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Sufferhorn Castle

by Will Myers and Jonathan G. Nelson

4 PCs

LEVELS 2-3



Sufferhorn Castle

A 5th Edition compatible adventure for four 2nd to 3rd level PCs
Sufferhorn orcs, cover art, and inspiration for this adventure by Scott Ackerman

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The Sufferhorn Orcs

Adventure Background

The Sufferhorn Orcs are the ruling clan of all orc, ogre, and troll tribes in the Gorrok Empire. They are led by the War-chief Kronak Butcherblade who raised the Sufferhorn tribes to conquer all those of lesser strength at the legendary Gorrok Point, which is Orcish for "Kill" (Gor) "Pit" (Rok) or Killpit. The site of their now mighty empire was dubbed as such after Kronak's unstoppable Sufferhorn clansmen and women slaughtered the leaders and members of those lesser tribal armies before stacking the bodies under a mound they would start to build their empire on. This site acted as a brutal warning to any tribe that would attempt to rise up against Butcherblade and his kin. That mound is the "Killpit" or Gorrok. Since then, weaker tribes have been established by lesser known war-chiefs, all of whom pledge loyalty to Kronak. They do so by backing any campaign he declares and by producing some integral element that strengthens the orc forces. Two of these lesser tribes are the Grindblok Tribe, which makes some of the best axes in the land, and the Boarhut Tribe, which trains giant boars to be ridden into battle.

The Sufferhorn tribe has now started to invade northern Yolhaven in order to expand its empire. It has done so by setting up small encampments in mountain caves and other hidden dwellings that slowly allow them to build up supplies and forces until they are ready to launch a guerrilla attack on unsuspecting towns. The Yols are simple farming folk and are not prepared to deal with heavily-armed orc forces. A call has gone out to adventurers who would help in a campaign to find these orc warrens, so that people of Yolhaven can live without fear of being attacked.

Sufferhorn Orcs stand taller than an average orc at 2 meters even when hunched over. Their heavy, compact frames can wield greataxes and troll clubs with ease. Some can even dual-wield without being slowed down by the nearly double handed size of their weapons. Sufferhorn Orcs are most well known for their long horns which they only cut when they are defeated in battle, with the length of the horns signifying how long a warrior is undefeated, as well as the higher his or her rank in the tribe. The Sufferhorn Orcs are the only orcs that are allowed to grow beards and full hair on their heads. Most orcs keep their hair tied back or rolled in a bone ornament or matted back with bone marrow, leaving their hair glistening as though it were in a clear jelly. Self scarification is extremely popular and is felt to be the one true way orcs can show their loyalty to the Empire of Gorrok, Kronak and the whole of the Sufferhorn Clan. This scarification is done in the Orcish language and often reveals pledges to Kronak or the Empire of Gorrok. Individual pledges are done either through fire branding or by cutting and then sealing the wounds with Jakkor root, which turns a scarred wound dark red - a color that contrasts well with their dark green and grayish-green skin color.

A group of war-mongering orcs, ogres, and trolls, led by Dolaken Boarhut, cousin of Kronak Butcherblade, has moved in on the unsuspecting human occupants of the small Mosshammer castle. Talks of war have been brewing among the orcs for over a year now, and Dolaken hopes to be the catalyst which begins the fire to extinguish the weak "non-green skins". Dolaken sees this castle as a strategic location and has claimed it as his own. He has also declared himself lord over this castle and the realm, now renamed "Castle Sufferhorn".

Adventure Synopsis

The PCs are besought by Irnaun Withail to take back Mosshammer Castle from the wretched Boarhut tribe of orcs. The money he would normally use for payment is in the castle. He offers the PCs what treasure is left in the castle as payment for their services.

Approaching the castle will force the PCs to confront a group of valiant undead guardians which may be dispatched through combat or diplomatic wisdom.

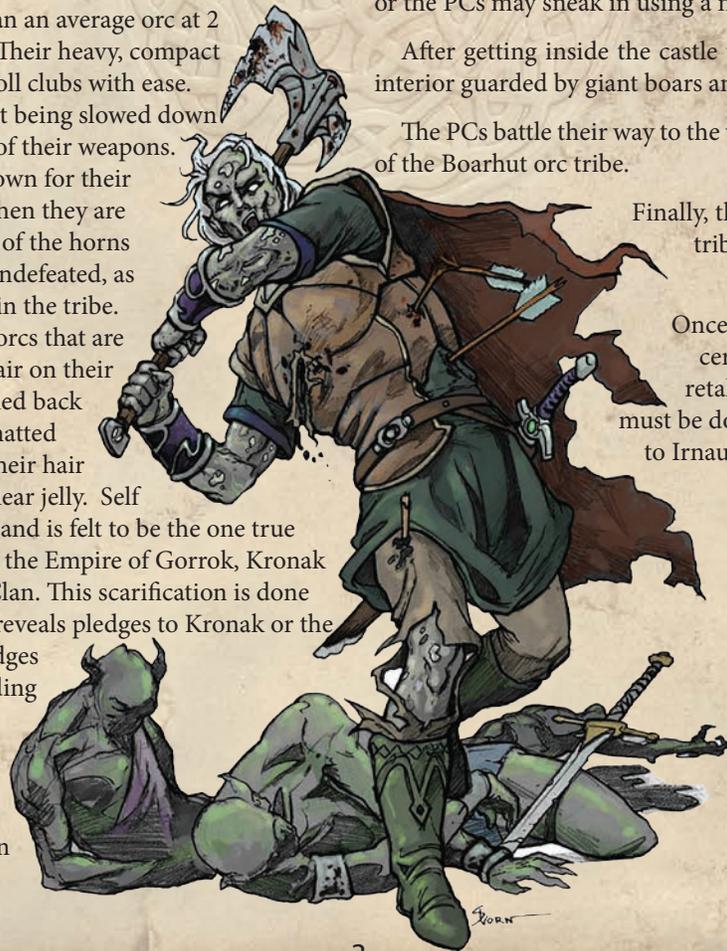
Nearing the castle, the PCs must take care not to be spotted by the orcs inside. Either the PCs will be spotted, and the alert sound, or the PCs may sneak in using a number of stealthy methods.

After getting inside the castle the PCs find a burnt and gutted interior guarded by giant boars and ogres.

The PCs battle their way to the top of the castle, fighting the core of the Boarhut orc tribe.

Finally, the PCs confront the leader of the tribe and his brother, both of whom present a significant challenge.

Once cleaned out, the PCs must make certain to secure the castle lest it be retaken by another local enemy. This must be done before handing the keys over to Irnaun Withail back at the local town.



Adventure Hooks

Sufferhorn Castle

The party is hired by Irnaun Withail, the former keeper of Mosshammer Castle, now Sufferhorn Castle. He wishes to return to the castle and restore honor to the Mosshammer name, but the orcs are preventing it. He will provide the PCs with one item of their choice: a potion of greater healing, a book on the tactics of the Boarhut tribe, or a banner of Castle Mosshammer. The potion of greater healing may be used as normal, the book of tactics will give any PCs who read it (6 hours) a +2 bonus on initiative in any skirmish with the Boarhut tribe, and the banner will help the PCs bypass the skeletal soldiers barring entry to the castle. **Remember:** The PCs may only choose one item; Withail will explain that he needs to keep the other two in case the party fails and he needs to recruit and equip another band of adventurers.

