

In The Shadow of The Wolves

An adventure for the courageous set in the province of Kom, in Hârnworld.

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GM's notes: This adventure is designed as an introductory adventure for a small company of adventurers, or explorers, in Hârnworld. No monsters or encounters with non-playing characters or monsters were included in this adventure as I felt that should be left to the discretion of the individual GM running this adventure in their campaign. Instead a detailed environment is presented, complete with maps and descriptions, covering an area approximately 50-60 square miles, with a bit of obscure local history thrown in. It is my hope you enjoy playing it, as much as I have.

With Regards,
Dirk Collins

Introduction

The knock on your door heralds the arrival of two warriors. The first makes introductions and identifies himself to you as Grisol Edric Alnuex, a knight of Kom, and he introduces the other knight to you as Hastur Audlyn. They bid you to allow them to enter for a time, for they have a tale to tell. Once in, and settled, Sir Alnuex tells you the story of how he arrived on your doorstep.



“If you happen to find yourself in Western Kom province and search carefully, you will find that 15 leagues north of Imrium as the crow flies, on the banks of the headwaters of the Pech River, on the western fringe of the Kom province an abandoned fortress, Caer Khinar. For a time, this fortress was a stronghold of the Kom Legion. History has it, that the legionnaires had pursued an especially strong and vicious band of highwaymen into the far reaches of the province. The legion had surrounded them in this part of the Rayesha Mountains known as the Wolves’ Maw. “

“The Wolves’ Maw is a series of rock peaks that raise sharply more than five hundred paces above the surrounding foothills. The bandits had prepared their retreat well in advance, were well provisioned, and were well dug in. The legionnaires were persistent as well, for the bandits in that year had very nearly depleted the coffers at Stimos. People were afraid to travel and trade. The officials in Stimos were coming under scrutiny from the Thardic Senate. So the legionnaires were given an open hand to end this reign of terror.”

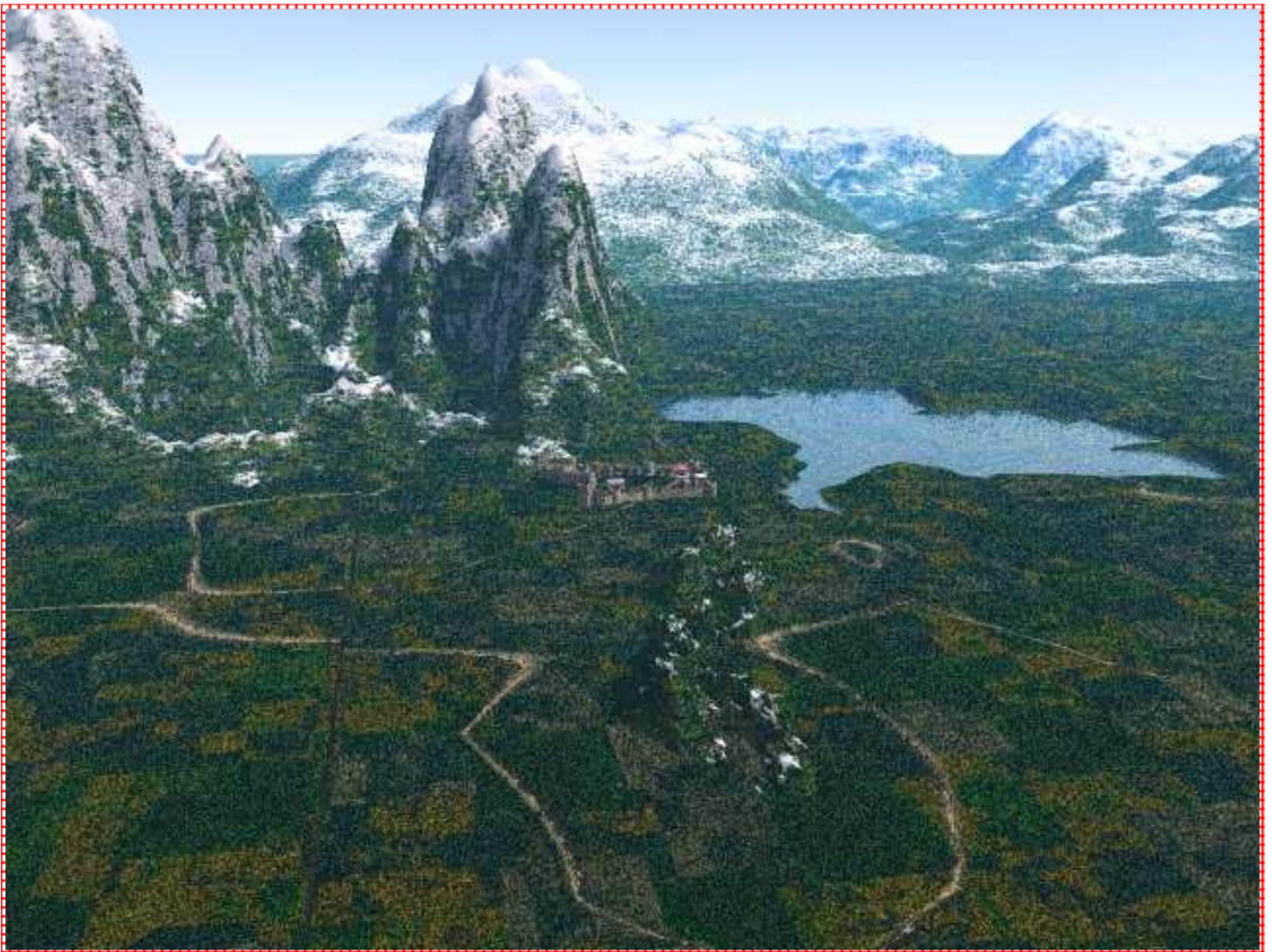
“The legionnaires built the Caer; it took them more than two years. Then slowly, conducting surprise attacks, making night raids, using deceit, and employing every trick they knew, the Knights slew the bandits. Sometimes they took just one, others times they took a handful, and finally, In the year after the Caer was complete, after the long winter had passed, and most of the spring, the knights and their vassals went forth in numbers and finished off the last score of bandits. “

