

THRONE OF NIGHT

BOOK
(1)
DARK FRONTIER



THE SUBTERRANEAN SANDBOX ADVENTURE PATH

D&D
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

GARY MCBRIDE
& MICHAEL CLARKE



8 miles across

main
passage

secondary
passage

minor
passage

THE UPPER AZATHYR



To →
FASTURVALT?

ENTRANCE FROM SURFACE

EXPLORER PC Map

THRONE of NIGHT

BOOK (1) DARK FRONTIER

BY

GARY MCBRIDE, WORDS

AND

MICHAEL CLARKE, ART

Special Thanks:

Carl and Shirley McBride, Mike and Teresa Hall, Jim Hall, Michelle McBride-Hall, Kimberly Knight, Jesse Emerson and Douglas Muir.

Fire Mountain Games LLC

www.firemountaingames.com

18795 SW Marko Ln

Beaverton, OR 97007

Compatibility with the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game requires the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game from Paizo Publishing, LLC. See <http://paizo.com/pathfinderRPG> for more information on the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game. Paizo Publishing, LLC does not guarantee compatibility, and does not endorse this product.

Pathfinder is a registered trademark of Paizo Publishing, LLC, and the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game and the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Compatibility Logo are trademarks of Paizo Publishing, LLC, and are used under the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Compatibility License. See <http://paizo.com/pathfinderRPG/compatibility> for more information on the compatibility license.

Throne of Night: Dark Frontier © 2013 Fire Mountain Games LLC, Open Gaming License © 2007 Wizards of the Coast. All rights reserved.

Product Identity: The following items are hereby identified as Product Identity as defined in the Open Game License version 1.0a, Section 1(e), and are not Open Content: All trademarks, registered trademarks, proper names (characters, locations, etc.), dialogue, plots, story lines, locations, characters, artwork and trade dress. (Elements previously designated as Open Game Content or are in the public domain are not included in this declaration.)

Open Content: Except for material designated as Product Identity (see above), the game mechanics of this Fire Mountain Games game product are Open Game Content, as defined in the Open Game License version 1.0a, Section 1(d). No portion of this work other than the material designated as Open Game Content may be reproduced in any form without written permission.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
DARK FRONTIER	
ADVENTURE BACKGROUND: EXPLORER	4
ADVENTURE BACKGROUND: OVERLORD	5
ACT ONE: FASTURVALT	6
ACT TWO: THE FUNGAL JUNGLE	38
ACT THREE: VOTHYS	76
APPENDIX: SONS OF DAMMERHALL	96
APPENDIX: LORDS OF THE AZATHYR	100
APPENDIX: PATRONS	104

*That is the exploration that awaits you! Not mapping stars and studying nebula,
but charting the unknown possibilities of existence.*

— Leonard Nimoy

ADVANCEMENT

This campaign uses the medium advancement track.

ACT ONE: FASTURVALT

The campaign begins at 1st level with a desperate tale of the defense of svirfneblin town of Fasturvalt. Is it Fasturvalt's destiny to be a free city within a newborn dwarven kingdom or will it be a slave camp in service to a drow empire? In this act, we learn Fasturvalt's fate.

ACT TWO: FUNGAL JUNGLE

By the time the fate of Fasturvalt is decided the PCs should be 2nd level. Being a sandbox, they have choices where they shall go next. Regardless, the exploration of the Fungal Jungle and the region known as the Upper Azathyr should see them through 2nd and 3rd level.

ACT THREE: VOTHYS

By 4th level the PCs are ready to begin their assault upon the drow stronghold of Vothys. They must either by arms or intrigue infiltrate the stronghold and confront the wicked Baroness Satha upon her home ground. By the end of this act, the PCs should be at or almost to 6th level. With this experience gained, they are ready to brave the Great Jumping Off Point and proceed further into the realms below.

WHAT NEXT?

Beyond the Great Jumping Off Point lies the mysterious realm known as the Earth's Wound, full of prehistoric wonders and forgotten secrets. Join us there as our exploration and conquest continues in Book Two of "Throne of Night".

INTRODUCTION: EXPLORERS AND OVERLORDS

Welcome to Fire Mountain Games second adventure path “Throne of Night”! If you’ve returned to us after reading “Way of the Wicked,” thanks for your loyalty. If this is your first Fire Mountain Games product then welcome aboard. We hope to provide you with something exciting and unique.

In truth, what you are reading is not one adventure. Within this single book there are actually two parallel adventures tangled together. These campaigns utilize many of the same NPCs, locations and events but they form two very different progressions and would make for very different gaming experiences.

The first adventure path we present is “Throne of Night: Explorer”. Explorer assumes you are heroic adventurers come from a life on the surface world to explore the worlds below. As they discover their destiny, they build a new kingdom in the darkness bringing hope to a world without light. Explorers may be mercenary or vindictive; we don’t assume that adventurers are saints. But ultimately neither are they villains. The quintessential race for this path is dwarves and at the back of this book you’ll find an article about how to play an all dwarven campaign.

But the Explorers don’t have to be dwarves. Having at least one dwarf would probably be helpful, but the Explorers could also be a pack of normal largely good-aligned adventurers. Yes, at last, Fire Mountain Games has published an adventure where you can play a paladin.

However, we remember our roots. It was villainy that got us this far and to villainy we return. Getting equal time is “Throne of Night: Overlord”. The Overlord version of this adventure path features the worst kind of evil. Throne of Night is a campaign where you can play a pack of chaotic evil drow bent on subjugating this entire region of the underworld to their whim.

I can already hear the outcry as I write this. “Chaotic Evil?! Gary, have you gone mad? You can’t have a party of chaotic evil drow adventurers. They’ll never make it out of the first cavern before everyone betrays everyone else. Did not you yourself make ‘chaotic evil’ a forbidden alignment in ‘Way of the Wicked’?”

You make a fine point. And yes, I did recommend banning chaotic evil characters. But the drow are simply too cool and have too much gaming history to ignore. And for better or for worse, the drow are undeniably chaotic evil. So how can we make this work? Is it possible to create a fun, playable chaotic evil campaign?

With “Throne of Night” we are going to try.

At the back of the book you’ll find an article about Patrons. Patrons present an optional subsystem where the GM, with substantial PC input, can design a divine master that will tie the party together. Even the wickedest of drow will be bound to the service of some demon lord. They will have sworn blood oaths to the lord and to their own cult. It is them against the world. To any outside their band, their word means nothing. They are without mercy or compassion. But they need each other to do their patron’s will and seize an empire beneath the earth.

In later books along the Overlord Track, we’ll present some optional opportunity for player vs. player betrayal and conflict. But for now the PCs are tied together by blood and purpose. If they are to have any chance to rule, they must remain loyal to one another.

If you are feeling particularly ambitious, you could even run two groups head to head Explorer vs. Overlord. We’ll talk more about that in later books. However, properly done this play style could create a campaign quite unlike anything you’ve ever played before.

But enough with delay! Now it is time to begin our journey into the dark. Come with me friends to a deep and desperate little gnomish community known as Fasturvalt. Are your players their only hope or their greatest fear? Either way, it is in Fasturvalt that your PCs will begin to forge their Throne of Night.

— Gary

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

DWARVEN EXPLORERS

Two hundred years ago, the greatest dwarven city in the world detonated without warning. For three days, eye-witnesses watched in horror as Dammerhall burned with black flame. All six of the great bridges that connected the mountain stronghold to the outside collapsed. The great gates were shut. No one escaped. Not a single survivor emerged from the doomed city.

Ever since that fateful day, the dwarves have tried to retake Dammerhall time and time again with no success. Most expeditions failed to find entry. A few perhaps managed and have never been seen again. The fate of Dammerhall remains a mystery.

What is no mystery is that for the last two hundred years, dwarven fortune has been in steep decline. With their capital destroyed the dwarven city-states fell to squabbling over who was the true heir of the high king. A dozen lesser dwarven kings declared their right to rule. The dwarven nation was split. So fractured, they became easy prey for enemies. Half of the surviving city-states would be destroyed within a century of the fall. Some were overrun by orcs. One was destroyed by a dragon. And most disgracefully, a few were destroyed by other dwarves in brutal civil war.

The surviving city-states turned in desperation to the kingdoms of men. These lesser dwarven rulers signed treaties of mutual defense and, in all but name, were annexed by the human realms. The kings of men were glad to have them. Dwarven craftsmanship, battle prowess and tenacity were legendary.

Over the last century the human kingdoms have overrun the dwarves, not through might of arms, but through numbers. These days, men and dwarves live alongside one another. The dwarven city-states are all but gone. The dwarven tongue is rarely spoken. Dwarves are often regarded as another kind of man. There may come a time in the very near future, where dwarves simply cease to exist as a separate people and are completely integrated into human society. Perhaps this is for the best. Perhaps dwarven glory is a thing best relegated to the past. Perhaps the future of the dwarven people is alongside the tribes of men.

There are a tiny handful of dwarves who cry nay! They see this integration as yet another defeat. There must be a new dwarven high king! But how can there be? The secret of forging true mithral has been forgotten. The regalia of the high king is lost. Dammerhall is destroyed. There is only one answer.

Dammerhall must be reclaimed!

Another dwarven expedition has formed. They are not trying to enter the city from above. Instead, they have heard rumors of a seventh way into the city – a secret way. Dammerhall did not just trade with the surface. It also traded with the realms below. Find the dark road into Dammerhall and the dwarves may yet reclaim what has been lost. They may yet find a worthy high king who can reunite the scattered dwarven people and build a new kingdom.

The old Dammerhall is lost. The kingdom the dwarves build will be a new sort of realm. For the dwarves to succeed, they must build a kingdom below. Only then can they retake the lost capital and become once more a strong and independent people.

The PCs are this last hope. If they fail, another expedition is unlikely. Upon this quest, the fate of all dwarves turns. The campaign begins with the PCs having discovered a cave that leads into the underworld. It is miles away from Dammerhall, but it is the only known entrance. Nothing is known of the underworld save rumors and hear-say. The PCs are truly venturing into a mysterious new realm.

THE FOLLY OF LORD GEIRNI

What the PCs do not know is that this entrance puts them very close to the deep gnome village of Fasturvalt. Fasturvalt is ruled by the high-born Lord Geirni.

Lord Geirni's father Lord Geiri made a deal with the devil. The deep gnome lord signed a pact with the drow, providing the dark elves with fine stone at low cost in exchange for being ignored. Lord Geiri was a crafty ruler and maintained an alliance with the treacherous dark elves while keeping them at arm's length. It was a delicate balance, but it kept Fasturvalt safe and free. Unfortunately for Fasturvalt, Lord Geiri died last year and his son, Lord Geirni, is an idiot.

At the nearby drow outpost of Vothys there is a new baroness. The baroness no longer cares to pay for the marble she needs to expand her dominion. She has decided that Fasturvalt should be conquered. Sensing that Lord Geirni is weak, she has sent a so-called emissary to Fasturvalt. The emissary's job is simple – scout the deep gnome's defenses, spread dissent and then lead an army to enslave the gnomes. Lord Geirni bought this emissary's lies hook, line and sinker.

Lord Geirni's sheriff Gunther did not. Gunther lead a caravan to go to the nearest svirfneblin city (weeks away) and seek aid. Unfortunately, the caravan ran afoul of drow allies. By strange fortune, the ruined caravan was also discovered by a party of dwarves. The PCs now have a chance to save Fasturvalt and begin to build their kingdom anew. Adventure awaits!

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

DROW OVERLORDS

The drow call this entire region of the underworld the Azathyr (pronounced ah-zah-theer rhymes with fear). It means web, so named for its many labyrinthine passages. The Azathyr is vast. These upper reaches are only a small part of that dominion. And yet they are critical enough to warrant watching. Thus was a small outpost on the very edge of drow influence built here many years ago. This is Vothys.

Vothys (pronounced VAH-this) is a minor outpost of the drow city-state of Taaryssia (pro. TAH-rissia). It controls access to the lower regions. It secures the entire area including the vast Fungal Jungle. It ensures that neither the deep gnomes nor anyone else can infiltrate the drow holdings beyond. And yet absolutely no drow wants to be here. The most remote and forgotten installation of the drow empire, to be stationed at Vothys is to be banished here.

Lady Satha Sevastia, now Baroness Satha of Vothys, is only here because she lost a power struggle. Too influential to simply assassinate, instead she was promoted into obscurity and sent here. She despises the place, but for now must accept her banishment. What she can do in the meantime is try to build a proper drow army in hopes of eventually returning to Taaryssia to get revenge on those who banished her. To do that, she needs to transform Vothys from a small outpost into a proper fortress. To do that, she needs slaves and strong stone.

Fasturvalt has both. The svirfneblin are skilled stoneworkers and their quarry produces the finest marble in all the upper Azathyr. The last lord of Vothys (now dead) was content to leave the gnomes alone. The Baroness is not. And so she sends a band of underlings she does not trust (the PCs) and a small army to conquer the deep gnome village.

Fortunately, Fasturvalt is current ruled by an imbecile. Lord Geirni Speaks-the-Truth-But-Slowly is barely able to write his own name, yet alone defend his people. Taking Fasturvalt from this inbred buffoon will be almost too easy. Her commands to her underlings are to capture the gnomish stronghold with as few civilian casualties as possible. After all, slaves are as much the objective of this raid as the stone.

Her plan has only one flaw – her underlings will inevitably betray her. They will try to seize control of Fasturvalt for themselves and use it as their base to plot her demise. The baroness knows this. And so, she has hidden an assassin in the army of common drow.

The assassin's mission is to wait until Fasturvalt is seized, kill the PCs and then send word to the Baroness. She can then personally oversee the transformation of Fasturvalt into the slave camp it was born to be. This is the Baroness' plan.

There is another wrinkle here. Though Lord Geirni is an idiot, his sheriff Gunther is not. The svirfneblin sheriff will never trust the drow and he will go for aid at the first sign of invasion. Much to his surprise, he will find help in the form of a rag-tag band of dwarves from the surface. These dwarves, though seeking the lost city of Dammerhall, are noble enough that they will offer to aid Fasturvalt in its most desperate hour. With the dwarves' help, the defenseless gnome village turns into a difficult target. The underlings of the Baroness, these would-be overlords, must seize the village even with dwarven aid and once victorious, survive the Baroness' assassin. If this can be done, then they can build their own fledgling empire and plot their next move – seizing Vothys itself and repaying the Baroness for her assassination attempt in kind.

Overlord PCs have one advantage. Between Vothys and Fasturvalt lies the massive Fungal Jungle. Rumor has it that there is something within that the Baroness fears. If it could be found, then the PCs would have a valuable weapon against their former mistress.

EVERYONE ELSE

Anyone could find the wrecked gnomish caravan. The saviors of Fasturvalt could be a more traditional band of surface adventurers. They may even be down here to find Dammerhall for their own selfish reasons. Looting a lost dwarven city is reason enough for adventurers to explore below. For purposes of Book Three, it would be nice if one PC is a dwarf, but even this deficit can be managed.

For Overlords, the Baroness could send almost anyone to do her dirty work. Trusting no drow to lead her strike force, she could instead hire evil adventurers from above. What if she decided to send an army of goblins or kobolds? You could easily use this beginning as the birth of a new nation. Satha could hire duergar mercenaries. With such races, you should modify the rank and files soldiers to match the PCs. Drow don't follow others well. And it gives the PCs a ready source of their own kind from which to build their empire.

ACT ONE: FASTURVALT

This first chapter details the deep gnome village of Fasturvalt and its defense against a drow incursion.

EXPLORER CAMPAIGN INTRODUCTION

This is the last chance for your people. For two hundred years, the dwarves have been scattered and leaderless. The dwarf holds are all but gone – conquered by invaders or overrun with outsiders. For decades now, the dwarves have mingled with the kingdoms of men. The humans have treated you well enough. They respect dwarven craft and tenacity. But with every passing year, the dwarves dwindle. Your tongue goes unspoken. Your ways are forgotten. Will there come a time when to be dwarven is merely another way of saying a short, bearded man?

It was not always so. Once the greatest empire in the all the world was dwarven. Once the majestic kingdom of Dammerhall was where all roads converged. The whole world came to pay tribute to the dwarven high king and his mithral throne.

And then calamity. The great mountain-city burned with black flame for three days. All the bridges into Dammerhall collapsed. All the gates were sealed. The only survivors were those who by chance were outside the city. For two centuries dwarves have tried to retake Dammerhall and discovered what really happened that dark day. And for two hundred years, they have failed.

The remaining dwarven holds, once vassals to Dammerhall, fell to squabbling about who should rule the dwarves. Weakened by division, many dwarf holds were overrun by orc or dragon. Some signed treaties with the realms of men, all but forfeiting their autonomy. And most disgraceful, some holds fell because of civil war where dwarf turned upon dwarf.

But there is yet hope. It is said that there is another way into the sealed city – a dark road beneath that goes through the uncharted depths of the earth. This expedition will be the one who will find that hidden road. This expedition will reclaim Dammerhall and restore dwarven glory, dispelling two hundred years of disgrace.

You have found an entrance into the darkness. Rumor speaks of a deep gnome village known as Fasturvalt where dwell the elusive svirfneblin, the deep gnomes. The first step is clear – Find Fasturvalt and secure a guide. Nothing will stop you in your quest. Nothing will stay your hand. This is your hour. This is the moment when the dwarven diaspora ends and where dwarven glory begins anew. In the realms below, you will make for yourselves and your people a Throne of Night.

OVERLORD CAMPAIGN INTRODUCTION

Long have you lingered in this frontier outpost, forsaken and forgotten. When at last you were summoned before the Baroness, Lady Satha of Vothys, immediately you knew it was a trap. But would you dare disobey her summons? And so you put your head into the noose. At least she was brief.

“I have an errand for you. The deep gnome quarrytown of Fasturvalt has two things I desire – stone and slaves. You will seize them for me. I have assembled an army of a hundred fine warriors. I put them under your command. That should be more than enough soldiers to brush aside their pitiful defenses. Even better their ruler, Lord Geirni, is a simpleton who believes he can placate us with treaties and supplications.

“My generosity does not cease there. I have gifts. The jewels summon forth minor fire elementals for about a minute I’m told. You can either shatter them and command the elementals directly or set them as traps. Amusing little toys to be sure. Use them to burn the gnomish armory. The potions will keep you in good health. See how much I care for you, my honored subjects,” she says with a smirk. A pampered courtier presents you with a small chest containing three jewels and three potions. [NOTE: this chest contains three of Satha’s fire jewels and three potions of cure light wounds]

“This errand should be simple enough even for you. Do this and return to me. You are dismissed.”

Generosity. Hah! The Baroness plots against you even if you do not yet understand her schemes. Still, it will be good to escape from the cesspool that is Vothys. There is even opportunity here if one is cunning. Enslave the deep gnomes, yes, but they will be your slaves not servants of the Baroness. Once Fasturvalt is yours, you can return to this outpost and thank the Lady Satha properly for her generosity. The time has come to be forsaken no longer. Seize Fasturvalt! Through the labor of svirfneblin slaves, you will build for yourself a Throne of Night.

Satha’s Fire Jewels

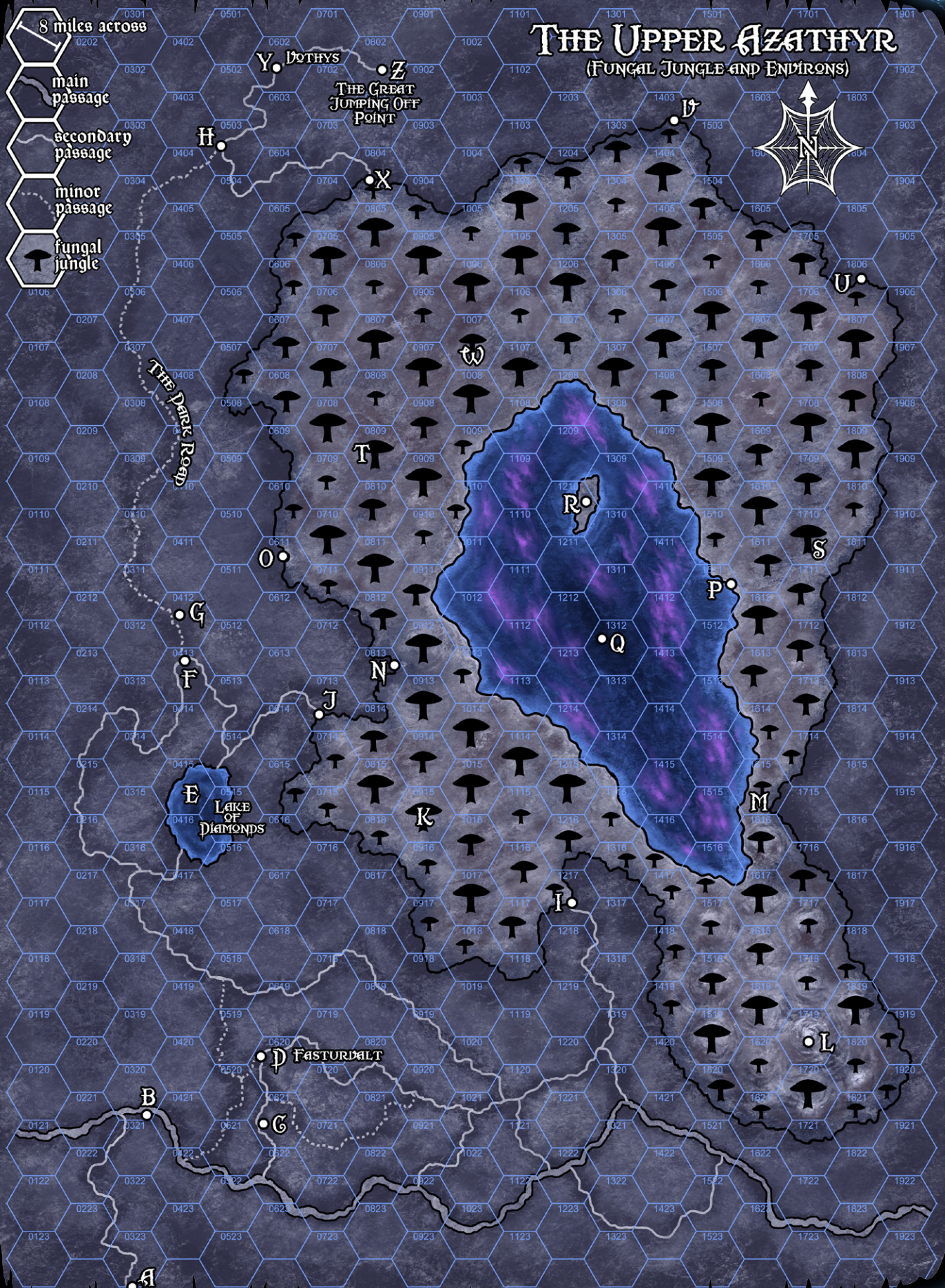
Aura moderate conjuration; CL 5th
Slot none; Price 1,500 gp; Weight --

DESCRIPTION

These small brilliant reddish orange fire jewels pulsate with their own inner flame. If smashed, broken or crushed a small fire elemental appears under the control of whoever broke the jewel. The small fire elemental operates exactly as if summoned by an extended *summon monster II* and persists for ten rounds. If given no orders, it attacks the nearest living thing. If there is nothing living nearby, it spends its time setting all flammables it can reach ablaze. The jewel can also be set as a trap. With a command word, it activates an *alarm*. If any come into its proximity, the elemental breaks free and attacks as if uncommanded.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, Extend Spell, *alarm*, *summon monster II* or *summon nature’s ally II*; **Cost** 750 gp



TRAVELING THROUGH THE UNDERWORLD

This campaign is set in a massive underground region known as the Azathyr of which only a portion is detailed here. Over the course of this campaign (in Books I-VI), we will detail the entire Azathyr. Our adventurers (both Explorers and Overlords) will be journeying far and wide through this strange environs. Here are nine things to keep in mind on their trek.

TRAVEL IS SLOW

Each hex represents a vast amount of space. A hex is eight miles across or approximately 55 square miles. Caverns, with their shifting elevations, winding indirect passages and ease of getting lost always count as difficult terrain for overland travel unless everyone in a party has a climb speed and is native to the underworld. That means that a dwarf party with an average movement of 20 ft. will traverse one hex a day. Small parties of unarmored drow could manage one and a half hexes, but even one armored individual with them slows them down to again one a day. And larger bands have little hope of traveling more than one hex a day.

Every hex you traverse takes a full day of travel. The passages of the underworld are not level, and while some are more difficult than others, this simplification better approximates average travel times. Even in the comparative wide open spaces of the fungal jungle, this rule still holds. The floor of that vast cavern is anything but flat and the giant mushrooms that grow everywhere can be slow to circumnavigate.

Three passages are shown on the hex map above.

Major Passages (double line): These wide passages are consistently twenty feet across or even wider. Huge creatures can pass without issue.

Secondary Passages (single line): The passages are ten feet across. Large creatures can pass without issue.

Minor Passages (dotted line): These passages are traversable by medium sized creatures but often only just. Often not level, travel times are doubled. Large creatures and wagon caravans cannot take them.

THIS IS A WORLD WITHOUT THE SUN

Darkness is the norm in the Azathyr and everything down here has adapted to that fact. Anyone without darkvision (or similar non-light based senses) is at a serious disadvantage. Using fire or magical light attracts every sort of predator and signals to intelligent opposition that you are outsiders. Most enemies will use magic to counter magical light and try to extinguish torches and lanterns, realizing that such blindness creates serious problems for their enemies.

WATER IS NOT A PROBLEM

The Azathyr is located beneath a great forest and water filters down through the cave almost everywhere. Many cave walls are wet. Water drips and small pools are the norm. This water is largely fresh and fine to drink. In short, water is not a problem unless specifically noted.

FOOD IS A PROBLEM

Every living thing in the Azathyr struggles to find enough food. Starvation is a constant threat and even in the sprawling fungal jungle, food is not easy to acquire. Many of the mushrooms that grow there are either not very nutritious or genuinely poisonous. Randomly eating mushrooms is surely asking to die.

That said the staple diet of the underworld is the mushroom. About a hundred different varieties of mushrooms are commonly eaten in the Azathyr from the common button to fire-caps to yellow frills and brown-heads. These mushrooms are consumed by almost every inhabitant of this region and provide a solid base for their diet. These mushrooms consume everything that dies underground. In the case of the fungal jungle that great cavern was once a sprawling bat cave before it got sealed up by seismic activity millennia ago. The mushrooms thrive on ancient guano hills that are in places hundreds of feet deep.

Further, the giant mushrooms of the fungal jungle (and the deep gnomes' mushroom fields) produce spores in such vast quality that they can be collected and milled into a sort of flour that can be baked into spongy grey bread known in undercommon as *veska* or mushcakes in the common tongue. Mushcake is hardy and nutritious but has an earthy flavor that is definitely an acquired taste for surface dwellers.

There are even species of mushrooms that can be brewed into sweet wort. That wort can be fermented into beer. These "black beers" are very alcoholic and dark in coloration. Their flavor closely resembles an oatmeal stout - malty, sweet and perhaps slightly bitter. They have a unique musky aroma that those born on the surface sometimes find off-putting. But the Azathyrans themselves relish these black brews and every race proudly brews their own variation.

Black beer can be further distilled into a hard liquor. These home-made "shines" are made a thousand different ways. However, if you triple distill the beer, you end up with night whisky. This powerful stuff is black as ink and, if well-made, smooth as silk. The finest night whisky comes from the drow city of Taaryssia. The drow sometimes lace their whiskey with powerful hallucinogenic extracts.



But as nourishing as mushrooms are, most species of the Azathyr also need animal protein. The deep gnomes raise eyeless cave fish in their stock lake. Here is the secret to eating them – they must be eaten raw and whole. By eating them this way, the valuable vitamin C in their organs is not destroyed by cooking. Of course, the svirfneblin do not understand why this works. They simply relish a small cave fish quickly scaled, soaked overnight in a peppery-salty-sweet candycap vinegar brine and eaten whole the next day. Needless to say, surface dwellers often consider this ‘delicacy’ revolting.

The fungal jungle also supports lizards, salamanders, cave crickets and pteranodons all of which may be eaten. But most prized of all, and very rare, are the cave auroch. It was likely the duergar who originally bred this species of miniature cattle for the depths. Whatever the source, these cattle are often treated as more valuable than gold. They graze on mushrooms and produce meat, leather, milk and beef tallow just to name a few. Wild herds are very rare, but a large free herd does yet wander the fungal jungle. This valuable resource as yet remains unclaimed.

Food imported from the surface is eagerly sought and ludicrously expensive when you can get it at all. Honey, wine and dried fruits and meats are particularly valued and fetch at least five times their surface cost. If dwarven PCs are clever and think to invest a little of their starting cash into such commodities they can easily trade them in Fasturvalt for a tidy profit.

EVERYTHING IS UNFAMILIAR

For those who originate from the surface, the Azathyr will be a constant source of weirdness and wonders. This is an incredibly isolated ecology. Virtually every animal and fungus found here is found nowhere else.

This novelty makes certain skills more difficult to use at least for a time. Initially, any skill that deals with local flora and fauna such as Survival or Knowledge (nature) should have all DCs increased by +2. After a few levels living down here, consider removing this unfamiliarity penalty. And of course, natives do not suffer this penalty. This is all they’ve ever known.

THERE IS NO WEATHER

The Azathyr is a fairly constant 60 F/16 C. Certain areas are warmed due to geothermal activity and those will be noted. But for most areas there is nothing equivalent to surface weather. It is always dark, damp and cool. Most dwellers here like it this way. The Fungal Jungle by the way does have weather of a sort. It is discussed in detail in Act Two below.

WOOD IS SCARCE

Another surface commodity that the PCs may take for granted is wood. Wood is a precious and rare commodity that must be imported from above. Wood items are rarely available for sale at all, but when they are they usually fetch ten times their list.

However, the inhabitants of the Azathyr have learned to make due. Giant mushrooms stalks can be cut into fibrous planks. If these planks are dried and kilned at a low temperature, they become hard as pine wood. This “grey wood” is commonly used in everything from crossbow quarrels to wagon wheels. Mechanically, it has no difference from normal wood. It is unquestionably inferior to good hardwood however, particularly in terms of longevity.

METAL AND STONE ARE NOT SCARCE

The Azathyr is blessed with rich deposits of iron and marble. Items surface dweller would never dream making out of such materials commonly are in the underworld. For example on the surface, hammers always have wooden hafts. In the Azathyr, hammers are often entirely metal perhaps wrapped with leather to avoid conducting heat.

Another example – every gnome peasant in Fasturvalt lives in a house made of carved marble. This is not because of the beauty and opulence of the stone (though it is lovely). Instead, this is because marble is easily acquired from the nearby quarry and the svirfneblin are masters at working it.

THE AZATHYR IS A WILD AND LAWLESS PLACE

There is no central government in the Azathyr. No great empire unites the disparate peoples of this region. When you leave a town or city, you are on your own. Even the so-called Gnome King’s Highway that connects to great svirfneblin cities outside of the Azathyr is not routinely patrolled.

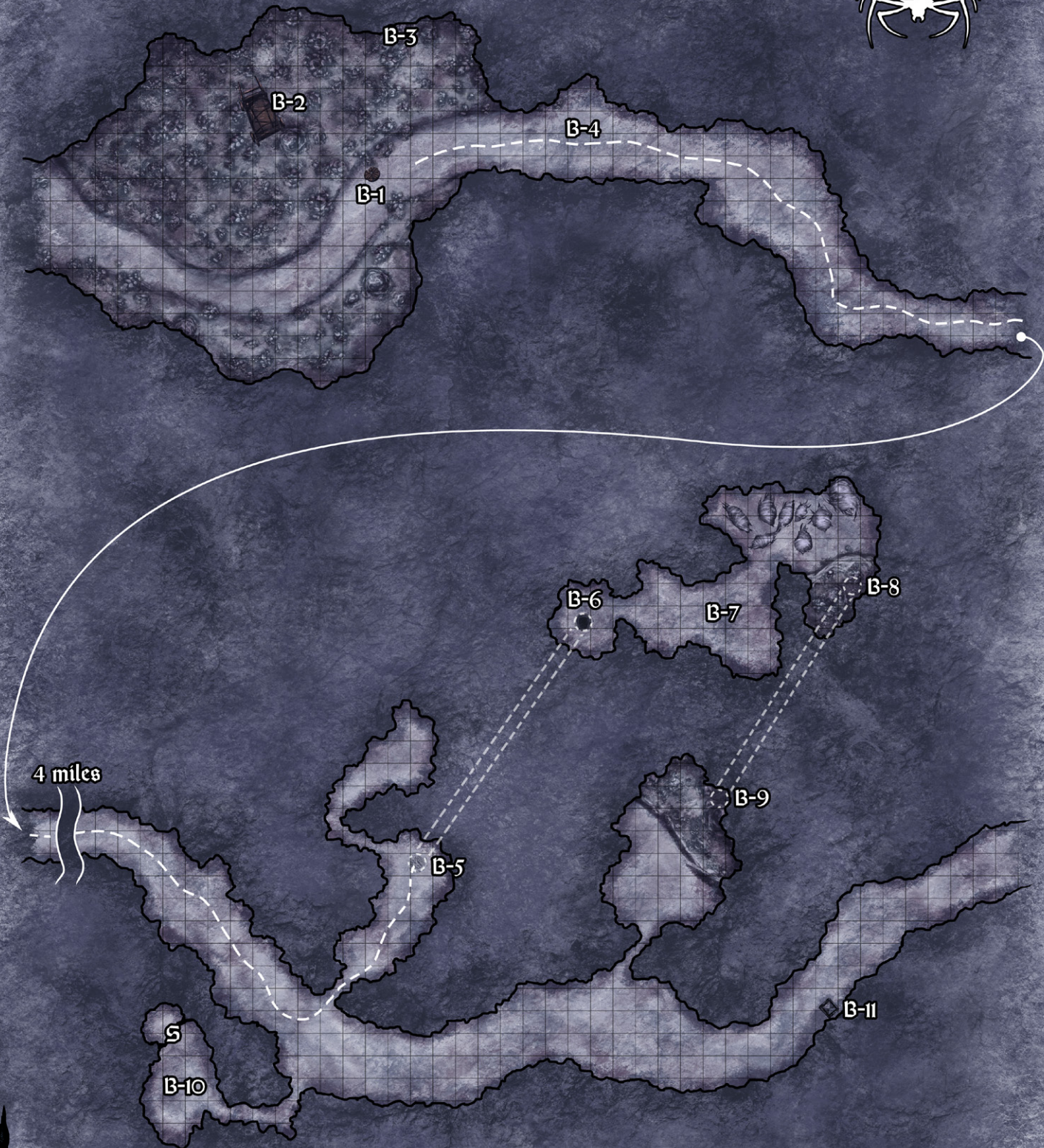
This anarchy has two effects upon almost anyone the PCs meet for the first time. First, strangers are always regarded with suspicion and caution. Weapons are kept at hand and a fight is expected. Second, people who don’t want a fight are often very polite and formal in their speech. They know that a single slight could start a deadly battle and so they seek to head off such confrontations by being pleasant.