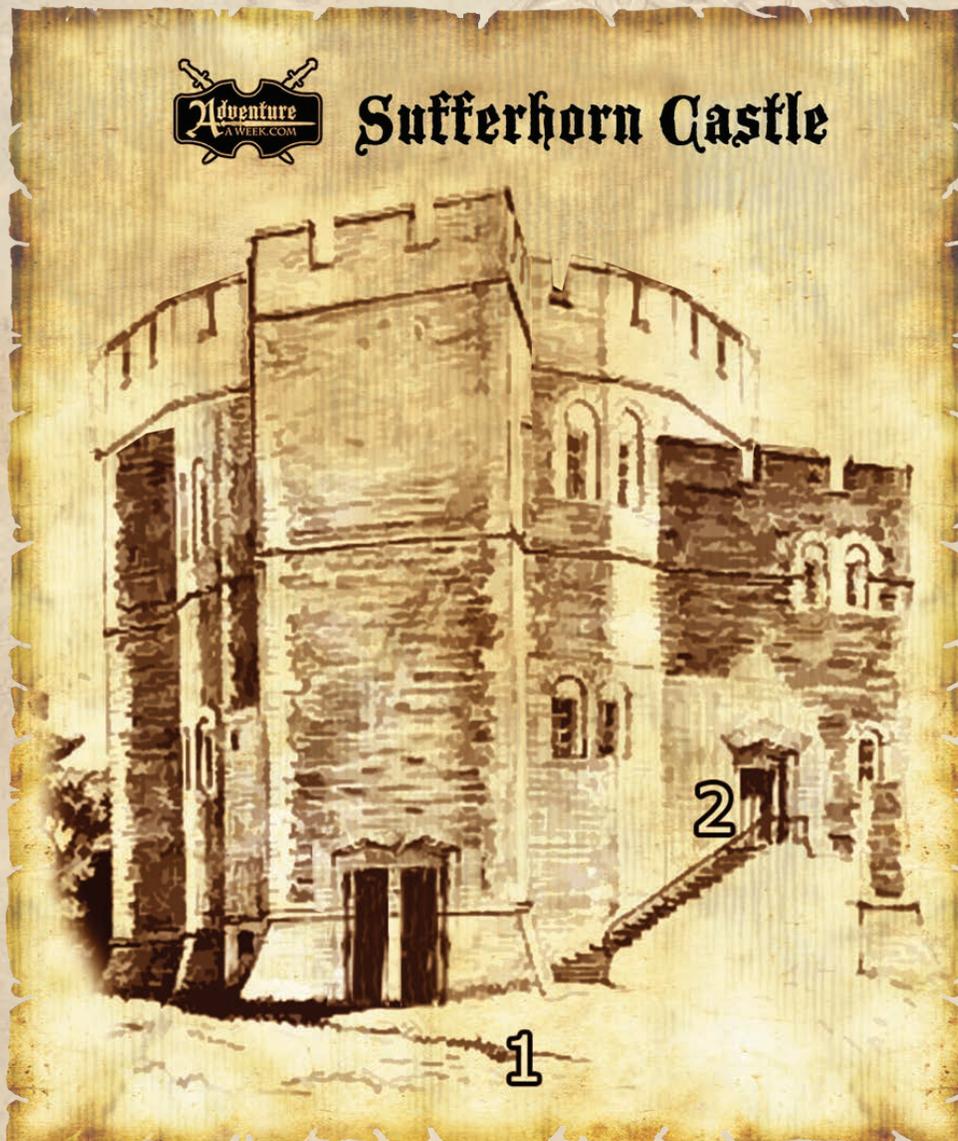
Aside from the main quest to remove the Boarhut Orcs from the castle, the party is also hired privately by Onalit Chetug. Onalit is an elderly priest who wishes to have a sacred relic from the chapel in Sufferhorn Castle. In reality, Onalit Chetug is a con man and rogue, seeking a treasure that is hidden in the chapel that was taken from him and placed there for safe keeping. He has the key to a box hidden somewhere in the chapel.

The first floor of the castle is a burnt remnant of what the castle once was. When the Boarhut orcs attacked the castle, they smashed in the front door and lobbed in glass flasks that they had found during another raid. When one of the members tried drinking the liquid inside the flask, the rest of the tribe learned that whatever was in the flasks (alchemist fire) burned without end, until it ran out of things to burn. The human defenders of the castle didn't stand much of a chance. They were either burned inside or they were slaughtered as they ran out from the burning keep to escape the flames. Once the conflagration stopped, the orcs went so far as to stab and smash many of the skeletons that remained so that they didn't rise as undead. Most of the occupants that perished inside the castle are now decorations for the orcs; the burnt, blackened skeletons are pinned to the wall with cruel barbed spikes. The rest, as well as those that ran outside, are lined up in two rows, remaining the castle's guardians. The ogres and the troll are content to stay in the burnt out interior of the first floor.

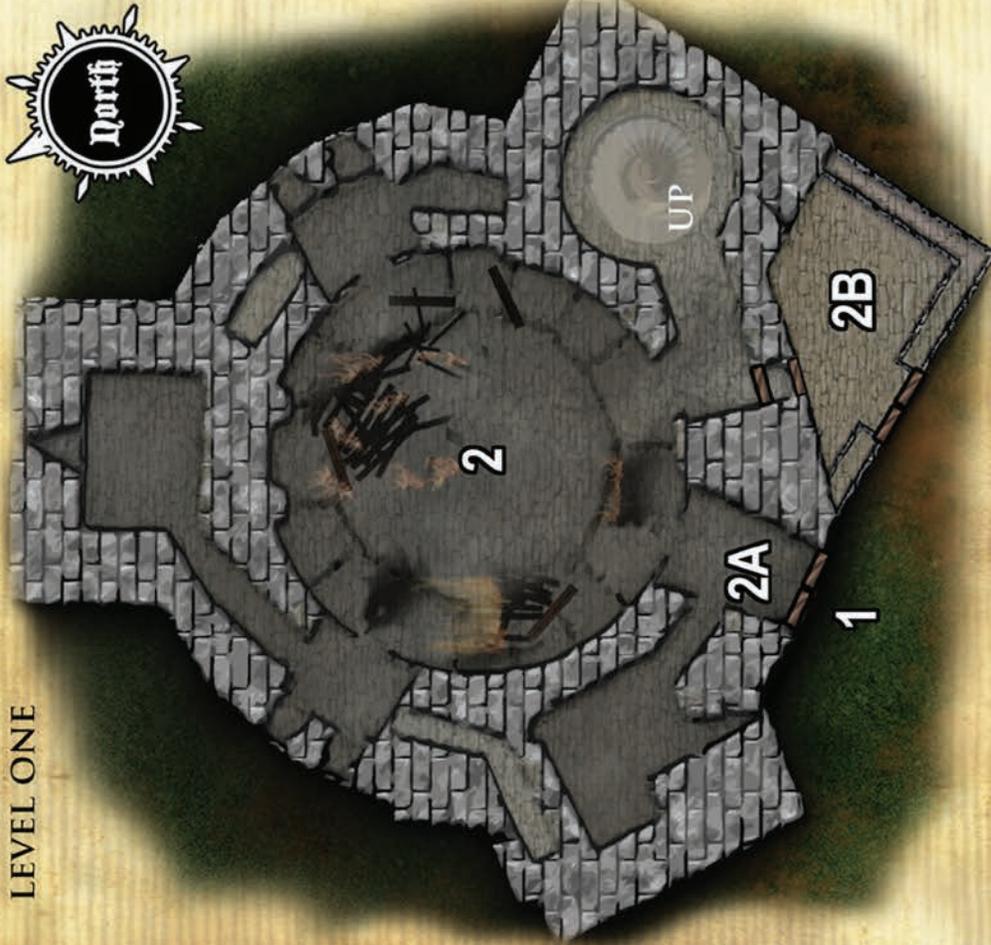
The only significant part of the first floor to escape burning was the chapel.