“After that, the bulk of the legion returned to the east, for they were sorely needed in the more populated areas. A company remained behind, holding the Caer as a stronghold for the Republic. Eventually they too, were recalled to the east, for the Caer held no significant strategic position within the Republic at all. In addition, the wolves that the jagged peaks in this particular area were named after dashed the hopes of settlers colonizing the area. There were other fell creatures, and quite a few foul beasts that inhabited the area as well. They viewed people as just one more meal. So the Caer was forgotten by settler and soldier alike.”

“Here is where the story involves you. A few months ago, the body of your great granduncle Amras (who went missing during the siege of the bandit lair) was found by a patrol in the razor sharp rocks that are both plentiful, and large, in the area at the foot of the Wolves’ Maw. We buried him on the spot where he fell. Just so you know, he died an honorable

death, doubtless locked in combat with the bandits. For we found a bandit arrow that had pierced him. The two dead bandits in the area where he was found indicated to our scouts that he fought well, but he was trapped in a rock gully. The bodies of no other legionnaires were found near him. Amongst his personal belongings, we are bringing back to you today a crude map of the Wolves' maw area, and a letter. The letter was addressed to your grandfather, may the gods rest his soul. We are delivering it, still sealed to you. We offer our condolences, and will hold another memorial for your granduncle in the coming days. In the meantime if there is anything you need, please contact us. We'll send an honor guard to the memorial, and one of us will stop by to escort you to your granduncles' memorial service."

"Hastur here was with the patrol that found your granduncles' remains, and he will remain for a while longer to answer any questions you might have. For I must take my leave now."



Wolves' Maw, Caer Khinar

Sir Alnuex rises and, gives you the still sealed letter, and the map. After thanking you for your time, he announces he must leave to attend to other matters here. Hastur stays for a

short while to answer any questions about your granduncle Amras, and then also departs. Once they have gone, you have the time to look over the map and read the letter.

Daer Tomar,

If you are reading this, then the worst has happened, for I am dead. It is my hope that you receive this, and may perhaps gain some benefit from my life. Looks like everything worked out to the best for you after all, eh?

The siege has been going well, there are not many bandits remaining. They sallied forth, the week before, and struck at Khinar Caer, killing no small number of guards, and getting two wagons of supplies before retreating. I was assigned to a company that went in pursuit of these raiders. We followed them to the southwest incline of the Wolves' maw, and cornered a portion of them in caverns where they had concealed themselves. We sent them to meet their Gods. While searching the belongings of one of the dead bandits, I found this ancient clan poem, and have copied it unto this letter.

I, and two others of the company, Himat, and Josu, have volunteered to remain behind for a few days more, to continue searching for bandits. Our real reason for remaining behind is to search for the entryway to the place that is described in the poem, as we believe the tomb of King Alynar is located in the foothills of the Wolves' Maw.

In the time of the night star, there arose a great king, A master wizard, a sorcerer of magic, and things, A great leader, he led, allowing no follower to fall, Victories he earned, trophies hung in his hall.

Alynar was his name, all knew of his deeds, He was wise, and kind, so take heed, In the last days of his life, during the time of great strife, He ordered a final rest be built, for him and his wife, Near the outcropping, known as great knife.

A hall and a tomb, within a tomb and a hall, Guarded by traps, pits, and deadfall, Built on the shadows of a rock wall, below the place where the wolves howl, and call.

Hidden here is the strength of a king, Many gold, jewels, and gems, the followers did bring, his weapons, his armor, and even a ring, animals, clothes, food, and even instruments to sing.

Good steeds and good words are what one needs, To open the door, to find the leads, To free the truth, to reveal his deeds, To bury his enemies among the weeds.