The closest thing that there is to a central power is the drow vault of Taaryssia. It is very distant from where the PCs begin the campaign and the drow are disinterested rulers. Almost all of the Azathyr is a wilderness. Perhaps it will be the PCs who will change that and bring law to this sunless borderland.



MAP
B

THE WRECKED GNOMISH CARAVAN



FASTURVALT AND ENVIRONS

A. DWARVEN ENTRANCE

This is where the dwarven campaign begins. This is a cavern populated by a million small bats that cover the ceiling. The cavern floor gently slopes down into darkness. A DC 10 Knowledge (local) check reveals: *"If rumors are true, this entrance is not far from the deep gnome redoubt of Fasturvalt. Follow this passage down and north. It should intersect with a major tunnel called The Gnome King's Highway. Fasturvalt is somewhere to the east."*

If the PCs fail this roll and go to the wrong direction (to the west) they will eventually meet a small svirfneblin caravan on the edge of the map. With a successful Diplomacy roll (DC 10) or a 2 gp bribe, the caravan master will tell them the way to Fasturvalt.

EVENT: THE EARTH IS ALIVE

EXPLORER: It takes four days to venture from the entrance to the Gnome King's Highway. On day three of that journey, there is a small tremor. For a few brief tense seconds, the earth moves and strains. The cavern ceilings groan and then ... nothing. Nothing collapses.

Unbeknownst to the PCs, this earthquake (which originated from deeper within the underworld at the Earth's Wound – see Book Two for details) has sealed the entrance at A. There is no going back.

OVERLORD: The earthquake still happens as the PCs first approach Fasturvalt. It seals entry A.

B. THE WRECKED GNOMISH CARAVAN

Map B encompasses two sites: the location where a gnomish caravan was ambushed by two intelligent giant spiders, the skis'raal (pro. SKIZ-rall rhymes with small) outlaws Skethyk and Azraak, and the ambush-er's lair.

B-1 A Strange Sight

In the middle of the passage, there is a single broken wagon wheel. The wheel is not made of wood. Instead it is made of some strange fibrous white matter that is almost as hard as wood (this is dried, hardened mushroom stalk). The wheel has been banded in crudely worked iron.

In their haste to get their prisoners and corpses back to their lair, the skis'raal failed to clear this wagon wheel out of the passage with the other debris.

A DC 10 Knowledge (nature) check reveals the wheel is made out of mushroom stalk from a mushroom as tall as a tree. A DC 25 Perception check will find the rest of the wagon at...

B-2 THE RUINED WAGON

The gnomish wagon has been hidden from the highway quite effectively amongst a cluster of large stalagmites. A DC 25 Perception check is indeed required to notice it from down below. However anyone who climbs up the eight foot high embankment will see it on a DC 10 Perception check.

The wagon is a wreck. However most of the damage was done by the skis'raal after the ambush when they dragged it up here and haphazardly dumped it. The attack was actually quite surgical. The skis'raal attacked from surprise hanging from the ceiling. Their webbing entangled their gnomish foes with hardly a struggle. Bits of webbing still cling to this wreck.

Anyone who examines the wagon closely and succeeds at a DC 10 Perception check will notice that there is quite a lot of dried blood on the front seat of the wagon. This is where the sheriff Gunther died. He has his throat sliced upon while entangled in a web.

B-3 KNIVY IVY

This location marks where the caravan's sole survivor hides. When the caravan was attacked, this svirfneblin rogue escaped the web and managed to slip away unnoticed. She has been hiding here for about twenty four hours. She has her pack of supplies so she can hold out for a bit longer. Her hopes is to wait until she hears another gnomish caravan come along and to gain passage to... well, anywhere. The spiders have already come back once and she well knows the dangers of traveling these passages alone. Still, she is close to striking out on her own regardless.

When she hears others approach, she is initially wary doing her best to hide (using her +15 Stealth) and observe. If she hears dwarven being spoken (a language she learned as a child), she listens for a bit. If it sounds like the speakers are not duergar, she will reveal herself, armed and ready to bolt. If she hears elvish being spoken, she will recognize the language but not understand it and will remain hidden. Drow characters will have to find Ivy on their own.

Ivy is a quick witted but caustic little firebrand of a gnome. She is independent to a fault and naturally loathes authority. However she saw the entire ambush. She knows all the details and knows that the skis'raal singled out Gunther and slew him, very unusual behavior for the skis'raal who are rarely seen outside the Fungal Jungle and always leave their prey alive. Ivy was hired by Gunther to serve as a scout. She knows he was acting against the orders of Lord Geirni (who she regards as an idiot) and knows the way back to Fasturvalt, though is not pleased about going back there.

Knivy Ivy is all but an outcast in Fasturvalt. She joined Gunther's caravan as a way to get out. Of course, now with Gunther dead and the caravan destroyed, Iverna lacks a home or any solid prospects for the future. Knivy Ivy projects an image of a tough, independent young woman but the truth ... she is all alone and looking for something to belong to.

This makes her potentially useful to both factions. Noble dwarves could show her that there are things worth believing in and fighting for. She could over the course of several adventures slowly shift to a chaotic good alignment and become one of the good guys. She would in time make a fine cohort. She could even serve as a romantic interest. Knivy Ivy is a very liberated gnome and would not necessarily be averse to falling for the right dwarf. Though caustic (and beardless) she is very beautiful by some standards.

Of course this also presents a possible opportunity for villains. Knivy Ivy has long been given the cold shoulder by the gnomes of Fasturvalt. She has never fit in and does not feel at all at home there. She could be convinced to betray her former homeland and become a treacherous infiltrator.

If Iverna returns to Fasturvalt with stories of Gunther's demise, she would be allowed past the gate and even given audience to Lord Geirni. Once inside, she could scout out current defenses, plant the fire jewels in the armory (see below for details) and commit other acts of sabotage. With her stealth and local knowledge she could lay Fasturvalt's defenses bare.

Iverna has no certain role to play in the upcoming campaign, but there will be several subplots presented for her throughout the coming books of "Throne of Night". She does have a secret that even she does not fully understand. She is sometimes tormented by terrible dreams but can never remember exactly what they are about (or perhaps, she does not wish to remember). Even charm spells or mind control will get no more specifics than this for now. Ivy herself does not yet understand the source of these terrible dreams.

If these sort of subplots appeal to you as a game master, then you should endeavor to make Knivy Ivy an appealing companion for your PCs. She has useful information and abilities that will further their cause. Your goal is to make certain the PCs understand this.

Story Award: Award 400 XP for gaining Ivy's service.

Iverna Already-Has-Your-Knife aka "Knivy Ivy"

CR 1

XP 400

Female svirfneblin rogue 1 (knife master)

CN small humanoid (gnome)

Init +3, **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; **Perception** +7

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 16, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +3 Dex, +2 dodge, +1 size)

hp 10 (1d8+2)

Fort +4, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3

SR 12

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee mwk dagger +4 (1d4/19-20)

Ranged light crossbow +3 (1d6/19-20)

Special Attack +1 to attack vs. dwarven and reptilian humanoids, sneak attack +1d8 with daggers and similar weapons, +1d4 otherwise

Spell-like Abilities (CL 1st)

Constant – nondetection

1/day – blindness/deafness (DC 12), blur, disguise self

TACTICS

During Combat Ivy tries to avoid combat. But if forced, she tries to blind her opponent and then sneak attack until she can escape.

Morale If reduced to half hit points, Knivy Ivy surrenders.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +0; **CMB** -1; **CMD** 12

Feats Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +7, Bluff +3, Craft (Alchemy) +2, Disable Device +7, Escape Artist +7, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +4, Knowledge (local) +4, Perception +7, Sleight of Hand +7, Stealth +13 (+15 underground); **Racial Modifiers** +2 Craft (Alchemy), +2 Perception, +2 Stealth (+4 underground)

Languages Dwarven, Gnome, Undercommon

SQ stonecunning

Combat Gear 10 bolts

Other Gear masterwork dagger, leather armor, light crossbow, 12 gp, stolen blue bat token (see pg. 26 below)

B-4 A TRAIL BEGINS...

The dotted line marks out an obvious trail along the wet floor of the cave. It takes no check of any sort to notice the trail. A DC 10 Survival (tracking) check will reveal that it was made by a large creature being dragged. A DC 20 Survival (tracking) further reveals that the large creature is quadrupedal and being dragged by two medium arachnids.

A DC 15 Knowledge (nature) further reveals that the large creature is a dead lizard. A DC 20 Knowledge (local) reveals it is pack lizard so commonly used underground as a dray creature.

This is the drag marks left by the two skis'raal that attacked and destroyed the caravan. They did a fine job leaving little trace of their trail. But their hunger and greed caused them to return and also remove the large lizard corpse. It was then that they knocked the wagon wheel into the path (B-1) and made this drag trail which leads four miles east to their lair.

B-5 ...AND MYSTERIOUSLY VANISHES

The drag trail suddenly stops. The skis'raal actually stood on the lizard here and climbed up to the Entry Way (B-6) in the ceiling above.

The "front door" as the skis'raal like to call it is a flap of sticky silk imbedded with carefully chosen stone formations that blends into the ceiling. It takes a DC 20 Perception check to notice from below even when actively scanning for such a portal. Casual notice requires a DC 30 Perception check. However, anyone who climbs up to the 10 ft. high ceiling and feels around will easily note something is amiss and that this patch of stone can be opened like a door.

B-6 THE ENTRY WAY

The hole in the ceiling leads up through a five foot chimney to a small chamber with the walls covered in webbing. Woven into the webbing is jagged runes fashioned from discolored silk. These strange runes are the written language of the skis'raal and reads: *"The lair of Skethyk and Azraak, outcast but unbroken. They are welcome here. All others are food."*

This warning, aside from the obvious threat, also conveys more information to those who pause to consider it. The two skis'raal who live here are criminals. Skethyk and Azraak are the cultural equivalent of murderous bandits who have a hideout along a major highway and rob hapless passersby. They are certainly not typical skis'raal. In fact most of their kind finds their behavior abhorrent and it was for ambushing gnome merchants that they were banished in the first place. Still, this subtlety may be missed by many.

B-7 LAIR OF THE SKIS'RAAL (CR 4)

The bandits Skethyk and Azraak currently reside here in this large cavernous redoubt sated on gnomish blood. The desiccated, murdered corpse of sheriff Gunther hangs suspended in webbing as does the caravan's dead pack lizard and six still barely alive svirfneblin soldiers (all of whom have suffered substantial strength damage from spider venom).

Skethyk and Azraak, Skis'raal bandits (2)

CR 2

XP 600 (1,200 XP total)

Male skis'raal ranger 1 (deep walker)

NE Medium magical beast

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., Perception +9 (+13 in webs)

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 13, flat-footed 11 (+3 Dex, +1 natural)

hp 23 (3d8+1d10+4)

Fort +6, **Ref** +6, **Will** +3

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

Melee bite +4 (1d6 + poison)

Special Attack favored enemy humanoid (gnome) +2, web (+8 ranged, DC 13, hp 3)

TACTICS

During Combat These spiders prefer to ambush foes, using their webs and poison to great effect. They particularly hate clerics (thanks to their banishment by the White Spider, a priestess) and will focus their attacks on anyone using divine magic.

Morale If one dies and another is at 7 hp or less, the other surrenders. The survivor will reveal anything he knows to save his life.

STATISTICS

Str 11, **Dex** 17, **Con** 12, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 17 (+29 vs trip)

Feats Iron Will, Weapon Focus (web)

Skills Acrobatics +8, Climb +20, Craft (traps) +4, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +4, Knowledge (geography) +4, Knowledge (religion) +1, Perception +9 (+13 in webs), Stealth +12 (+16 in webs), Survival +4; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Perception (+8 in webs), +4 Stealth (+8 in webs), +16 Climb

Languages Skis'raal, Undercommon

SQ Track +1. Wild Empathy -1

Gear Skethyk wears a carved cave boar ivory armband worth 50 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; save Fort DC 14; frequency 1/round for 4 rounds; effect 1d2 Strength damage; cure 1 save.

Web (Ex) Creatures with the web ability can use webs to support themselves and up to one additional creature of the same size. In addition, such creatures can throw a web up to eight times per day. This is similar to an attack with a net but has a maximum range of 50 feet, with a range increment of 10 feet, and is effective against targets up to one size category larger than the web spinner. An entangled creature can escape with a successful Escape Artist check or burst the web with a Strength check. Both are standard actions with a DC 13. Attempts to burst a web by those caught in it take a -4 penalty.

Web spinners can create sheets of sticky webbing up to three times their size. They usually position these sheets to snare flying creatures but can also try to trap prey on the ground. Approaching creatures must succeed on a DC 20 Perception check to notice a web; otherwise they stumble into it and become trapped as though by a successful web attack. Attempts to escape or burst the webbing gain a +5 bonus if the trapped creature has something to walk on or grab while pulling free. Each 5-foot-square section of web has 3 hit points and DR 5/—.

A creature can move across its own web at its climb speed and can pinpoint the location of any creature touching its web.

EXPLORER VERSION OF THE LAIR

Skethyk and Azraak are criminal outcasts from the skis'raal colony in the Fungal Jungle (see Map V. below). They are not mindless monsters. The skis'raal are an intelligent race of giant spiders and these two outlaws have only attacked the caravan because they have been paid to do so by the drow "emissary" Malathorn. They are not expecting guests and attack any non-drow who enters their lair.

Once defeated, searching reveals much cast off rubbish and broken gear of little value. Hidden amongst the bones, junk and webbing are:

- Gunther's badge of office (worth 20 gp and proof of his demise)
- Mithral ring inscribed 'G&E forever' in gnomish script (Gunther's wedding ring worth 50 gp)
- Gunther's masterwork short sword (his heart-broken wife Esmara will reward the return of the sword and wedding ring with Gunther's private stash of six *potions of cure moderate wounds* and a rare bottle of elven brandy from the surface worth 250 gp here in the Azathyr; 50 gp on the surface.)
- Bag of 20 pp with elvish writing that reads "Hail Satha, Baroness of Vothys" (drow coinage)
- Iron key with gnomish 'A' (Fasturvalt armory key)
- A bolt of silk worth 80 gp
- Misc. coins (mostly gnomish) worth 77 gp
- Masterwork greataxe engraved with a dwarven runic D. A successful Knowledge (history) DC 10 reveals that is likely a weapon made in the dwarven city of Dammerhall.

There are up to six gnome soldiers alive in the webbing. For each day the PCs have delayed, one of them is dead. The survivors are grateful but hungry and weakened from venom. The most veteran of them, Harvald, asks their rescuers to take them back to Fasturvalt and promises a reward from their lord for their safe return.

If asked any questions they know very little. They confirm Knivy Ivy's version of what happened. They were traveling through the Azathyr and were attacked without provocation by the spiders. The spiders shot webs at them that entangled the whole band. The leapt to the attack and poisoned everyone with multiple bites before they could get free.

Harvald, entangled and helpless, saw the spiders focus on sheriff Gunther and slit his throat. Harvald still cannot talk about the murder without tears welling up in his eyes. "He was the greatest gnome I ever knew. He deserved better. He deserves justice..."

Gnome Soldiers of Lord Geirni's Guard (6)

CR 1/2

XP 200 each (1,200 XP total)

hp 12 (currently at STR 6 each; see page 18 for details)

OVERLORD VERSION OF THE LAIR

There are not yet any corpses (besides a few old husks of drained gnome merchants) nor any treasure besides the silk, miscellaneous coins and the dwarven axe. Instead this is simply the lair of two very modestly successful skis'raal bandits. It is up to our villainous PCs to lure them into service to their cause.

Skethyk and Azraak do not attack drow who approach their lair. They are afraid of dark elves and fear retribution. Instead they make hissing threats in undercommon: "*Be gone! We wish no traffic with the likes of you!*" However, these empty threats aside, the truth is that these two are eager for richer pickings.

If you prefer to handle this interaction with a Diplomacy check, then the skis'raal start Unfriendly. But if they can be shifted to Friendly using Diplomacy and promised payment, they will become mercenaries in the drow's service.

Threatening the spiders works surprisingly well at least for a while. They are already afraid of the drow. A successful Intimidation check can reinforce that fear and transform them into terrified lackeys. Of course, the moment they think they have the advantage they will try to get revenge against their former masters.

So, the better course is to actually speak to and negotiate with the skis'raal. The skis'raal are outcasts who are barely scraping by as bandits. The caravans that move along the Gnome King's Highway are often well armed and fiercely guarded. Two skis'raal on their own will eventually meet their match.

But as servants of the drow, these skis'raal could have a long and glorious future. They could become elite servants of the drow, gaining in experience and following them throughout the course of their rise to power. Charismatic and capable drow could show them that potential and so gain valuable allies. These spider rangers can be put to many uses and know the Gnome King's Highway well.

However, never forget that they are mercenaries (who prefer to be paid in both gold and corpses). No matter how much they fawn and scrape before their drow masters, they are always ultimately out for themselves. If provided with less than 10 gp a month each and less than two medium sized victims (or four small sized victims), they will seek other employment.

Skethyk is the ring-leader of the pair and Azraak always follows his lead. One look in his many eyes reveals a crafty monster. Perhaps if our overlords treat him well for many months, Skethyk could become something more than a mercenary - a skis'raal cohort!



Skethyk and Azraak speak in a low raspy hiss and seem to threaten with every word. They are murderers and villains who were banished from the skis'raal enclave in the Fungal Jungle when they developed a taste for gnome flesh and started routinely raiding small caravans along the Gnome King's Highway. They bear a grudge against the priestesses who banished them and would love to get vengeance against their own kind. One of the ways to earn their more permanent loyalty is to slay the White Spider (see pg. 69) who banished them in the first place.

Skethyk and Azraak assume every humanoid they meet cannot understand the language of spiders (the skis'raal tongue) and constantly chitter at each other. If anyone ever learns the tongue or casts *comprehend languages*, they can overhear their conversations. Disturbingly, Skethyk and Azraak are almost always talking about the same thing. They constantly size up everyone they meet for how they'd taste.

For example: *"He's a juicy one, my love. He'd make a fine supper."*

"Oh, yes! Ample meat for the both of us, my love. And I do so love elven flesh. So sweet, my love. So tender..."

Story Award: Award Overlords XP equal to defeating the skis'raal for gaining them as allies.

B-8 THE BACK DOOR (UPPER)

This is a small hidden door (DC 20 Perception check to find) that has been concealed behind formations on a six foot rise at the back of the cavern. This back door is Skethyk and Azraak's escape hatch if a superior force ever storms their lair.

B-9 THE BACK DOOR (LOWER)

This is a small five foot shaft. This door is also concealed in a similar manner to the front door with a silk covering embedded with stone (DC 20).

B-10 DROW SUPPLY CACHE

As fate would have it, the skis'raal have unknowingly made their lair across from a drow supply cache. Similar caches are hidden throughout the Azathyr. It may seem unlikely that a society as evil and chaotic as the drow would have this level of cooperation and coordination. However, for all their wickedness, the drow still wish to see their own kind conquer, thrive and survive. Thus drow nobles create and stock caches such as these.

The secret door is cunningly made to look exactly like natural stone and is difficult to find even when searching (Perception check DC 25). However, press the right stone and the cache easily opens. Drow PCs may make a DC 15 Knowledge (local) check to know about this cache. This cache has been long neglected, but its contents survive thanks to a minor magical effect that keeps the contents unspoiled for long periods of time. In fact the best way to find this cache is to cast *detect magic* in the cave. It radiates a minor transmutation aura visible even through the stone.

OVERLORD CONTENTS

In the Overlord version the cache has not yet been looted. Though long neglected, it is still stocked since the last time a drow noble plotted to invade Fasturvalt (an invasion that Lord Geiri, Lord Geirni's father, managed to forestall). The cache still contains 200 days' worth of hard mushcake and dried auroch meat (i.e. iron rations). But more important than the less than appetizing food, it contains one hundred and twenty doses of a potent alchemical concoction known as *gnome's bane*.

Gnome's bane gives a +8 alchemical bonus to fortitude saves to resist the *blindness/deafness* spell-like ability of the svirfneblin for 24 hours, making the imbiber all but immune. The concoction is also poisonous to gnomes only (treat as arsenic). Each dose is worth 50 gp but it is impossible to sell here in the Upper Azathyr.

The gnomes abhor the stuff and will not do business with anyone who traffics in it and the Baroness will simply seize any brought to her. For everyone else, the svirfneblin have never been trouble and these potions have little use.

Of course the real use of this cache is perhaps obvious. With these doses in their possession, an Overlord army that attacked Fasturvalt would be rendered almost immune to the major advantage of the deep gnomes – their potent spell-like abilities. This long neglected cache is in fact the key to conquering Fasturvalt.

EXPLORER CONTENTS

When the PCs open the cache, it is seemingly empty. Malathorn, the so-called drow emissary, has already been here and collected its contents. However in his haste, a single vial of *gnome's bane* was left behind. It has rolled into a small corner niche but a DC 10 Perception check finds it. A DC 20 Craft (alchemy) check will identify it for what is. They can also take it to Fasturvalt or show it to Knivy Ivy. Any adult svirfneblin recognizes the stuff by smell and is immediately horrified by it.

Iverna is quick to express her revulsion. "*Gnome's bane*," she hisses angrily. "*One of the drow's wonderful gifts to the world. If anyone besides a svirfneblin drinks it they become resistant to our magic. If a gnome drinks it, they die slowly and painfully. You either destroy that or we part company.*"

Ivy will grudgingly accept that they need to keep it in order to convince the gnomes of Fasturvalt of the danger they're in. She'll accept it. But she won't like it.

A successful tracking roll (Survival DC 15) with reveal that many individuals came through here several days ago and unloaded something from the cache. It is an easy leap of logic to guess that there was once a lot of *gnome's bane* in this cache.

If the PCs have any animal companions with the scent ability, they will also be able to smell that there was once a great store of food here. In short, this supply cache has been looted with the last week. The only group that would need so much supplies as this cache once held are an army.

If the PCs have already rescued the gnome soldiers, then Harvald is quick to leap to these conclusions. Alas, he is not surprised. He accepts these discoveries grimly.

"So, Gunther was right. I didn't want to believe it. I always hoped this journey was simply the Sheriff being paranoid. But there is a drow army out there somewhere and can there be any doubt that they are preparing to enslave we svirfneblin?"

"Lord Geirni's father, Lord Geiri, made a deal with the devil years ago. He bribed a drow baron. We provided them with the Azathyr's finest marble. They pretended we didn't exist. The Sheriff caught wind that the old Baron was dead and had been replaced by someone younger and more ambitious. He knew what that meant. War was coming. He was right about everything and they killed him for it.

"We must get to Fasturvalt now!"

B-11 WAY STONE

The gnomes built these waystones long ago to mark the King's Highway. This one reads "5 ½ days east and north to Fasturvalt. 9 days west to Kladdenvalt and 32 days east to Vondehammer." These are the names of other svirfneblin holds outside of the Azathyr. Similar waystones are found every eight miles along the King's Highway. They assume a party of gnomes making about eight miles a day.

The other gnomish communities are not described in detail in this campaign and have no direct role to play. Still, they exist to explain where trade to Fasturvalt comes from. Here are two brief descriptions of these svirfneblin enclaves.

Vondehammer is a small community about the size of Fasturvalt. Instead of stone work, Vondehammer is famed for its iron foundry and the gnomes that live there mine low quality ore that they refine and turn into amazing tools and weaponry. Vondehammer steel is well known through the Azathyr and beyond and much sought after.

Kladdenvalt is the capital and stronghold of the mighty gnome king Olvain But-Whispers-and-a-Thousand-Warriors-Answer. A small city by surface standards, Kladdenvalt is thriving and prosperous. It is also at peace, well defended and in no need of adventurers. Outsiders are treated well but always with suspicion.

EXPLORERS AND THE CARAVAN

For dwarven explorers, this is a fairly straight forward series of encounter. They discover a ruined caravan with ample of evidence of foul play and likely meet the sole survivor. Knivy Ivy becomes their de facto guide through the Azathyr. They then proceed to the spider cave, defeat the skis'raal bandits and hopefully rescue the gnome soldiers who they escort back to Fasturvalt. If they are clever and observant, they have even begun to deduce much of the drow's plan to conquer Fasturvalt.

The drow have hired skis'raal bandits, paying them in platinum, to make sure no one from Fasturvalt goes for help from the nearest svirfneblin settlements. The drow army has collected a large amount of an alchemical compound that defeats the gnome's spell-like abilities. There can be no doubt that the drow intend to attack Fasturvalt and likely soon.

Perhaps the PCs have even chatted with Ivy and learned the Lord Geirni is a well-meaning simpleton. He is ripe for being manipulated and in fact a drow "emissary" named Malathorn is already in Fasturvalt, filling the lord's head with lies and surveying the gnomes strengths and weaknesses.

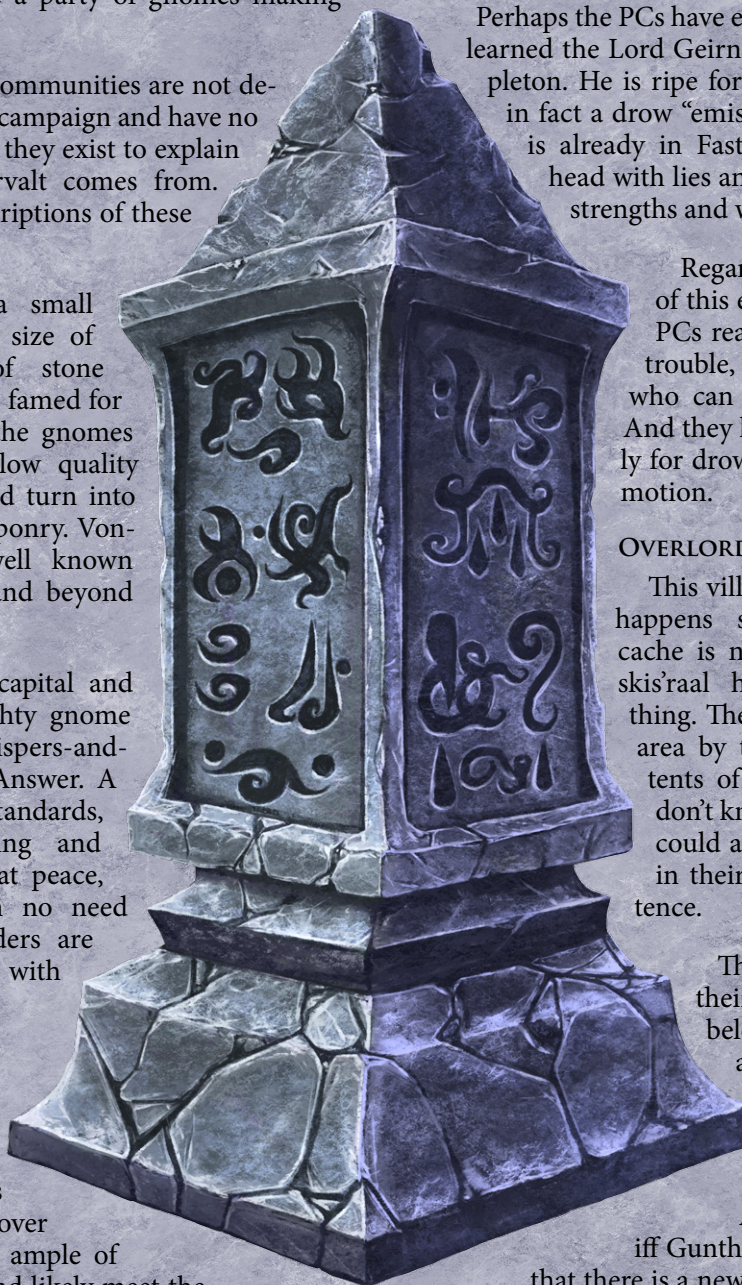
Regardless, the whole point of this encounter is to make the PCs realize that Fasturvalt is in trouble, they are the only ones who can help the deep gnomes. And they had best get there quickly for drow schemes are already in motion.

OVERLORDS AND THE CARAVAN

This villainous version of events happens somewhat earlier. The cache is not yet claimed and the skis'raal haven't ambushed anything. The drow are drawn to this area by their need for the contents of the cache. If the PCs don't know about the cache, you could always have an underling in their army know of its existence.

The drow proceed from their staging area (see area G below) along the dark road and they seize the cache. They meet the skis'raal and have a chance to gain their service.

Around this time, Sheriff Gunther will have gotten word that there is a new Baroness in Vothys and begin to fear that the drow are on the move. He will disobey the express wishes of his master, Lord Geirni, and organize his caravan. He heads out towards Kladdenvalt to seek allies and aid in this desperate hour. At some point, it is likely the PCs and Gunther may meet. Gunther wastes little words with drow or anyone trying to stop his caravan.



GUNTHER'S CARAVAN (CR 6)

Enemies attacking Gunther's caravan head on may be in for a rude shock. The sheriff and his guards in full armor are a formidable fighting force. However, the caravan is easily ambushed when it stops every twelve hours to rest. Then all but one guard (who rotates every two hours) takes off their breastplates and the gnomes eat, rest and tend the pack lizard. Then they are most vulnerable. Of course, the drow PCs have a hundred soldiers at their command. Overwhelming this caravan is no great trick. Ivy, who has actually been to Kladdenvault once, is serving as a guide. She is not interested in fighting especially against overwhelming odds and tries to disappear in the confusion of battle.

The one wagon carries provisions for a month's journey (mostly mushcakes and salted cave fish) as well as mundane camping supplies of no great value. What there is little of here is money. In fact, Gunther is broke. He is hoping to hire mercenaries for food and the promise of later reward once Fasturvalt is safe.

Gunther As-Certain-As-The-Stone, Sheriff of Fasturvalt CR 2

XP 600

Male svirneblin fighter 2

LG small humanoid (gnome)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 16, flat-footed 19 (+6 armor, +2 shield, +3 Dex, +2 dodge, +1 size)

hp 19 (2d10+4)

Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +3; +1 will vs. fear

SR 13

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft. (15 ft. in armor)

Melee mwk shortsword power attack +6 (1d6+3/19-20)

Ranged light crossbow +6 (1d6/19-20)

Special Attack +1 to attack vs. dwarven and reptilian humanoids

Spell-like Abilities (CL 2nd)

Constant – nondetection

1/day – blindness/deafness (DC 12), blur, disguise self

TACTICS

Before Combat If given the chance, Gunther activates *blur*.

During Combat Gunther attacks his enemies with the battle cry "Fasturvalt", power attacking with every stroke. His strategy is to let his superior defenses win the day while inflicting damage with his short sword.

Morale Gunther fights to the death against those who would stop him from saving Fasturvalt.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +2; CMB +2; CMD 15

Feats Power Attack, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (short sword)

Skills Craft (Alchemy) +2, Intimidate +3, Perception +3, Profession (Soldier) +6, Stealth +7 (+9 underground); **Racial Modifiers** +2 Craft (Alchemy), +2 Perception, +2 Stealth (+4 underground)

Languages Gnome, Undercommon

SQ bravery +1, stonecunning

Combat Gear 20 bolts

Other Gear masterwork shortsword, breastplate, steel shield (bearing insignia of Fasturvalt), light crossbow, mithral ring inscribed with "G&E Forever" in gnomish (50 gp), armory key, 32 gp

Gnome Soldiers of Lord Geirni's Guard (6)

CR 1/2

XP 200 each (1,200 XP total)

Male Svirfneblin warrior 1

N small humanoid (gnome)

Init +1; **Senses** Darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 16, flat-footed 19 (breastplate +6, shield +2, size +1, Dex +3, dodge +2)

hp 12 (1d10+2)

Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +3

SR 12

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft. (15 ft. in armor)

Melee shortsword +4 (1d6+1/19-20)

Ranged light crossbow +5 (1d6/19-20)

Special Attack +1 to attack vs. dwarven and reptilian humanoids

Spell-like Abilities (CL 1st)

Constant – nondetection

1/day – blindness/deafness (DC 12), blur, disguise self

TACTICS

Before Combat If given the chance, the gnomes activate *blur*.

During Combat These soldiers follow Gunther's lead and obey his orders.

Morale If Gunther falls, they surrender at half hit points. But while their Sheriff stands, they fight to the last.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +1; CMB +1; CMD 14

Feats Weapon Focus (short sword)

Skills Craft (Alchemy) +2, Craft (various) +4, Perception +3, Profession (Soldier) +5, Stealth +7 (+9 underground); **Racial Modifiers** +2 Craft (Alchemy), +2 Perception, +2 Stealth (+4 underground)

Languages Gnome, Undercommon

SQ stonecunning

Combat Gear 20 bolts

Other Gear shortsword, breastplate, steel shield (bearing insignia of Fasturvalt), light crossbow, 1d6 gp

Iveryna Already-Has-Your-Knife aka "Knivvy Ivy" CR 1

XP 400

hp 10 (see page 12 for details)

Pack Lizard CR 2

XP 600

N Large Animal

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low light vision, scent, Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 9, flat-footed 14 (+5 natural, -1 size)

hp 22 (2d8+13)

Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +3

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee bite +4 (1d8+5 plus grab)

TACTICS

During Combat The pack lizard does not usually fight in combat and is not combat trained. However, if anyone unfamiliar gets directly in front of the lizard and is wounded or carrying food, the pack lizard will try to bite them. Once a pack lizard gets a hold of something it is famously difficult to get it to let go.

Morale If wounded, the pack lizard panics and tries to flee.

STATISTICS

Str 20, Dex 10, Con 21, Int 1, Wis 17, Cha 11

Base Atk +1; CMB +7; CMD 17 (21 vs trip)

Feats Endurance, Toughness

Skills Perception +8

SQ Docile

C. THE NEEDLE'S EYE

The so-called Needle's Eye is a natural choke point just south of Fasturvalt along the main passage that connects to the Gnome King's Highway. Anyone making a knowledge (local) DC 10 check who is native to the Azathyr knows about this location. Knivy Ivy certainly knows about this place (having just passed through with Gunther's caravan) and will mention it if an ally asks about a natural ambush spot near Fasturvalt.