The second floor was also spared from burning and is now home to Dolaken Boarhut, who resides in room 10. While the opulence of the original decor is now damaged, the pieces remain. On the walls of the second floor are painted portraits of the castle's former occupants, but they have been slashed, knocked crooked, and are defaced with various best-not-investigated substances.

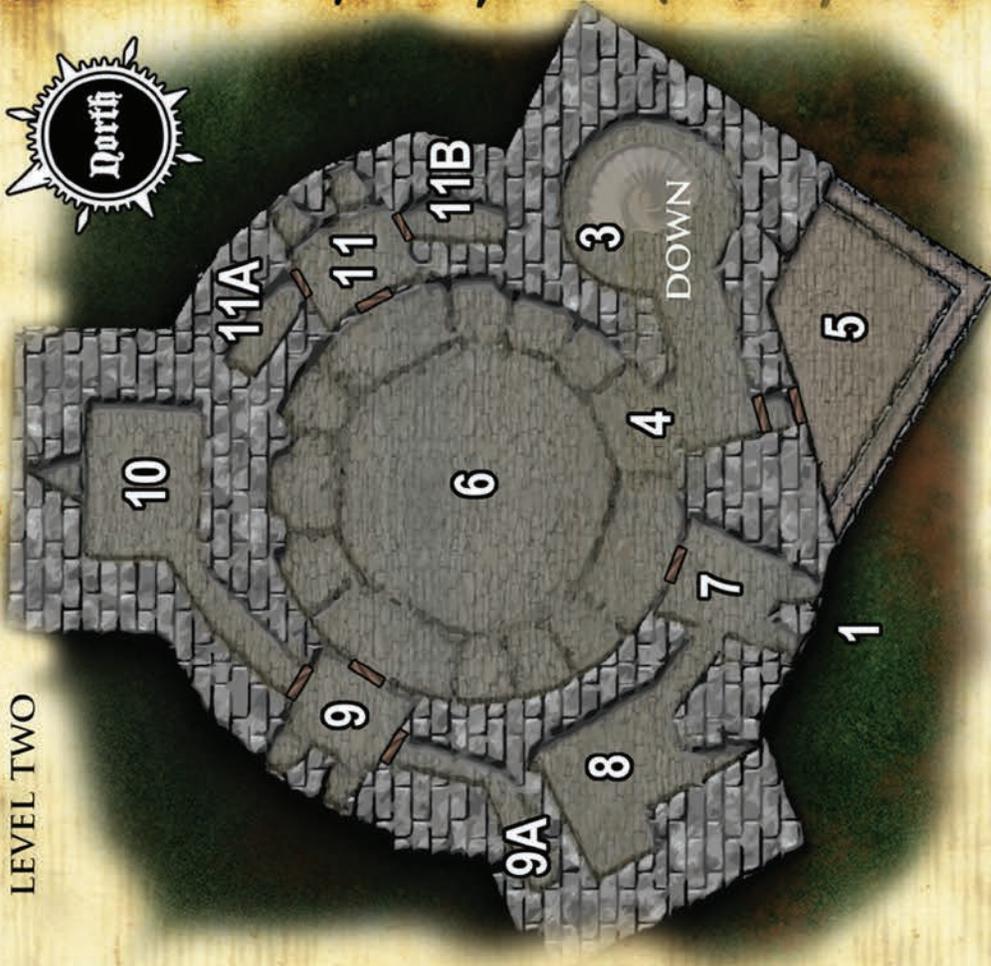
Dolaken's brother and lieutenant, Harveken, claimed room 11 for his own. The rest of the tribe of orcs stays in room 6, the Main Chamber.



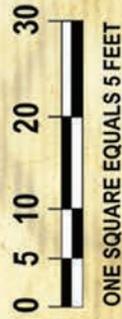
LEVEL ONE



LEVEL TWO



ORC HELD CASTLE



1. Path to Castle

A dirt path leads from the lowlands up to Sufferhorn Castle. As the path crests a rise, it is apparent this castle has recently been host to a siege. The windows on the first floor are all broken out and black streaks trail up the walls above each window, evidence that a large fire once tore through the interior. The knights that died protecting this castle are now situated in two large stacks on either side of the path, driven onto two long, sharpened poles by the Boarhut tribe. Most of the corpses have had their flesh and muscle picked clean by carrion birds. These skeletons were placed here by Harveken Boarhut, using a scroll he found which contained a spell called *placate spirit*. This allowed him to use the undead as guardians for his tribe. However, the spirits of these guardians are still loyal to Castle Mosshammer.

As the PCs move past, the skeletons on the two poles begin to twitch and struggle, finally breaking free of the poles in 1d2 rounds. Once free, the skeletons converge on the PCs, clacking their jaws and pulling at the ragged remains of their clothes. The skeletons are permanently bound to protecting the castle and will not allow anyone to approach any closer. They are attempting to warn the PCs to stay away, and should a *speak with dead* spell be cast, the undead will continually scream, "Stay away from Mosshammer Castle!" They provide no other information and cannot answer the PCs questions.

If the PCs approach the castle doors the mob of skeletal soldiers will attack. If the **banner of Castle Mosshammer** is carried, or if the name **Irnaun Withail**

is called out to the skeletal soldiers, they will cease their attack and allow the PCs to pass unharmed. Irnaun Withail is the former keeper of Mosshammer Castle to which the skeletons owe allegiance.

If a PC both carries the banner and demonstrates allegiance to Irnaun Withail, the skeletons will follow the PCs inside the castle and assist them in combat against the Boarhut tribe.



Combat

6 Mosshammer Skeletal Soldiers total XP 300;
Adjusted XP 600; Hard

Tactics: Surround the enemy and seize the strategic advantage.

Skeleton

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 13 (armor scraps)

Hit Points 13 (2d8 + 4)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	6 (-2)	8 (-1)	5 (-3)

Damage Vulnerabilities bludgeoning

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages understands all languages it knew in life but can't speak.