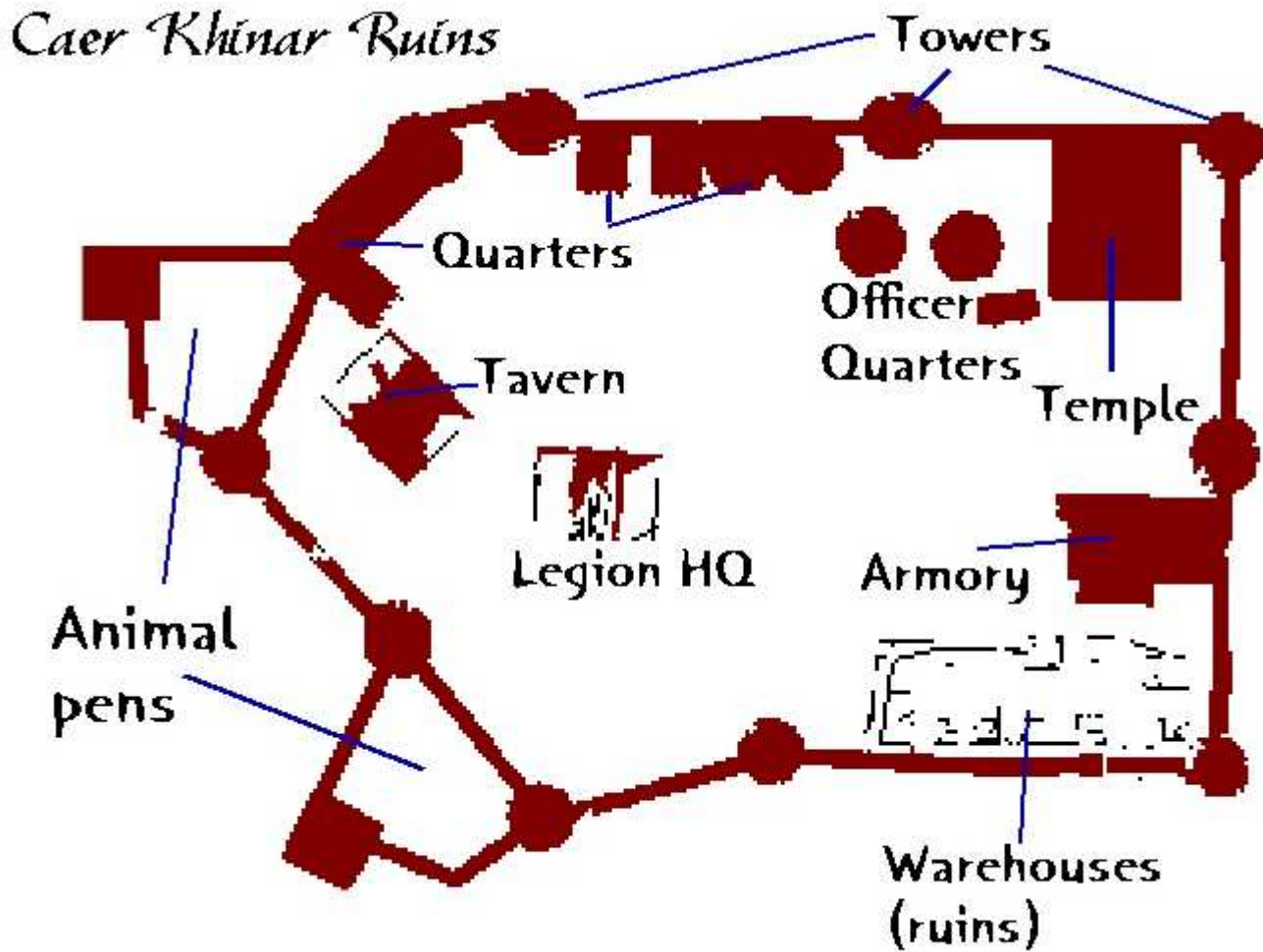
That is all we were able to decipher of the poem. I am writing this letter to you, so that my comrades may bring it to you, in the event misfortune visits upon me.

Your younger brother,

Amras



The base of the mountains is overrun with broken boulders, jutting rocks, and rocks mixed