C-1 SIGN

A stone marker written in undercommon, gnome, dwarvish, elvish and skis'raal reads "Fasturvalt ahead, domain of the great Lord Geirni son of Geiri. All who come in peace are welcome." The sign is not that old having been replaced just a few years ago when Lord Geiri died.

If Knivy Ivy is with an Explorer party, she pauses at the sign and sneers. "Great! Hah! Not great enough to do anything about the drow."

C-2 TRADER'S BANE

The cavern here narrows to less than five feet. All medium creatures are squeezed. Gnomish wagons must be unloaded, wheels removed, and then reassembled on the other side. Pack lizards can only fit through without injury if their sides are greased and they are pulled through. Needless to say, this takes time (about an hour per wagon). But that time is nothing compared to how long it takes to go the long way around from the King's Highway.

C-3 AMBUSH GALLERY

If the delays weren't bad enough, nature has created a perfect place to stand and fire missiles at those either coming through or stuck at the Needle's Eye. The formations here create a natural rampart that grants cover to medium creatures standing behind it to fire down in the passage. A small natural stairway leads up the center of the rampart and is easily blocked by a single defender.

EXPLORER CAMPAIGNS

The Needle's Eye is the best place to catch the drow emissary Malathorn after he leaves Fasturvalt (see below for details) and so might be the scene for a battle.

OVERLORD CAMPAIGNS

This is the perfect place to ambush a gnomish caravan headed to or from Fasturvalt. Such caravans could provide a natural way to either infiltrate the town or gain information about current defenses. Gunther's caravan (see page 18 for statistics and details) must come through this gap.

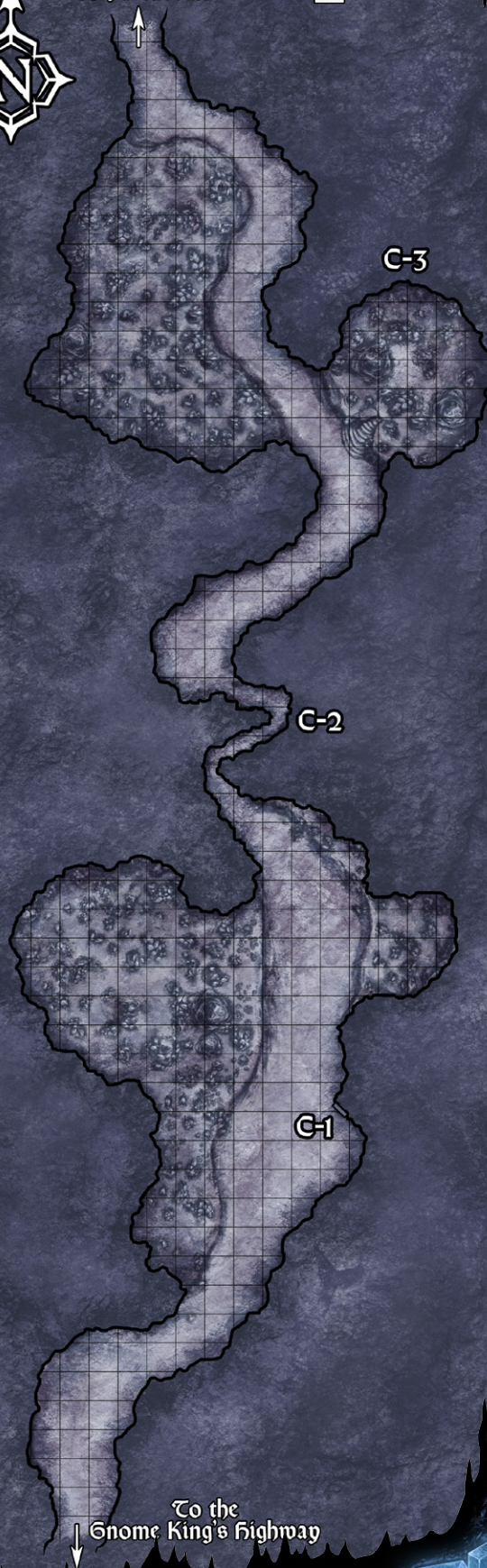
Map
6

THE NEEDLE'S EYE



To Fasturvalt

□ = 5'



To the
Gnome King's Highway

D. THE SVIRFNEBLIN TOWN OF FASTURVALT

See page 22 below for details.

E. THE LAKE OF DIAMONDS

This vast cavern is a natural wonder. Everywhere gigantic quartz crystals erupt from the walls and ceilings. They hang like delicate diamond chandeliers from every wall. And the floor of the cavern is filled with a jewel clear lake. Little wind moves through this cavern and so the face of the lake is calm like a great mirror. Lost in eternal darkness, this mirror is disturbed or seen only rarely.

As splendid as the lake is to normal sight, its true beauty is appreciated only via darkvision. The crystals radiate a pale violet several shades beyond the normal visible spectrum. Piezoelectric arcs dance amidst the crystalline menagerie.

The lake is not silent. White cave crickets that grow to three inches long swarm throughout the crystal lake. They emit a low eerie hum that seems to make the crystals almost reverberate. It is a haunting music that fills this great space.

Giant Cave Salamander

CR 4

XP 1,200

N Large Animal (aquatic)

Init +7; Senses blindsight 60 ft., scent, Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 12 (+3 Dex, +3 natural, -1 size)

hp 34 (4d8+16)

Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +1

Immune gaze attacks, visual effects

Weakness blind

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft., swim 40 ft.

Melee bite +4 (1d8+5 plus grab)

Special Attack death roll (1d8+10 plus trip)

TACTICS

During Combat These salamander are solitary ambush predators.

They swim quietly through the lake of diamonds seeking prey along its shore. Once prey is found, they try to get close enough to grab a foe and drag it into the water.

Morale If reduced to 8 hp or lower, the salamander flees.

STATISTICS

Str 16, Dex 16, Con 18, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 6

Base Atk +3; CMB +7 (+11 to grapple); CMD 20 (24 vs trip)

Feats Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Stealth)

Skills Climb +11, Perception +6, Stealth +15 (+19 in the water), Swim +11; Racial +4 to Stealth (+8 in the water); +8 Swim

SQ Invisible to Darkvision

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Death Roll (Ex) - When grappling a foe of its size or smaller, a cave salamander can perform a death roll upon making a successful grapple check. As it clings to its foe, it tucks in its legs and rolls rapidly, twisting and wrenching its victim. The salamander inflicts its bite damage and knocks the creature prone. If successful, the salamander maintains its grapple.

Invisible to Darkvision (Su) - The salamander is completely transparent to darkvision and always counts as invisible to anyone seeing by this sense. Other senses detect the salamander normally. This innate supernatural ability cannot be negated or dispelled.

This gargantuan underground lake is actually an unimaginably huge quartz geode more than ten miles across at its widest point. The quartz itself is cloudy and jagged and portable pieces are of little value. The lake takes its name from the two beaches where the passages enter the great domed geode. These beaches are littered with broken pieces of crystal that have fallen throughout the years. They look much like beaches made of scattered diamonds.

The lake itself is near sterile and the water is drinkable. However, the cave is not without dangers. Living here is a small population of giant cave salamanders. These eyeless albinos have evolved a unique hunting ability. They secrete a strange slime that makes them completely transparent to darkvision. This adaptation allows them to feast upon visitors to this lake and so the place has gained a dire reputation as being cursed.

They are solitary hunters and their lairs are in small crystalline caverns hidden below the waterline far from the two entrances to the geode. Their usual prey is the cave crickets that throng here, but they are always eager to supplement their diet with visitors. There are about a dozen of these eyeless hunters scattered throughout the more than eighty square miles of the lake. However they prowl the two beaches near the entrances so meeting one there is likely.



THE DARK ROAD (ENCOUNTERS F-H)

One of the drow secrets of the Upper Azathyr is that they have discovered a minor passage that bypasses the Fungal Jungle and connects Fasturvalt to Vothys (the drow outpost detailed in Act Three). Without this passage, you must venture into the weird wilderness, with its many inhabitants and potential complications.

The passage is known in the drow tongue as the *mena doelyn* (pro. mine-ah doe-lin) or literally “the hidden path”. But more commonly the drow simply refer to it as the dark road. Both ends of the dark road are sealed by masterwork secret doors that have been built to blend in perfectly with the native stone.

Though the dark road is marked as a minor passage on the map (see page 7), it has been extensively cleared of debris and formations and leveled so that it does not slow movement like minor passages usually do. That said, the dark road is quite narrow and widening its ninety six mile length would be a major engineering project. As a result medium creatures must move through it in single file and large creatures count as squeezed and have their movement halved. Wagons and larger beasts cannot navigate the dark road.

Still Overlord PCs begin the campaign knowing about the dark road and it represents a substantial boon to freely navigating the map. However, there is one problem with the dark road. The Baroness considers it an important military asset and has it constantly patrolled. There is always at least one drow patrol moving up and down the *mena doelyn*. In this way, the Baroness will know if her enemies use the dark road. Every day there is a 20% chance of meeting a patrol.

These patrols consist of six drow guards and two drow hunting leopards known as shaokyri. One of the drow guards is always a patrol sergeant eager to prove him or herself to the baroness by capturing prisoners. For any non-drow, this patrol is a combat encounter. The drow seek to imprison any intruders they meet to be taken back for torture and interrogation. Drow will be stopped and asked their business. The sergeant is not trusted enough by the Baroness to know her plan for betraying the PCs. Thus, the PCs may be mistaken for allies. If the PCs seem knowledgeable about Vothys and give a convincing story, the sergeant will let them pass. The sergeant knows the new password of Vothys: “*Satha serith azbariel*” (lit. Satha prays for my return).

Drow Patrol(6) **CR 1**

XP 400 each (2,400 XP total)

hp 18 (see page 77 as drow guards)

Shaokyri (drow hunting leopards (2)) **CR 2**

XP 600 each (1,200 XP total)

hp 19 (see page 82)

F. SOUTHERN ENTRANCE

The dark road’s southern entrance is a nondescript passage that contains a masterfully constructed secret door (DC 30 Perception check to find with a search).

G. THE DROW STAGING AREA

This large cavern along the dark road is where the Overlord campaign begins. A hundred drow common soldiers await the PC’s arrival. Besides the soldiers there are also thirty days provisions for this army stored in this cave. One of the soldiers is not who he seems and is in fact the Lady Satha’s assassin Zethra. His mission is to hide within the army, wait for the PCs to succeed and only then slay them.

H. NORTHERN ENTRANCE

This is identical to the southern entrance (F.) above.

Zethra Morgus, the Baroness’ Assassin **CR 4**

XP 1,200

hp 33 (see page 83 for details)

Common Drow Soldier **CR 1/3**

XP 135

Male or female drow warrior 1

CE Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft.; Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +2 Dex, +1 shield)

hp 5 (1d10)

Fort +2, **Ref** +2, **Will** –1; +2 vs. enchantment

Immune sleep; **SR** 7

Weaknesses light blindness

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee rapier +3 (1d6+1/18–20)

Ranged hand crossbow +3 (1d4/19–20 plus poison)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st)

1/day—dancing lights, darkness, faerie fire

TACTICS

During Combat They use their poisoned crossbows to take prisoners, their magic to sow chaos and make for easier targets, and failing that, turn to their rapiers.

Morale The drow are not fanatics. If half their number fall or defeat looks inevitable and there are no officers to enforce discipline, they flee.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 14, **Con** 10, **Int** 10, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14

Feats Weapon Finesse

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +3; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Perception

Languages Elven, Undercommon

SQ poison use

Gear leather armor, light steel shield, rapier, hand crossbow with 20 bolts, drow poison [2 doses], 3d6 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison Use (Ex) Drow are skilled in the use of poison and never risk accidentally poisoning themselves. Drow favor an insidious toxin that causes its victims to lapse into unconsciousness—this poison allows drow to capture slaves with great ease.

Drow Poison—injury; *save* Fort DC 13; *frequency* 1/minute for 2 minutes; *initial effect* unconsciousness for 1 minute; *secondary effect* unconsciousness for 2d4 hours; *cure* 1 save.

FASTURVALT

Fasturvalt

N small town

Corruption +0; Crime +0; Economy +2; Law +1; Lore +2; Society -2

Qualities Insular, Strategic Location

Danger -5

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government hereditary autocracy led by House Geidne

Population 460 (460 svirfneblin)

Notable NPCs

Lord Geirni Geirison of House Geidne, He-Speaks-the-Truth-But-Slowly (LN male svirfneblin fighter 2/aristocrat 1)

Gunther As-Certain-As-The-Stone (LG male svirfneblin fighter 2)

Tammar Even-the-Stones-Listen (N male old svirfneblin expert 5)

Miatha Always-A-Song-Follows (NG female svirfneblin adept 2)

Iveryna Already-Has-Your-Knife (CN female svirfneblin rogue 1)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 1,100 gp; Purchase Limit 5000 gp; Spellcasting -

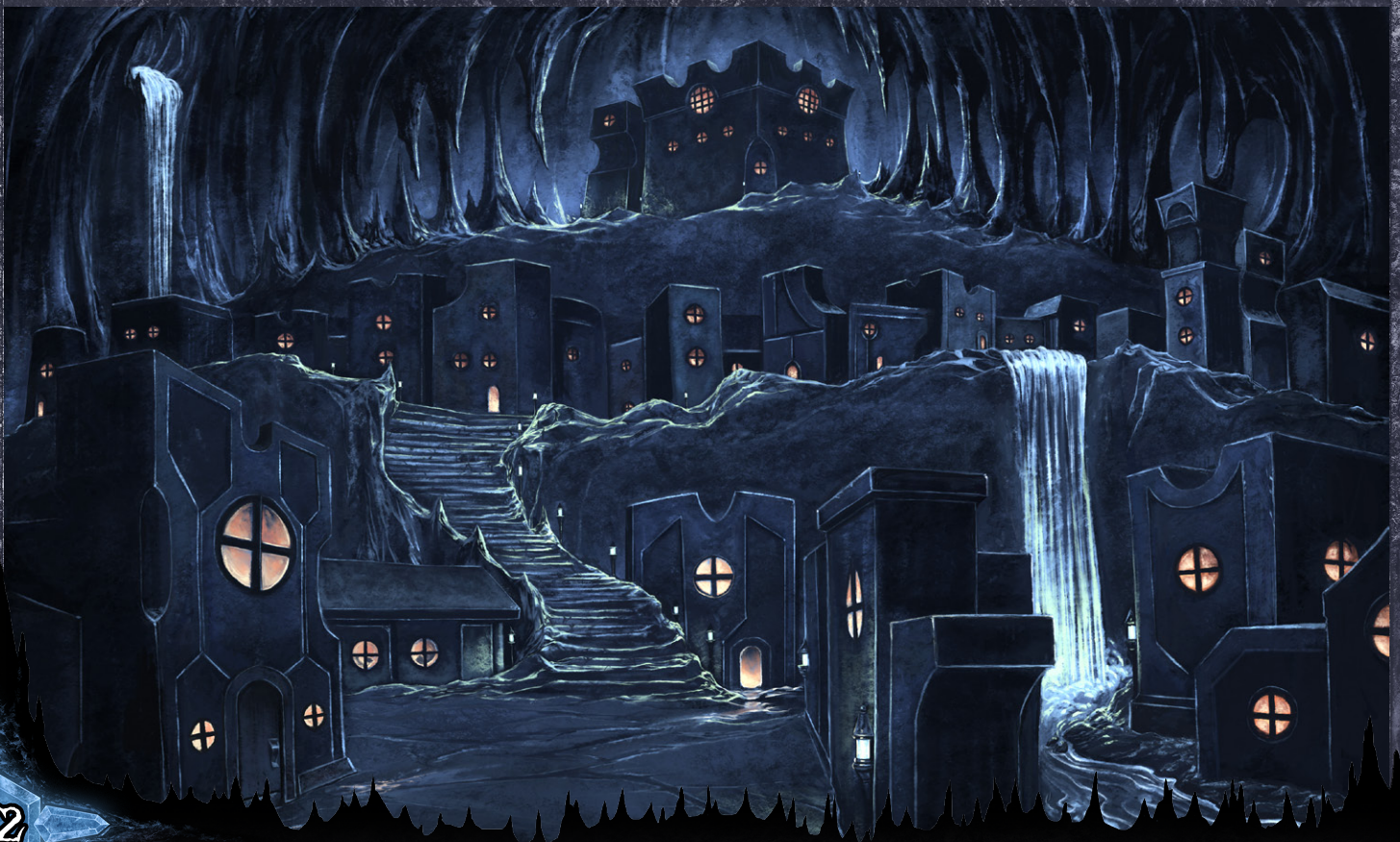
Minor Items 3d4 items; Medium Items 1d6 items; Major Items -

Fasturvalt is the only permanent svirfneblin town in the Azathyr. Originally established by the House of Geidne (pro. Gee-ed-knee) one hundred and fifty years ago, it was created to both clear out duergar slavers who preyed on the Gnome King's Highway and to take advantage of the fine marble to be found in this great cavern. The first lord of Fasturvalt (Lord Geirli Knows-No-Fear) cleared the cavern of its duergar enclave and founded the town. Since then the town has prospered and its fine stonework and marble are now famous both within the Azathyr and without.

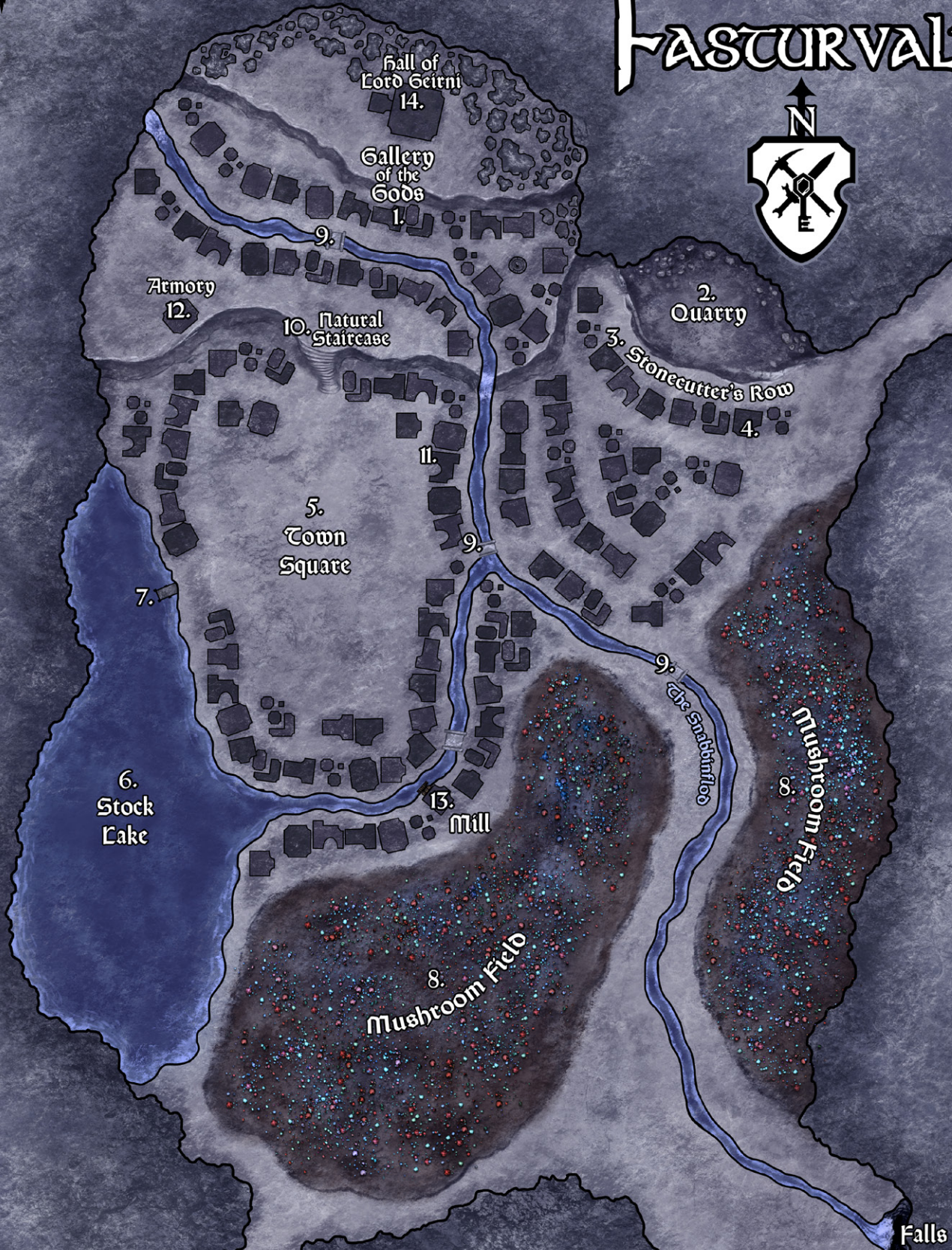
However the town has always lived in the shadow of the drow threat. The drow bore the former duergar inhabitants no love, certainly. But the drow have always believed that the entire Azathyr is theirs by right and the svirfneblin intrusion grates upon them. Still, the small quarry-town has always been a minor priority.

Finally about fifty years ago, the drow decided it was time to take Fasturvalt. Lord Geiri, Lord Geirni's father, managed to head off their imminent attack by making a deal with the devil. He traded stone for peace. The drow, distracted by their own internal rivalries, took the deal and Fasturvalt has been since left alone to live in virtual isolation save for a few trade caravans bound for destinations outside the Azathyr.

Now the old drow baron has been assassinated and replaced. Lord Geiri Geirlison is also dead, having lived to the fine old age of one hundred and seventy seven. His son, the nearly imbecilic Lord Geirni, sits upon the throne, the last heir of House Geidni. How in three generations the noble house of Geidne degenerated from the bold and innovative Lord Geirli to Lord Geirni is uncertain. What is certain is that the current lord seems unable or unwilling to appreciate how much danger his people are in. For one hundred and fifty years Fasturvalt has known only peace and prosperity in its hidden corner of the Azathyr. But now it seems that Fasturvalt's fortunes are about to change.



FASTURVALT



1" = 50 yards

FEATURES OF FASTURVALT

Fasturvalt is a single gigantic cave that anywhere else in the world would rate among the largest caverns anyone has ever seen. Of course, here in the Azathyr with such great open spaces as the Lake of Diamonds, the Fungal Jungle, the Earth's Wound and the great vault of Taaryssia, it is simply standard fair.

The cavern ceiling rises more than a hundred yards high at its central apex and is adorned with countless natural hanging formations. Running right through the center of this cavern is the Snabbinflod (lit. the Quick Water). This aptly named river comes into Fasturvalt from a tumultuous waterfall along its north-western wall and roars through the center of town. The river is black, cold, deep and deceptively fast. The song of the Snabbinflod (as the gnomes call it), a low dull roar, never ceases in the cavern. While the gnomes hardly even notice it, newcomers may find it quite annoying and it can make sleeping in Fasturvalt difficult.

The gnomes never go swimming in the deadly Snabbinflod. The waters are so rapid that they will sweep you downstream, dash you against the rocks and drop you several hundred feet down the natural pit at the southern end of town into an underground river channel where you will never be seen again. In short, there is no fording this river.

The gnomes have cut a channel in their cavern and created a man-made (gnome-made?) tributary of the Snabbinflod that is slightly more forgiving. It is still fast and powerful, but merely dumps you into the stock lake where you can safely swim to shore.

The stock lake is also anything but pleasant. The water here is murky and overgrown with mildly bioluminescent cave algae that give the lake a sickening pale green glow. The stock lake is teeming with blind cave fish who thrive within their murky home. Every rotten scrap and bit of waste that isn't heaped on the mushroom fields ends up here. Of course, these cave fish are a major source of food for the svirfneblin and small gnomish craft are always on the river dredging the stock lake for fish large enough to harvest.

The other major source of food is the mushroom fields. Several different types of fungus grow out of the rich black substrate, but they all grow to be enormous. The mushrooms are harvested when they are as tall as corn stalks (about six to eight feet tall). The tough fibrous stalks are used either as a wood substitute, fuel for fires or as fibers for cloth and rope. The spores from the massive caps are milled into sticky grey flour and then baked into mushcakes. The flesh of the caps is a staple of the gnomish diet and dominates every meal.

The people of Fasturvalt all but worship these mushroom fields and in fact it is not only their main source of food, it is also their graveyard. Whenever a gnome of Fasturvalt dies, he is buried wrapped in porous white fabric made of mushroom stalk fibers within the rich black dirt of the mushroom fields. Outsiders often see this as a grisly form of cannibalism, but the svirfneblin believe it a great honor to return to the soil of their beloved mother-cave.

Fasturvalt is a misty place. With the river and the lake it is always damp and cool. That condensation plus the ground water seeping in from above means it is almost always lightly drizzling within the cavern. Between the damp mist, the sound of the river and the odors of the stock lake some would say that Fasturvalt is a miserable place to live. Certainly it is far from the dwarvish ideal.

However the svirfneblin do not find it so. For them, the cavern is mother. Everything they need is here. The marble to be found in the quarry is the finest in all of the Azathyr – dense and lustrous. The song of the river is the sound of the Snabbinflod bringing them fresh water to drink and bathe in. The smell of the lake and the mushroom fields is the smell of life and prosperity. The cavern feeds them, clothes them and in the fullness of time reclaims them. Many of the deep gnomes living here will never leave this cavern. Their whole life is Fasturvalt.

TOPOGRAPHY

Fasturvalt's natural floor is not flat. The whole cavern is a gentle slope, with the highest elevation at the northwest and the lowest at the southwest corner.

Near the northwestern corner the slope becomes more pronounced and the cave has two embankments that each rise about thirty feet. The first rise has a broad natural stairway that the gnomes have broadened and widened, while still preserving its natural beauty.

1. GALLERY OF THE GODS

Upon the second rise is the Gallery of the Gods. Here are located a solid wall of massive, beautiful flowstone columns that span the entire height of this great cavern. Stained by minerals seeping in from above, these columns are a rainbow of brilliant colors – red, ochre, vermillion and blue.

The gnomes imagine in these great columns the faces of svirfneblin deities forever looking over Fasturvalt, protecting its inhabitants and blessing its labor. It was these grand formations that first drew explorers to this place countless years ago and to this day it reminds an object of reverence.

2. QUARRY

This is Fasturvalt's blessing and curse. The quarry here has an almost limitless supply of the finest marble to be found in the entire Azathyr. This marble here is perfect for sculpture having a slight translucence that mimics flesh and capable of being polished to a brilliant sheen. This dense stone is comparatively soft and malleable when first mined and with time hardens to be amazing durable, making it a perfect building material. In short, everyone wants this stone. And Fasturvalt has lots of it. The quarry has been already been stepped down more than a hundred feet and there is no end to the deposit in sight. In one hundred and fifty years of constant labor, the quarrymen of Fasturvalt have extracted less than a fifth of the marble that is to be found here.

3. STONECUTTER'S ROW

The marble from the quarry is brought here and skilled artisan's shape into a million forms. The gnomes live in houses made of marble. Lord Geirni's hall is adorned with marble statues. The gnomes dine on marble plates, drink from marble cups and play chess on marble boards with marble pieces. The stone is ubiquitous about this town.

Tammar Even-the-Stones-Listen

CR 3

XP 800

Male old svirneblin expert 5

N small humanoid (gnome)

Init -1; Senses darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor, -1 Dex, +2 dodge, +1 size)

hp 22 (5d8)

Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +10

SR 16

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee mwk hvy pick +2 (1d4-2/x4)

Special Attack +1 to attack vs. dwarven and reptilian humanoids

Spell-like Abilities (CL 5th)

Constant – nondetection

1/day – blindness/deafness (DC 14), blur, disguise self

TACTICS

During Combat Tammar is too old to be much of a fighter anymore.

If forced into a fight, he calls for help and swings his pick wildly.

Morale If reduced to 11 hp, Tammar surrenders.

STATISTICS

Str 7, Dex 9, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 18, Cha 10

Base Atk +3; CMB +1; CMD 10

Feats Alertness, Persuasive, Skill Focus (Craft [Stonecutter])

Skills Craft (Alchemy) +13, Craft (Stonecutter) +14, Diplomacy +10, Intimidate +10, Knowledge(dungeoneering) +7, Knowledge (engineering) +11, Knowledge (geography) +7, Knowledge (history) +7, Knowledge (local) +11, Knowledge (nobility) +7, Knowledge (religion) +7, Perception +16, Profession (Quarry Foreman) +12, Sense Motive +14, Stealth +1 (+3 underground); Racial Modifiers +2 Craft (Alchemy), +2 Perception, +2 Stealth (+4 underground)

Languages Common, Dwarven, Elven, Gnome, Undercommon

SQ stonecunning

Gear leather armor, masterwork pick (used also as walking stick), sapphire and mithral ring of the master of stonecutter's guild (250 gp), pipe, good tobacco, flask full of good surface whiskey

4. THE BROKEN CHISEL

Amidst all the workshops and warehouses of Stonecutter's row, there is one unusual structure. Unlabeled save for a large placard adorned with broken stone cutter's tools, everyone on the Row knows it as the Broken Chisel. This is a bar where off-duty stonecutters go to drink and relax with their fellows. This is not a boy's club, the svirfneblin are remarkably egalitarian on who gets the honor of working stone and so male and female deep gnomes freely come in. During off shifts, it can be quite raucous. However, this is the domain of the stonecutters and anyone else is not respected here.

This is also the lair of Tammar Even-the-Stones-Listen, the aged foreman. In fact the Broken Chisel is sometimes called Tammar's Court. The grizzled old stonecutter is either here or in the quarry. Tammar is the last gnome left in Fasturvalt who was alive at the founding of the town. He is more than a hundred and eighty years old but still spry. His word about town carries much weight.

Tammar realizes that Lord Geirni is not very bright and that the drow want this town. He also realizes more than most the value of the marble here. He is indifferent about politics, but if persuaded that Fasturvalt is in danger, he could request a private audience with Lord Geirni. He is also key to building defenses for the town (see below for details).



5. TOWN SQUARE

A large open area in the center of town that is covered in small "trodstools", a soft white mushrooms that you can walk upon. The gnomes gather here frequently to socialize and gather.

6. STOCK LAKE

A murky smelly lake filled with blind cave fish.

7. STONE PIER

A pier on the stock lake where a few small gnome fishing boats dock.

8. MUSHROOM FIELDS

Where the Gnomes grow the mushrooms that are the primary source of their food and clothing.

9. BRIDGES OVER THE SNABBINFLOD

Four solid marble bridges twenty feet across span the fast moving river below.

10. NATURAL STAIRCASE

A reinforced natural stairway to the town heights.

Miatha Always-A-Song-Follows CR 2

XP 600

Female svirneblin adept 2

NG small humanoid (gnome)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; **Perception** +7

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +1 Dex, +2 dodge, +1 size)

hp 9 (2d6)

Fort +3, **Ref** +3, **Will** +8

SR 13

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee shortsword +1 (1d6/19-20)

Special Attack +1 to attack vs. dwarven and reptilian humanoids

Adept Spells (CL 2nd; concentration +5)

1st – *cure light wounds*, *sleep* (DC 14)

0 – *guidance*, *mending*, *stabilize*

Spell-like Abilities (CL 2nd)

Constant – *nondetection*

1/day – *blindness/deafness* (DC 13), *blur*, *disguise self*

TACTICS

During Combat Miatha tries to avoid fights, but if it is unavoidable she uses *sleep* to try bring it to a swift halt.

Morale If brought to 4 hp or less, she surrenders.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 12, **Con** 10, **Int** 13, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 12

Feats Skill Focus (Heal)

Skills Craft (Alchemy) +6, Heal +11, Knowledge (religion) +4, Perception +7, Perform (sing) +6, Profession (Innkeeper) +7, Sense Motive +5, Stealth +3 (+5 underground); **Racial Modifiers** +2 Craft (Alchemy), +2 Perception, +2 Stealth (+4 underground)

Languages Dwarven, Gnome, Undercommon

SQ stonecunning, summon familiar (Caspar Watch-Out-He-Bites)

Trait Beautiful Singer +1 to Perform (sing) and it's a class skill

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*

Other Gear shortsword, leather armor, ring of keys (to the inn), 4d10 gp, healer's kit

11. THE BLUE BAT

This is the only traveler's inn and public house in town. Miatha Always-A-Song-Follows is not only the proprietress, but is also the town's only spellcaster. Fasturvalt rarely has more than a few visitors, so the inn (which is sponsored by the House of Geidne) is not so much a business as a town institution. The matronly innkeeper is not only an excellent cook but is also the town doctor, matchmaker, spiritual advisor and counselor. She is also a competent bartender and a magnificent singer. The result of wearing all these hats is that Miss Miatha (or Mother Mee as most call her) is the most popular gnome in town and the blue bat is never empty. Even Knivy Ivy likes Miatha and spends most of her free time here while in Fasturvalt.

The Blue Bat sports a large mushroom bark sign adorned with a bright blue marble tiled bat insignia. The Blue Bat serves only one drink – black beer – and it has a lot of it. Local farmers brew their own black beer and trade their excess for Miatha's many services. A pot of peppery stew (made with mushrooms and fish meat of course) is always bubbling over a warm fire making The Blue Bat one of the few places in town that isn't dark. Anyone who is a guest of Lord Geirni (and has a blue bat token) eats and drinks here for free. Everyone else must pay 5 sp for a bowl of stew and a serving of mushcakes and 2 sp per pint of black beer. She also has barrels of pickled fish (1 sp) and mushrooms fried in lizard fat (2 sp) that serve as bar snacks.

The Blue Bat is patrolled by a small, sharp-toothed dinosaur named Caspar Watch-Out-He-Bites. He is Miatha's familiar and the pampered little beast is the bar's mascot. But he does bite if you aren't careful.

Caspar Watch-Out-He-Bites, Miatha's familiar

CR 1/2

XP –

Male variant compsognathus

N Tiny animal

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 30 ft., low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +4

DEFENSE

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

hp 6 (1d8+2)

Fort +4, **Ref** +4, **Will** +0

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., swim 20 ft.

Melee bite +1 (1d3–1 plus poison)

Space 2-1/2 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

TACTICS

During Combat Watch out. He bites.

Morale If Caspar takes damage and survives, he flees.

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 15, **Con** 14, **Int** 6, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 5

Base Atk +0; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 9

Feats Improved Initiative

Skills Perception +4, Swim +10

SQ improved evasion, share spells, empathic link

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 12; *frequency* 1/round for 4 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Str; *cure* 1 save.