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

ACTIONS

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Hiding out

If the PCs wish to do some recon before entering the castle, they may attempt to locate a good hiding place either among some scrub brush in the plains just south of the approaching path, or in the swamp lands to the east of the castle. Watching the castle for 24 hours reveals that a hunting party leaves the castle a couple hours before sunset and returns at dusk with numerous fresh kills from the nearby swamp. This hunting party leaves and returns at practically the same time every night and can be ambushed near the swamp without the occupants of the castle becoming immediately aware. If the PCs are able to kill the orcs and don their equipment they could attempt to sneak into the castle and at least gain the upper-hand in the first combat scenario should they think wisely about it.

Combat

4 Sufferhorn Orcs Encounter total XP 400; Adjusted XP 800; Deadly

Tactics: The orcs which comprise this party are growing tired of this routine and will look for any way to have fun with the PCs. If the PCs are spotted trailing the group, the orcs will feign ignorance only to lead the PCs deeper into the dangerous swamp and double back on them when they least expect it. The Sufferhorn Orcs are quite adept at travel and survival in the swamp and obtain a advantage on Wisdom (Perception) and Wisdom (Survival) checks made whilst traveling here. They are also able to move at normal movement rates when others are reduced to half due to the swampy terrain.

Before Combat Orcs make few preparations before combat, preferring to charge headlong at any foe that presents itself.

During Combat The Sufferhorn Orcs have perfected the craft of fighting in small spaces, so they use large one-handed weapons instead of two-handed weapons like regular orcs. While the Sufferhorn Orcs inflict as much suffering on their opponents as possible, they know to follow Dolaken's orders. These orcs fight in an organized fashion, using ranged weapons first, if possible, before closing into melee. They will also protect Dolaken and Harveken to the best of their abilities in combat.

Morale Sufferhorn Orcs are a determinedly loyal lot, mostly out of fear. They will not flee combat unless directed to do so by Dolaken or Harveken.



Orc

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (hide armor)

Hit Points 15 (2d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	7 (-2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Intimidation +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

ACTIONS

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d12 + 3) slashing damage.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Spotted by the Orcs

If the PCs are engaged in combat in area 1 the orcs hear the commotion and become alerted to their presence. Within 2 rounds, 1d4+8 orcs begin to fire arrows from the windows (area 7) on level two of the castle and the balcony (level 5) gaining a +2 to hit due to their vantage point and higher ground on the PCs. The rest of the orcs will be alerted and prepare for the arrival of the PCs, which will make for a difficult assault on the interior of the castle.

If the PCs remain in area 1 for more than five minutes, there is a 80% chance they will be spotted during the daytime and a 40% chance they will be spotted at night. These checks increase cumulatively by 10% for every additional minute the PCs remain in area 1.

Castle Doors

The castle is protected by two sets of wooden double doors. One allows entry directly to the charred Great Hall of the first floor (area 2), the other enters the Chapel (area 2B). All of the doors are twice the standard thickness as well as enhanced by magic for an extra layer of protection. A huge orcish waraxe now hangs above the main entry doors (to 2A) and is poised to fall should anyone attempt to touch the door. When an orc warrior chooses to leave the castle he holds a shield above his head to block the falling axe and then carefully replaces it upon re-entry.

Trap

A successful DC 17 **Wisdom (Perception)** check notices the trap. The trap may be disarmed using thieves tools and a successful DC 15 **Dexterity** check. If PCs spring the trap, an axe swings down striking both whoever is standing in front of the door and anyone directly behind that character. The falling axe makes an attack roll with a +8 to hit and does 4 (1d8) slashing damage on a successful hit.



2A. Front Door

One ogre out of the three will always be on guard here. If he hears the skeletons outside the door, he will use a sliding plate to look outside and see what is causing the commotion. If he sees trouble coming, he will warn the other ogre. Any sounds of combat will bring the nearest orcs, who will appear in 1d4 rounds.

Combat

2 Ogres Encounter total XP 900; Adjusted XP 1350;
Deadly

TACTICS

Before Combat Ogres rarely lay ambushes, and when they do, it's not so much because they are crafty as they are lazy. If they can kill a man with a well-thrown javelin, they don't have to fight or chase him down.

During Combat Once battle is joined, ogres wade into the thick of melee, swinging their clubs at any target that presents itself.

Morale When prey turns out to be more dangerous than they thought, the rare moment of good sense seizes the ogres; they flee if reduced to less than 5 hp.

Ogre

Large giant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 11 (hide armor)

Hit Points 59 (7d10 + 21)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)	5 (-3)	7 (-2)	7 (-2)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages Common, Giant

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

ACTIONS

Greatclub. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage.

2B. Former Chapel

The remains of the chapel are damaged, both from the orcs and ogres, not to mention the giant boars. The boars have been here for several weeks, leaving the room smelling like the very worst pig droppings. The odor is foul in the enclosed room, requiring a **DC 16 Constitution saving throw** or be poisoned for 1d4 minutes.

Upon the dais, under where the pulpit used to be, is a small wooden case hidden in the floor. A **DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check** is required to find the box among the debris from the pulpit. The box is locked and Onalit has the key. A **DC 25 Wisdom (Perception) check** will notice that the box is trapped.

The exterior door to what used to be the castle's chapel has been barred from the inside and is blocked with the remnants of pews piled up against the door. This is to keep the chapel's new residents, a small herd of giant boars, from getting out.

The door to the chapel from the inside of the castle is barred from the outside, to keep the boars in. Next to this interior door, a once beautiful cabinet has been damaged and is leaning against the wall on three legs. The shelves of the cabinet hold half a dozen stoppered, liquid-filled bottles. If these bottles are opened, the smell is salty and musky. Each bottle has a label. If any of the party members reads Orcish, the label reads "pig sweat."

These bottles are used to make the male boars more aggressive, as the smell of the sweat brings out the territorial nature of the boars. When thrown on a target, the boars will attack that specific target.

Combat

1 Giant Boar Encounter total XP 450; Adjusted XP 450; Medium

Tactics: Giant boars are simple but aggressive. A giant boar charges its opponent, trying to rip the target open with its tusks.

Giant Boar

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 42 (5d10 + 15)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	2 (-4)	7 (-2)	5 (-3)

Senses passive Perception 8

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Charge. If the boar moves at least 20 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a tusk attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) slashing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a **DC 13 Strength saving throw** or be knocked prone.

Relentless (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). If the boar takes 10 damage or less that would reduce it to 0 hit points, it is reduced to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

Tusk. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

2. Burnt and Gutted Interior

The four ogres that venerate Dolaken Boarhut live on the ground floor of the castle in what was once the Great Hall. Mattress and piles of straw litter the floor along with the remains of food and drink. These ogres follow the lead of Dolaken Boarhut not out of respect, but out of fear of Dolaken's brother, Harveken, who has a mystical control over them.





Side Quest: Reward for the Romantic

The main fireplace is located in the center of the room against the back wall. This fireplace holds a morbid secret found only by PCs which climb into and peer up into the chimney (also succeeding on a **Wisdom (Perception) DC 15**). For within this chimney rests the body of a man who died in an attempt to escape the castle during the orc attack. He survived long enough to make it halfway to the next level of the castle before the smoke from the castle fire overtook him. His skeletal and shrunken remains still tightly clutch the inside of the chimney, preserved from the smoke. If a PC attempts to climb up and inspect the body, he or she may notice (**Wisdom (Perception) DC 20** or **Wisdom (Perception) DC 15** with light or darkvision) a small scroll sticking out of his mouth. The scroll is wound tightly and bound with horse hair (**Intelligence (Nature) DC 12**).