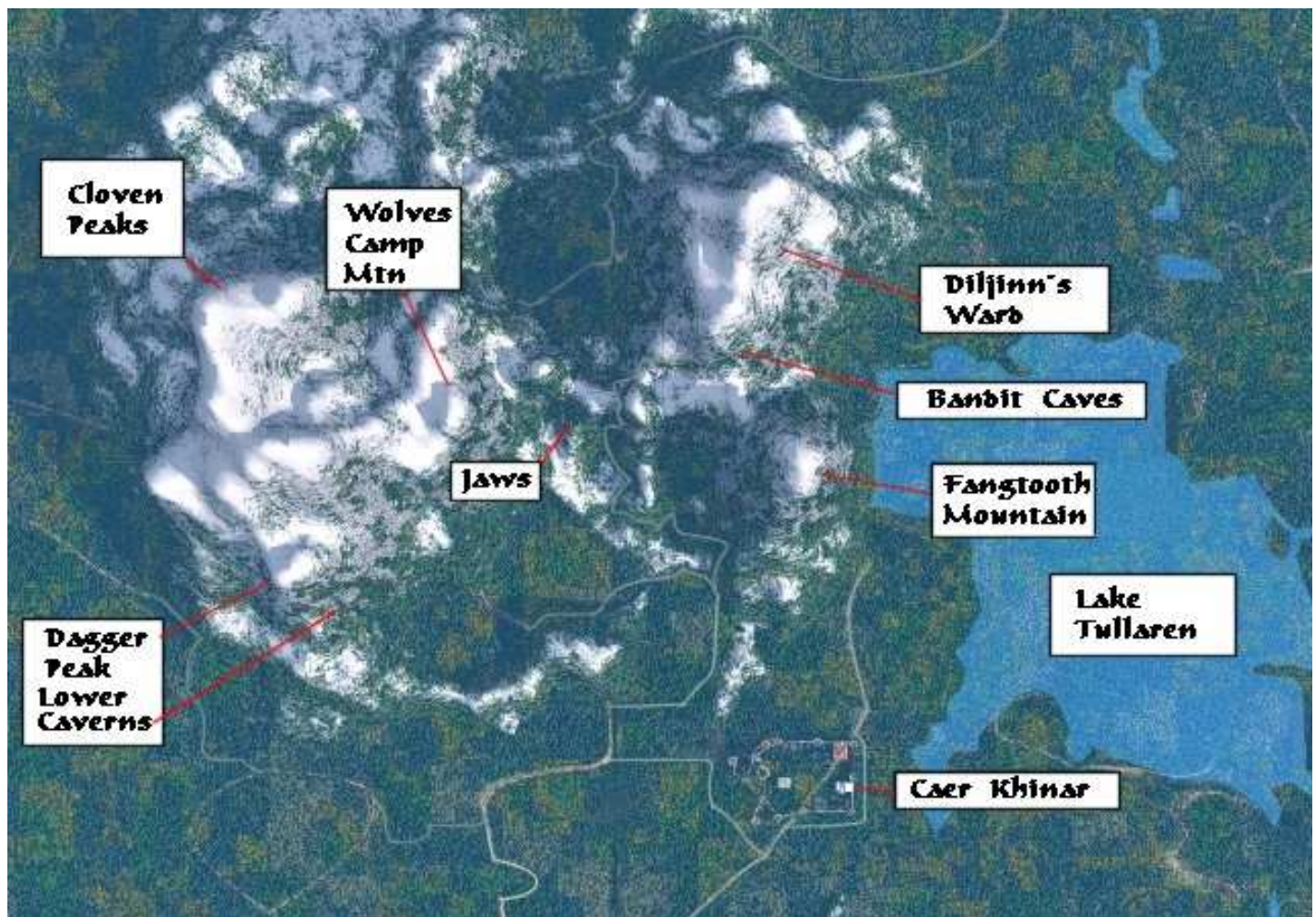
The Ruins of Caer Khinar

Caer Khinar

The ruins of Caer Khinar are mostly intact. The only buildings utterly destroyed are the warehouses. They burned to their foundations over ten years ago. The walls and towers are made of local stone, a dark colored talus rock with sharp edges that may fragment into shards if struck. Ages ago, local tribes would come here to make stone daggers and arrowheads, now the places are barren. The tavern has a basement, an empty wine cellar, and a deep well. A careful search in the armory will reveal an underground tunnel large enough for a man to crawl through that goes out several hundred paces into the country. The temple is abandoned but well kept, as is the officers' quarters, and the Legion HQ. Warriors of Kom routinely patrol the area and use this ruin as a camp. The outer wall at the western animal pen has been breached. The main gate, where the troop quarters and barbican is located, is still intact, though the iron portcullis covering the gate has long since been removed. Turning over a wagon at the main gate can serve to protect the Caer.

The towers, both round and square, are a little over ten paces high, and most are connected by an earthen underground tunnel system that runs from tower to tower in the basement level. The two square towers that control the entry to the animal pens are not connected by this tunnel system, but the Legion HQ is!

The tavern, armory, and temple are made of the local stone, and the temple has an imported loose red clay tile roof. The quarters, and officers' quarters are made of wood, and are elevated sitting on platforms of wood suspended by support beams. A short stairway allows access to each of these buildings, and there is a crawl space underneath them. The Caer battlements are accessible on the inside by way of an earthen embankment that gently slopes upward and levels out at the walls. These embankments partially bury buildings that are up against the outer wall. All buildings are one-story structures except the temple, and the armory.