12. THE ARMORY

This stout stone building sits alone on an embankment. A flag bearing the standard of Fasturvalt flies in front of the building. The building is built like a great marble bunker. However, it is strangely unguarded.

A-1 THE ARMORY DOOR

This massive marble door banded in iron is expertly carved depicting bas relief scenes of Lord Geirli leading gnomish soldiers in glorious triumph over the hated duergar. In addition to the marble, there is also an expertly crafted iron lock set into the stone (DC 30). Further the door is trapped. The armory door is opened by only two keys. Lord Geirni has one around his neck. Gunther the sheriff had the other.

The door is secured by a clockwork trap known as the screaming scythes. If tampered with or forced without using the key, the iron bands erupt from the stone like sharp scything blades. Further, a loud clockwork clanger goes off alerting every gnome within a hundred yards that someone is fooling with the armor door.

Screaming Scythes

CR 1

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger forcing or tampering with the armory door; **Reset** manual
Effect Atk +10 melee (1d8+1/x3) and a loud mechanical alarm is set off; multiple targets (everyone standing within ten feet of the doors).

Story Award: If the PCs find and use the sheriff's key, they receive a CR 1 (400 XP) award as if they had defeated the trap on the door.

A-2 FOYER

This small foyer is dominated by two exquisitely sculpted larger than life marble statues. These statues are of Lord Geirli's generals who aided in taking Fasturvalt one hundred and fifty years ago. They were part of a set of three statues made in the wake of the svirfneblin victory. The third (of Lord Geirli himself) is in Lord Geirni's hall.

There is nothing here of any value or danger.

A-3 ARMORY MAIN CHAMBER

This low bunker-like chamber has a low ceiling (six feet) and contains a dozen different niches set in the stone wall. It is lit by torches set in heavy iron sconces. This is the armory of the gnomish militia and contains their weaponry and armor for use in times of emergency. Each niche contains stone weapon racks that each holds five short swords and scabbards, five small spears, five small light crossbows, 100 quarrels, 5 heavy steel shields bearing the insignia of Fasturvalt and five gnome-sized chain shirts.

In the larger corner niches there is, in addition to the normal gear, also a flag bearing the heraldry of Fasturvalt and military musical gear – drums, horns and fife.

This gear is taken out every few weeks when the town militia drills on the town square.

A-4 FIRE JEWELS

This spot is where the drow emissary Malathorn on his tour hides three of *Sasha's fire jewels* while Lord Geirni drones on and on about the great victory won in the cave more than a century ago. He activates the jewel's trap feature, knowing that the fire elementals will likely erupt when the svirfneblin come to arm their militia. He hopes the three fire elementals who erupt will kill several gnomes and set their gear ablaze.

The fire elementals will attack anything living near them. But if deprived of targets instead sets the equipment ablaze. Destroying one niche worth of equipment is a full round action. Everything but the short swords are ruined by such an attack. Even the armor and shields have leather straps which are destroyed by the intense heat of the elementals. If not stopped, in ten rounds (roughly a minute), the three fire elementals will have ruined almost every piece of equipment in this place.

THE FASTURVALT ARMORY

□ = 5'



13. THE SPORE MILL

This is the mill where the spores are ground in to flour to make the mushcakes. Busy all the time, it seems that the milling never ceases. The miller, Sandor Born-the-Same-Day-as-the-Vault and his large family lives above the mill. Sandor is one of the most important gnomes in Fasturvult and will speak vehemently against any plan of defense that abandons his precious home and business.

14. HALL OF LORD GEIRNI

This is the single largest, most imposing structure in all of Fasturvult. It is the great hall of the House of Geidne and it is the court and residence of Lord Geirni, lord of Fasturvult.

H-1 THE ENTRANCE TO THE GREAT HALL

This sparse guardroom always has two of Lord Geirni's twelve personal guards stationed here. They allow any deep gnome into the hall, but no one is allowed to go before his lordship armed so they collect weapons.

For outsiders, they demand to know their business before the great lord. Only if the visitors are polite and their matter sounds urgent do the guard let them in. These guards however are easily deceived and are even susceptible to bribes (10 gp will get you taken before the lord).

THE HALL OF LORD GEIRNI IN FASTURVULT

□ = 5'



Gnome Soldiers of Lord Geirni's Guard

CR 1/2

XP 200 each (400 XP total)

hp 12 (see page 18 for details)

H-2 CLOAKROOM

This is where guests hang their cloaks. Lord Geirni keeps a few of his fine fur cloaks here (worth 50 gp in total).

H-3 WEAPONS RACKS

This is where their weapons are stowed. There is a stout rack here made of marble with an iron lock (DC 20). Usually this rack is empty unless the PCs or the Emissary Malathorn is here.

H-4 THE GREAT HALL

This is a large columned hall with a great fire pit at the center and the almost comically oversized throne of the svirfneblin lord at the far end. The walls are adorned with richly made tapestries and banner woven of fungus fibers and even surface silk some of which are older than the town itself. The fire pit always burns low, the flames fed by mushroom bark. The warm orange glow keeps this room well lit by svirfneblin standards and anyone with low-light vision will have no trouble seeing. The room is also pleasantly warm if a little smoky at time.

This chamber is the center of town government. All trials are adjudicated here. All proclamations by Lord Geirni are made here. And if anyone should seek to petition the lord, it is must be made here. The only time anywhere else is used is if Lord Geirni wants to speak to the entire village. Then he moves the gathering to the much larger town square (described above).

H-5/H-6 THE BARRACKS

These two identical rooms are where the gnome lord's personal guard sleeps. There are five small bunks in each room and ten small footlockers and armor racks. However, all the guards have their own homes in the town. As a result, these rooms are little used. The only time all the guards bunk here is if there is an emergency and they may be needed at any time.

Still in times of trouble there are likely two gnome soldiers waiting here or patrolling the hall.

Gnome Soldiers of Lord Geirni's Guard

CR 1/2

XP 200 each (400 XP total)

hp 12 (see page 16 for details)

H-7/H-8 GUEST ROOMS

These guest rooms were built a hundred and fifty years ago when Lord Geirli hoped Fasturvult would become a center of svirfneblin power. Now, they are well appointed but little used.

H-9 LARGE GUEST ROOM

A larger nicer room intended for honored guests. Otherwise it is identical to H-7 and H-8.

H-10 PRIVATE GUEST GARDEROBE

A small private bathfrom for H-9. There is always a small jug of fresh water drawn from the Snabbinflod.

H-11 THE WALK OF HONOR

Stone statues of Lord Geirni's ancestors are kept here as well as portraits, banners and other memorabilia. Most prominent is the large, exquisite marble statue of his grandfather Lord Geirli, founder of Fasturvalt. Some of these statues predate Fasturvalt, depicting the history of House Geidne before it left Kladdenvalt. All of the statues of gnomish lords are taller than life. Little of this is truly valuable. A beautiful golden brocade robe of an ancient ancestor is worth 150 gp.

H-12 LORD GEIRNI'S PRIVATE GARDEROBE

This is the Lord's private bathroom. Comfortable, but not fancy, a small hole leads to an underground tributary of the Snabbinflod.

Lord Geirni Geirison, He-Speaks-the-Truth-But-Slowly CR 2

XP 600

Male svirneblin fighter 2

LG small humanoid (gnome)

Init +1; Senses darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 14, flat-footed 22 (+9 armor, +2 shield, +1 Dex, +2 dodge, +1 size)

hp 22 (2d10+7)

Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +7; +1 will vs. fear

SR 13

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft. (15 ft. in armor)

Melee shortsword +6 (1d6+3/19-20)

Special Attack +1 to attack vs. dwarven and reptilian humanoids

Spell-like Abilities (CL 2nd)

Constant – nondetection

1/day – blindness/deafness (DC 11), blur, disguise self

TACTICS

During Combat Lord Geirni is a fearless but unsophisticated combatant. He charges into battle with short sword and relies upon his toughness and thick armor to carry the day.

Morale Lord Geirni may be something of a fool but he is dedicated. He fights to the death in defense of Fasturvalt.

STATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 6, Wis 13, Cha 10

Base Atk +2; CMB +4; CMD 15

Feats Iron Will, Toughness, Weapon Focus (short sword)

Skills Craft (Alchemy) +0, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (Nobility) +2, Perception +3, Stealth +3 (+5 underground) **Racial Modifiers** +2 Craft (Alchemy), +2 Perception, +2 Stealth (+4 underground)

Languages Gnome, Undercommon

SQ stonecunning, bravery +1

Trait Indomitable Faith +1 to Will save

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*

Other Gear shortsword +1 (Sword of Lord Geirli He-Knows-No-Fear), masterwork full plate (heirloom armor of House Geidne), masterwork steel shield (with insignia of Fasturvalt), cloak of protection +1, Seal of Fasturvalt, keys to armory, treasury and great hall, coronet of lordship, pouch with 12 blue bat tokens

H-13 LORD GEIRNI'S BEDCHAMBERS

This is Lord Geirni's private bed chamber. It features a large comfortable bed and wooden (!) wardrobe full of clothes worthy of such an important gnome. The Lord's garments including jewelry and finery are worth 675 gp.

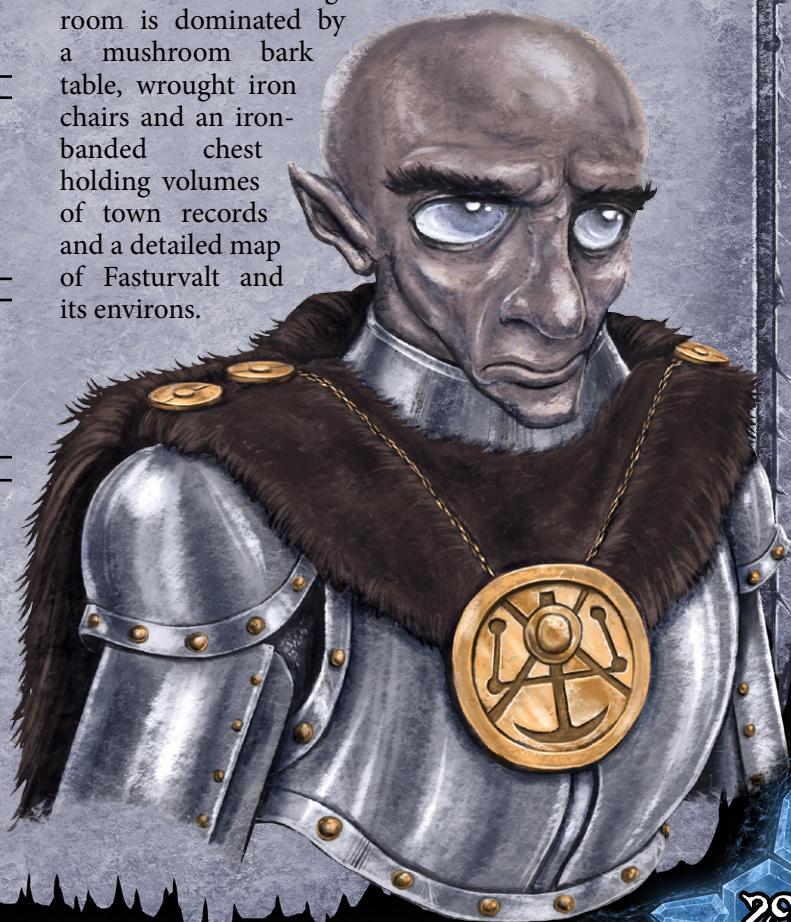
Lord Geirni also has a substantial stash of hard candy brought from the surface in a kaleidoscope of colors and flavors. The lord has quite a taste for it and there is over 5 lbs. of it here in carefully sealed tins. This collection of rare delicacies is worth 250 gp in total here in the Azathyr.

H-14 THE LORD'S ARMORY AND TREASURY

The lord's keeps his weapons and armor here when he is not wearing it. There is also a large stout wooden chest banded with iron. This is Fasturvalt's treasury. Currently, it holds 5600 gp in gnomish coins, the entire fortune of House Geidne. It is locked by a superior lock (DC 30).

H-15 THE LORD'S COUNCIL CHAMBER

This chamber is where the Lord and his advisors meet to discuss matters of state in private. Unfortunately the Lord has little in the way of good counsel these days. Once Lord Geirni, Sheriff Gunther, Old Tammar, Miss Miatha, and the senior guard formed a sort of lord's council. Now, Lord Geirni rarely bothers with such meetings. The room is dominated by a mushroom bark table, wrought iron chairs and an iron-banded chest holding volumes of town records and a detailed map of Fasturvalt and its environs.



THE BATTLE FOR FASTURVALT EXPLORER CAMPAIGN

After finding the wrecked wagon, slaying the spider assailants and perhaps rescuing some gnome soldiers, the dwarves may be under the impression that they will be greeted as heroes in Fasturvalt. Instead, what they discover is a town full of whispers and worries. The Lord has a new guest in his hall – a drow emissary. The common gnomes are shocked by this turn and fear what the arrival of the drow means for their home.

If Knivy Ivy is with the PCs she is quick to share her opinion: *“Lord Geirni is an idiot. A mythic moron. An emperor of imbeciles. A champion of chumps. Now that his dad is dead and the only decent soldier he had is slain, the drow are going to eat that fool alive. You want my advice? Get you while the getting’s good. Resupply. Have a beer. Ditch this dump. Fasturvalt is doomed.”*

The worse part about Knivy Ivy’s grim rant is that she is correct. Lord Geirni is a well-meaning simpleton who is, even as the dwarves arrive in town, being played by a drow emissary named Malathorn. The drow have already arranged the murder of the town’s sheriff and kept him from summoning gnomish aid. Fasturvalt, having long survived by both secrecy and being non-threatening has no armies and no defenses. One hundred drow soldiers await Malathorn’s word to swoop down and enslave everyone in this town. If the dwarves do nothing this is Fasturvalt’s inevitable fate.

But Fasturvalt can be saved. The deep gnomes are a hardy, resolute people. They have a militia that can be mustered. They have fine stone and the expertise to build walls quickly where there are now none. They have a small contingent of soldiers who can fight valiantly for their people. And they have help – brave, heroic dwarves come from the surface who can organize a defense in just a few weeks and turn this defeat into a victory. But first, our heroes must disentangle the serpent from around Lord Geirni’s throat. That serpent is named Garius Malathorn.

Malathorn has been sent by the Baroness Satha of Vothys to Fasturvalt on a mission – enslave the town with as little damage and cost as possible. Towards this end, he has devised a plan.

He will come into town and promise the Lord Geirni exactly what the gnome wants to hear – the drow wish only peace. In fact, they wish to establish an embassy in town so that svirfneblin and drow can live in peace side by side. They want only to expand trade and will pay in silver for fine Fasturvalt marble. Malathorn will flatter the idiot lord, ply him with gifts and say whatever lies are necessary to gain Lord Geirni’s favor.

While conducting this campaign of flattery, Malathorn asks for very little. The drow “emissary” expounds upon how he has long heard about this fine town. Could he be given a tour? Lord Geirni will happily comply and shows Malathorn all the defenses. Malathorn will plant magical traps to destroy the militia’s supply of crossbows and bolts. And his final gift will be to give to Lord Geirni a box of poisoned candy just as he leaves, taking advantage of the lord’s sweet tooth. With Geirni dead, the militia disarmed and the town in chaos, the drow army will be able to take this town on a whim.

Malathorn has already half completed this plan when the PCs arrive. He has persuaded Lord Geirni that the drow seek only to establish an embassy. He has received a tour of the town and seen its almost shocking lack of defenses. And Malathorn has planted fire jewels in the town armory that merely await discovery to burn the town’s stockpiles of munitions.

BEFORE THE BATTLE

Here are twelve things the PCs might do to help Fasturvalt before battle begins. This list is not comprehensive, but should give you enough examples to formulate a response to most plans the PCs might devise. Ultimately be flexible and keep the game moving.

MURDER MALATHORN (CR 4)

Attacking Malathorn either in Lord Geirni’s hall or in the streets of Fasturvalt may seem a simple solution to the problem. And likely the PCs can prevail against Malathorn and his retinue. But if this is done without persuading Lord Geirni, the gnome noble immediately orders the PCs arrested. From then on Lord Geirni blames the PCs for drow hostility. He berates them: *“You fools! They only wanted to build an embassy here. Now you’ve brought down their wrath upon us all!”*

The PCs have one chance to avoid becoming outcasts from Fasturvalt. At their trial, they must persuade Lord Geirni with a single diplomacy roll that the drow mean to enslave Fasturvalt. This is not easy. Lord Geirni is Unfriendly. It will require a DC 25 check to make him Friendly (which represents him believing the PCs about the drow plot). Anything lower gets the PCs banished forever from Fasturvalt.

Award the PCs a +4 to this roll if they present Gunther’s badge and bring forth a witness that he was attacked by spiders paid by the drow (i.e. one of the soldiers or Ivy). Award a +2 if the PCs returned home any of the gnome soldiers safely. Assess a -2 penalty if the PCs reveal they are friends with Knivy Ivy (who Lord Geirni regards as a criminal). Award a +2 bonus if the PCs give Lord Geirni a present of sweets.

CONVINCE LORD GEIRNI TO READY FOR WAR

The PCs may come before Lord Geirni and attempt to argue that the drow are wicked while Malathorn is still in town. There the challenge is that Malathorn will debate their every point with his lies.

The drow are evil. “Long have I had to endure the slander against my kin. It is true that criminal elements have done horrid deeds in the past. Is this not true of all free peoples? But we are all to be held accountable for their crimes? Where is justice, noble Lord Geirni?”

Garius Malathorn, Drow “Emissary” to Fasturvalt

CR 2

XP 600

Male drow rogue 3

CE Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +2; Senses darkvision 120 ft.; Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +1 shield)

hp 20 (3d8+3)

Fort +1, Ref +6, Will +2; +2 vs. enchantment

Immune sleep; SR 9

Weaknesses light blindness

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk rapier +6 (1d6-1/18-20 plus poison)

Ranged hand crossbow +5 (1d4/19-20 plus poison)

Special Attack sneak attack +2d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd)

1/day—dancing lights, darkness, faerie fire

TACTICS

During Combat Malathorn avoids combat at all costs. But if that becomes impossible, he tries to use his poisoned rapier to disable enemies and then to either coup de grace them or escape.

Morale Malathorn is terrified of Lady Satha and so will not lightly betray her. But if reduced to 5 hp, he will flee. If fleeing is not possible, he instead surrenders and will beg for his life. He is willing to trade anything he knows for his release.

STATISTICS

Str 9, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 18

Base Atk +2; CMB +1; CMD 14

Feats Deceitful, Weapon Finesse

Skills Bluff +12, Diplomacy +10, Disable Device +7, Disguise +12, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (local) +5, Linguistics +5, Perception +9, Sense Motive +7, Sleight of Hand +9, Stealth +9; Racial Modifiers +2 Perception

Languages Dwarven, Elven, Gnome, Undercommon

SQ evasion, poison use, rogue talent (honeyed words), trapfinding, trap sense +1

Combat Gear 20 bolts, drow poison (4 doses)

Gear mithral chain shirt, light steel shield, masterwork rapier, hand crossbow, letter of credentials from the Baroness Satha, masterwork thieves tools, package containing poisoned candy, noble garb and jewelry (worth 200 gp), 45 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison Use (Ex) Drow are skilled in the use of poison and never risk accidentally poisoning themselves. Drow favor an insidious toxin that causes its victims to lapse into unconsciousness—this poison allows drow to capture slaves with great ease.

Drow Poison—injury; save Fort DC 13; frequency 1/minute for 2 minutes; initial effect unconsciousness for 1 minute; secondary effect unconsciousness for 2d4 hours; cure 1 save.

Malathorn's retinue (6)

CR 1/3

XP 135 each (810 XP total)

hp 5 (see page 21 for details)

The drow murdered Sheriff Gunther. “We mourn with you the loss of this svirfneblin hero. Even though we never met, he seems a kindred spirit. But to blame us for his death? Preposterous! The story I heard was that giant spiders attacked them along the King's Highway. I neither travel nor consort with giant spiders, noble Lord Geirni, and of course neither I nor my mistress the Baroness had anything to do with this wicked crime.”

We found drow money in the spider's lair! “I wonder what innocent drow was murdered for that blood money. Or was it planted there instead by outsiders who obviously bear a grudge against my people?”

A drow cache was found containing gnome's bane. It once contained much more! “You found a nearly empty cache no doubt built hundreds of years ago and for this my people are responsible? Gnome's bane is a terrible poison, my lord, and one I have recently seen it only in the hands of dwarves!”

In the end, this banter back and forth mostly befuddles the simple Lord Geirni. He becomes unsure exactly who to trust. Both the drow and the dwarves are outsiders. Both claim the other to be malicious invaders. And while it's true that the drow and the deep gnomes have a long history of animosity, it is also true that the svirfneblin and the deep dwarves (the duergar) are also arch-enemies. The PCs may make a Diplomacy check versus Malathorn's Bluff to see who gets the better of the exchange. However, win or lose, at the end, Malathorn throws up his hands.

“The courtesy of your hall seems diminished as of late, great Lord Geirni. Thus must I depart. Regardless to show that we hold no grudges, I was instructed by the Baroness to give you this gift. Obtained at great cost from the surface it is merely a token of our esteem.”

With this, Malathorn presents a brightly wrapped box. Lord Geirni rips it open and inside sees a box of beautiful hard candy. The gnomish lords eyes light up. “Candy! I so rarely get it down here.” For a moment the gnomish lord expressed almost child-like glee. Malathorn lets a brief satisfied smirk escape for only a second and then departs.

The candy, which Lord Geirni will ingest later that evening, is coated in *gnome's bane* poison. Lord Geirni, with his massive sweet tooth, will consume several large mouthfuls of the stuff (the equivalent of many doses) and die in his bed. He was the last scion of House Geidne, a great line of svirfneblin heroes.

Gnome's Bane

Type poison, ingested; Save Fortitude DC 18

Onset 10 minutes; Frequency 1/minute for 6 minutes

Effect 1d3 Con damage; Cure 2 saves.

Special Effects only gnomes (both deep and surface)

SAVE LORD GEIRNI FROM POISONED CANDY

The PCs can sneak into Lord Geirni's bed chambers (H-13) and steal the gift. They could even task Iyy to do it. If they recover the candy and bring it to Miatha or Old Tammar, either will be able to quickly tell it is poisoned with *gnome's bane* and will tell the Lord and the assembly of this. This will save Lord Geirni's life and persuade him of what everyone else seems to know – the drow are wicked. The truth will be obvious then. The drow intend to attack!

RALLY THE PEOPLE

Whether the PCs save Lord Geirni or not, it will fall to the PCs to rally the people of Fasturvalt. More than four hundred deep gnomes gather at the town square. They have all heard what has transpired in the last few days. They know the drow are coming. For many the only sane thing to do is abandon Fasturvalt and flee the Azathyr altogether. The PCs must convince them that there is something here worth fighting for.

This could just be a simple Diplomacy check (DC 20). But far better is to let a PC actually stand and deliver a moment or two of the best rousing speech they can muster. Don't judge their efforts too harshly. If they do a good job at all and make a few good points, award a +2 bonus to their check.

If the PCs have made allies of Miatha and Tammar, they cheer their words. Give another +2 for each. If the PCs saved Lord Geirni and the gnome soldiers award another +2. The *svirfneblin* want to be persuaded. They do not want to give up the only home they have ever known. They want to hear that there is hope for their beloved Fasturvalt. Strange is fate that they should hear it from the lips of dwarves.

SAVE THE ARMORY

Clever PCs may realize that the poisoned candy may not have been the only sabotage done by Malathorn. If they ask a guard or Lord Geirni himself about the "tour" that Malathorn made, they all say that Malathorn especially wanted to see the armory claiming he had heard it held magnificent statuary (which actually it does).

Inside the armory are the three fire jewels waiting to be unleashed. If the PCs merely send gnome villagers, then the elementals will be freed and the armory's contents will burn and gnomes will die. If the PCs go, they will still have to fight three small fire elementals but they have a real chance to save the town's armory and its munitions.

Small Fire Elementals (3)

CR 1

XP 400 each (1,200 XP total)

hp 11 (see Pathfinder RPG Bestiary entry for Elemental, Fire)

AMBUSH MALATHORN

Malathorn is not able to leave immediately once he announces his departure. It takes him almost two hours to gather his retinue, resupply and head out. If the PCs are clever, they could get ahead of him. It is easy to find out where he came from. He entered through the large southern entrance. And he exits there even though it's in the wrong direction to throw off pursuers. That means his small band will be heading through the Needle's Eye (detailed on pg. 17).

Ambushing him does not stop the attack on Fasturvalt but it does deny their commander any intelligence that Malathorn has managed to accumulate.

ORGANIZE THE STONECUTTERS TO BUILD WALLS

Once Lord Geirni is either dead or committed to stopping the drow attack, this action is almost trivial. If the PCs go to Tammar Even-the-Stones-Listen, he will be frank about what he can do.

Read this: *"In two weeks, if my stonecutters work around the clock and nearly kill themselves, they can build a crude wall to block the northern entrance and southwestern entrance at the narrowest gap. The walls will be simple affairs, maybe fifteen or twenty feet tall with a mushroom plank catwalk and without gates. Plugging the wide southern entrance in two weeks is impossible. Three months maybe. And then only if you're willing to accept a few deaths due to cutting corners."*

He takes a long draw from his pipe and then pauses, for a moment quite philosophical. *"Anyways, you wouldn't want to plug it. Every great castle needs a breach. If you leave it open, you'll know exactly where your enemies will be coming from."*

If asked about building defenses at the Needle's Eye, he simply shrugs. *"The Needle's Eye is almost ten miles south of town. Hauling the stone that far will be a major undertaking and any guards you post there will be out of action when the battle comes if the enemy comes from another direction. Also, you must pick one of the small passages to leave empty. I can't build all three in two weeks. You want my advice – stick to the Vault."*

EVACUATE THE MILL AND NEARBY HOMES

Tammar's proposed wall building scheme leaves the Mill (13.) and eleven houses on the wrong side of the river. Needless to say the owners aren't thrilled about abandoning their homes. Sandor Born-the-Same-Day-As-the-Vault, the mill owner, is the voice of this opposition. He tries to convince Lord Geirni (if he's alive) to stop any plan that does this. He argues that without the mill, food shortages are very likely. He paints a dire picture of the vault's future.



The PCs can handle this problem one of three ways: ignore him, convince Lord Geirni or convince Sandor. Ignoring the miller does work. Ultimately, what can the gnomes do but flee behind the defenses when the time comes? Convincing Lord Geirni is easy enough. Tammar agrees with the evacuation and the lord accepts his advice. Convincing Sandor of the necessity of this move is the most difficult but causes the least grumbling.

Sandor is unfriendly. A DC 22 Diplomacy skill check will cause him to grudgingly come around. Convincing him does have one benefit. He can suggest moving the millstone to a secure location. The millstone is heavy but hard to replace. And by saving it the disruption in food supply will be minimal.

TRAP THE BRIDGES

The bridges are natural defense points and so the PCs will likely concentrate on them. The bridges are twenty feet across and forty feet long. They are made out of marble and collapsing them is not trivial. Tammar is initially against collapsing any but will grudgingly admit that collapsing one or two would make Fasturvalt more defensible. He is utterly against collapsing all of them. *"We'll be as trapped as they are. All they need to do is wait and starve us out."*

A skilled engineer (Knowledge [engineering] DC 20) could rig a bridge to remain standing and yet collapse if much weight is put upon it. This is risky (the roll should always be made in secret) but if it succeeds, the Snabbinflod is a brutal river. It could eliminate a good number of the enemy in one master stroke.

ATTACK THE DROW ARMY BEFORE THEY ARRIVE

Attacking the drow army in the open caves does take the drow army by surprise, but is almost certainly folly. The PCs are only first level and cannot hold up against the onslaught of the drow forces. Still, if the PCs carry out this plan, you can use locations on Miscellaneous Caves and Passages (see pg. 95 below) to set the scene for the battle.

LEARN THE STRENGTH OF THE DROW FORCE

The PCs may want to scout out the drow force either by sending stealthy scouts or by dispatching familiars. These tactics are very likely to work. The drow army, before they get to Fasturvalt and actually see the new gnome defenses, is confident to the point of arrogance that they march to an easy victory. Therefore, they have not taken excess precautions that their movements are unobserved. Still, scouting out such a force is dangerous. The drow all carry poisoned hand crossbows and would love to capture a spy to present to their commander.

MUSTER AND TRAIN THE MILITIA

If the PCs gain the support of Lord Geirni or he is slain, then they may call up the militia. If they saved the armory from the fire elementals (see above), there is enough gear to arm a militia of sixty svirfneblin peasants with crossbows. And even if the crossbows burned, they can still call up the militia and arm these stonecutters with picks.

This is not the first time the militia has been called up. From time to time, the later Sheriff Gunther would call up and drill the able gnomes of Fasturvalt. It is because of him that all these gnomes are proficient in the pick as a hand weapon instead of just as a tool.

The problem with the militia is morale. These are not trained soldiers. These are sculptors, masons and bricklayers. They love their town and will readily state they are willing to die for it, but on the battlefield the chances of flight is high. The PCs cannot make the militia into veteran soldiers in two weeks. But they can make it so they won't run away at the drop of the hat.

MILITIA MORALE RULES (OPTIONAL)

Any PC can train a unit of twenty militia. To train a unit, the PC must share a common tongue with the militia (they speak undercommon and gnome).

Untrained and leaderless, the militia rolls morale every round that they are attacked by an enemy. Roll a d20. On a 11 or lower they flee from the battle regardless of the circumstances. Even a few deaths or injuries can sow chaos in the lines of an undisciplined force.

If someone with trains the militia for one full week, eight hours a day and then leads them into battle, they may add their Charisma bonus to their morale checks, or a +2 whichever is higher. Any leader (even a cantankerous dwarf) is better than no leader.

A second week of training means the militia only rolls morale when they lose a quarter of their fighting strength. They roll an unmodified roll at 1/4 losses. They roll a -2 check at 1/2 losses. They roll a -4 check at 3/4. If they make that one, the heroic militia fights to the last. If their officer ever falls, they lose his bonus.

If the militia can train for two more weeks (four total) then they all gain a bonus feat: Toughness. If one commander did all this training, they also gain a special bonus trait: Born Leader (see the Pathfinder RPG Advance Player's Guide for details). If they already have Born Leader, they can pick another appropriate trait (with GM permission) instead.

Note that these rules are optional. you can always roleplay out morale if you'd prefer.

Gnome Militia

CR 1/2

XP 200

Male or female svirfneblin expert 1

N small humanoid (gnome)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 15, flat-footed 13 (leather +2, +1 size, +2 dodge, +2 Dex)

hp 5 (1d8+1)

Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +5

SR 12

OFFENSE

Melee heavy pick +0 (1d4/x4) or
short sword +0 (1d6/19-20) or
spear +0 (1d6/x3)

Ranged light crossbow +2 (1d6/19-20)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st)

Constant—*nondetection*

1/day—*blindness/deafness* (DC 12), *blur*, *disguise self*

TACTICS

During Combat The militia men follow the lead of their officer.

Morale See pg 33 above.

STATISTICS

Str 10 Dex 14 Con 12 Int 10 Wis 12 Cha 6

Base Atk +0; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 12

Feats Skill Focus (Craft)

Skills Craft (Alchemy) +2, Craft (various) +7, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +4, Knowledge (local) +4, Perception +6, Profession (various) +5, Stealth +7 (+9 underground); **Racial Modifiers** +2 Craft (Alchemy), +2 Perception, +2 Stealth (+4 underground)

Languages Gnome, Undercommon

SQ stonecunning

Trait Stonecutter: the gnome militia are proficient with all picks

Combat Gear 20 bolts

Other Gear heavy pick, short sword, spear, light crossbow, leather armor, 1d4 gp

THE DROW COMMANDER

Malathorn is not the commander of the drow army, though it is easy enough to see why outsiders may think that as he is definitely the “face” of the horde. No, the actual commander is the brutal Daniel Gorgus. Daniel is a favorite of the baroness and has been given this mission because Lady Satha believes that Daniel will see it done. And if he proves untrustworthy, that’s why she sent her assassin along.

For his part, Daniel relishes the chance to prove himself to the baroness. But not in the way the baroness thinks. If Daniel does seize control of Fasturvalt, he will not turn over the gnome stronghold to his so-called “liege”. Instead he will make himself master and use the wealth and power of the conquest to begin his own campaign to conquer Vothys.

Daniel Gorgus, Commander of the Drow Army

CR 2

XP 600

Male drow antipaladin 3

CE Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft.; Perception +3

Aura cowardice (10 ft), evil (10 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 11, flat-footed 21 (+9 armor, +1 Dex, +2 shield)

hp 27 (3d10+6)

Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +6; +2 vs. enchantment

Immune sleep; **SR** 9

Weaknesses light blindness

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft. (20 ft in armor)

Melee mwk greatsword +7 (2d6+3/19-20 plus poison)

Ranged hand crossbow +4 (1d4/19-20 plus poison)

Special Attack cruelty (sickened), smite good 1/day, touch of corruption (4/day, 1d6)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd; concentration +6)

1/day—*dancing lights*, *darkness*, *faerie fire*

At will—*detect good*

TACTICS

During Combat Daniel relishes melee combat and charges into any fray that presents itself. Anyone who wears a holy symbol of a good god or casts good divine magic automatically earns his smite from his poisoned blade.

Morale Daniel is a crazed demonic fanatic and fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 16

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 16

Feats Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (great sword)

Skills; Bluff +7, Disguise +7, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (Religion) +4, Perception +3 **Racial Modifiers** +2 Perception

Languages Elven, Undercommon

SQ plague bringer, poison use, unholy resilience

Combat Gear 20 bolts, drow poison (4 doses)

Gear masterwork full plate, heavy steel shield, masterwork great sword, hand crossbow, silver demonic holy symbol, 5 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison Use (Ex) Drow are skilled in the use of poison and never risk accidentally poisoning themselves. Drow favor an insidious toxin that causes its victims to lapse into unconsciousness—this poison allows drow to capture slaves with great ease.

Drow Poison—injury; save Fort DC 13; frequency 1/minute for 2 minutes; initial effect unconsciousness for 1 minute; secondary effect unconsciousness for 2d4 hours; cure 1 save.



THE BATTLE FOR FASTURVALT OVERLORD CAMPAIGN

The overlord version of events is more freeform. Note that there is no Garius Malathorn or Damiel Gorgus in the Overlord campaign. Everything that those NPCs do, the PCs have the option of doing.

The PCs can march directly into Fasturvalt and attack without delay. There is something to be said for having the element of surprise. Moving their army from the staging area to Fasturvalt takes about two weeks if they attack the northern entrance. The problem with that plan is that every adult *svirfneblin* in Fasturvalt can cast *blindness/deafness* once per day.

