th-level spells to be cast (see the Judge Guidelines for more details)
- Members of the Guildsmen will research a topic for you. After one day they report back on one topic (Knowledge skill check) with all information available to them (DC 25 or less).

6 Influence Points (purchase price: 500 gold)

- Requirement for 6th-level spells to be cast (see the Judge Guidelines for more details)

HIGHFOLK TOWN COUNCIL

Known for arguing about everything under the sun and getting little accomplished, the Town Council still can be considered an influential organization, if one knows the right people. One of the council's main tasks is the parceling of land in and around Highfolk Town.

General Note: These points may also be spent on political campaigning. They may only be spent at interactives or directly through the Wisconsin Triad. All land purchases are subject to approval.

1 Influence Point (purchase price: 50 gold)

- Business license to operate in the Town of Highfolk

3 Influence Point (purchase price: 200 gold)

- Additional requirement to purchase a plot of land outside the Town of Highfolk (land for sale by the Triad only)

6 Influence Points (purchase price: 500 gold)

- Additional requirement to purchase a plot of land in the town's Poor District (land for sale by the Triad only)

10 Influence Points (purchase price: 2000 gold)

- Additional requirement to purchase a plot of land in the town's Merchant District (land for sale by the Triad only)

15 Influence Points (purchase price: 5000 gold)

- Additional requirement to purchase a plot of land in the town's Temple or Elven Districts (land for sale by the Triad only)

KASHAFEN TAMAREL, LORD OF THE HIGH ELVES

The leader of Clan Shandareth has a long reach, and it extends throughout the Highfolk region. He is regarded as the noblest of all elves, and his word commands respect and order. Note that Influence Points with the Lord of the High Elves cannot be purchased; they must be earned through interaction. Kashafen's influence may also be used for favors from the Followers of the Seldarine Pantheon.

1 Influence Point

- "Elf Friend" status can be gained by any PC (except dwarves and half-orcs), allowing the PC to freely travel to Flameflower

3 Influence Points

- Admission to the Elven Court at Flameflower for one event (for non-elf (except dwarves or half-orcs) PCs only; elves and half-elves can do this if the situation warrants it without spending IPs)
- May freely come and go in the Elven Court (for elf and half-elf PCs only)
- "Elf Friend" status can be gained by any dwarven PC, allowing the PC to freely travel to Flameflower

6 Influence Points

- Racial representative to the Elven Court; a non-elf PC (except dwarves or half-orcs) may come and go freely

10 Influence Points

- Racial representative to the Elven Court; a dwarven PC may come and go freely

MERCHANT GUILDS OF HIGHFOLK

The various merchant guilds spread out in Highfolk and the Highvale. They see much of the activities of both common and uncommon men and women. Merchant guilds may also allow the use of Influence Points to buy certain items at a lower price (such cases will be noted in specific events).

1 Influence Point (purchase price: 50 gold)

- Perfect Gather Information skill check (all information available on subject is learned); can only be used in Highfolk or Verbeeg Hill, and one day must be spent in town

3 Influence Points (purchase price: 200 gold)

- Trade license (PC must also possess 4+ ranks in Craft or Profession skill that he/she is seeking license for)

6 Influence Points (purchase price: 500 gold)

- Backing of PC for Town Council position

10 Influence Points (purchase price: 2000 gold)

- Guild Membership (20% discount on all standard PH goods purchased in Highfolk)

PATRON'S GUILD OF NOREBO

The Smiling Halls of Good Fortune smile upon those who give generously at their worship services - the dice tables and other games of the gambling halls in Verbeeg Hill. The High Roller (high priest) is very wealthy as a result; and with wealth, comes power.

General Note: These points may only be spent during a module. None of the benefits are permanent. All benefits must be gotten in Verbeeg Hill.

1 Influence Point (purchase price: 50 gold)

- 1 Fortune Lotto Ticket (may only be purchased at specific events)

3 Influence Points (purchase price: 200 gold)

- Favor of the House - for one scenario, no "bad luck" will occur to you at the gambling table, and your games will be blessed with "good luck" while you play (+2 sacred bonus to Profession (Gambler))
- Lodging at the temple in Verbeeg Hill for one scenario (lifestyle cost halved)

6 Influence Points (purchase price: 1000 gold)

- Lucky Nines - you are allowed one (and only one) reroll during one (and only one) Highfolk regional scenario (Does not stack with other rerolls.)

10 Influence Points (purchase price: 5000 gold)

- Winner on Double Down - you are allowed one reroll per day of one (and only one) Highfolk regional scenario (Does not stack with other rerolls).

MORDIANNA RELLEN—TAMAREL, MAYOR OF HIGHFOLK TOWN

The Mayor is an old adventurer herself, and still has a soft spot for heroes of renown. Note that Influence Points with the Mayor cannot be purchased; they must be earned through interaction. Mordianna's influence may also be used for favors from the Church of Ehlonna, Gnomish Consortium, Guildsmen of the High Art, Highfolk Town Council, and the Merchant Guilds.

1 Influence Point

- Letter of introduction, useful for one scenario

3 Influence Points

- Personal backing of PC for Town Council position
- Writ of Investigation for one scenario (Subject to refusal)

6 Influence Points

- Life imprisonment sentence may be reviewed and possibly lessened

10 Influence Points

- Death sentence may be commuted to exile from the land.

PLAYER HANDOUT 1A – CARESS OF ANGELS

You dream of place under the mountain. It is a dark place where tentacles appear and disappear at the corner of your vision. You spiral down a path which parts in four ways. At the end of each path is a locked chest. The first chest is being buffeted by a strong wind; the second chest is covered in dirt; the third chest is on fire; and the fourth chest is underwater. Behind you a dark figure arises. You catch a glimpse of it before you awake from your sleep (or reverie) with the thought you must recover the contents of the locked chest before the dark figure does.

PLAYER HANDOUT 1B – KISS OF DEVILS

A nightmare plagues your sleep. You are in a dark and vile place caught in the grasp of a multitude of slimy seething tentacles. The tentacles drag you down a spiral path which parts in four ways. At the end of each path is a locked chest. The first chest is being buffeted by a strong wind; the second chest is covered in dirt; the third chest is on fire; and the fourth chest is underwater. Behind you a dark figure arises. The tentacles throw you to the dark figure that then proceeds to rend you limb from limb before it begins to devour you. As it consumes the last of your body, you awake from your sleep (or reverie) with the thought you must possess the contents of the locked chests.

PLAYER HANDOUT 1C – BORN OF THE VESPE

You dream of a dark place under the mountain. Your dream is interrupted by a quiet but urgent elderly female voice. “I am the Seer of All Time. Seek the source of evil in this dark place and you will find the keys.” With that you rouse from your reverie.

PLAYER HANDOUT 1D – DEVOTED

You dream of a dark place under the mountain. Before you step into the dark place, a tiny mote of light appears before you. The tiny mote speaks to you in a quiet whisper. “I am the Dreamer of the Sea and Stars. Seek the keys in this dark place and you shall find the source of the evil.” With that the tiny mote of light fades and you awake from your sleep (or reverie).