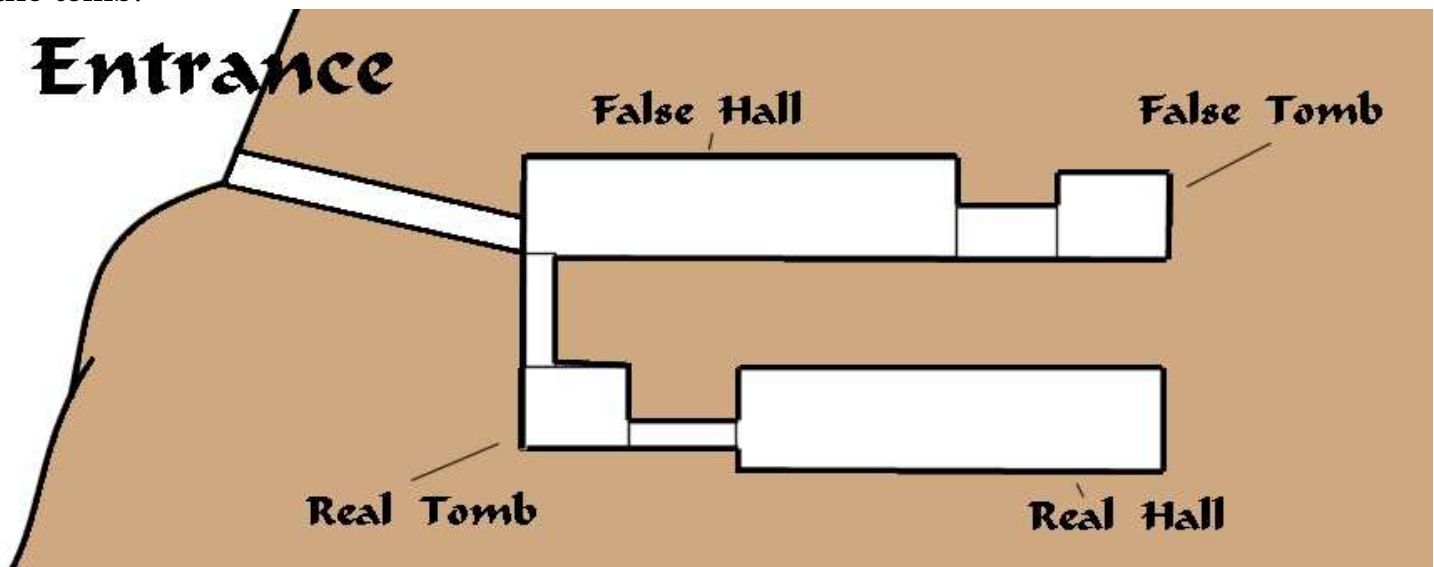


Wolves' Maw, Aerial View

The roads in the area are little more than crude dirt trails. A series of foot trails completely surround the mountain, and go up the mountainside to areas where there are streams, springs, caves, caverns, and other points of interest. The caves and caverns are of a talus type stone set in vertical plane. The stone shatters easily. The result is narrow, deep, and vaulted pockets and caverns, the floor of which is littered with shards of sharp stone. A typical cavern is 5-30 feet wide 10' to 60' long, and 10' to 40' high. The caverns are separated by narrow crevices that are extremely narrow and sometimes too small for a man to pass thru. The lower caverns, and the bandit caves on Diljinns' Ward have had most of the sharp stones removed from the floors. The floors remain uneven and jagged though.

Alynar's Tomb

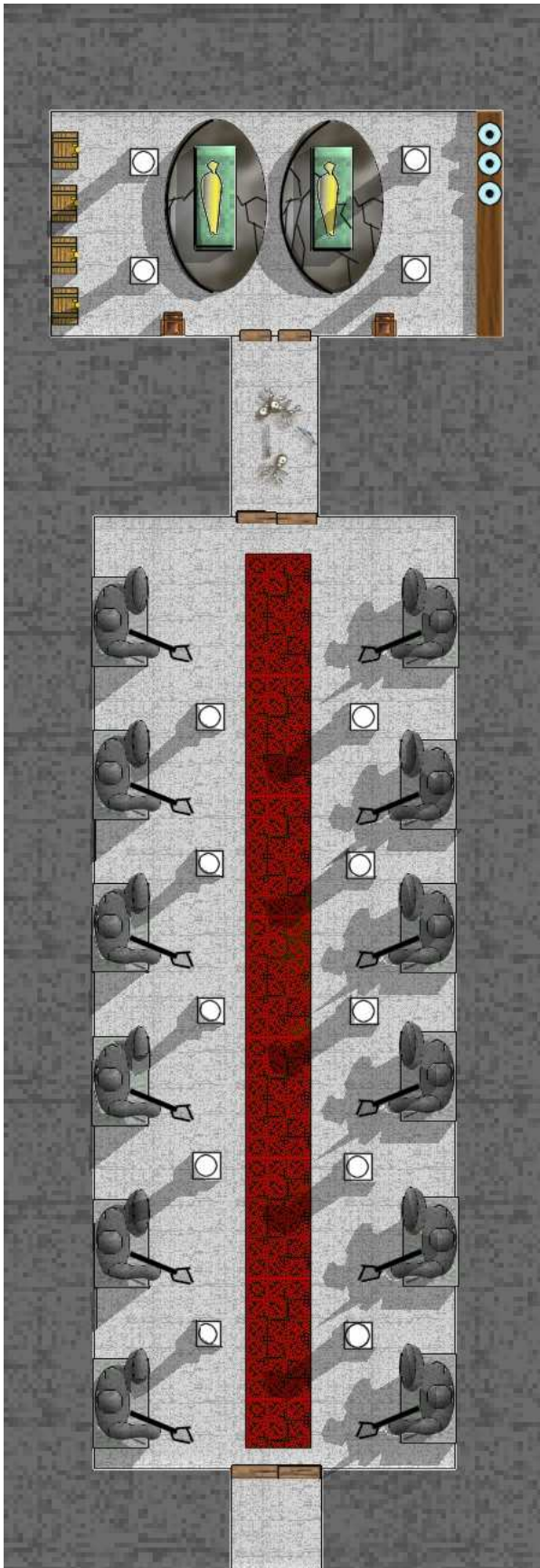
The Kings Tomb indeed exists, and is located on the upper slopes of Dagger Peak, on the shady side of the mountain high up, buried under deep snow. A short downward sloping tunnel leads to the hall and false tomb. A secret door in the floor of the sloping tunnel leads to the real tomb, and the hall where the two coffins of the late king and his wife are located is connected to the real tomb. There are no markers or trails leading to the tomb entrance. Time has wiped away any clues that may have remained leading to the actual location of the tomb. Only a careful and painstaking search of the upper reaches of Dagger Peak may yield knowledge of the whereabouts of the tomb entrance. The entry corridor is five-paces tall, and the corridor to the false tomb is six paces high. The chimney leading down to the Real tomb is fifteen-paces high, and the corridor leading from the real tomb to the real hall, is one pace, and a half again, high. All the loose shale and rock from this excavation was carefully carried away and dropped into Lake Tullaren to leave no clue as to the entrance of the tomb.