Even if the only half the population gets the chance to cast the spell, then the drow army will likely end up entirely blind (drow common soldiers need to roll a 10 or better to succeed on their Fortitude save). And against a blind foe, Lord Geirni, Sheriff Gunther and the eighteen guards will be able at the very least to inflict a bloody toll if not actually win the day. The battle will be costly for the deep gnomes no doubt, but they may very well prevail.

There is another problem with a direct assault. No drow has actually been in Fasturvalt for more than two decades. No one is sure about the state of the defenses. The gnomes are master stoneworkers. They may have built walls. It is possible that the Baroness is actually sending the PCs on a suicide mission against a heavily defended foe. Only the most reckless of PCs will not realize these dangers and want to check out their enemy.

Checking out the enemy without revealing their forces requires leaving the army some distance away. A hundred drow cannot pass through a wet cavern without leaving a detectable trail and deep gnomes move all throughout these caverns going about their daily business. If the PCs want to keep their army a secret, then they must leave it at least a week away from Fasturvalt. The shores of the Lake of Diamonds are a nice natural campsite for the army. The giant salamanders (see above in Map E) might trouble a small band of adventurers but they steer clear of larger bands. However, these monsters ensure that the *svirfneblin* do not frequent this "cursed" place.

Rather than revealing this information in one massive info-dump, instead let the PCs come up with it on their own either by examining their starting map or making appropriate Knowledge checks. It will seem more natural if the drow PCs come up with these facts on their own and construct their own scheme to enslave Fasturvalt.

If the PCs simply walk into town and demand to see Lord Geirni, no one may be more surprised than them when this actually works. Lord Geirni has seen the drow before. He doesn't like them, but he also believes that they are well-bribed allies. He wants to know their business in his holdings.

Fooling the gullible Lord Geirni is no great task. He wants to believe that Fasturvalt is in no danger and that the drow will keep their treaty that his father signed so many years ago. Any decent rogue or bard should be able to have him convinced of any farfetched fantasy.

Lord Geirni begins Unfriendly to the drow. If he can be made Helpful and successfully bluffed, he will even agree to let drow troops pass through his town if some lame story about how they are going to deal with bandits along the Gnome King's Highway is given. He will even let them stay one night on the Town Square if he is but promised they will make no mischief and he is given suitable payment (or at least promised such) In effect, this idiot is handing over the keys to the kingdom.

The problem is Sheriff Gunther. Sheriff Gunther leaves Fasturvalt as soon as he gets wind that drow are on the move. He doesn't wait for Lord Geirni to do something foolish. He knows that's inevitable.

Even before the campaign begins he has heard about the new baroness in Vothys and realizes that trouble is brewing. He has talked to Lord Geirni about it and tried a dozen times to persuade him to ready for war. Lord Geirni does nothing.

"We must keep our end of the treaty," Lord Geirni explained to the Sheriff. "The drow are a wicked people, no doubt. But they need our stone. We provide them a small portion of our output for free and they leave us be. That has always been the arrangement."

The flabbergasted sheriff could not believe Lord Geirni's naïveté. "That agreement was always a bad idea. If you invite a serpent into your home, should be surprised when it bites you? The old drow baron was fat and decadent. This new baroness, rumors say, is young and ambitious. It is only a matter of time before she strikes!"

Lord Geirni simply assured Gunther once more that all was in hand and forbade the sheriff from doing anything rash. In secret, the sheriff began to plan. He has already made arrangements to travel to Kladdenvalt and recruit aid. He will save Fasturvalt no matter what it costs him. And he will do it even over Lord Geirni's express disapproval. He makes his preparations secretly but quickly. He knows time is short.

Exactly where and how the PCs overtake the caravan is up to them. However, if the Sheriff makes it to the far western side of Hex 0320 (near location B on the map), he will encounter a party of dwarves from the surface led by a paladin calling himself Arthin Oathsworn. They are on some sort of holy mission and the dwarven paladin claims to be the last heir of Dammerhall, a place Gunther has never heard of.

Whatever their mission, they are headed to Fasturvalt in search of guides and when they hear of the eminent drow attack they take it as a sign from Father Mountain. They are eager to sign up.

Sheriff Gunther is uncertain if seven dwarves is really enough to turn the battle. Arthin persuades him. "It's a long journey to Kladdenvalt. You may miss the battle. Providence has brought us together for a reason. Let us go and save your people. Besides seven dwarves is just enough, I think." They return to Fasturvalt.

Even if Sheriff Gunther is slaughtered, the dwarves come of their own volition eager to avenge this wrong. They rally the villagers, persuade Lord Geirni to resist and see walls are built.

Arthin Oathsworn

CR 2

XP 600

Dwarf paladin 3
LG Medium humanoid
Init +0; **Senses** Darkvision 60 ft., Perception +
Aura courage (10 ft.),

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 21 (+9 armor, +2 shield)
hp 36 (3d10+15)
Fort +7, **Ref** +2, **Will** +5; +2 vs. poison, spells, and spell-like abilities
Defensive Abilities defensive training (+4 dodge bonus to AC vs. giants); **Immune** disease, fear

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.
Melee mwk greatsword +7 (2d6+3/19-20)
Special Attacks smite evil 1/day

Paladin Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd; concentration +4)
At will—*detect evil*

TACTICS

During Combat Arthin relishes melee combat and charges into any fray that presents itself. Anyone who wears a holy symbol of an evil god or casts evil divine magic automatically earns his smite from his blessed blade.

Morale Arthin is a crazed religious fanatic who fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 10, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 12
Base Atk +3, **CMB** +5, **CMD** 15 (19 vs bull rush or trip)
Feats Toughness, Weapon Focus (Greatsword)
Skills Diplomacy +7, Knowledge (nobility) +4, Knowledge (religion) +4, Sense Motive +5
Languages Common, Dwarven
SQ aura, divine grace, lay on hands (2/day, 1d6), mercy (sickened), stonecunning
Trait Indomitable Faith +1 to will
Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds* x2
Other Gear masterwork greatsword, masterwork full plate, heavy steel shield, holy symbol of Father Mountain, 46 gp

They do the best they can with the time their given and turn the Battle of Fasturvalt into a real struggle. This may surprise the drow if they've been to town before. Where once there was a cake walk, now there is a real fight ahead of them.

Dwarven Explorers (6)

CR 1/2

XP 200 each (1,200 XP total)

Dwarf expert 1/warrior 1
LG Medium humanoid
Init +0; **Senses** Darkvision 60 ft., Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17 (+5 armor, +2 shield)
hp 19 (d8+d10+9)
Fort +5, **Ref** +0, **Will** +3; +2 vs. poison, spells, and spell-like abilities
Defensive Abilities defensive training (+4 dodge bonus to AC vs. giants)

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.
Melee warhammer +3 (1d8+2/x3)
Ranged heavy crossbow +1 (1d10/19-20)

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 10, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8
Base Atk +1, **CMB** +3, **CMD** 13 (19 vs bull rush or trip)
Feats Toughness
Skills Craft (various) +4, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +4, Knowledge (engineering) +4, Perception +5, Profession (engineer) +5, Sense Motive +5, Survival +5
Languages Common, Dwarven
SQ stonecunning
Combat Gear 20 bolts
Other Gear warhammer, heavy crossbow, chainmail, heavy steel shield, 2d6 gold pieces

STAGING THE BATTLE

Running a battle of one hundred drow versus sixty gnome militia and allies is likely beyond the patience of any group. Fortunately, the Battle of Fasturvalt needs not be so exactly simulated.

Instead, try to boil the battle down to three key moments and run each of those. Exactly what those key moments are will depend heavily upon PC action. For example, a typical battle (from the Explorer point of view) might go something like this.

Moment 1: The drow move arrogantly in from the large southeastern entrance believing Fasturvalt to be largely defenseless. They are in for a rude shock as they try to take the bridge near the mill. Run a battle between the PCs vs. six common drow soldiers (CR 3) who attack their position. If the PCs win, the drow are repulsed with gnome militia pouring in crossbow bolts all the while.

Moment 2: The drow pull back and reform and try something new. First, they set fire to all the buildings on their side of the bridge. This may seem like merely a vindictive move but what they're really doing is generating lots of black smoke. As the smoke fills the central portion of the map, they try to use small improvised two-man rafts to cross the stock lake.

The second key moment is a desperate battle on the banks of the stock lake between drow on boats versus dwarves on shore. It is largely a ranged battle. If the PCs detect the enemy and hold the beach, the drow are again repulsed.

Moment 3: Infuriated by his troops' blunderings, Damiel leads a half dozen soldiers (CR 4) to make a final push through the PCs defenses. Can the PCs slay the drow commander and win the day?

An overlord campaign would have similar key moments that can be played out.

Moment 1: The drow attack a hastily constructed marble wall that covers the northernmost entrance. Can the PCs climb a ladder and kill four dwarven explorers that hold that particular stretch of wall? Or will the drow be repulsed, suffering heavy casualties.

Moment 2: Having won the wall, the drow army surges into Fasturvalt. They rush past the quarry and Stonecutter's Row towards the bridge nearest the Town Square. Will the gnome defenses hold against this wave of vicious slavers? The PCs get to fight six gnome soldiers who valiantly hold the bridge.

Moment 3: On the natural stairway the gnomes mount their last ditch defense. Can the drow defeat Arthin Oathsworn, two dwarven explorers and two gnome soldiers to win the day?

Whichever sides wins two out of three of the key moments, wins the battle. Again, these are only suggestions. Customize these moments to better fit your campaign and whatever your PCs have focused on.

EVENT: THE DEATH OF LORD GEIRNI

Regardless of the exact course of the battle, Lord Geirni (if he's not already dead) should die. He dies heroically defending the other wall that the PCs did not hold that got attacked by a small flanking force. He dies holding the bridge. But most importantly, he dies. In an Overlord campaign, likely the PCs capture him and execute him.

Why must Lord Geirni die? Because it is time for Fasturvalt to have new leaders. With the death of Lord Geirni, the House of Geidne is wiped out. Things cannot be as they were, the svirfneblin are sure of that. And so they turn to new leaders and make a radical decision. They offer the mantle of Lord of Fasturvalt to which every PC seems to be the leader of the band (perhaps the one with the highest charisma). This likely means that rulership of Fasturvalt passed from deep gnome hands into dwarven hands. And why not? Who was it who in their darkest hour came to their aid?

VICTORY!

Whoever wins the battle, the ownership of Fasturvalt has changed hands. Dwarves perhaps celebrate with a raucous night of singing and drinking black beer in their new great hall. The deep gnomes bring great drums and fill the marble hall of Fasturvalt with rhythm and percussion.

The drow celebrate their victory perhaps with a coronation and a public address to their new subjects telling them about the new order. Let the PCs decide the details, regardless. They've done a great deed. Reward them for it!

Every PC who played a role in saving Fasturvalt receives a permanent 10% discount on gear bought here.

Every PC who helped enslave Fasturvalt can pickout a gnomish slave to be their personal servant. Further they can loot Lord Geirni's treasury (see H-14 above).

But all celebrations must be tempered by a grim realization. Vothys remains unconquered. The Lady Satha is out there and she hasn't stopped wanting Fasturvalt for her own. It is time to strike back against this aggressor! It is time to dispose of this hated rival.

The war is not over. This was only the beginning.

WHAT ABOUT DAMMERHALL?

More focused players may note, as we come to end of Act One that there has been basically no movement on the plot point of getting to Dammerhall. The truth is that the gnomes of Fasturvalt don't know where Dammerhall is. They've heard rumors of a magnificent dwarven city somewhere in the Azathyr, but they know no specifics.

However, Tammar is sure that the passage into this dwarven city will not be found in the Upper Azathyr. If it were anywhere around here, he is sure that in his long life he would have heard some rumor of it at least.

If you want to find Dammerhall, then you must go deeper. Dammerhall must lie beyond the Great Jumping Off Point. That should put the PCs on a path to explore further into the Azathyr. More information about Dammerhall is to be found in Book Two and Three.

ACT TWO: THE FUNGAL JUNGLE

This act details the massive and weird fungal jungle, its many strange encounters and bizarre inhabitants.

THIS WEIRD AND SUNLESS WORLD

The Fungal Jungle is an environment like nothing the surface world has ever seen. The cavern itself encompasses over 9000 square miles. By comparison that means the Fungal Jungle is slightly smaller than the state of New Hampshire. By far the largest single cavern in the entirety of the Azathyr, this environment is large enough that you could easily run an entire campaign set within its confines. And yet it covers less than a fourth of the grand subterranean majesty that is the Azathyr.

So how does such a massive cavern survive (in a seismically active area no less)? The short answer is magic. The more complete answer is that the Fungal Jungle is actually the grave of a dead god. The primeval demon-god Z'ggu-Xan-Zara (pro. Zeg-goo-Zan-ZAH-ra), lord of decay, in the time of the titan war was slain here by the gods. His body decomposed and from that rot formed an endless sea of mushrooms. It is because of his lingering power that so many magical beings and alchemically potent species grow in such a comparatively small space.

For a time the cavern was open to the surface by chimneys and vast populations of bats and pteranodons roosted in this cavern. Those chimneys have long ago collapsed, trapping populations of those creatures below. Many died off. But some made their peace with this strange and secret realm and remain to this day.

There are two intelligent civilizations that are native to the Fungal Jungle. The original inhabitants are the myceloids (or the Xan as they call themselves). These intelligent mushroom men are actually splinters of the dead god. They have lived here for countless eons and the Fungal Jungle is all they know and all they wish to know. Still, they are a culture in decline. Surrounded by more recent, vigorous races transplanted from the surface (for example the drow and the svirfneblin), they face a time of crisis. Their wisest have come to realize that the Xan must adapt or fade away.

The second group of settlers are newer arrivals but no less alien. The skis'raal are man-sized intelligent spiders. These arachnids are the apex predators of the fungal jungle and are led by priestesses that worship their mother-deity – the White Spider. The Xan and the Skis'raal have clashed many times, but their animosity is more based off misunderstandings than actual conflicts.

As for the fauna, the fungal jungle teems with life. Brightly colored insects buzz between the great stalks. The magic of the decaying god has changed them in a thousand different ways. Six-winged bioluminescent dragonflies buzz about the jungle. Some of them grow as long as horses. Ants in every color of the rainbow build colonies amidst the black earth of the jungle floor. Beetles and flies by their billions thrive here.

Albino bats, eyeless from being cut-off from the surface, flap through the sunless skies hunting the smaller insects and being hunted by the larger. They are not alone in the skies. The largest flying predators are the blind cave pteranodons called Pale Hunters.

Salamanders in every imaginable type thrive here from brightly color specimens more similar to surface creatures to unique eyeless albinos that filter even the faintest trace of oxygen from near lifeless pools through delicate exposed blood-red gills. Eyeless cave fish, albino horseshoe crabs and gaudy versicolor cave lobsters can be found in the center Lake of the Violet Mists in great numbers.

For all of its fauna diversity, it is not for the animals that the Fungal Jungle is known. In this mighty forest there are no plants. There are no trees, grasses, shrubs or mosses. Even the humblest briar has no place here. Instead there is only fungus and in such bewildering variety it would require lifetimes to name them all.

Giant white-caps grow as tall as pine trees. Bulbous headed lantern fungus glow with their own inner fire. Frill cap mushrooms grow taller than a man. Conical caps fill the forest in mad rainbow kaleidoscope. Mushrooms grow out of dead fallen fungal stalks. Tiny caps too small for the eye to see form soft mats. Small harmless oozes, relatives of deadly green slime and ochre jelly, prowl the jungle floor absorbing ants.

The ceiling of the great cave at its highest is almost a quarter mile tall. It is covered in bat roosts and glowing bioluminescent molds that make the ceiling look almost like it were covered in stars. The strange radiation given off by these bioluminescent is beautiful when seen with normal vision, but with darkvision it truly comes alive. All the jungle is bathed in a scintillating unearthly glow that shimmers between shades of violet and cerulean.

NOTE: Range of all darkvision is doubled within the fungal jungle thanks to this alien glow.



THE WEATHER OF THE FUNGAL JUNGLE

The fungal jungle is a large enough cavern that it experiences weather. Water filters in through the bed of limestone above and drips back down, making it seem (during the rainy season above) like it is raining. The lake and small rain pools evaporate and create thick clouds of mist that linger and swirl about the fungal jungle. Clouds of spores, bioluminescent themselves, are often caught up in these clouds and creating glowing violet fogs that sweep out across the Lake of Mists and swirl amongst the great mushroom stalks of the jungle.

The Fungal Jungle has two seasons: the wet and the dry. During the wet (which lasts about seven months) it rains from the ceiling almost every day for at least an hour or two. When it is not raining, dense violet mists rise off the lake and fill the jungle with a narcotic fog. Sometimes these fogs concentrate and can even become potentially hallucinogenic (see random encounters below)

During the dry season (about five months) the rains stop. The lake recedes a few feet. The air becomes dry as the thirsty fungus drink the moisture. Spore drifts, like fine talcum sand, accumulate in dry clumps. At the height of the dry season the fungal jungle experiences spore storms where powerful wind currents caused by variable temperatures can reach even dangerous speeds. The spores are like fine grit sand paper ripping and tearing through the fragile fungus groves.

THE TWO FACTIONS

As mentioned above, there are two intelligent tribes in the Fungal Jungle: The Xan and the skis'raal. Both of these peoples are potential allies or enemies for the PCs. Each of these tribes has a Faction Score that represents how they perceive the PCs. These scores are on a -30 to +30 scale:

-20 to -30 Open Warfare: The faction members attack the PCs on sight. All NPCs start as Hostile.

-10 to -19 Hatred: The faction members may not attack immediately, but the smallest excuse is taken for combat. All NPCs start as Unfriendly.

+9 to -9 Tolerated: The faction members care little about and may not even know of the existence of the PCs. All NPCs start as Indifferent.

+10 to +19 Respect: The faction does not consider the PCs to be allies, but they possess at least a grudging respect for them. All NPCs start as Friendly.

+20 to +30 Alliance: The PCs and this faction may enter into an alliance. All NPCs start as Helpful.

Explorers begin with Faction scores of Xan +0 and Skis'raal -10. The spiders have learned that surface dwellers often treat them as mindless monsters.

Overlords begin with Xan -10 and Skis'raal +0. The Xan have been harvested for alchemical components by drow raids. Though long ago, the Xan have a long memory.

Throughout the Fungal Jungle encounters there are opportunities to gain and lose Faction Points. But here are a few general modifiers that can apply at any time the PCs interact with the Faction.

-20 Points: Initiating unprovoked violence against members of the faction and letting survivors escape to report the slaughter. Depending on how heinous the attack, this may instead simply drop the faction score to -20 regardless of starting value. Such treachery by a supposed ally can be a bitter pill to swallow.

-10 Points: Forming an Alliance with the other Faction (only gained once). There is great mistrust between the Xan and the skis'raal and it will not easily be overcome.

-5 Points: Becoming Respected by the other Faction (only gained once).

-2 Points: Assess this penalty whenever a PC causes a member of the Faction to become Unfriendly or Hostile.

+1 Point: Having any sort of peaceful contact with the Faction (only gained once).

+2 Points: Successfully trading with the Faction (only gained once).

+2 Points: Award for every member of the Faction who becomes Helpful to the PCs.

+5 Points: Fighting alongside members of that faction for the first time (only gained once).

And as always, these are only guidelines. Feel free to assess whatever penalties and bonuses you think appropriate. In particular, feel free to withhold awards that were gained in such a way that the Faction may never know of the deed. The rule of thumb is that deeds done in secret do not affect the Faction Score.

Story Award: Give a CR 1 (400 XP) award for earning the respect of the Xan or skis'raal. Award only once per faction.

Give a CR 3 (800 XP) award for making an alliance with the Xan or skis'raal. Award only once per faction.

FUNGAL JUNGLE ENCOUNTERS (I-X)

MAP I THE SOUTHERN ENTRANCE

The southern approach is one of three main entries into the Fungal Jungle. You round a corner and then the full immensity of the jungle opens up before you. It is an awe inspiring sight for newcomers.

I-1 THE APPROACH

The flat stone pathway leading up to a pair of twenty foot drops. This approach is depicted upon the front cover.

I-2 NATURAL STAIRCASE

This is a natural staircase leading down to the jungle floor. Damp and slick, it counts as difficult terrain.

I-3 SCORPION LAIR (CR 4)

An ambush spot overlooks the natural staircase 30' below. A pair of cave scorpions nests here. Anything that moves upon the natural staircase below will be detected by their tremorsense. With their climb speed, the scorpions have no problem fighting hanging off the wall and ignore the stair's difficult terrain.

These voracious predators often venture out into the jungle to hunt their preferred prey. They have a 50% chance any time the PCs pass by to be out of their lair. If they are out, they will return 1d8 hours later.

Cave Scorpion (2)

CR 1

XP 400 each (800 XP total)

N Medium vermin

Init +0; Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 10, flat-footed 12 (+2 natural)

hp 16 (3d8+3)

Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +1

Immune mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft., climb 40 ft.

Melee 2 claws +2 (1d4), sting +2 (1d4, plus poison)

Special Attacks rend (2 claws, 2d4)

TACTICS

During Combat Anything moving that enters their lair or gets within range of their tremorsense will get attacked. The cave scorpions are always hungry. They are not tactical fighters. They attack the nearest enemy until it is dead.

Morale The scorpions are not smart enough to flee. They fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 11, Dex 10, Con 13, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 2

Base Atk +2; CMB +2; CMD 12 (24 vs. trip)

Skills Climb +8, Perception +4, Stealth +0 (+12 in caves); Racial Modifiers +8 Climb, +4 Perception, +12 Stealth in caves

SPECIAL ABILITIES

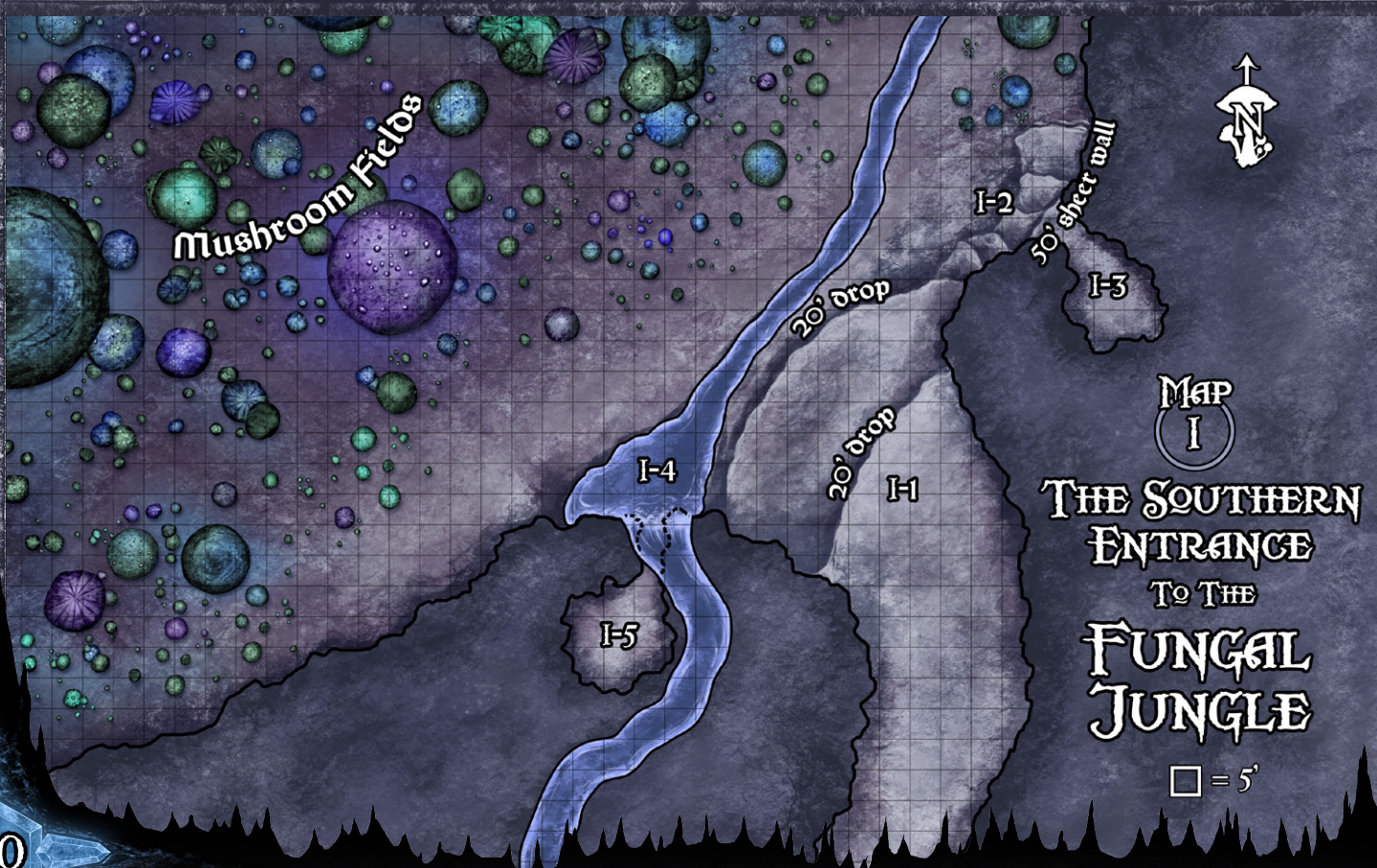
Poison (Ex) Sting—injury; save Fort DC 12; frequency 1/round for 4 rounds; effect 1d2 Str; cure 1 save.

Young Cave Scorpions (4)

CR 1/4

XP 100 each (400 XP total)

hp 4 (see Pathfinder RPG Bestiary entry for Scorpion, Greensting)



MAP
J

THE WESTERN ENTRANCE TO THE FUNGAL JUNGLE



□ = 5'



Once defeated, eager treasure hunters could climb up to the ledge and search the cave. However all they will find is a small nest of young cave scorpions. These scorpions could become fine familiars.

I-4 FRESHWATER POOL

This shallow, lifeless pool is formed by a waterfall that flows off the cavern wall high above. The water filters through the limestone rock above, is ice cold and sweet to drink.

I-5 HIDDEN CAVE

There is a hidden cave behind the water fall. Seeing this cave without entering the pool requires a DC 25 Perception check. Finding the cavern inside the pool is either automatic if the PCs move behind the falls or requires only a DC 10 Perception check.

Beyond the veil of water, there is a small cavern with a low ceiling only six foot tall. Its ceiling is adorned with a few fragile soda straw formations that are stained blood red thanks to iron filtered through the stone. This wet cavern is strewn with a few bones where once a predator laired. However, that predator is long gone, no doubt eaten by some other inhabitant of the jungle. So now the cave is abandoned. This hidden cave would make a fine base camp for a group of PCs or a place to hide a cache of supplies.

However, if the bones are carefully searched and a DC 15 Knowledge (dungeoneering) check will discover that amongst the bones there are the rotten remains of a myceloid.

MAP J THE WESTERN ENTRANCE

The western entrance is one of the three main entrances to the Fungal Jungle. The entrance abruptly ends with a sheer forty foot drop onto the hard stone floor directly below. Beyond the drop, the endless mushroom fields stretch out of sight into the darkness.

If the ledge is closely examined (DC 10 Perception check), there are numerous marks that reveal that pitons and ropes have been driven into stone here before doubtless used to repel down. There are even a few iron spikes still imbedded in the stone with a few remaining telltale silk fibers hanging loose.

This is evidence that over the years that the drow have used this entrance several times to enter the jungle. However, save for those invaders, largely this entrance is unused. It is near no major settlements. In the end, both the drow and the svirfneblin feel that the Fungal Jungle is simply too dangerous to be of much use as a permanent settlement. And the inhabitants are happy with their weird domain and rarely leave. The result is that this entrance sees little traffic.

MAP K LAIR OF THE WEIRD (CR 4)

The PCs likely hear this encounter before they see it. They hear the high pitch cry of distress from quite a distance. If they follow the sound of the cries, they come upon a clearing within the Fungal Jungle.

K-1 THE STRUGGLING MYCELOID

At the edge of a mossy green patch of ground that glows with a faint bioluminescence, a single myceloid hunter struggles and holds a spear frantically trying to stab at seemingly empty air. The mushroom man is clearly being pulled into the green patch though by nothing that can be seen. Perhaps the hunter has gone mad.

In fact, the myceloid hunter Miku strayed too close the lair of a fungus weird and is being pulled to its death. If the PCs do nothing, in two rounds the weird will stop playing with Miku and drag the hunter into the pool. There the wounded Miku won't last long.

Saving Miku from the weird and seeing the hunter safely back to the city of Xan (see map O below) earns the PCs a +3 to their Xan Faction Score. Miku himself takes such an event very seriously and, if the PCs impress the hunter with their bravery, may even go as far as pledging to serve them. The PCs may gain a myceloid cohort from this encounter.



K-2 POOL OF THE WEIRD

Weirds are maggots writhing in the flesh of dead Z'gggu-Xan-Zara. They hunt the living with neither malice nor mercy. The wise learn to recognize their formation and give them wide berth. They are difficult to destroy. Slaying them merely causes reformation. To be permanently destroyed the pool must be *consecrated* to break its link to the dead god. A caster rolls a DC 10 Perception check as the spell is cast. If they succeed they are assaulted by visions of the god's death. They hear its name echo in their mind.

Fungus Weird

CR 4

XP 1,200

N Large plant (fungus)

Init +7; Senses low-light vision; Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+3 Dex, +4 natural, -1 size)

hp 39 (6d8+12)

Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +3

DR 5/bludgeoning; Immune plant traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee bite +7 (1d8+4 plus grab)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

Special Attacks sleep spores

TACTICS

During Combat The weird is an ambush predator. Anything within reach is attacked. It uses its sleep spores to incapacitate then bites and grabs, trying to drown sleeping victims in its slime pool.

Morale The weird fights until zero hit points and then collapses back into its pool. It will reform four rounds later (see below)

STATISTICS

Str 17, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 13

Base Atk +4; CMB +8 (+12 grapple) +4; CMD 21 (can't be tripped)

Feats Alertness, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Perception +12, Sense Motive +3, Stealth +8

Languages Common, Terran, Weirlding

SQ camouflage, fungus pool, reform

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Camouflage (Ex) A fungus weird is effectively invisible in its pool until it attacks. It takes a successful DC 20 Perception check to notice a fungus weird in its pool before it attacks.

Fungus Pool: A fungus weird's "pool" is not a pool at all, but an entanglement of lichen, slime molds and funguses. A typical pool covers a 20-foot radius, and a fungus weird (being bound to its pool) can never leave this area.

A creature that enters a fungus weird's pool (on its own or with the aid of the fungus weird) is automatically entangled (as the *entangle* spell) until it escapes. An entangled creature can break free and move half its normal speed by using a full-round action to make a DC 15 Escape Artist check or a DC 19 Strength check. The check DCs are Constitution-based and the Strength check includes a +4 racial bonus.

Sleep Spores (Ex) Once every 1d4 rounds, as a standard action, a fungus weird can release a puff of greenish-yellow spores in a 10-foot cone. These spores induce sleep (as the *sleep* spell) if the opponent fails a DC 15 Will save. Unlike the sleep spell, there is no HD limit or maximum HD affected. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Reform (Ex) When reduced to 0 hit points or less, a fungus weird collapses back into its pool. Four rounds later, it reforms at full strength minus any damage taken from fire-based spells and effects. Fire damage takes 24 hours to heal.

SAVING MIKU

If dwarves rescue Miku from the weird, the young Xan is uncertain what to make of them. It thanks them, grateful for its life, but is uncertain what they want in return. It wishes to return to the city of Xan and will even lead them to the Throne of the Alchemist (see below) if they wish. It is more wary of drow, knowing how they have hunted its kind before. But still, Miku can be persuaded that they mean him no harm and might very well also take them to the Alchemist if they seem friendly.

Miku is an unusual myceloid. It dreams of leaving the jungle and seeing the wider world. Miku is a born adventurer amongst its kind. Possessing an unusual curiosity for this usually staid and homebound people, Miku's recklessness nearly got itself killed with the weird. Regardless, the myceloid would make a fine and colorful cohort.

Miku speaks in a soft vibrato. It is guileless, honest to a fault and takes promises of loyalty very seriously. Miku loves to sing, humming in the low reverberating telepathic language of fungus. It also loves riddles and games. Under the influence of a heroic band of dwarves, Miku could become a hero of its people, traveling farther than any other Xan in living memory. Corrupted by the wicked drow, Miku could become the monster that people often mistake its people as being.

Miku the Myceloid Hunter

CR 4

XP 1,200

Azathyrrian myceloid

N Medium plant

Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18 (+2 armor, +6 natural, +1 Dex)

hp 37 (5d8+15) [currently 18 hp]

Fort +7, Ref +2, Will +4

DR 5/slashing; Immune plant traits; Resist cold 10, fire 10, sonic 10

Weaknesses vulnerable to electricity

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee mwk glaive +7 (1d10+4/x3)

Ranged javelin +4 (1d6+3 + poison)

Special Attacks spore cloud

TACTICS

During Combat If hunting, Miku uses its sleep javelins to try to capture prey. But in battle, the myceloid turns to its wicked glaive.

Morale If reduced to 9 hp or less, Miku surrenders.

STATISTICS

Str 17, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 9, Wis 12, Cha 10

Base Atk +3; CMB +6; CMD 17

Feats Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Stealth)

Skills Perception +6, Sense Motive +5, Stealth +9, Survival +5; Racial Modifiers +4 Sense Motive, +4 Survival

Languages Undercommon; telepathy 60 ft. (myceloids only)

Gear masterwork glaive, leather armor, 4 javelins poisoned with sleep spore.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison Use (Ex) Myceloids are skilled in the use of poison and never risk accidentally poisoning themselves. What is commonly called drow poison is actually a myceloid invention, used to paralyze animals when hunting.

Sleep Spore Poison—injury; save Fort DC 13; frequency 1/minute for 2 minutes; initial effect unconsciousness for 1 minute; secondary effect unconsciousness for 2d4 hours; cure 1 save.

Spore Cloud (Ex) Once per day as a standard action, a myceloid can expel a 10-foot-radius burst of spores centered on itself. This cloud persists for 1d3 rounds. Any creature caught in this cloud or that moves through it is effected as if by a *mass daze* spell (DC 15 Fortitude save to resist) but without the 4 HD level limit. Any given target can only be dazed once by any given spore cloud. The spore cloud does not hamper vision.