The horse hair is wound so tightly and singed from the hot smoke it must be cut to unfurl the scroll. Attempts to slide it off will rip the already delicate parchment.

The letter also includes directions to “Carolyn’s” home in the nearby city as well as an advanced thank you from “Stephen” for delivering the letter.

PCs which take on this small quest after the adventure has concluded will be rewarded by Carolyn (who has already grieved when the castle was besieged and no survivors emerged). She will grant them 10 silver pieces and an old treasure map that her grandfather gave her. She has never heard of the locations on the map, but perhaps the PCs have.

If the PCs don’t find the letter in the fireplace you may alternatively have Carolyn hire them once word spreads of the reclamation of Mosshammer Castle. She gives them the 10 sp and also offers the treasure map once they find and return the body of her lover who must be among the dead, somewhere in the castle.

MY DEAREST CAROLYN,
A TERRIBLE TRAGEDY HATH BEFALLEN THE CASTLE.
A FORCE OF MONSTROUS HUMANIDS DOTH ASSAULT US AS I
WRITE THIS.
I WILL ATTEMPT TO FIND A WAY OUT OF THE CASTLE SO THE
TWO OF US MAY BE TOGETHER AGAIN, BUT I FEAR I MAY
NOT MAKE IT, THUS I WRITE THIS LETTER.
IF I PERISH, PLEASE KNOW THAT MY HEART BEATS FOR NO
OTHER.

YOURS FOREVER,
STEPHEN



Side Quest: Buried Treasure

Rumors (Charisma DC 10): The Dark Wood is supposedly haunted by malicious spirits of the Vikmordere, a tribal people with strong ties to nature.

GM Information & Ideas:

Cursed Creek is a foul, disease-filled water source which gurgles its way out of Dark Wood. Infected by devil spawn, the water is not safe to drink. If one consumes any of the water from Cursed Creek they will suffer the effects of poison, disease, and a horrible curse (all effects up to the GM).

A halfling named Garnid (**N Halfling Spy**) has been tricking travelers at **Little Crags Pass** into paying a toll in order to proceed. He has strategically stacked rocks and debris upon a hill in the shape of tall men holding bows. When the sun shines just right they appear to be shadowy figures upon the distant hillside. The PCs will have to use **Wisdom (Insight)** or pay a hefty toll of 20 gold to pass (the halfling determines his price based on his victim's appearance. If the PCs appear well off he will up this toll to 10 gold per person in the party.)

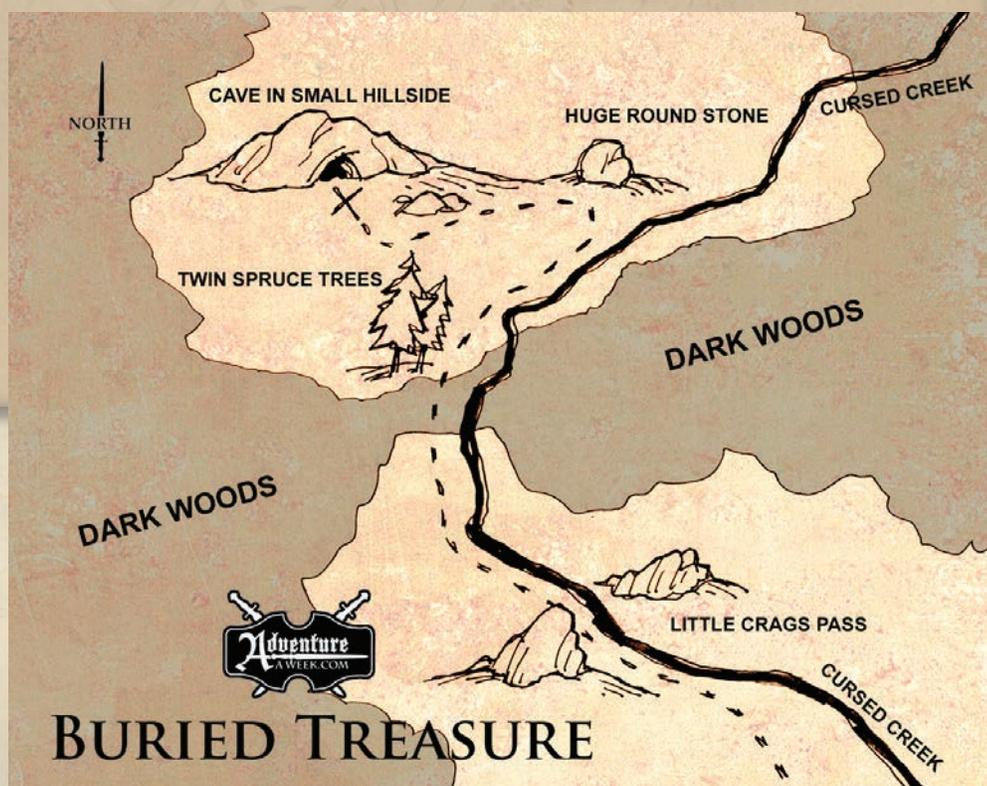
The Vikmordere Spirits are actually a group of Vikmordere hunters that was violently slain within Dark Wood and the members of which have risen as undead. For these "spirits" you may use Skeletons or Ghouls. The PCs will be attacked as they pass through Dark Wood. Should the PCs enter the woodland area with great care they may be able to get a jump on the undead before they are spotted.

The **Twin Spruce Trees** hold no event, but if you want to make things interesting you could introduce a lost Pixie from West Wood who has a broken wing and is looking for a free lift home. (XP bonus for good characters).

The **Huge Round Stone** is covered in the language of the Ancestor People (runic). A wizard or historian may be interested in these runes and would be willing to pay up to 30 gold for a rough hand drawn copy. The PCs may also attempt to decipher the runes. What could they possibly reveal? The location of a burial site? Treasure? An entrance to an underground city?

The **Cave in the Hillside** is home to a Bugbear with a couple goblin minions, or if the party is a bit stronger a Basilisk. According to the map the treasure is buried at the entrance to the cave. The PCs may have to put up with one of the above creatures before they are able to locate and dig up the treasure.

The **treasure chest** which was buried here contains 600 gp, a silver and gold necklace (100 gp value), and 2 small rubies (30 gp each).



3. Stairs

These spiral stairs are wide enough to allow two humans or one orc or one ogre to move up or down. The stairs themselves are chipped in places and are scored in others. There is nothing unusual about these stairs. The top of these stairs is out of view of the ogre at the entry to the Great Hall.

4. Entry to the Great Hall

The lone ogre that guards this area is more alert than his kin at the front door of the castle due to the proximity of Harveken Boarhut. He stands facing the stairs. He uses the hallway from the stairs as a choke point to hold off invaders. If combat ensues, he will bellow and the archer(s) from 11 will join in the defense of the Great Hall. Harveken will join in 2 rounds and Dolaken will join in 4 rounds.