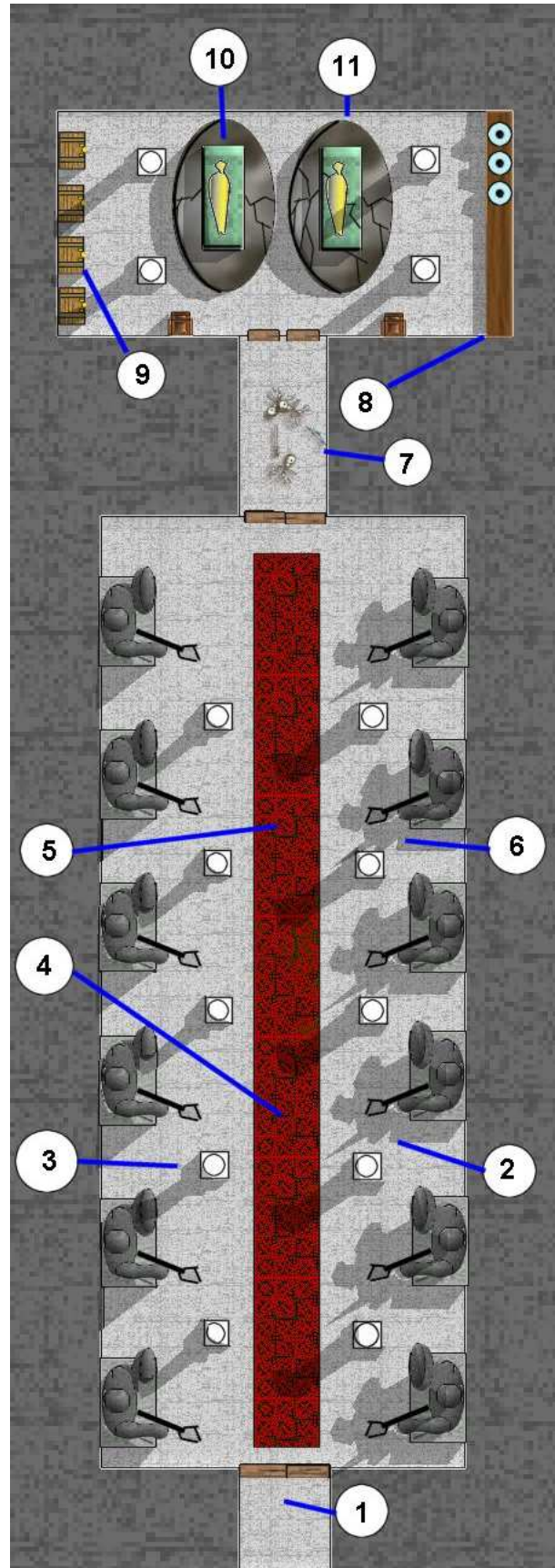
The False Hall is decorated with many faded paintings and drawings of evil creatures, and of sinister people. Many guardian columns are cut of stone, and these giant evil looking warriors lean towards the center of the hall and appear to be menacing any whom walk into the hall. There are two pit traps here, each four paces deep, and one section of the ceiling that will collapse in on the unwary whom walk underneath the falling ceiling section and trigger the pressure plate. The short corridor leading to the false tomb is trapped as well, and two stone blocks will drop from the ceiling completely isolating the corridor from the rest of the false level. Once a year, during the summer solstice, the blocks slowly retract and the trap resets itself awaiting other unwary explorers. There are a goodly number of skeletons here, still clothed in the armor, and with the weapons, armor, & equipment they carried in their greedy quest to loot the Kings' Tomb.

Each coffin in the false tomb is rigged with a deadly trap. Nothing of value will be found on this level of the tombs except for what can be scavenged from the dead.

The Faux Hall and Tomb



Alynar' s Tomb Map1, False Level



Alynar' s Tomb, GM Map1 False Level

Map Key for Alynar's Tomb, Faux Hall, Upper Level

The Great hall is filled with giant statues of evil looking warriors. The statues are at least twice the height of a man, and the stone spears they wield graze the ceiling. The entire hall is covered in a thin layer of dust, and looks as if it had been undisturbed for a very long time. A tattered red carpet extends from the entry of the tomb through the great hall to the doors of the burial chamber.

1. Trapdoor - There is a secret trapdoor here, leading to a chimney that goes straight down to the real tomb of Alynar. The trapdoor will open if both spears on the first two giant statues are pulled downward simultaneously.
2. Pit Trap – Walking over this area of the floor will cause the floor to collapse triggering a pit trap. The pit is three or maybe four spears deep, and sharpened wooden spikes line the bottom of the pit pointing upward.
3. Open Pit – This area of the floor has collapsed here. The remains of an adventurer are in the pit. His personal belongings, weapons, and armor have been removed.
4. Rockfall – under the carpet is a pressure plate, if stepped on, a portion of the ceiling will collapse raining down shards of sharpened stone and many sizeable boulders.
5. Rubble Pile – On the floor here is a pile of sharpened shards of stone, bits of wood, timbers, and many small boulders.
6. Pit Trap – Walking over this section of the floor will trigger a trapdoor that opens into a pit. The pit is five-spears deep, and the bottom of the pit comes together in a V and closes automatically trapping the hapless victim by wedging him/her/it in.
7. Sliding Wall Trap – There are the bones of three men scattered on the corridor floor here. The man closest to the door is holding a scroll, wherein he describes in detail the horrors of watching his two comrades being crushed, and himself trapped in the tomb where he died. Two swords can be found here, a small shield, as well as rope, two backpacks, flint and tinder, a dagger, a short bow, and two quarrels of arrows. You will also find a blank scroll, a dried bottle of ink, and a few dozen gold and silver coins along with two quill pens. There is no food, torches, oil, or water to be found. This entire room is a trap. When the double doors to the faux tomb itself are struck, moved, or opened, two sections of the ceiling approximately three hands wide slam down just inside both doorways, forcing the doors closed and crushing or sealing any within the corridor. The sliding walls open, and the trap resets itself only once a year on the summer solstice.

Map Key for Alynar's Tomb, Faux Tomb, Upper Level

8. Shelves – The shelves contain now empty bottles, vases, and jars. The shelving stands at least as tall as a man and is no longer anchored. Disturbing the shelving will cause the shelves to collapse and fall inward toward the center of the room.