MAP L MOUNT URANOTH

This is the largest mountain in the Fungal Jungle rising just over 1300 feet. It is even larger than Skytouch Mountain (see Map R) because the ceiling is higher here. Mount Uranoth does not quite touch the ceiling but it does get within about a hundred feet.

This mountain is simply a single gigantic stalagmite that has over time become enormous. Its surface is almost entirely slick flowstone and it is therefore a dangerous climb.

L-1 THE BEAST OF MOUNT URANOTH

This is the lair of a large, aggressive thoqqua. It was caged here by svirfneblin wizards from Vaustestad (see R.) to cut iron from the iron mine (L-2). Though the magics that bound it have long since dissipated, still it is trapped upon this plane. It hates this cold, misty place and seeks always warmth and failing that at least vengeance against any intruders.

The Beast of Mount Uranoth

CR 5

XP 1,600

Advanced thoqqua

N Medium outsider (earth, elemental, extraplanar, fire)

Init +3; Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +14

Aura molten body

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+3 Dex, +6 natural)

hp 47 (5d10+20)

Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +4

Immune fire, elemental traits

Weaknesses vulnerable to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., burrow 20 ft.

Melee slam +8 (1d10+3 plus burn)

Special Attacks burn (1d6, DC 13)

TACTICS

During Combat The beast loves to burrow beneath its foes quietly and then erupt out, burning them alive.

Morale The beast flees if reduced to 11 hp or less. It burrows deep within the mountain to heal and eventually retake its territory.

STATISTICS

Str 17, Dex 17, Con 19, Int 6, Wis 16, Cha 10

Base Atk +5; CMB +8; CMD 21 (can't be tripped)

Feats Nimble Moves, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Acrobatics +11, Perception +14, Stealth +11, Survival +11

Languages Ignan (cannot speak)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Molten Body (Su) A thoqqua's body is hot enough to melt stone.

Anyone striking a thoqqua with a natural weapon or unarmed strike takes 1d6 points of fire damage. A creature that grapples a thoqqua or is grappled by one takes 3d6 points of fire damage each round the grapple persists. A creature that strikes a thoqqua with a manufactured weapon can attempt a DC 15 Reflex save to pull the weapon away from the creature's molten body quickly enough to avoid having the weapon take 1d6 points of fire damage—damage caused to a weapon in this manner is not halved as is normal for damage caused to items, and ignores the first 5 points of hardness possessed by the item. As a result, most metal weapons can generally safely strike a thoqqua without taking much damage, but wooden weapons have a significant chance of burning away if used against one of these creatures. The save DC is Constitution-based.

L-2 THE IRON MINE

A fragment of the primal god's sword broke off and embedded here in the mountain side. Long ago, covered over with flowstone, the Vaustestad svirfneblin found it and began to excavate the crude primal iron. Though they mined it for decades, there is still a massive deposit of iron waiting to be extracted.

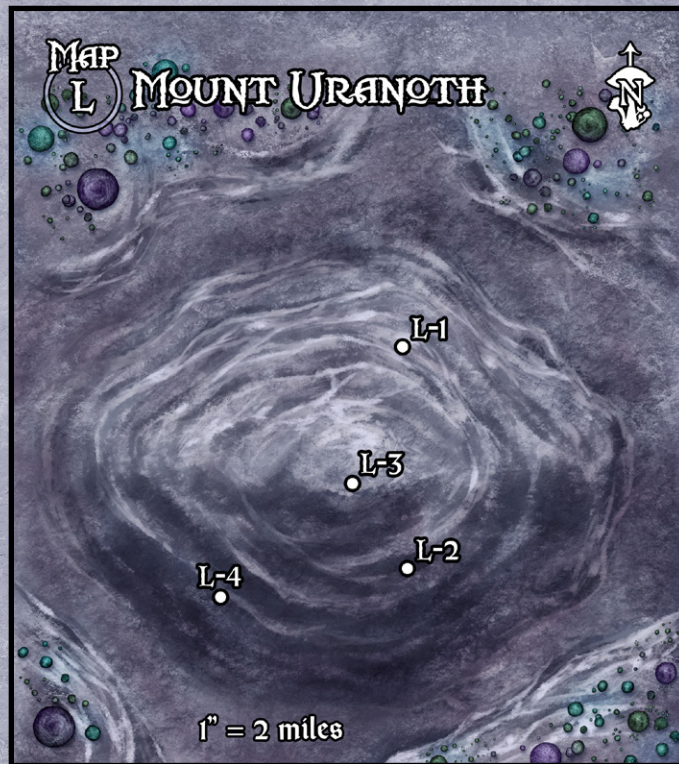
L-3 THE SUMMIT

It is no easy thing to summit Mt. Uranoth. The last two hundred feet is treacherous (four DC 20 Climb checks to ascend). The last individual to successfully climb Mount Uranoth was a deep gnome explorer. The explorer planted a banner in the summit that still waves. The ragged banner bears in gnomish script the name of the mountain "Mount Uranoth ascended by Jaster Will-One-Day-Touch-the-Sky of Vaustestad".

The explorer died shortly thereafter during the descent. His body lies within sight of the summit down a crevice in the mountain (DC 25 Perception check to notice). His skeletal form is covered only in tattered rags but still clutches his prized *rope of climbing*.

L-4 BASE CAMP

This is Jaster's last base camp inside a shallow cave. It is wrecked by time but still contains perhaps the last intact bottle of Vaustestad night whiskey in the world (worth 100 gp).



MAP M THE MUDDY BANKS OF THE LAKE OF VIOLET MISTS (CR 5)

The banks of the lake are covered in deep mud. The spores mix with the earth and form swirls of intensely colored clay. There are predators that have adapted to this strange environment and burrow through this versicolor goop. Largest amongst them is the giant cave cray. These massive lobsters possess garish shells that help them blend into the colorful mud.

These surprising social monsters are monogamous, pairing off for life. One guards the lair while the other hunts. With this particular couple, the female has just given birth to a great egg sac (see M-2) and so she is always to be found within the lair. After the male has captured a prey animal and eaten about half of it, he will bring the remaining carcass to his lady love.

M-1 THE MUD BANK

This is the spot where the male giant cave cray lies in ambush. Its eyes are just above the surface of the mud. With a successful DC 10 Perception check, an observant traveller will notice something shiny in the mud, perhaps a pearl about two-inches across. Only if the observer also beats the cray's Stealth check does this potential victim notice that this "pearl" occasionally twitches and moves as if alive.

Giant Cave Cray (2) CR 3

XP 800 each (1,600 XP total)

N Large vermin (aquatic)

Init +0; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 9, flat-footed 15 (-1 size, +6 natural)

hp 26 (4d8+8)

Fort +6, Ref +1, Will +1

Immune vermin traits

Weaknesses water dependency

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., burrow 20 ft. (mud only), swim 40 ft.

Melee 2 claws +5 (1d6+3 plus grab/19-20)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

Special Attacks constrict (claw) 1d6+3

TACTICS

During Combat The cray are masters of using their mudbank to their advantage. They leap from the mud, attack and hopefully grab their prey. Then they drag them out into the lake to drown as they feed upon them. If possible the cray will only kill one medium or small sized creature this way per day.

Morale The cray will not retreat once they encounter prey. They fight to the death until they have claimed their prize.

STATISTICS

Str 16, Dex 10, Con 14, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 2

Base Atk +3; CMB +7 (+11 to grapple); CMD 17 (29 vs. trip)

Feats Improved Critical^B (claw)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +4 (+12 in mud), Swim +19; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception, +4 Stealth (+12 in mud), +8 Swim

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Water Dependency (Ex) A giant cave cray can survive out of the water for 1 hour per 2 points of Constitution. Beyond this limit, the cray runs the risk of suffocation, as if it were drowning.

M-2 CRAY CAVE

This cave is little more than a wet packed hollow dug within the earthen hillside. The entrance is plugged with a pellet of earth that blends in quite well (DC 20 Perception check to notice). It takes the cray a full round action to remove or replace this pellet.

Inside the cave is the female cray. Her beloved egg-sac is attached beneath her body. This hampers her movement, halving her speed. She also attacks anything that is not her mate that enters the lair.

Once defeated, the crayfish are delicious eating. Their flavor resembles that of fine lobster meat. There is such a great store of food between these two animals that the PCs will probably be unable to take it all with them. All in all the giant crays provide about 200 days of food. Unfortunately it will spoil in about three days. The eggs of the giant crayfish are also edible and very nutritious. They are intensely salty and something of an acquired taste. Each egg is about two inches in diameter and there are hundreds of them here in a bundle. The skis'raal love cray eggs and regard them as a delicacy (DC 20 Knowledge [dungeoneering] to know this). If the PCs were to make a gift of giant cave cray eggs to the skis'raal it would be very well received. +2 skis'raal Faction Points. The eggs keep for weeks if kept moist.





MAP N CAVE FISHER AMBUSH (CR 5)

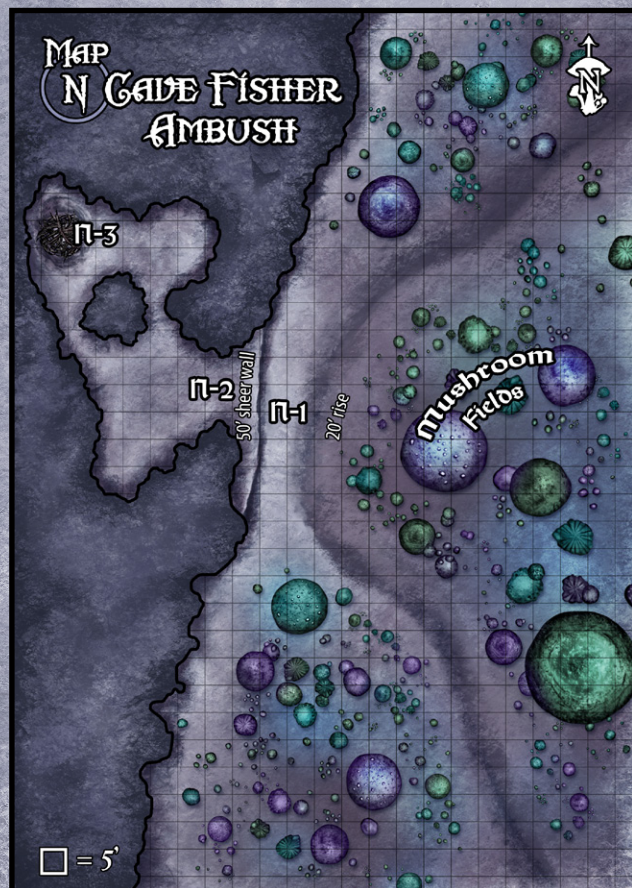
A nest of some of the jungle's weirdest predators lives in this high cavern. This is the lair of the cave fishers. These ravenous crustaceans are not picky eaters and will hunt anything living that crosses through their territory. Cave fishers are usually small predators, no bigger than a foot long hunting bats. Very rarely a cave fisher lives long enough to grow enormous. Currently there are only three and they live here.

N-1 PATH

This narrow path cuts between a steep hill and sheer rocky cliff face. A cursory glance will not detect the ledge. A DC 15 Perception check is required to notice the hidden ledge high above.

This path is a well-known danger by the Xan and the skis'raal and they both avoid it. Still, getting from north to south in this hex without taking this path is not easy. Unless the PCs have a climb speed, it adds one day to travel times taking the long way around.

The sheer cliff face has been worn smooth by cave rain and so, though a little rough in places, has few handholds (DC 25 Climb checks). The cave fishers also need poke only a very small part of their face over the ledge to hunt. Thus they count as having improved cover from enemies on this path.



N-2 THE LEDGE

This fifty foot high hidden ledge is populated by three adult cave fishers. They lie perfectly still waiting for anything to walk by on the path below. They then try to drag them up the wall as high as possible as quickly as possible. Even if their struggling victims cut themselves free, the drop will also hurt them.

N-3 FISHER NEST

The ledge leads back to a small shallow cavern. A large stone column hides a nest of a bones, fur and mushrooms that the three cave fishers burrow into to lay their eggs.

Recently, the cave fishers managed to capture a pair of two drow outcasts foolishly trying to avoid patrols along the dark road by crossing the Fungal Jungle. They are now both only bones. But their two mithral chain shirts and a *wand of acid arrow* (6 charges) still survive in the fisher nest.

Cave Fisher (3)	CR 2
XP 600 each (1,800 XP total)	
N Medium vermin	
Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0	
DEFENSE	
AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+1 Dex, +4 natural)	
hp 22 (3d8+9)	
Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +1	
Immune mind-affecting effects	
OFFENSE	
Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.	
Melee 2 claws +5 (1d4+3)	
Ranged filament +3 (drag)	
Special Attacks pull (filament, 10 feet)	
TACTICS	
During Combat The cave fishers are well adapted to their preferred combat strategy and do not vary from it. They hide on their ledge and shoot sticky filaments at passerbys, drawing them upwards.	
This particular colony has developed a nasty trick. The pull up a victim forty feet and then cut their own lines, dropping the victim back to the rocky path. Then they try to shoot them again. This method works wonderfully on small creatures and fungal wolves.	
Morale Cave fishers retreat if reduced to six hp or less.	
STATISTICS	
Str 17, Dex 12, Con 17, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 4	
Base Atk +2; CMB +5 (+9 with pull); CMD 16 (28 vs. trip)	
Skills Climb +11	
SPECIAL ABILITIES	
Filament (Ex) A cave fisher can fire a thin filament of sticky silk as a standard action. This touch attack has a range of 60 feet and no range increment. A creature struck by a cave fisher's filament becomes attached to the sticky thread. As a standard action, a creature can rip the filament free with a DC 20 Strength check. A caught creature can also attempt to escape a filament by making a DC 25 Escape Artist check. A filament is AC 14 (touch 12), has 5 hit points, and has DR 15/slashing. An application of liquid with high alcohol content (or a dose of universal solvent) dissolves the adhesive and releases the creature caught by the filament. A cave fisher can have only one filament active at a time.	
Pull (Ex) A cave fisher has a +4 racial bonus on CMB checks made using its pull special attack.	

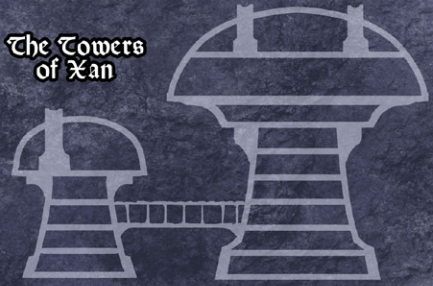
MAP
0



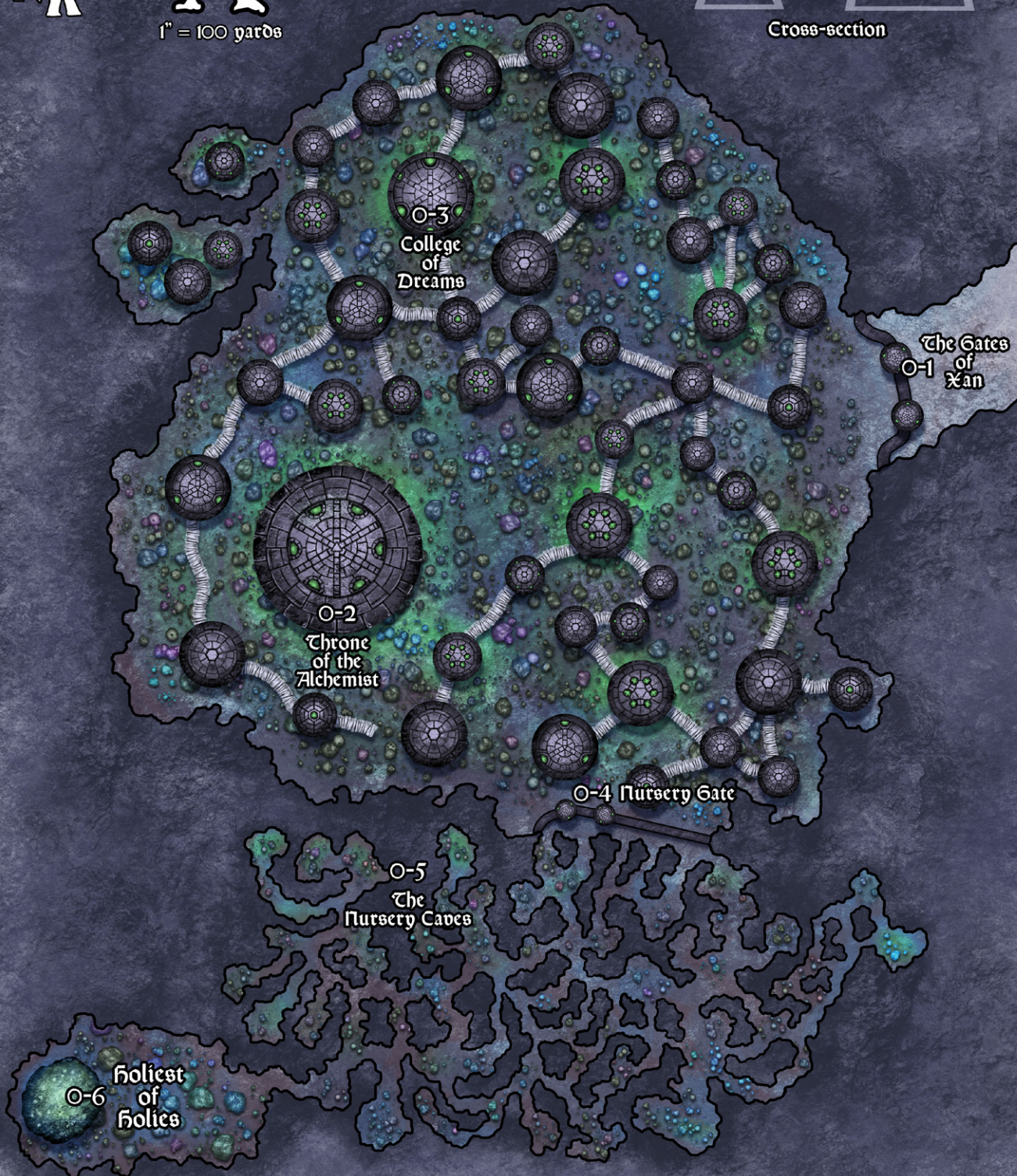
THE CITY OF XAN

1" = 100 yards

The Towers
of Xan



Cross-section



MAP O THE CITY OF XAN

Xan, Myceloid City

N small town

Corruption +0; **Crime** +0; **Economy** +0; **Law** +2; **Lore** +4; **Society** -2

Qualities Academic, Insular

Danger -5

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government Magical Council led by the Alchemist

Population 1880 Azathyrian myceloids

Notable NPCs

The Alchemist (N myceloid alchemist 8)

The Sage (N myceloid diviner 7)

The Singer (N myceloid bard 6)

The Gardener (N myceloid expert 7)

The Steward (N myceloid fighter 6)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 1,000 gp; **Purchase Limit** 5000 gp; **Spellcasting** -

Minor Items 6d6 items (potions and alchemical only); **Medium Items**

-; **Major Items** -

Xan (the name of both the city and the people) is the largest concentration of myceloids in the Azathyr. Boasting almost two thousand inhabitants, this city of towers and fungus is as alien as it is unique. At once, this place is an oasis in the Fungal Jungle. But similarly it has comparatively little to offer outsiders compared to other towns of similar size. Xan is not made for men, elves, gnomes or dwarves. It is for the mushroom-men. All others will always be outsiders here.

The city is dominated by stone mushroom-shaped towers connected by woven mushroom fiber catwalks. Everywhere the myceloids come and go, performing their strange rituals. Fungus grows everywhere and the cavern is thick with dense clouds of spores. Any non-myceloid or anyone not immune to poison must make a DC 10 Fortitude save each full day they are in Xan. If they fail, they take 1d3 points of Constitution damage. This damage persists as long as the victim remains within Xan. Even those who make their save (and are non-myceloids) will develop a persistent cough and occasionally hack up horrific mucilaginous multi-colored phlegm.

Xan, by the way, is what the Baroness Satha fears. If anyone could ever rally the mushroom-men against Vothys, the drow outpost would be doomed. Fortunately for her, the myceloids have little taste for war.

O-1 THE GATES OF XAN (CR 9)

The approach to Xan is quite unassuming. A large passage leads from the Fungal Jungle to a plain thirty foot tall stonewall with two crude towers. From the ground, the gate obscures the city beyond. There are a dozen myceloid soldiers here, who are polite but insistent that Xan is closed to outsiders. Only if they travel with a myceloid (for example Miku, pg. 43 above) will they be allowed access to the city. The wall itself is made of broken stone and is DC 20 to climb.

Myceloid Soldiers (12)

CR 2

XP 600 each (7,200 XP total)

Azathyrian myceloid

N Medium plant

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +6

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18 (+2 armor, +6 natural, +1 Dex)

hp 19 (3d8+6)

Fort +5, **Ref** +2, **Will** +4

DR 5/slashing; **Immune** plant traits; **Resist** cold 10, fire 10, sonic 10

Weaknesses vulnerable to electricity

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee glaive +5 (1d10+2/x3)

Ranged javelin +3 (1d6+2 + poison)

Special Attacks spore cloud

TACTICS

During Combat They prefer to attack from the walls with cover using their poisoned javelins, but will use their glaives if forced into melee.

Morale If reduced to 5 hp or less, A soldier flees or surrenders.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 12, **Con** 14, **Int** 9, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 15

Feats Iron Will, Weapon Focus (Glaive)

Skills Perception +6, Sense Motive +5, Stealth +5, Survival +5; **Racial**

Modifiers +4 Sense Motive, +4 Survival

Languages Undercommon; telepathy 60 ft. (myceloids only)

Gear glaive, leather armor, 4 javelins poisoned with sleep spore.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

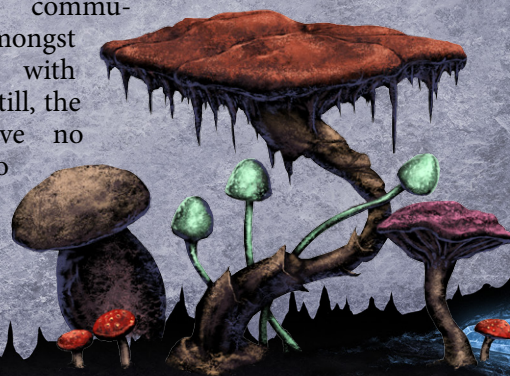
Poison Use (Ex) Myceloids are skilled in the use of poison and never risk accidentally poisoning themselves. What is commonly called drow poison is actually a myceloid invention, used to paralyze animals when hunting.

Sleep Spore Poison—injury; save Fort DC 13; frequency 1/minute for 2 minutes; initial effect unconsciousness for 1 minute; secondary effect unconsciousness for 2d4 hours; cure 1 save.

Spore Cloud (Ex) Once per day as a standard action, a myceloid can expel a 10-foot-radius burst of spores centered on itself. This cloud persists for 1d3 rounds. Any creature caught in this cloud or that moves through it is effected as if by a *mass daze* spell (DC 15 Fortitude save to resist) but without the 4 HD level limit. Any given target can only be dazed once by any given spore cloud. The spore cloud does not hamper vision.

Attacking the gates is folly. The twelve soldiers are just the beginning of the myceloid army and if attacked, great horns are blown. Within ten rounds the gate is reinforced by another twelve soldiers. The Steward (as a myceloid soldier but add six fighter levels) arrives about five minutes later with a larger contingent of twenty four soldiers.

Clever PCs can devise other methods to get in. Magical disguises will be sore tested though, as the myceloids communicate amongst themselves with telepathy. Still, the guards have no method to detect invisibility.



O-2 THRONE OF THE ALCHEMIST

This is the center of the City of Xan and the home of its enigmatic leader – The Alchemist (a myceloid alchemist [mindchemist] 8). The Throne is actually a vast multi-level castle full of winding hallways, countless chambers and subterranean halls. The focal point of the Throne is a great audience chamber. At the center upon a podium sits the Alchemist itself. The chamber is full of guards and great hanging boxes full of other fungal dignitaries and mouldering officers of the myceloid government.

If the PCs have gained entrance into the city they are brought immediately here. The guards have no other idea what to do with outsiders, they are so rare. The Alchemist grants them audience. Its voice is deep and slow and rarely betrays even a hint of emotion. The Alchemist has a master-level poker face. It is difficult to provoke the Alchemist to violence without attacking the myceloids first. However, it is quick to defend its people from murderous invaders.

Attacking the Alchemist is almost surely suicide. If outsiders are in the city, then it is always guarded by dozens of soldiers and the Steward who is charge with the Alchemist's safety. Even if the PCs somehow get the Alchemist alone, it is still a CR 10 spellcaster capable of calling upon assistance immediately.

But violence is unlikely. The Alchemist is curious about outsiders. Where do they come from? What do they want? Will they be staying? These are all questions it will be quick to ask. The alchemist has questions and concerns of its own and answering them or helping to resolve these issues is the most likely way to form an alliance with the Xan.

The Xan currently consider the skis'raal dangerous enemies. The Alchemist would be very pleased by the destruction of the White Spider or her egg-sac (see pg. 69) and is only too pleased to provide the location of the skis'raal village (V). Doing such a deed earns a +10 Faction Score Xan. Of course, it also makes a mortal enemy of the skis'raal.

Wicked Overlords could use this mistrust to start a full war between the skis'raal and the Xan. If the Xan Nursery Caves (see O-5 below) were violated and evidence was left it was done by spiders and the skis'raal egg-sac was destroyed (see V-8 below), an apocalyptic war would break out between the two peoples. The skis'raal are less numerous, so the Xan could overrun their village. But then the skis'raal would begin a brutal guerilla war against the Xan that would destroy the myceloids ability to gather food from the jungle. The end result would be that both races would be crippled.

A more difficult road for noble Explorers is to patch the differences between the White Spider and the Alchemist. There is no reason for war between the Xan and skis'raal. The conflict is simply a matter of mistrust and cultural misunderstandings. The Fungal Jungle is vast enough for both of them. They even use different resources (the Xan need only fungus and corpses; the skis'raal hunt only living game).

If audiences could be gained with both leaders to and each was persuaded to listen to reason (DC 25 Diplomacy checks), delegations could hold a meeting on middle ground (perhaps the Mysterious Tower [S] or at the strange obelisk if it were purified [W]). The Alchemist and the White Spider would actually meet face to face for the first time and a lasting truce known as the Treaty of Silk and Spore could be forged. Such a treaty would bring peace to the Azathyr (particularly if Vothys were also destroyed) and earn a +10 Faction Score bonus to both sides.

Besides the matter with the skis'raal, the Xan have other concerns. They have been troubled by the strange blue slime (see W below) and the slime zombies it creates. Anyone who could figure out how to cleanse it would earn their gratitude (and a +3 Faction Score Xan). There is one who understands the true nature of the infection and how to cure it (see O-6 below).

The Alchemist also knows the location of the lost deep gnome city of Vaustenstad. It knows that the deep gnomes once possessed a great magical instrument – a darkvision telescope. The Alchemist would love to have that instrument for study by the College of Dreams (O-3 below). Repairing it and leaving it where it is (see pg. 63) earns a +3 Faction Score Xan. Bringing it back to Xan increases the gain to +5.

If an alliance could be made with Xan, they could become an important resource in the PC's budding kingdom (see Book II for details about this) providing food, potions and rare alchemical supplies for trade.

However, there is one thing that no alliance with the Xan will accomplish. The Xan will not attack Vothys. The Xan believe (with good reason) that going to war against the drow is too risky. It's not the Baroness they fear. Instead, they fear far Taaryssia, the great city of the drow. The Xan have long enough memory to remember that the drow nobility once greatly valued Vothys. Doubtless in time, they will again and then woe to whoever destroyed it. Though it may seem like cowardice now, the Alchemist is actually right.

Story Award: Give a CR 6 (1,600 XP) award for either establishing peace between Xan and skis'raal or engineering an apocalyptic war.



O-3 COLLEGE OF DREAMS

This is the center of learning in Xan and the domain of the Sage (a venerable myceloid diviner 7). The Sage only rarely moves, sitting at the center of a great coliseum attended by dozens of students who hear its wise telepathic sendings and debate the meaning of these cryptic emanations. The Sage will be curious about outsiders and moves to meet them (a great honor!) speaking in undercommon. The Sage is full of questions many of which will seem ridiculous to non-Xan (When did you start using the mouth to talk? Why don't you consume your dead?). The Sage is a kindly and patient soul and grateful for answers. It will do its best to reciprocate. Communicating politely with the Sage earns a +2 Faction Score Xan (but only once).

In a side laboratory are held three captive skis'raal hunters. They are being studied to see if the spiders are intelligent enough to negotiate with. Though the Sage has reservations about holding the spiders, it will take an order from the Alchemist to have them released.

O-4 NURSERY GATE

This gate controls access to the nursery caves beyond. If the myceloids are serious about keeping outsiders out of the city, they are deadly serious about keeping the nursery caves secure. Within grows the future of their civilization. To be chosen to guard the nursery caves is a great honor and seen as stepping stone toward one day becoming the Steward.

The twelve soldiers stationed here were a special violet sash made of shimmering mycelium thread. They turn away all outsiders and if their warning to stay away is not heeded, they attack immediately and sound the horns for urgent reinforcement. Not just the soldiers come to defend the nursery caves when such an alarm is sounded. Every myceloid capable of picking up a club comes to answer such a call. Nothing can be said that will make these guards admit an outsider. The only way they will allow such an act is if the outsider is escorted by the Alchemist itself.

Myceloid Soldiers (12)

CR 2

XP 600 each (7,200 XP total)

hp 19 (see pg. 49 above)

O-5 NURSERY CAVES

Given the tight security of this place, the PCs may expect to find vaults full of gold. Instead all they find is a labyrinth of nearly identical caverns full of strange looking violet mushrooms growing from the decaying corpses of myceloids. Reverent but non-combatant tenders roam the place in great number carefully tending to these young myceloids as they slowly grow, gain sentience and absorb some portion of the memory of the dead elders they sprout from. The tenders will only deviate from their routine if they encounter outsiders.

The nursery caves are a maze. Even the map (pg. 48) shows only the major passages. Thousands of tiny passages, all identical, split and head off above and below. The passages are choked with thick clouds of spores that reduce visibility down to twenty feet at best. The spore clouds are noxious and disorienting. To navigate the labyrinth takes six successful Survival (tracking) DC 15 checks and six DC 15 Stealth checks to avoid detection (invisibility, obviously, would help greatly). A set of checks takes 10 minutes and forces a saving throw against the mist. Tracking failures moves them further away from the goal. A Stealth failure causes myceloid soldiers to be summoned.

Poisonous Mist

CR 4

The Poison Mist slowly overcomes its victims. For every ten minutes you spend in the mist, roll a DC 13 Fortitude save or take 1d3 Con ability damage. Those immune to poison are unaffected.

Anyone attacking the young myceloids growing here will earn the eternal enmity of the populace of Xan. For the myceloids this is the most despicable of acts. It isn't simply infanticide (though that is monstrous enough). It is a direct attack upon their heritage and their shared memory. They never forgive such an act. Faction Score Xan is -30 and can never be raised.

Story Award: Give a CR 5 (1,600 XP) award for crossing the labyrinth.

THE REST OF XAN

Much of the City of Xan remains undescribed in these scant six pages. Does that mean nothing of interest happens there? No. Rather, it is important to understand that strange Xan is not a city built for any but the myceloid people. It is their home and they conduct their strange business there.

The PCs are free to wander amongst the catwalks and towers of Xan. They will see myceloids engaged in strange activities beyond count. They will see fungus men gathered in circles humming in strange vibratory synchronicity. They will observe bizarre laboratories where the mushroom work on unfathomable experiments. They will see weavers' workshops where living looms thread together tapestries of fine mycelium. They will see symposiums of gathered myceloids conducted only in the language of spores. This and thousand other things even stranger fill the thousand chambers of fabled Xan.

O-6 HOLIEST OF HOLIES

This hidden cavern beyond the nursery labyrinth is a great chamber forbidden to outsiders. Inside floats what looks like a giant levitating fungal ball. This is the last surviving remnant of the primal demon god Z'ggu-Xan-Zara. This once powerful and evil entity has mellowed after millenia of being diminished and trapped in this cavern. It no longer seeks destruction or chaos. It does not even seek freedom for if the gods knew of its existence they might destroy it once and for all. Instead, this shard of primal divinity dedicates itself to guiding its people towards a greater future.

This is Xan-Zara the First and Eldest. This ancient fungal demigod is the true ruler of the myceloids. The Alchemist is simply a figurehead. All matters of great import are brought before Xan-Zara and its proclamations are law. Still such consultations are rare. Instead, Xan-Zara mostly floats alone in deep contemplation remembering the countless weight of unfathomably deep time. Xan-Zara is not only the leader of the Xan, it is their creator. It gave forth the first spores that found purchase in the fallen and became in time the first of the azathyrian myceloids.

It is unlikely that the PCs (Explorer or Overlord) will ever meet Xan-Zara. After all, getting through the Nursery Gate is no easy trick and even if they managed that feat, exploring the labyrinth of the nursery caves is not exactly productive. But if they do, then Xan-Zara will be intrigued by them.

The great floating fungus speaks in a voice like sevenfold thunder. Its words are as much felt within the mind and the heart as they are heard. It does not yell or raise its voice and yet every word seems as almost like a divine revelation. It introduces itself by saying: *"Outsiders, invaders, you have come here unbidden. Know that I could destroy you with but a thought...and yet... there is something about you that intrigues me. I so rarely receive visitors. Yes, you may stay for a while. Let me propose a game. I have seven questions I would ask of you. Answer them honestly as best you are able and I will answer seven questions for you. You may go first."*

After patiently listening to their question, it does its best to provide a true answer. Xan-Zara is neither omniscient nor does it know the future. Instead, the god-fragment is simply very old, vastly experienced and inhumanly wise. Its answers tend to prevaricate and it always seems to answer both 'yes' and 'no' as the entity dreamingly considers questions put to it. If asked how Dammerhall was destroyed, Xan-Zara answers *"Dammerhall was destroyed by the great weakness of your kind – greed. It was the greatest city of its age and yet it was not enough. Will you rebuild Dammerhall only to once more see it fall?"* That is all it says on the subject.

Finally, it is its turn to ask a question.

"Did Yoth-ssqua transfigure after the rectification of the Vuldrani or does he remain transfixd upon more tellurian concerns?"

It doesn't really matter what the PCs answer. Xan-Zara knows they don't know the answer to these questions. After all, what does it need to know from these mere mortals? Instead, it is simply leading up the seventh question and trying perhaps, indirectly, to provide these mortals with a small bits of information that may help them stave off the dark days that are ahead.