Combat

1 Ogre Encounter total XP 450; Adjusted XP 450;
Medium

Tactics: Ogres favor overwhelming odds, sneak attacks, and ambushes over a fair fight. They are intelligent enough to fire ranged weapons first to soften up their foes before closing, but ogre gangs and bands fight as unorganized individuals.

Before Combat Ogres rarely lay ambushes, and when they do, it's not so much because they are crafty as because they are lazy. If they can kill a man with a well-thrown javelin, they don't have to fight or chase him down.

During Combat Once battle is joined, ogres wade into the thick of melee, swinging their clubs at any target that presents itself.

Morale When their prey turns out to be more dangerous than they thought, the rare moment of good sense seizes ogres; they flee if reduced to less than 5 hp.

See stats on page 6.

5. Balcony

The balcony is a place of punishment for the orcs. Those that are caught shirking duty, not displaying orc-like behavior, running from the "demon sheep" (see room 9), or simply by Dolaken's whim, are sent to the balcony, where they must stand guard in the sun, without food or water, for one full day. As the balcony is, at most, 30 feet wide on one side, this job is boring, even without the withholding of food.

Treat any guards on the balcony as having a -1 penalty to Initiative, Wisdom (Perception), and attack rolls.

6. The Great Hall

The Great Hall is a majestic sight to behold. Careful consideration was taken to construct this room as the focal point of the castle. The room itself is built from stone, but an old, partially burnt walkway skirts the wall about fifteen feet above the floor. Fine works of art decorate the walkway and are in each of the four corners, one has been spoiled with Orcish graffiti scrawled in blood and only legible to those well versed in the language. The words "ALL HUMANZ R DIEZ" have been written by one of the more learned of the group. The walkway is very unstable and the stairs which once led there have been burnt in a fire and destroyed. There are no other visible ways to reach the walkway.

A grand fireplace takes center stage in the room, large enough to use as a great oven. There are still some chairs set up facing the fireplace where the adults once told the children stories before bed. There are blood stains on the ground where the former occupants of this castle were slain when the orc troops stormed in. It is quite apparent that the orcs spared nothing and no-one. The pelts of the family dogs, beloved of the children, hang to dry near the fireplace whilst filthy and stinking orcs rock in rocking chairs, warming themselves and laughing next to the fire.

A grand dining table nearby has become a dumping ground for half eaten food, gore-stained weapons, and empty flagons. Two barrels of ale rest nearby, completely emptied of their contents.

The orcs in this room are the primary force holding the castle. They have consumed much of the food and all of the ale and now grow restless, prepared to move on and loot the next human settlement. Their leader, however, has sternly reminded them who is in charge and declared that they are to remain here and hold this castle for the time being. Whilst none of the orcs actually dares to confront their leader, none of them are happy about the arrangement either. A couple more weeks here and the tribe just may turn on their leader and his capable brother.

Combat



4 Sufferhorn Orcs Encounter total XP 400; Adjusted XP 900; Deadly

TACTICS

Before Combat Orcs make few preparations before combat, preferring to charge headlong at any foe that presents itself.

During Combat The Sufferhorn Orcs have perfected the craft of fighting in small spaces, so they use large one-handed weapons instead of two-handed weapons like regular orcs. While the Sufferhorn Orcs inflict as much suffering on their opponents as possible, they know to follow Dolaken's orders. These orcs fight in an organized fashion, using ranged weapons first, if possible, before closing into melee. They will also protect Dolaken and Harveken to the best of their abilities in combat.

Morale Sufferhorn Orcs are a determinedly loyal lot, mostly out of fear. They will not leave combat unless directed to do so by Dolaken or Harveken.

See stats on page 5.

7. Archer's Aerie

This room is used in defense of the castle during times of combat.

There is always one orc stationed here, with room for a second archer if needed. From outside the castle, it is difficult to see the orc through the narrow arrow slits. The orc(s) in this room will fire arrows at targets they can see while shouting a warning to the rest of the guards. Once the targets have passed where the archers can attack with bows, they will drop their ranged weapons and move to room 4 to help guard Stairwell 3.

So far, the orcs are unaware of the secret door that leads to the former armory.

One of the bricks of the north wall, when pushed inward, releases a latch for the secret door, allowing access to the armory. The lower half of the wall is covered in green moss, with the secret brick covered in a slightly different colored fake moss. A **DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check** is required to see the difference in color.

8. Former armory

This room was used by the archers from room 7 when their normal missiles seemed to be ineffective against attackers. Inside the secret door is a small pool of dried blood. The door itself has a version of the *arcane eye* spell cast upon it to allow someone inside this room to see room 7.

The former armory used to contain several quivers of +1 arrows and several +1 *longbows*, as well as a rack magical swords and hooks for magical shields. The small closet held half a dozen suits of +1 *leather armor*. Sadly, most of these items were used up in defense of the castle or damaged and not repaired before the Sufferhorn Orcs assaulted the castle.

Now, there is only one quiver of 4 +1 *arrows*. Two bows might still be of use, but they have been broken and repaired, so they are no longer magical. The magical swords are in disrepair, and the remaining shield no longer retains its magical properties.

In the closet, there are suits of leather armor in various states of disrepair. One suit, however, is intact enough to be worn, but does not retain its +1 bonus.

In the bottom of the closet is a skeleton dressed in a ruined suit of leather armor, sitting in broken glass, dried blood and an odd colored liquid stain. A **DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check** shows that the collarbone and the top two ribs are broken by a large, sharp bladed weapon. This skeleton is one of the former interior defenders of the castle. Upon taking what he knew was a mortal blow, he retreated into the secret room and closed the door to hide. A second **DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check** or a **DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check** will discover that the odd colored liquid is a spoiled healing potion.

9. Slaughterhouse

(Former bathhouse)

The stench of blood and the buzzing of numerous flies fills this room. What used to be the bath has been turned into a blood drain as animals and enemies are brought here to be slaughtered. Hooks that used to hold towels and robes now hold knives and axes of various sizes and shapes. The two doors on the north wall have nothing of any significance hanging on them. The closet to the right houses primitive sharpening tools and leftover towels used to wipe blades clean.

There are stories that circulate around the orcs that the spirits of goats and sheep that have been slaughtered haunt this room and more than one orc that has gone into the room to butcher the day's kills has coming screaming out of the room, babbling about "herds of demon sheep." Dolaken and Harveken have never seen this so they do not believe it and any orc that behaves in this manner is publicly humiliated by being sent to the balcony.

Combat

1 Demon Sheep Encounter total XP 450; Adjusted XP 450; Medium

Demon Sheep

Medium undead, neutral

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 13 (3d8)

Speed 0 ft, fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Ethereal Sight. The demon sheep can see 60 feet into the Ethereal Plane when it is on the Material Plane, and vice versa.

Incorporeal Movement. The demon sheep can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

ACTIONS

Etherealness. The demon sheep enters the Ethereal Plane from the Material Plane, or vice versa. It is visible on the Material Plane while it is in the Border Ethereal, and vice versa, yet it can't affect or be affected by anything on the other plane.