9. This chest is filled with coins of fool's gold, or false gold. In addition several dead plague ridden rats have long ago been thrown into the chest as well, and the chest is contaminated with the plague. Any player handling the faux coins risks catching the plague.

10. Faux King's Tomb – Sliding the cover off the Faux Kings' tomb will reveal a smooth slanting passage leading down at a 45-degree angle into the depths of the mountain. The passage goes downward several hundred paces and ends in a shallow pit half filled with quicksilver and another contact poison that kills quickly. Whether or not the contact poison is still potent may be the subject of debate. At the time King Alynar was buried, the pit was filled with quicksilver, and contact poisons by the bucket were carefully poured down the chute, saturating all the surfaces.

11. Faux Queens' Tomb – If the cover is removed from the Queens' Tomb, No remains will be visible. The only thing visible is an inscription in an ancient language carved into the stone slab where the Queen would have rested. It reads:

“Death shall come on a swift steed to the ones that touch the tomb of the Queen.”

Map Key for Alynar's Tomb, Real Tomb, Lower Level

The Lower Level of the tomb is where King Alynar and his wife, Queen Nordu were interred. Their skeletons are still in the crypts where they were buried with four loyal followers whom died at about the same time as them. Just like the upper level, everything is covered with a fine layer of dust, and nothing has been disturbed on this level since the good king was buried here. There are no traps on this level.

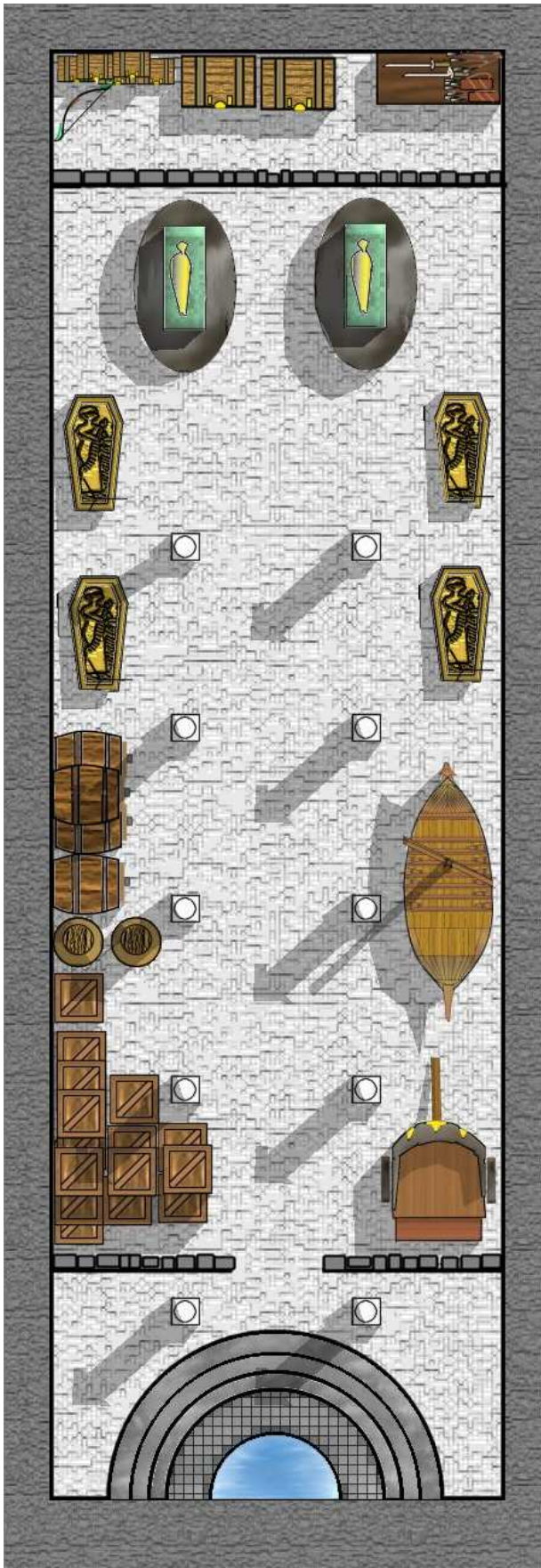
A. Pool – A fresh clear pool of ice cold water. This pool is three paces deep, and is directly underneath the chute from the faux level. A stairway leads down into the tomb and great hall.

B. Stores – Grain, clothes, bronze utensils, tools, pots, pans, baskets, and clay jars can be found neatly arranged and organized within these boxes. All together, 16 crates of good supplies.