Its other five questions are:

"Does the Cerulean Realm of Vinth Dartha remain coterminous to the subastral vortices of Han Yao?"

"Is Mount Voormithadreth yet situated in the Eiglopien range or did the need for homeostasis after the confluence of the seven geas force a transdimensal shift?"

"How many moons are to be found in your sky and when is the next septenary convergence?"

"Did King Kohandra manumit the Targas or do they yet persist in helotry?"

"What became of Sarnath in far Mnar?"

It responds to each answer however ludicrous with a moment of contemplation and then says "I see" or "how fortunate" or "terrible to hear." With his last question he becomes more focused:

"Does any in the Azathyr know of the coming calamity arising from below?"

Whatever they say, he continues *"I see that the answer is no. You live in a time of plenty when the luxury of war is yours to indulge. Enjoy it while you can. However, when the time comes to face what dwells beyond the Sea of Ghosts, then you will unite or you will die. And now I am more certain than ever that this time will be upon us all too soon."*

"This has been a pleasant distraction, outsider. Now go in peace. Your answers have given me much to think about....much to think about indeed."

And with that the PC's consultation with Xan-Zara is over. If they feel both confused and yet lucky to be alive, you (the GM) have conducted this exchange properly.

Xan-Zara the First and Eldest

CR 21

XP 409,600

hp 418 (see Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 entry for Mu Spore)

MAP P THE OLD DOCK

This old dock juts out into the Lake of Violet Mists. It is made entirely of quarried stone and anyone who has spent any time in Fasturvalt will recognize its construction as similar to the stone bridges that span the Snabbinflod. There can be little doubt it is of deep gnome build.

If Knivy Ivy is with the party she only shrugs. *"The svirfneblin once had a colony in the Fungal Jungle? I didn't know that."*

Ivy is in fact incorrect. The deep gnomes did not have a colony here. They had a major city here. But that was more than three centuries ago. It was destroyed by a combination of drow harassment and natural disaster and now no living gnome in Fasturvalt or surrounding communities remember the place. The tragedy here is that lost Vaustenstad (pronounced Voss-ten-stod rhymes with Todd) once represented the high point of gnomish culture and technology in the Azathyr.

The water around the dock is muddy and brackish (typical for the muddy banks of the Lake of Violet Mists). Strange bioluminescent algae bloom in the water giving off a faint violet glow.

P-1 THE DOCK

This is the stone dock itself. Though long abandoned and disused, it is still sturdy and in good repair. However, it is completely coated in mud, small fungal growth and lake sludge. This makes the surface of the dock quite slick and thus difficult terrain.

Anyone who chooses to move at full speed may make a DC 20 Acrobatics check to ignore this slickness. However, if they fail the check, they are immediately dumped off the pier and into the water. Despite the brackish appearance and faint glow, the water itself is not harmful. However, it is not uninhabited...

P-2 SLIME PATCH

The end of the pier is thickly caked with mud and slime. In fact, this slime is alive. It is a bizarre native organism known as mudbog or a hunting slime. There is one lurking on the end of the pier and second clinging to the side of the dock. They are initially dormant having not fed in several days, but something living and warm walking on the last half of the dock wakes them as does anything falling in the water.

Though not at all intelligent, they do possess an instinctual low cunning. Thus the mudbogs do not simply leap to the attack. Instead, they pause for a few moments waiting for the creature to get closer.

Mudbog (2)

CR 3

XP 800 each (1,600 XP total)

N Large ooze

Init -5; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft.; **Perception** -5

DEFENSE

AC 4, **touch** 4, **flat-footed** 4 (-1 size, -5 Dex)

hp 31 (3d8+18)

Fort +7, **Ref** -4, **Will** -4

Defensive Abilities camouflage; Immune ooze traits; Resist fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., swim 10 ft.

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Special Attacks acid, engulf (1d6 bludgeoning plus 1d6 acid damage, AC 4, hp 6)

TACTICS

During Combat The mudbogs are not intelligent. They lie in wait until something steps on them or get close and then engulf, attack and consume. That's about as complicated as their plans get.

Morale The mudbog fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 1, **Con** 23, **Int** --, **Wis** 1, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 13 (can't be tripped)

Skills Stealth -9 (+3 in marshes), **Swim** +13; **Racial Modifiers** +12
Stealth in marsh; +8 Swim

SQ camouflage

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Acid (Ex) A mudbog secretes a digestive acid that quickly dissolves organic material, but not metal or stone. Any melee hit deals 1d6 points of acid damage. Armor or clothing dissolves and becomes useless immediately unless it succeeds on a DC 17 Reflex save. A wooden weapon that strikes a mudbog dissolves immediately unless it succeeds on a DC 17 Reflex save. The mudbog's acidic touch deals 17 points of acid damage per round to wooden objects, but the ooze must remain in contact with the object for 1 full round to deal this damage. The save DCs are Constitution-based.

Camouflage (Ex) The consistency and coloration of a mudbog makes it difficult to discern from a normal patch of mud. Any creature within 10 feet of a mudbog must make a DC 20 Perception or Survival check to determine the actual nature of the creature.

Engulf (Ex) A Medium or smaller opponent that walks into a mudbog is automatically grappled and takes 1d6 acid damage each round the mudbog maintains the hold. Engulfed creatures are considered to be grappled and are trapped within the mudbog's body. This ability otherwise functions as swallow whole, save that a creature that cut its way out of a mudbog leaves no hole in the protoplasmic creature's body.

If someone steps on the mudbogs they immediately attack and likewise if someone moves away, they also rush to the attack fearful that their prey will escape. They lunge forward appearing almost as if the mud at the end of the dock is beginning to flow uphill and up the side of the stone structure. If Miku is with the party and sees this strange phenomenon, the myceloid immediately warns its friends of the dangers. Miku also knows these creatures are resistant to fire.

The mudbogs do their best to engulf anything living nearby and continue to attack until they are either destroyed or they have completely consumed one medium-sized creature. Once they have fed, they return to the water to hide amongst the ooze and muck that surrounds the old dock.

P-3 THE GNOMISH SUB "UNDERBLAD"

Once the mudbogs are defeated, their attack did stir up the brackish water. Anyone looking off the end of the pier might (with a DC 20 Perception check) notice that there is something large and metal in the water. In fact, this is an old svirfneblin sub on its side covered in muck. This small submersible vehicle is a wonder of gnomish engineering and yet was only an away boat for a much larger vehicle (the Himmelsvard; see map Q below). A testament to gnomish ingenuity, the small sub was left abandoned almost three hundred years ago. The rope that tied it to the dock has rotted away and it has flipped upside and lodged in the muck. And yet the sub remains sealed and largely functional.

Anyone who examines the submersible may make a knowledge (engineering) check.

DC 10 - It is some sort of strange man-made machine!

DC 15 - It is a submersible vehicle of some sort.

DC 20 - Gnomes built this weird vehicle. There's a hatch at the rear. That's probably how you get in.

DC 25 - It looks sealed and in remarkably good condition. There's a hatch at the rear. Perhaps if you opened it carefully, you could enter without flooding it.

The airlock has a control panel that drains it and allows dry access.

Underblad's Airlock

CR 4

Type mechanical; Perception n/a ; Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

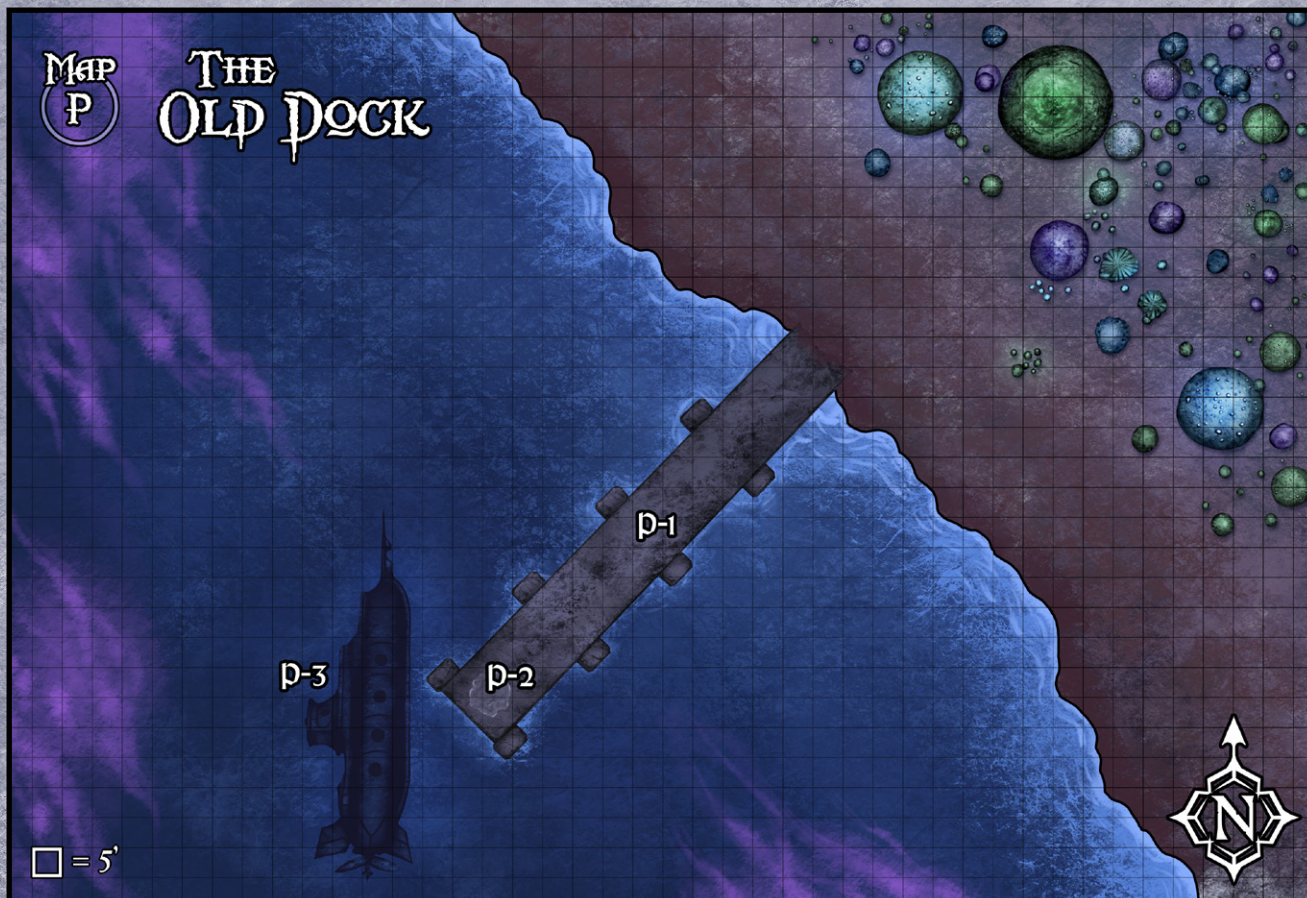
Trigger Tampering with the airlock mechanism; **Reset** none

Effect If activated (without a successful disable device check) the sub floods and anyone within 10' of the hatch is slammed against the bulkhead taking 4d6 damage; DC 20 Reflex save avoids.

Special Reading gnomish adds +4 to the Disable Device check.

Inside, the vessel has twelve passenger and two crew seats. There is also a complex steam engine at the rear. A DC 20 Knowledge (engineering) check reveals that to run, you must flush the engine with lake water. Then light the pilot flame (any fire source will do). And then it needs fuel. Even common lamp oil will serve though refined fuel runs smoother. A pint of oil lasts five minutes. The tank will hold fifteen gallons (10 hours) of fuel. The sub when running can cover one lake hex in an hour making it a quick way to travel indeed.

Getting the Underblad running is one thing but piloting it is another. Perform any maneuver requires a DC 10 Dex check to avoid a crash. After an hour of careful practice, anyone can get the hang of it and take the sub out for a spin around the lake. If the sub floods, the delicate mechanisms are damaged and likely ruined forever. There is a gnome engineer in Kladdenvalt who knows enough of this lost art to fix it. Pillaging the mithral from the controls permanently ruins the sub but collects 600 gp worth of treasure.



MAP Q THE WRECK OF THE HIMMELSVARD

In the center of the Lake of Violet Mists, in its deepest waters is the wreck of the greatest of the gnomish sky ships – the Himmelsvard, sword of the skies.

Q-1 SUBMERSIBLE DOCK

This chamber is where the Underblad (see P. above) docks. The submersible's point triggers the hatch plate and folds up allowing the sub to swim and lock into place on scaffolding. The operation is somewhat delicate and an inexperienced pilot must make a DC 10 Dexterity check to maneuver the craft; award a +2 bonus to this roll if the PC has more than a day's experience with the craft. If failed, the sub crashes into the Himmelsvard, imbedding itself into the scaffolding never to leave again. The dock holds a store of refined fuel oil in three metal drums (150 gallons in all).

Q-2 LOWER CORRIDOR

This empty corridor has a ceiling hatch that connects to the upper deck (Q-15). A hatch once led down to engineering, but it is destroyed and inaccessible.

Q-3 STARBOARD WORKSHOP

This workshop is full of many strange tools and gizmos. Taken together they count as a masterwork tool kit for (traps) worth 55 gp. But there is also a box full of mithral sprockets here worth 450 gp.

Q-4 PORT WORKSHOP

Identical to Q-3 but instead of mithral sprockets there is a *traveler's any-tool*.

Q-5 JAVELIN ARMORY

This room is full of javelins for the ballistae (see Q-7, Q-10 and Q-14). Four hundred are on racks here.

Q-6 CREW'S ARMORY

This chamber is empty of anything but racks thanks to the evacuation that happened before the crash.

Q-7 REAR GUNNERY DECK

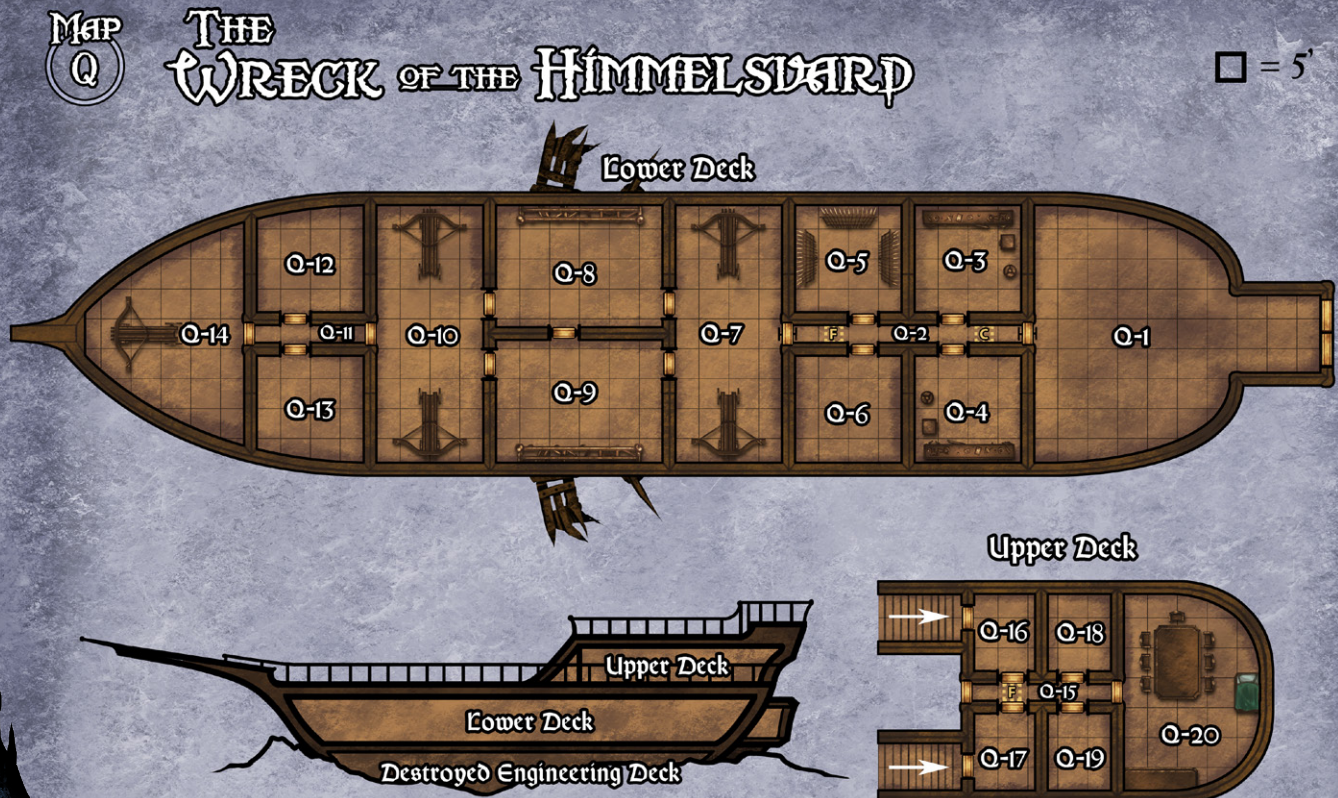
Two large quad-firing repeating ballistae are here (fire four shots a volley, three reloads). These are in fine shape and valuable (they would fetch 2000 gp each). Unfortunately, they are also impossible to remove without flooding the ship. They have several delicate parts made of mithral that can be stripped off worth 100 gp each. Doing this ruins the ballista.

Q-8 STARBOARD STEERING

An intricate control panel that once controlled the right wing now sheered away. It can be pillaged for jewelled buttons and mithral parts worth 250 gp.

Q-9 PORT STEERING

As Q-8 but on the left.



Q-10 MIDDLE GUNNERY DECK

As Q-7 but there is a haywire clockwork gnome that once manned the ballistae here. It attacks anyone who enters this chamber screaming in broken gnomish “Forbidden! Forbidden!”. Besides the berserk golem, there is also a small box on the wall labeled “emergency” in gnome. Inside are six *potions of water breathing*. These allow stranded PCs to swim to the lake’s surface.

Clockwork Gnome

CR 6

XP 2,400

N Medium construct (clockwork)

Init +6; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (+2 Dex, +2 dodge, +6 natural)

hp 64 (8d10+20)

Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +2

DR 5/adamantine; Immune construct traits

Weaknesses vulnerable to electricity

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 halberd +18/+13 (1d10+14/x3)

Special Attacks latch

TACTICS

During Combat The clockwork gnome attacks with its halberd trying to skewer all invaders.

Morale The clockwork gnome fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 28, Dex 15, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 1

Base Atk +8; CMB +17 (+19 disarm); CMD 31 (33 vs. disarm)

Feats Improved Initiative^B, Lightning Reflexes^B

SQ efficient winding, proficient, standby, swift reactions

Gear +1 halberd

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Efficient Winding (Ex) The clockwork gnome can function for 2 days per Hit Die every time it is wound.

Latch (Ex) The Clockwork gnome has specially designed hands that easily grasp and lock onto weapons and objects. The gnome can attempt to disarm or grapple as a standard action without provoking an attack of opportunity, and it receives a +2 bonus on disarm checks. In addition, it receives a +2 bonus to CMD against attempts to disarm it.

Proficient (Ex) The clockwork gnome is proficient with all simple and martial weapons.

Standby (Ex) The clockwork gnome can place itself on standby as a standard action. While on standby, the clockwork gnome cannot move or take any actions. It remains aware of its surroundings but takes a -4 penalty on Perception checks. Time spent on standby does not count against the soldier’s wind-down duration. The clockwork gnome can exit standby as a swift action—if it does so to initiate combat, it gains a +4 racial bonus on its Initiative check.

Q-11 LOWER CORRIDOR

This is an empty corridor.

Q-12 STARBOARD ENGINEERING COMPARTMENT

This once led down to the destroyed engineering deck and stored emergency gear. Now it is empty save for a hatch in the center of the floor. That hatch used to allow access to the starboard boilerroom. Now, the magically generated steam has built up in a bubble. Opening the hatch releases the steam in a furious blast.

Boiler Blast

CR 5

XP 1,600

Type magical; Perception DC 28; Disable Device DC 28

EFFECTS

Trigger opening the boiler hatch; Reset none

Effect spell effect (*fireball*, 6d6 fire damage, DC 14 Reflex save for half damage); multiple targets (all targets in a 20-ft.-radius burst)

Once the steam is released, there is a small empty chamber that leads nowhere. Inside the empty chamber there is a strange white residue that is actually three doses of *fire ward gel*.

Q-13 PORT ENGINEERING COMPARTMENT

This chamber has nothing of interest.

Q-14 FORWARD GUNNERY

As Q-7 but the forward firing Ballista here was wrecked in the impact of the crash. However, it can still be stripped for 100 gp in mithral components.

Q-15 UPPER DECK CORRIDOR

This is an empty Corridor.

Q-16 SHIP’S CABIN

This small cabin is neatly furnished with a bed, ship’s chest (with a DC 20 lock) and wall mounted mirror.

Q-17 SHIP’S CABIN

Identical to Q-16 above.

Q-18 SHIP’S CABIN

Identical to Q-16 above.

Q-19 SHIP’S GALLEY

This is the ship’s kitchen. During the hasty evacuation this room was largely forgotten. All the food is long since rotted away. However, there is a small chest of magically preserved spices worth 150 gp in a locked cubbard (DC 20 to open). The chest weighs 5 lbs.

Q-20 CAPTAIN’S CABIN

This finely appointed cabin is still in remarkable condition. Spared the worst of the impact when the ship crashed, it looks almost like it did the day the ship crashed. A finely carved bed of lacquered fungus bark is in one corner. A heavy table surrounded by seven gnome-sized chairs has a map of the fungal jungle noting a major gnome city at R-2 (see below) named Vaustenstad. In a desk is a beautifully illuminated charter in gnomish script that reads: “*Captain Aster Never-Turns-Back-From-Danger is hereby charged by the king to take the Himmelsvard, sword of the skies, on its maiden voyage to survey the king’s realm.*” There is in the wardrobe a sea-chest (superior lock DC 30) that holds the ship’s fund (500 gp), a mithral medal of valorous service (worth 200 gp), a noble’s vigilant pillbox and a *folding boat*.



MAP
R THE ISLE
OF
SEVEN HORNS



1" = 1.5 miles

MAP R THE ISLE OF SEVEN HORNS

There is only one island on the Lake of Violet Mists. Named for the seven mountains that dominate this island, this name is not well known by any of the folk of the Upper Azathyr. As a result, the PCs may take it upon themselves to name this mysterious island.

THE LICHENBRACK

Once there were chimneys up to the surface. Those chimneys are long gone, but their legacy survives in the Lichenbrack. This is a swamp without trees or grass. Instead this is the land of the lichen. Lichens are plants and fungus living in symbiosis. The plant feed on the glow that radiates from the bioluminescent ceiling. The fungus consumes the dead. Together, the lichens cover everything in polychromatic shaggy sheets. They are blazing red, deep burnt umber and vibrant purples. The mushrooms that struggle to survive in this brutal landscape are covered in these aggressive parasitic growths.

Water falls from the sky here almost constantly almost as if the sky was constantly weeping. Great channels of water flow down from the seven peaks down to the Lake of Violet Mists. Everywhere albino dragonflies dart over the shaggy muck hunting for salamanders and cave frogs. A few of these hunters grow as big as horses and prowl the Lichenbrack. They are eager to add variety to their diet and attack any explorers who invade their territory.

Giant Dragonfly CR 4

XP 1,200

N Medium vermin

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+2 Dex, +5 natural)

hp 45 (7d8+14)

Fort +7, **Ref** +4, **Will** +3

Immune mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 80 ft. (perfect)

Melee bite +9 (2d8+6 plus grab)

Special Attacks darting charge

TACTICS

During Combat The giant dragonfly is not a powerful enough to flyer to pickup medium sized foes. Instead, it uses its flyby attack and perfect move speed to harass enemies.

Morale If reduced to 11 hp or lower, the giant dragonfly retreats.

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 15, **Con** 14, **Int** --, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 9

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +9 (+13 grappling, or +17 grappling on a charge); **CMD** 21 (29 vs. trip)

Feats Flyby Attack^B

Skills Fly +10

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Darting Charge (Ex) A giant dragonfly is adept at swooping in to attack prey with a powerful bite and then, just as quickly, swooping out of reach. As a result, a giant dragonfly gains Flyby Attack as a bonus feat. In addition, if a giant dragonfly charges while flying, it receives a +4 bonus on CMB checks to grapple foes.

GREEN LAKE

In the Lichenbrack is a lake that glows bright green thanks to the strange lichen that cover its surface. This lake is the lair of Megaria Hate, the so-called Green Lake Witch. She lurks in the water, clad in leather rags, eager for victims to vent her fury upon. She is not a native of the Fungal Jungle, fleeing here after being banished from the elven woods above. But she has adapted well, learning how to use her *tree shape* power to take the form of a giant mushroom and learning to speak undercommon.

Explorers will likely have little use for Megaria, quickly coming to blows with the malevolent hag. For Overlords there are more possibilities. Megaria can be cowed into service if defeated and threatened. She knows the location of the gnomish ruins and the healing spring atop Skytouch Mountain (see R-1 below). Still, she is a creature of barely restrained hate and will always be an unreliable ally. She also hunts skis'raal for their venom, using it as an intoxicant. Slaying her earns a +5 Faction Score skis'raal.

Megaria Hate, The Green Lake Witch

CR 5

XP 1,600

CE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 90 ft.; Perception +15

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18 (+1 Dex, +8 natural)

hp 58 (9d10+9)

Fort +6, **Ref** +7, **Will** +7

SR 16

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +13 (1d4+4 plus weakness)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th)

Constant—*pass without trace*, *tongues*, *water breathing*

At will—*alter self*, *dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (DC 12), *invisibility*, *pyrotechnics* (DC 14), *tree shape* (giant mushroom), *whispering wind*

TACTICS

During Combat Meg uses her magic to lure intruders to their death.

Morale Megaria Hate retreats if reduced to 14 hp or less.

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 12, **Con** 12, **Int** 15, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 24

Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Deceitful, Great Fortitude

Skills Bluff +12, Disguise +13, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Linguistics +3, Perception +15, Sense Motive +9, Stealth +13, Swim +18

Languages Aklo, Common, Giant, Undercommon

SQ mimicry

Gear Amber necklace worth 150 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Mimicry (Ex) A green hag can imitate the sounds of almost any animal found near its lair.

Weakness (Su) The hag's claws sap strength from those she strikes. Each time a green hag hits a foe with her claws, the victim takes 2 points of Strength damage unless he resists the weakness with a DC 16 Fortitude save. Alternatively, a green hag can attempt to inflict even greater weakness on a foe by making a touch attack—this variant requires a standard action, and cannot be attempted in the same round the hag makes claw attacks. The opponent touched must succeed on a DC 16 Fortitude save or take 2d4 points of Strength damage. The save DC is Charisma-based.

MAP
R-2

GNOMISH RUINS

1" = 1.5 miles



R-1 SKYTOUCH MOUNTAIN

The second highest mountain in the Fungal Jungle, this mountain rises 1250 feet to touch the ceiling. At the very apex of Skytouch Mountain where the mountain reaches the sky, there is a flow of radiantly pure water that washes from a magical elven spring up above through the limestone. This spring pools at the base of the column. Every month this pool produces 50 gp worth of alchemically potent water that can be used to make healing potions. Already 300 gp worth of this sparkling cerulean fluid have accumulated.

R-2 THE GNOMISH RUINS OF VAUSTENSTAD

Most of this old deep gnome city is buried under great fields of slick, oily mud. There is little evidence of what calamity befell this city, but whatever caused it to be abandoned, since then the city has been inundated with great flocs of mud. In fact, Vaustenstad was destroyed by the drow. Back when Vothys was in its heyday, the drow raided this gnomish settlement and destroyed it utterly. What the drow did not destroy, time and the lake's flooding have finished.

R-2A THE DOCKS

These old docks are covered in mud, but are still functional enough to dock a craft.

R-2B THE CORPSE

There is massive corpse in the middle of this mud covered road. It so decayed and covered in wriggling mud maggots that it is impossible to tell exactly what it was save that it was immense. Still, a DC 18 knowledge (dungeoneering) check reveals the answer. This is the final resting place of the former master of the Violet Lake – a mighty froghemoth. Fortunately it is dead. Unfortunately, it succeeded in spawning before it died.

R-2C THE FOUNTAIN

This ruined, muddy stone fountain is intact enough to still reveal a few beautiful examples of gnomish stone-craft. However, the muddy water in the fountain conceals the last clutch of froghemoth eggs laid by its now-dead mother. Getting stuck to the eggs almost certainly attracts the Beast of Vaustenstad.

R-2D THE BROKEN FORTRESS

The castle of Vaustenstad is in surprisingly good repair. There is nothing dangerous here, however if the PCs wanted to build a castle (see Book II for rules), this site would cost half the usual resources to do so.

R-2E THE RUINED TOWER

Though ruined, this tower is intact enough to still have a roof and to have a working fire place that can be fueled with mushroom bark. This is the best place to camp on this entire island.

Froghemoth Eggs

CR 2

XP 600

Froghemoth's nest contains approximately 60 eggs held together with a glue-like slime that serves three functions. The slime reacts with the water the eggs are laid in, producing a brown aquatic cloud extending 15 ft. from the eggs, similar to muddy water. All Perception checks made to spot items in this cloudy water take a -8 circumstance penalty. Spotting the eggs requires a DC 20 Perception check. The slime's second function is that it traps potential food. Any creature – other than a froghemoth – coming into contact with the slime is held fast. Breaking free from the slime requires a DC 15 Strength check.

The slime's third function is to serve as a conduit for the egg's electrical charge. Every 5 rounds, the eggs release a charge. Any creature within the slime when this charge is released must make a DC 14 Fortitude check or suffer 1d4 Strength damage. Each egg has 6 hp and 2 hardness. In a group of fewer than 10 eggs, the electrical discharge is not strong enough to affect creatures of Small size or larger.

R-2F THE ROAD OUT OF TOWN

This muddy, washed out road connects to R-3 and leads to the observatory atop Mount Vergut (R-4).

THE BEAST OF VAUSTENSTAD

This is the froghemoth's oldest progeny, a large beast that resembles a tentacular ravenous tadpole the size of a rhinoceros. It roams the mud fields and the nearby lake searching for prey. Unless the PCs are extraordinarily cautious and stealthy, it will notice them and begin to stalk this fresh meat.

The Beast of Vaustenstad (Tadhemoth)

CR 5

XP 1,200

Female variant tadhemoth

N Large aberration (aquatic)

Init +6; Senses darkvision 120 ft., Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 11, flatfooted 17 (+2 Dex, +8 natural, -1 size)

hp 43 (8d8+8)

Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +7

Immune electricity (partial) Resist fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., swim 30 ft., burrow 20 ft. (mud only)

Melee +11 bite (1d6+5/19-20 plus grab), +7/+7 tentacles (1d4+2 plus grab), +7 tongue (1d4+2 plus grab)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft. (15 ft. with tongue)

Special Attacks swallow whole (2d6+3 damage, AC 16, hp 10)

TACTICS

During Combat The beast is an ambush predator, sliding through the mud and attacking without warning, eager to feed.

Morale If reduced to 10 hp or less, the beast flees.

STATISTICS

Str 20, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 9

Base Atk +6; CMB +11; CMD 23

Feats Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Power Attack

Skills Perception +10, Stealth +10 (+18 in mud), Swim +17; Racial Modifiers +5 Perception, +8 Stealth (in mud)

SQ amphibious

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Amphibious (Ex) A tadhemoth can survive either in or out of water although they have more difficulty on dry land.

Slowed by Electricity (Ex) While tadhemoths take no damage from electricity, electrical attacks other than that of froghemoth eggs confuse them, and they become slow for 1 round, as if affected by the spell slow.

R-3 WASHED OUT ROAD

This muddy road is washed in places, entirely disappearing into the mud. Following it is literally a slog. And then you must climb up Mount Vergut. Further, the mud fields on the north of the Isle of Seven Horns swarm with biting eyeless flies. The end result that this journey becomes one day of utter misery. Everyone must make a Fortitude save (DC 15). Anyone possessing the Endurance feat receives a +4 bonus to this save. Failing the save means that unfortunate has caught some sort of exotic swamp disease and is sickened for 1d6 days. *Remove disease* will remove the sickened condition immediately.

R-4 SVIRFNEBLIN OBSERVATORY

Once there was a hole in the Fungal Jungle over the Lichenbrack. It was this natural chimney that allowed the strange lichens, symbiotic fauna containing both fungus and plant, to develop there. Through that hole, deep gnome scientists looked through a telescope and marveled at the stars. But now Vaustenstad is in ruins and the chimney has collapsed. Even the sky has abandoned this ruined observatory.

1ST FLOOR

R-4A ENTRYWAY

This shabby mud-choked entryway is ruined and waterlogged. The once beautiful ornate brass doors hang off their hinges, soiled and tarnished. A fallen plaque lies in the muck. In gnomish it reads: "The Vaustenstad Observatory established 1367 S.R., 'We have loved the stars too fondly to be fearful of the dark.'"

Anyone familiar with gnomish dates (i.e. S.R. Svirfneblin Reckoning) will recognize that this observatory was founded almost four hundred years ago.

R-4B FRONT HALL

The inner double doors of the entryway are more intact and so the front hall has been spared much of the destruction meted upon the entryway. Several portraits of distinguished svirfneblin scientists still hang in the dark front hall.

One is labeled Humboldt Would-Rather-Know-Than-Guess and displays a portrait of an older rather, severe deep gnome. Another reads Cagan First-To-Go-Forth-Where-Others-Fearred. This gnome is rather younger and has a devil-may-care look in his eyes. The other portraits are too rotten to make out.

Anyone examining the floors may make a DC 15 Perception check. Success divine that something has slithered across the floor recently leaving a mud trail that leads towards the eastern doors (into R-4C).

R-4C EASTERN OFFICES (CR 6)

Whatever the original purpose of this chamber is now hard to guess. The eastern wall of the observatory is cracked and marred and in the floor, there are signs of burrowing through the tiles and soil below. In fact, a small colony of three giant rot grubs now nests here in the back corner. They usually feed on the bats nested in the upper floors, but are not picky eaters and attack anything that moves.

Giant Rot Grub (3)

CR 3

XP 800 each (2,400 XP total)

N Small vermin

Init +1; Senses blindsense 30 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+1 Dex, +3 natural, +1 size)

hp 34 (4d8+16)

Fort +8, Ref +2, Will +1

Immune mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee bite +6 (1d6+3 plus poison and grab)

Special Attacks gnaw, grab (Medium)

TACTICS

During Combat The rot grub has only one tactic. It lunges at the nearest prey it senses and tries to latch on to feed.