Horrifying Moan. Each non-undead creature within 60 feet of the demon sheep that can see it must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. A frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the frightened condition on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to this demon sheep's Horrifying Visage for the next 24 hours.

9A. Closet

The odour in this room is retch-inducing. This closet is lined with chunks of meat cut off of numerous animals and various enemies. Some have been here long enough to rot and mold.

10. Dolaken's Chamber

What was once a ruler's bedroom has become a pit of sloth. The king-sized feather bed remains in the room, but the frame has been broken and the mattress lay in the ruins. An armoire that used to hold regal finery is now beaten up and has large chunks missing out of it, with the former clothes scattered around the room, dirty and worthless. Bones and rotting animal parts have been tossed haphazardly around the room, creating an unpleasant aroma.

Not much of value is kept in this room because Dolaken, being marginally intelligent, knows that his room would be where someone seeking riches would look. Instead, he keeps the riches of the tribe in room 11a.

Combat

Dolaken Boarhut total XP 1,100; Adjusted XP 1,100; Deadly

Tactics Dolaken will engage the closest, most obvious melee opponent to prove his strength. He is smart enough to use his javelins to target spellcasters. Should the opponent begin besting Dolaken, he will begin fighting defensively and start looking for a way out.

Dolaken Boarhut

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (scale mail armor)

Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	7 (-2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Con +6

Skills Intimidation +2, Perception +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 4 (1100 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Dolaken Boarhut makes two greataxe attacks.

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d12 + 4) slashing damage.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.



11. Harveken's Chamber

Harveken Boarhut is a strange orc. While most take to combat with ease, Harveken found his way into magic. However, being an orc, he uses his magical abilities to bully others. Currently, Dolaken has his brother using his magic to keep the ogres in line. Harveken relishes in this, because the ogres are much bigger than he is, but they do what he says.

Harveken thinks that because of his innate magical abilities he is superior to the average orc. Because of his superiority, he shows that he is above the wanton destruction of that same average orc. His bedroom is still mostly intact from when he took it over. The bed still sits on its frame, even if the frame creaks when he lay down on it. The dresser is mostly intact (he is still an orc after all), holding the finery of the previous inhabitant. On top of the dresser, Harveken keeps a small collection of skulls of those that he has defeated in magical combat.

Combat

Harveken Boarhut total XP 1,100; Adjusted XP 1,100; Deadly

Tactics Harveken Boarhut dislikes physical combat because he's not very good at it. His magical abilities have been used to bully around the ogres, but he hasn't had many real chances to try his powers against enemy combatants. Harveken will begin combat by trying to slow a foe and then use magic missile and firebolt as many times as he can. When he runs out of useful spells, he will use his battle axe to defend himself while trying to stay out of melee combat.

Harveken Boarhut

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor Class 10 (13 with mage armor)

Hit Points 35 (5d8 + 15)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	9 (-1)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Constitution +6

Skills Arcana +1, Intimidation +6, Perception +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

Sorcery Points. Harveken has 5 sorcery points available. As a bonus action, he can spend 2 spell points to create a 1st level spell slot, 3 spell points to create a 2nd level spell slot, or 5 spell points to create a 3rd level spell slot. Harveken can also spend 2 spell points to cast a spell as a quickened spell reducing the casting time to a bonus action.

Spellcasting. The Harveken is a 5th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +6 to hit with spell attacks). Harveken has the following sorcerer spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt, mage hand, minor illusion, ray of frost, prestidigitation*
 1st level (4 slots): *detect magic, mage armor, magic missile,*
 2nd level (3 slots): *misty step, suggestion*
 3rd level (2 slots): *slow*

ACTIONS

Battle axe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage.

Mr. Harveken's Retreat

This room contains three treasure chests, each is trapped and holds treasure.

Rot Grub Chest (Chest One)

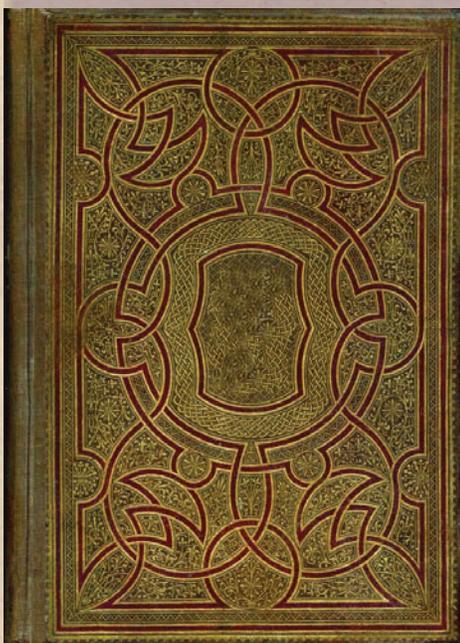
The lock (DC 22 **Dexterity check** to open) of this sturdy, iron bound chest conceals a rot grub. A successful DC 17 **Wisdom (Perception) check** reveals the tiny creature. A DC 15 **Dexterity check** disables the trap and obstructs the rot grub. If a character springs the trap, a successful DC 13 **Dexterity saving throw** avoids the rot grub. On a failed saving throw, the rot grub burrows its way under the character's skin and begins to squirm its way towards the character's brain. After each long rest, the character must succeed on a DC 12 **Constitution saving throw** or the character's hit point maximum is reduced by 3 (1d6). If the character's hit point maximum is reduced to 0, the character dies. A *lesser restoration* or other spell that removes diseases or curses destroys the rot grub, and the character's hit point maximum returns to normal after completing a long rest.

Book of Striking Good Looks

Wondrous item, very rare

This magical book promises a permanent change to improve one's appearance to those that would take the time to read the book (52 hours within a 2 week period). The true powers of the book are revealed upon completion. The reader is

granted the face of the person who previously read the book. The effects are irreversible by any known means other than a *wish* spell.



Spiked Chest (Chest Two)

The middle chest is big and iron bound, and its owner has packed it with hundreds of small iron spikes under tremendous pressure. A successful DC 20 **Wisdom (Perception) check** reveals the trap. A DC 15 **Dexterity check** is required to disable the trap. If the chest is opened before the trap is disarmed, it explodes into a shower of spikes, iron, and wood. Every character within 10 ft. of the chest must make a **Dexterity saving throw DC 15**. On a failed saving throw, the character takes 10 (3d6) piercing damage or half as much on a successful save.

Treasure

A vial of Malyass Root Paste poison with (5) doses left. A dose of poison is enough to coat one weapon, and each dose has enough poison to coat one weapon.

Malyass Root Paste (Contact) A creature subjected to this poison must make a DC 15 **Constitution saving throw** or become poisoned for 5 minutes. The poisoned creature also takes 3 (1d6) poison damage.

Portrait Chest (Chest Three)

This chest was already here when the orcs seized Mosshammer Castle. None of the orcs have been brave enough to open the chest, but Harveken has spent some time observing the portrait on the wall, and the chest in an attempt to understand the purpose of the magic behind this trap and how to disable it.