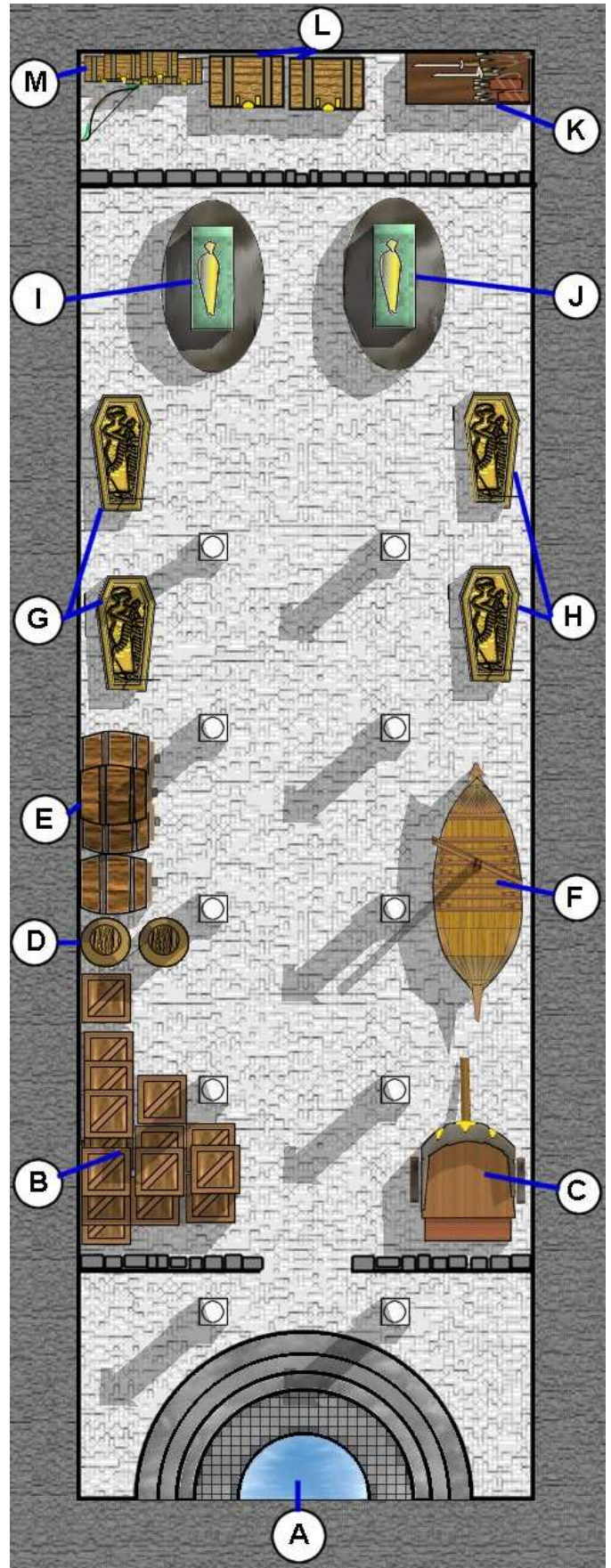
C. Two-Man Chariot – Still in working condition. It was disassembled, brought here, and then re-assembled.

D. Grain Ale Barrels – Two barrels of overly fermented grain ale. Possibly poisonous.

E. Wine Barrels – Four large barrels of blue wine aged for almost 200 years. This wine has been kept in near perfect conditions, and is potent, and tasty, with a crisp smoky flavor, and a dark blue coloring.



Alynar's Tomb, Map 2, Lower Level



Alynar's Tomb, GM Map 2, Kings' Tomb

F. Longboat – A longboat twelve paces long, and six paces wide with a mast and sail. Just as with the chariot, this was broken down and rebuilt inside the tomb. The cool dry climate has preserved the boat well, and it is seaworthy needing just a fresh coat of pitch in its' current condition.

G. Vault of the Kings' Bodyguard and Retainer – All that is in here are the remains of the Kings' bodyguard, and most valiant retainer whom died at the same time as the king did. The Kings' bodyguard has an extra dagger in his worm-eaten boot, and is wearing a tarnished bronze breastplate. The Kings' Bodyguard is also wearing three gold rings, and a diamond pendant. All the clothes have long since decomposed and are no longer wearable.

H. Vault of the Queens' Retainer and Sister – The Queen Sister, Zita, died in the same ambush that killed the rest of the royal family and was interred here. The Queens' retainer chose to follow the queen here, and was not buried, but was the last living guardian in the tomb itself. The Queen Sister is wearing a diamond and bronze diadem, and a gold belt that survived the ages. The retainer has a pearl necklace, two gold bands, and a dozen copper bracelets, The Kings' gold and diamond ring, a longsword, as well as a serpent skin purse that survived, all in the vault with her.

I Vault of King Alynar

King Alynar is interred here. Only his bones remain. He was buried in his bronze breastplate. A ceremonial dagger inlaid with three bluestar sapphires was placed in his hands. He was well-clothed and was buried wearing a silk shirt, and flax pants with leather armor leggings, and large leather boots (all useless now.) He also wore a silver diadem with a large diamond, and two emeralds embedded in it. His weapons are in the secret room.

J. Vault of Queen Nordu

The Queen was buried in her finest palace dress, a violet and white silk affair, along with silk slippers. She also wore a cloak of black velvet that has survived remarkably well, and is still useable. Clenched in her arms is the scepter of rulership. A silver and bronze scepter inlaid with three bluestar sapphires. In her vault is also a silver shod walking staff, also inlaid with one bluestar sapphire.

K. The Secret Room – Behind the false wall. On this table are the Kings' weapons, a two-handed sword, a longsword, a large shield, and two full quarrels of arrows as well as half a dozen loose arrows just sitting on the table. With a bit of repair, and care, all is useable.

L. Two Trunks – One contains rotted silk and cloth bolts, as well as spare brass and silver buttons, sewing materials, eating and drinking utensils, plates, silver goblets, crystal wine glasses, and a starter wardrobe of clothes (degraded now) for the King. The other trunk contains similar goods exclusively for Queen Nordu

M. Treasury – Five small chests here. Each holds four hundred gold coins and six hundred silver coins. In one chest is a bag containing a total of twenty-six precious stones. You will find diamonds, rubies, emeralds, sapphires, as well as a topaz, and two amethyst stones. In addition, the Kings' Longbow (unstrung) is propped up against the money chests.