A successful DC 17 **Wisdom (Perception) check** detects the trap. The trap can be disabled with a successful DC 20 **Dexterity check**. When the chest is touched, the portrait of the old crone magically animates and wags her finger while letting out a string of vile insults. The character who touched the chest must make a **Dexterity saving throw DC 14**. On a failed save, the character takes 5 (1d10) fire damage or half as much on a successful save.

Treasure

Inside the treasure chest is a small box inside of which is a **wand of secrets** disguised as a simple wooden pipe which smells of tobacco and has burn marks along the inside of the bowl.

NB. Harvenken's Rescue

This door has a mechanism which locks and bars the door with a single swift action once inside the room. Harvenken keeps this room stocked with protective and healing potions and oils he has found in his travels. As a last resort, Harvenken will retreat here if failing in combat.

Treasure



Potion of water breathing (smells of an ocean breeze)

Potion of resistance, acid (scent of lavender)

(2) *Potion of greater healing* (bluish-purple elixir in a tall, slender bottle)

Conclusion

When the party has managed to either kill or run off this section of the Boathut Tribe, they can report back to Irnaun Withail, who will lead a team to Mosshammer Castle to reclaim it. Any treasure that is found is the PCs to keep, and they will always be welcome at Mosshammer if they ever need a place to make camp.

If the PCs have bargained with Onalit Chetug and have returned with the chest, he pays them a fee of 20 silver pieces each, but refuses to say what the relic is inside the case.

If the PCs have bargained with Onalit Chetug and have returned without the chest, he thanks them for doing their best, pays them 5 silver pieces apiece, and mumbles about finding "better adventurers next time."

If the PCs found the note in the chimney and return it to Carolyn, they will receive 10 silver pieces and a treasure map.

Leaving the Castle Unattended

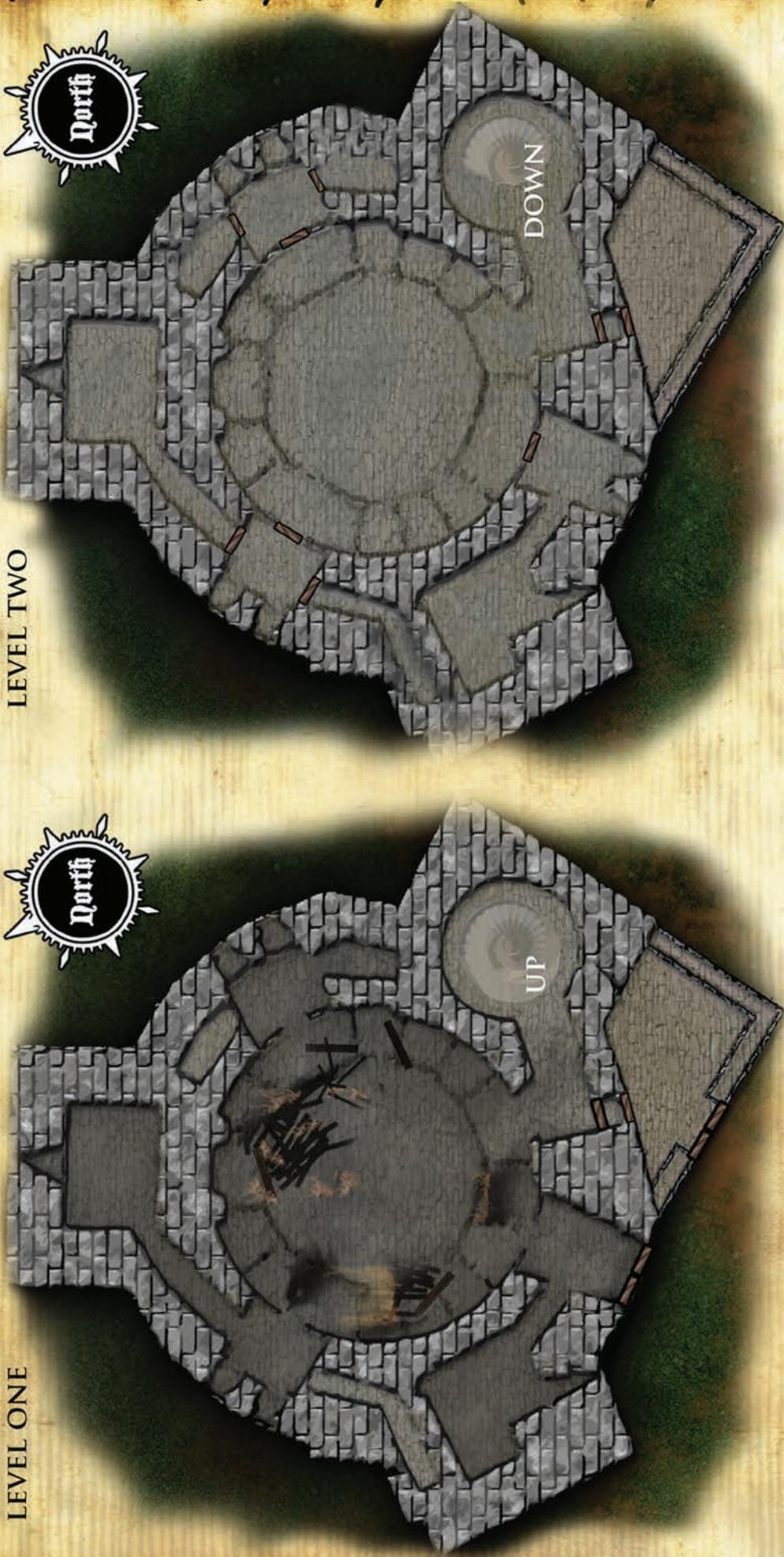
If the party chooses to leave Mosshammer Castle without leaving anyone to safeguard it, there is always the chance that another group of orcs (or enemy of the GM's choice) could take possession of the castle in their absence. This act of poor judgment on the PCs' part could jeopardize their reward and cause further hardship and discontent in the region. A shift of power could be inevitable and the PCs may be to blame. If both the orcs and the townsfolk are against the PCs, where will they turn?



LEVEL ONE



LEVEL TWO



ORC HELD CASTLE



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A 5th Edition Compatible Adventure For 4 PCs of Levels 2-3

Mosshammer Castle has been seized by Sufferhorn orcs! The former occupants of the castle are missing, most likely slain by the orcs during the violent attack. Could the movement of the orcs into human territory herald a coming orc horde and the surging tides of war? If the castle is not reclaimed the nearby towns and villages could be overrun when orc reinforcements arrive. The PCs are called upon to retake the castle, now dubbed “Sufferhorn Castle” by the occupying orcs. The mission will not be easy; the PCs must storm a castle, figure out how to get inside, and slay the leader of the Sufferhorn Orcs, the dreaded Dolaken Boarhut.

Also included in “Sufferhorn Castle”:

- Cartography by 3x ENnie award winner Todd Gamble and Jonathan G. Nelson
- Sufferhorn Orc lore by Scott Ackerland
- New Magical Item: Book of Striking Good Looks
- New Monster: Mosshammer Skeletal Soldiers
- Three New Traps by Rory Toma of Trap-a-day
- Two bonus short side quests including a treasure map