Morale The rot grubs are too stupid to retreat and fight to the death as long as they sense prey.

STATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 12, Con 18, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1

Base Atk +3; CMB +4 (+8 grapple); CMD 15

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Gnaw (Ex) A rot grub that is grappling a foe and chooses to damage the foe with an additional grapple check deals twice its normal bite damage (2d6+6 for most giant rot grubs), in addition to injecting an additional dose of poison with each successful check.

Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; save Fort DC 16; frequency 1/round for 5 rounds; effect 1d3 Str; cure 1 save.

R-4D WESTERN OFFICES

This chamber is filled with broken rubble and debris. Broken furniture and rotten parchment litter the place. Searching through the rubble takes at least ten minutes. But anyone who makes that effort and succeeds at a DC 20 Perception test will discover the one valuable item that remains in this room.

There is an ornate svirfneblin writing set here, buried amongst the debris. Carefully closed, it has weathered the years in remarkable condition. It detects magic and in fact has a minor dweomer upon it that any ink or quills stored within will not rot. It is made of surface wood (in fact, rare teak) and beautifully constructed. It consists of several pens, brushes, an inking stone and a selection of fine inks. The inks come in various colors – black, blue, red, gold and even a greenish *glowing ink*. The set is worth 220 gp.

R-4E 1ST FLOOR STAIRWELL

A spiral staircase leads up to R-4F.

2ND FLOOR

R-4F 2ND FLOOR STAIRWELL

Spiral stairs lead down to R-4E and up to R-4K.

R-4G HALLWAYS

This area is empty and quiet.

R-4H STORAGE

This chamber holds a rickety brass shelf that stands despite its age. The shelf holds a collection of strange springs, gears and coils. Altogether there are 300 gp worth of rare metal components.

R-4I WORKSHOP

This workshop has not weathered the years well and holds only strange junk and debris of uncertain purpose. However, the junk is searched and DC 20 Perception test made there is a manual written in gnomish detailing the telescope in R-4s. The manual reveals that the telescope is not merely useful for observing the stars but also extend darkvision to see for miles.

R-4J BAT CHAMBER

No trace remains of this room's original purpose. It is now open to the elements and shelters hundreds of small bats. If the door is opened, they awaken suddenly and fly out with a great screeching racket.

3RD FLOOR

R-4K 3RD FLOOR STAIRWELL

Spiral stairs leads down to R-4F and up to R-4P.

R-4L HALLWAY

This small hallway connects all the rooms on this floor, but is itself empty. There is the sound of loud squawking come from the southern door (see R-4N).

R-4M CLASSROOM

This old classroom holds nothing but dust and broken metal fitting where furniture has rotted away. A few harmless small bats nest in the rafters.

R-4N PALE HUNTER NEST

A pair of blind cave pteranodons (also called Pale Hunters) has made a nest here. As fate would have it, as the PCs approach, the pair are busy fighting over a barely alive skis'raal artisan they ambushed while the spider was gathering pigments. The Pale Hunters may squabble amongst themselves, but quickly unite to prevent outsiders from stealing their catch. Saving the artisan and returning him to the skis'raal village (see area V, pg. 68 below) earns a +3 Faction Score skis'raal and will allow them audience with the White Spider. Lar'ath'ak (pro. LAR-ath-ack) is suspicious at first but very grateful if the PCs see him safely home. Still, he is no adventurer desiring only to return to his village..

Pale Hunters (2)

CR 3

XP 800 each (1,600 XP each)

hp 32 (see page 67)

Lar'ath'ak, Skis'raal Artisan

CR 1

XP 400 each

hp 16 (currently -2 hp; see Giant Spider in the Pathfinder Bestiary except he is a magical beast instead of vermin and have a 12 Int)

R-4O SIDE CHAMBER

This room is empty.

4TH FLOOR

R-4P 4TH FLOOR STAIRWELL

A spiral staircase leads down to R-4K.

R-4Q HALLWAY

This room is empty.

R-4R CAGAN'S OFFICE

This room bears a brass plaque "Professor Cagan". Inside, a once hidden safe has fallen out of the rotten, crumbling northeastern stone wall. The safe remains locked and difficult to open (DC 30). It is also very durable (hardness 15, 100 hp, Break DC 35) and boat-anchor heavy (200 lbs.). The combination lock still works and goes from one to thirty. The combination is based on Cagan's epithet "First-To-Go-Forth" and is 1 right, 2 left, 4 right. Scratched on the safe's front by a student long ago in gnomish is "Behold the ego. He can only remember his own name". Inside are 50 gnomish pp., a golden pocket watch (still ticking!) worth 250 gp, and the eyepiece for the telescope in R-4s.

R-4S TELESCOPE CHAMBER

This chamber is dominated by a massive telescope. Alas, that the telescope has been damaged over the years. It lacks the eyepiece (found in R-4R) and a main lens (found in Area U below). Also the base no longer turns properly. The base can be fixed using half of the parts in Storage (R-4H) and a successful Knowledge (Engineering) (DC 15) skill check.

If the open lens case is examined and a Knowledge (nature) (DC 15) is made, it is revealed that the case has been scratched by some large flying creature. A DC 20 Knowledge (nature) check further guesses it was one of the Pale Hunters.

If repaired the telescope surveys one end of the Fungal Jungle to the next. It cannot make out fine details, but it can reveal most of the major features and even works fine in total darkness (since it actually enhances darkvision rather than normal vision). Further, the College of Dreams in Xan (pg. 52) would love to use this instrument. If the PCs reveal its location, they will be grateful (+3 Faction Score Xan). If the PCs somehow transport this 500 lb. instrument to Xan they will be even more please (+5 Faction Score).

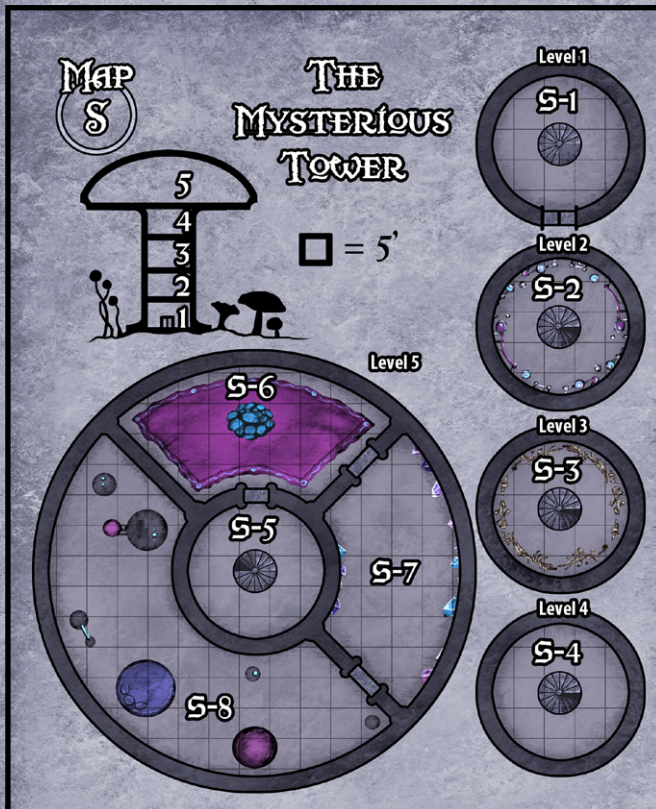
MAP S THE MYSTERIOUS TOWER

In a particularly productive part of the Fungal Jungle, there is a strange tower that at first glance appears to be a large mushroom. In fact, the tower is made out of stone and has been adorned with colorful tiles to blend in amongst the many large mushrooms.

At a distance the tower does a decent job of blending in to the fungal "foliage". It takes a DC 20 Perception check to notice this tower amidst the tall fungus growths. However, within a hundred yards, the tower is all too obvious.

The tower is the abode of the mysterious Master, an otherworldly mercane who has come to the Fungal Jungle to collect a strange fungus that grow nowhere else. The so-called "Master" is actually a relatively low-level collector for a large mercane trading firm who, by gathering exotic commodities, hopes to rise amongst his fellows. In particular it values anything magical.

Still, the Master is dangerous to random visitors to the tower. The mercane has installed several defenses designed to keep out visitors and cares little about which outsiders get hurt. After all, in its mind everyone who enters is trespassing. Still, if someone can defeat the security and gain audience with the Master of this mysterious tower, it can be convinced to trade.



S-1 GUARD LEVEL (CR 5)

The first level of the tower is a circular room with a high vaulted ceiling. There is a spiral stairway at the center of the chamber. Three strange metallic spheres of obviously otherworldly origin dart and flit about the chamber. These are the Master's deadly knife sphere.

Knife Spheres (3)

CR 2

XP 600 each (1,800 XP total)

Variant arbiter

LN Tiny outsider (extraplanar, inevitable, lawful)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., detect chaos, low-light vision; **Perception** +5

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 15, flat-footed 13 (+3 Dex, +1 natural, +2 size)

hp 15 (2d10+4); regeneration 2 (chaotic)

Fort +5, **Ref** +3, **Will** +3

Defensive Abilities constant vigilance, constructed; **SR** 13

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 50 ft. (perfect)

Melee dagger +7 (1d4+1/19–20)

Space 2-1/2 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Special Attacks electrical burst

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 2nd; concentration +4)

Constant—*detect chaos*

3/day—*command* (DC 13), *make whole*, *protection from chaos*

TACTICS

During Combat The spheres hover out of reach at the top of the ceiling and use their *command* spells issuing orders to flee. Those that remain are warned that the tower is off limits and then, if the intruders persist, are attacked with the sphere's blades using flyby attack.

Morale These knife spheres fight until reduced to 4 hp or less and then unleash their electrical burst, falling inert for 24 hours.

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 11, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 13

Feats Flyby Attack, Weapon Finesse^B

Skills Diplomacy +7, Fly +12, Knowledge (planes) +5, Perception +5, Sense Motive +5, Stealth +16

Languages truespeech

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Constant Vigilance (Su) An arbiter gains a +4 bonus to recognize and disbelieve illusions created by creatures with the chaotic subtype or possessing the chaotic descriptor.

Electrical Burst (Ex) An arbiter can release electrical energy from its body in a 10-foot-radius burst that deals 3d6 electricity damage (DC 13 Reflex half). Immediately following such a burst, the arbiter becomes stunned for 24 hours. The save DC is Constitution-based.

S-2 ALCHEMICAL LABORATORY

This laboratory is where the master takes samples and works his various experiments, looking for treasures and commodities for his trading company. The equipment here counts as masterwork alchemist's lab though it weighs 250 lbs.

The newest result of an experiment by the Master rests upon a table. There are four identical potions each containing a strange violet fluid. They are marked I, II, III and IV.

These four potions are (in order): a *potion of cure light wounds*, a *potion of cure moderate wounds*, a single dose of striped toadstool poison and a *philter of love*.

S-3 TAXIDERMY CHAMBER

This room features a large collection of bones including a pteranodon, a fungal wolf, a cave boar and a drow. The bones are all carefully mounted on display stands. These bones are not particularly valuable save for the cave boars three inch long ivory tusks that are worth 120 gp in total.

S-4 THE EMPTY CHAMBER

This seemingly empty chamber is actually trapped by an inanimate crystalline entity from another plane. The crystal is set into the ceiling 10' up. It can only be avoided or shattered (it has a hardness 10; 10 hp). It is healed by electrical damage.

Crystalline Guardian CR 4

XP 1,200

Type magical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger passing through this chamber without the password or being a mercane.; **Reset** automatic (every round)

Effect electricity arc (4d6 electricity damage, DC 20 Reflex save for half damage); multiple targets (all targets in a 30-ft. line)

S-5 STAIRWELL

This is the upper landing for the spiral staircase and is empty save for stairs.

S-6 MEDITATION CHAMBER

This chamber is empty save for a pile of pillows and a brightly colored rug that covers the entire floor. If the PCs have managed, somehow, to ascend the tower without alerting the knife sphere or alerting the crystalline guardian, there is a 50% chance that the Master is here, deep in meditation.

S-7 STUDY AND LIBRARY

This chamber is full of strange crystals mounted on the walls with seemingly no function. However, if the crystals are touched by any sentient but a mercane, that individual must make a DC 15 Will save. If they fail, then they are dazed for 1d3 rounds and receive nothing but static-laden shouting. If the Will save succeeds, then instead the individual makes contact with the spirits bound into these crystals.

These minor advisory spirits speak in Celestial, Draconic or Infernal. They answer questions on scholarly and esoteric topics and grant a +4 bonus to Knowledge (arcane, dungeoneering, nature, planes or religion) checks. However, this advisory process takes 1d4 hours per skill check. Removing the crystals from the tower walls destroys them.

S-8 PRIVATE CHAMBERS

This chamber is adorned with a circular bed and other weird pieces of furniture whose function is difficult to guess. There are several gold and crystalline abstract statuary worth 300 gp in total, weighing 20 lbs.

The Master is not pleased about the presence of intruders in its tower, but is realistic that those who could get this far are dangerous. So, the mercane will speak with intruders asking what they seek. Of course, it is likely the PCs have no idea who the Master is. Heroic explorers may realize that the Master is not evil and try to put misunderstandings behind them. The Master is looking for the jade cap fungus (see Foraging the Jungle below). If the PCs can find the mushroom, the Master will gladly trade the tower for a sample and leave this plane. The Master is also a capable merchant. It keeps 2000 gp in magical trade good in its secret chest (tailor these to be useful to your PCs) and is pleased to engage in trade with civil guests.

Master of the Mysterious Tower CR 7

XP 3,200

Hermaphrodite mercane adept 4

LN Large outsider (extraplanar)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 natural, -1 size)

hp 87 (6d10+4d6+40)

Fort +9, **Ref** +5, **Will** +13

SR 20

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk large falchion +10/+5 (2d6+3/18-20)

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

Adept Spells (CL 4th; concentration +8)

2nd - *mirror image*

1st - *comprehend languages*, *cure light wounds*, *sleep*

0th - *detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *read magic*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th; concentration +11)

3/day - *dimension door*, *invisibility* (self only)

1/day - *plane shift* (DC 17)

TACTICS

During Combat The Master of the Tower is not here to fight and prefers to leave such brute matters to its guards. However, if forced, it goes invisible, casts *mirror image* and uses *dimension door* to surprise invaders with its falchion and spells.

Morale The Master plane shifts away if reduce to 12 hit points or less, never to return to the Fungal Jungle.

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 14, **Con** 16, **Int** 20, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 24

Feats Combat Casting, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Toughness

Skills Appraise +14, Bluff +11, Craft (Alchemy) +12, Diplomacy +12, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (arcana) +18, Knowledge (planes) +18, Perception +17, Profession (merchant) +13, Sense Motive +15, Sleight of Hand +11, Spellcraft +16

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ secret chest

Gear masterwork large falchion, fine silk robe worth 100 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Secret Chest (Sp) The master can retrieve or hide an extradimensional chest, as the *secret chest* spell (caster level 5th). The Master does not need an expensive replica to use this ability; any chest will do. It can only use this ability on one chest at a time.

MAP T SKIS'RAAL GAME TRAP

Three days out from their village (see V below) a pair of skis'raal brothers hunt for game. They have captured a young pteranodon and have left it bound in a clearing. They are hoping its plaintive cries will attract larger prey (in particular adult pteranodons).

T-1 TRAPPED INFANT PTERANODON

Young Pale Hunter

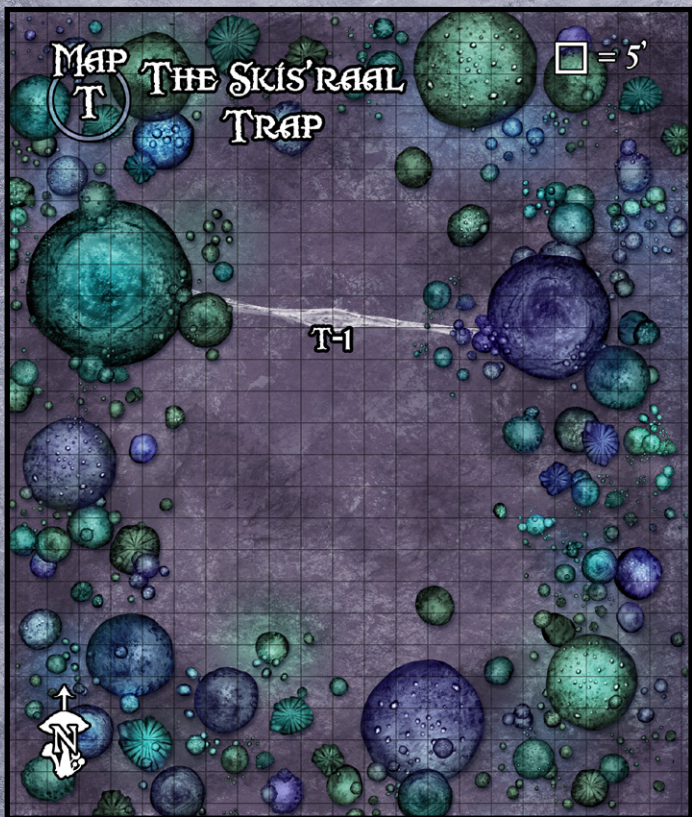
CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 22 (currently at 8 hp; Use Pale Hunter with the young template; see pg. 67)

Any travelers will hear the cries hundreds of yards away. A Knowledge (nature) DC 20 will recognize the cries as that of a pteranodon. If the PCs approach (and do not appear to be animals) one of the skis'raal will reveal itself, climbing atop a nearby mushroom. It will hiss in undercommon, "that is not for you."

The skis'raal are not looking for a fight, but they will defend their game trap. Any suggestion that they free the pale hunter is met with a hissing laugh. "Why should we do that?" The only thing that would cause them to do that voluntarily is if the PCs trade a large animal for the young pteranodon. But it must be alive. If the PCs acquire the pale hunter and feed the starving animal, it will grow into an adult in six months and could become a mount or animal companion.



One thing that will catch the skis'raal attention is if the PCs present Skethyk's ivory leg band. They demand to know where the PCs got that. Though startled, they are not angry to learn of Skethyk's demise. In fact quite the opposite. +3 skis'raal Faction Score for dealing with the criminals Skethyk and Azraak. They may even allow an audience with their leader, the White Spider back at their village if the PCs are polite.

Vezz'raak and Mathyk

CR 3

XP 800 (1,600 XP total)

Male skis'raal ranger 2 (deep walker)

N Medium magical beast

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., Perception +10 (+14 in webs)

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +3 Dex, +1 natural)

hp 30 (3d8+2d10+5)

Fort +7, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

Melee bite +6 (1d8 + 1 + poison)

Special Attack favored enemy animal +2, web (+8 ranged, DC 13, hp 5)

TACTICS

During Combat These skis'raal do not attack obvious sentients unless attacked first. And then their first priority is to escape.

Morale These brothers are very loyal to each other. They fight to the death to defend one another.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 17, **Con** 12, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 19 (+31 vs trip)

Feats Improved Natural Attack, Iron Will, Weapon Focus (web)

Skills Acrobatics +8, Climb +20, Craft (traps) +4, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +5, Knowledge (geography) +5, Knowledge (religion) +2, Perception +10 (+14 in webs), Stealth +13 (+17 in webs), Survival +5; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Perception (+8 in webs), +4 Stealth (+8 in webs), +16 Climb

Languages Skis'raal, Undercommon

SQ Track +1, Wild Empathy +2

Gear web armor (counts as leather), web "packs" containing several wrapped poisoned salamanders (5 days rations)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; save Fort DC 14; frequency 1/round for 4 rounds; effect 1d2 Strength damage; cure 1 save.

Web (Ex) Creatures with the web ability can use webs to support themselves and up to one additional creature of the same size. In addition, such creatures can throw a web up to eight times per day. This is similar to an attack with a net but has a maximum range of 50 feet, with a range increment of 10 feet, and is effective against targets up to one size category larger than the web spinner. An entangled creature can escape with a successful Escape Artist check or burst the web with a Strength check. Both are standard actions with a DC 13. Attempts to burst a web by those caught in it take a –4 penalty.

Web spinners can create sheets of sticky webbing up to three times their size. They usually position these sheets to snare flying creatures but can also try to trap prey on the ground. Approaching creatures must succeed on a DC 20 Perception check to notice a web; otherwise they stumble into it and become trapped as though by a successful web attack. Attempts to escape or burst the webbing gain a +5 bonus if the trapped creature has something to walk on or grab while pulling free. Each 5-foot-square section of web has 5 hit points and DR 5/—.

A creature can move across its own web at its climb speed and can pinpoint the location of any creature touching its web.

MAP U CLIFFS OF THE PALE HUNTERS

This is the site of the largest single colony of blind cave pteranodons (called Pale Hunters by both the Xan and the skis'raal) in all of the Fungal Jungle. These powerful aerial hunters rule over the sunless skies of this hidden jungle. About two dozen adults nest here, but they are rarely here in such numbers. Instead, they are out hunting the endless mushroom fields. At any time there are 1d10 adults in these nests as well as 2d10 helpless fledglings and 1d10 eggs about the size of an American football. These leathery eggs have rich yolks and make for fine eating. The drow consider them a delicacy.

The pteranodons are mostly pale white in coloration but every once in a while a throwback will be born recalling the vivid coloration they had on the surface. These pale hunters are not pale at all, but instead possess brown skin banded with electric blue striping.

Clever PCs will watch the nests before approaching. The number of hunters changes every 1d4 hours as the pteranodons come and go. The nests are never totally unattended but once in a while there will be only a single adult here. That is the perfect time to pillage the nests. The pale hunters collect shiny things to decorate their mushroom bark nests. There are twelve large active nests that may be searched. The nests contain:

Pale Hunters (Blind Cave Pteranodon)

CR 3

XP 800 each

N Large animal

Init +8; Senses blindsight 120 ft., scent; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 11 (+4 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 natural, -1 size)
hp 32 (5d8+10)

Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +3

Immune gaze attacks, visual effects and illusions, sight-based attacks

Weaknesses blind

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., fly 50 ft. (average)

Melee bite +5 (2d6+4)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

TACTICS

During Combat These cunning hunters circle in the darkness on the edge of their blindsight range and then swoop down to strike at their prey. If the fight goes badly, they fly away to recover.

Morale These animals flee any fight if reduced to 8 hp or less.

STATISTICS

Str 16, Dex 19, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 15, Cha 12

Base Atk +3; CMB +7; CMD 21

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Fly +7, Perception +11

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Blind (Ex) These pteranodons see and sense exclusively through its blindsight ability, which is based on sound, scent and vibration—beyond 120 feet, it is considered blind. A deaf pteranodon is effectively blinded as well except against foes within ten feet—its sense of smell functions enough for it to attack targets this close, although in such cases these creatures still gain the benefit of concealment (20% miss chance). It is invulnerable to all sight-based effects and attacks, including gaze attacks.

1: Nothing of any interest

2: Links of a ripped mithral chain shirt have been scattered about the nest as decoration. Though now useless as armor, there is 150 gp of mithral scattered about.

3: One of the bones in this nest is decorated and intricately carved. This “bone” is in fact a *wand of enlarge person* (16 charges) of skis'raal manufacture. Returning it to the White Spider gains a +3 Faction Score.

4: A pendant of amber taken from the Nursery caverns of Xan worth 100 gp. Returning this to the Alchemist (see O above) clears up the fate of a missing hunter. +2 Faction Score Xan.

5: A few gnomish copper pieces together worth 14 cp.

6: A broken helmet crusted with old blood with a beak-sized hole in the top. It is worthless.

7: broken pieces of glass and pretty stones (worthless)

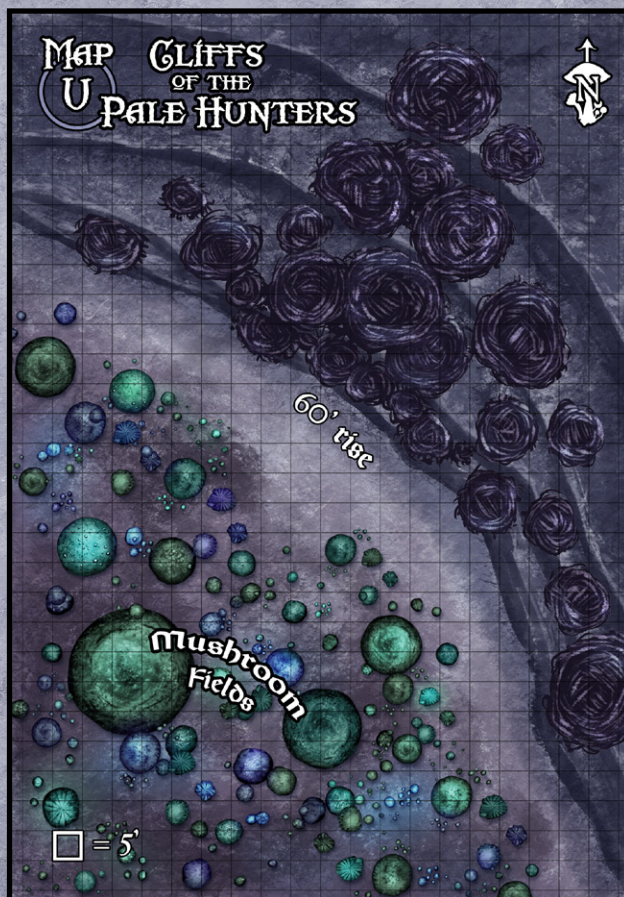
8: this nest is woven with dozens of daggers and knives. Make A reflex DC 12 save or take 3d4 damage. Most of the blades are bent and useless, but one is a +2 *dagger*.

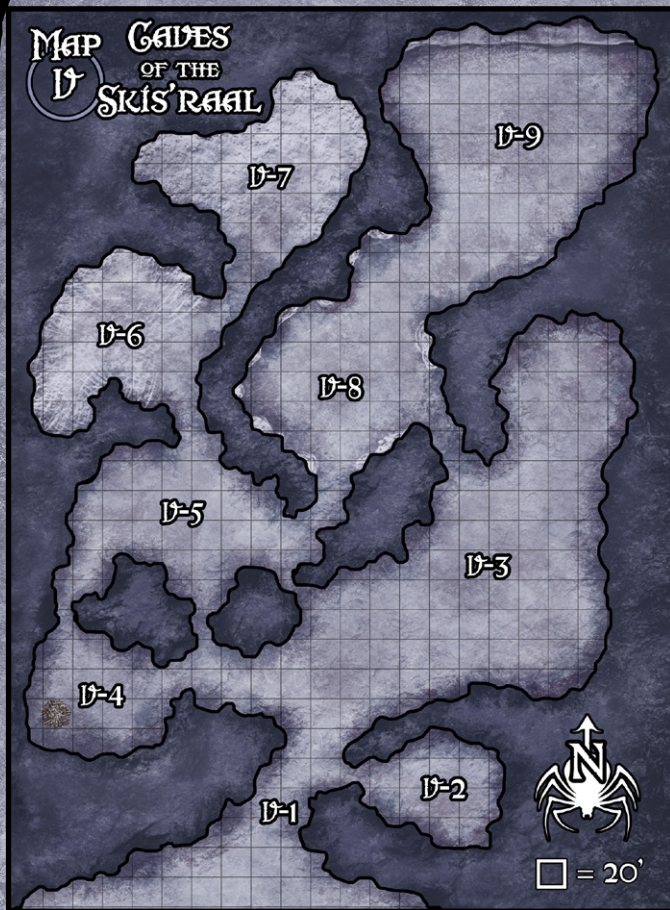
9: a silver necklace worth 35 gp

10: worthless broken armor scraps

11: 2d10 gp in scattered coinage.

12: the last missing lens of the gnomish telescope (see R-4S on pg. 63). Miraculously it is undamaged.





MAP V CAVES OF THE SKIS'RAAL

These caverns contain an entire village of the intelligent spiders known as the skis'raal. Though not near as numerous as the Xan, they are capable hunters and are crossed only at great peril. Still, it is fair to say that the skis'raal are a dying race. Where once there were several villages throughout the Fungal Jungle now there is only this one (known in the skis'raal tongue as Kethy'kaz'jazzaal or lit. 'Temple of the White Spider'). There are approximately two hundred and fifty adult skis'raal left in the entire fungal jungle and most live here. Still, the White Spider, their shaman and queen, has just given birth to the largest egg sac in living memory. In a year, the eggs will hatch and then perhaps the skis'raal will be renewed. The eggs are the great hope of the skis'raal future and these spiders will die to protect that hope.

V-1 ENTRYWAY TO THE VILLAGE (CR 8)

The entryway is marked with webbing woven with writing in the skis'raal tongue marking this as the territory of the skis'raal and as the Temple of the White Spider. It is always guarded by six skis'raal soldiers.

Skis'raal soldier (6) CR 3

XP 800 each (4,800 XP total)

hp 37 (see Giant Black Widow in the Pathfinder Bestiary 2 except the soldiers are magical beasts instead of vermin and has a 10 Int)

V-2 GUARDHOUSE

The guard house' ceiling is covered with silk nests where six more soldiers rest. They are ready to come to the aid of their fellows at the entryway if need be.

V-3 VILLAGE COMMONS

This open cavern's ceilings and walls are covered with silk domiciles. A hundred common skis'raal live here. Each is a hunter leaving to search the nearby jungle of small prey. Still, these are not the tribe's hunters who take larger prey. Instead, these are the smaller, less intelligent commoners who spend most of their time weaving silk and gathering small game. In a human society, these would be the equivalent of farmers.

Skis'raal Commoner CR 1

XP 400 each

hp 16 (see Giant Spider in the Pathfinder Bestiary except they are magical beasts instead of vermin and have an 8 Int)

V-4 WORKSHOPS

No skis'raal lives her. Instead the artisans work here, crafting beautiful tools and pieces of jewelry from bone and ivory. There strange silken workshops hang from the ceiling and inside are their bizarre instruments. The tools themselves are useless to any non-spider but if these workshops were pillaged, there is 2000 gp here in beautiful carved ivory. There are always at least 4d6 artisans here, hard at work on their various projects.

V-5 ARTISAN'S QUARTERS

This is where the artisans dwell. In all, fifty skis'raal artisans dwell here in their hanging silk homes.

Skis'raal Artisan CR 1

XP 400 each

hp 16 (see Giant Spider in the Pathfinder Bestiary except they are magical beasts instead of vermin and have a 12 Int)

V-6 HUNTER'S QUARTERS

For the skis'raal to thrive, they must capture large game such as cave boar, aurochs and pale hunters. This is where the hunters dwell. At any time there are 4d6 hunters here, resting and preparing for the next hunt. Forty hunters dwell here, but they are rarely all present. Most are out, prowling the fungal jungle.

Skis'raal Hunters CR 3

XP 800 each

hp 30 (see pg. 66)

V-7 SOLDIER'S QUARTERS

Twenty soldiers live here. This is also the home of the largest of the skis'raal, Nath'kyr the commander. Nath'kyr not only commands the army but he is also allowed the privilege of breeding with the White Spider. If she is the queen, he is her consort.

Nath'kyr, skis'raal commander CR 5

XP 1.600

hp 16 (see Ogre Spider in the Pathfinder Bestiary 3 except Nath'kyr is a magical beast instead of vermin and has a 12 Int)

V-8 CHAMBER OF THE EGG SAC

This is the village hatchery and nursery. Currently there are no children. Instead there is one large egg sac almost the size of an elephant. It hums with life and holds thousands of eggs. It is worshipped and guarded day and night. Six soldiers never let the egg sac out of their sight. Other silk patches mark where hatching have occurred in the past and in fact this is how the skis'raal keep time. This village is fifty five hatchings old (roughly two hundred and twenty years).

Skis'raal soldier (6)

CR 3

XP 800 each (4,800 XP total)

hp 37 (see Giant Black Widow in the Pathfinder Bestiary 2 except the soldiers are magical beasts instead of vermin and has a 10 Int)

V-9 THRONE OF THE WHITE SPIDER

This cavern is open and clear with a single perch in the back that forms a natural throne. This is the heart of the village and of skis'raal culture in the fungal jungle. This is where the only female skis'raal in this entire village dwells. This is their temple and shrine. It is also where the White Spider will spend the rest of her life.

The White Spider heals and guides her children. She will only leave this chamber to defend her egg sac (V-8). She is patient and kind to her own children and ruthless against those who would threaten them. When she speaks it is always in a soft whisper.

STORMING VOTHYS?

The skis'raal have no love for the drow. It is all the worse that the drow have an affinity for spiders and see the skis'raal as natural servants. It would please the White Spider to see Vothys destroyed. Still, she considers this task too dangerous to be worth the cost.

There are two ways to change her mind. The PCs could form an alliance. Gifts of living prey such as aurochs or pale hunters (+2 Faction Score per animal; max. +10) or dealing with a nearby fungal wolf pack (see pg. 73; +3 Faction score) or getting the hunters held by the Xan released (see pg. 52; +5 Faction score) would help. The other way is to hold the egg-sac hostage (-20 but effective).

However the PCs gain this alliance, the White Spider is willing to send Commander Nath'kyr, two hunters as guides and ten soldiers to raid the drow tower. With this force the PCs could storm the walls of Vothys.

The White Spider, Queen of the Skis'raal

CR 8

XP 4,800

Female skis'raal cleric 7

N Medium magical beast

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., Perception +18 (+22 in webs)

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 14, flat-footed 18 (+4 armor, +4 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 75 (10d8+30)

Fort +13, **Ref** +12, **Will** +15

Resist acid 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

Melee bite +9 (1d8 + 2 + poison)

Special Attacks channel positive energy 7/day (DC 18, 4d6), web (+13 ranged, DC 17, hp 10)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th; concentration +12)

8/day—*acid dart* (1d6+3), *rebuke death* (1d4+3)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 7th; concentration +12)

4th—*cure critical wounds*⁰, *death ward*, *inflict critical wounds*

3rd—*cure serious wounds*⁰, *dispel magic*, *invisibility purge*, *prayer*

2nd—*bull's strength*, *cure moderate wounds*⁰, *hold person* (DC 17),

spiritual weapon, *zone of truth*

1st—*bane*, *bless*, *cure light wounds*⁰, *detect charm*, *divine favor*, *know the enemy*, *shield of faith*

0th (at will)—*create water*, *detect magic*, *guidance*, *stabilize*

D Domain spell; **Domains** Earth, Healing

TACTICS

During Combat The White Spider prefers to avoid combat, but if forced to fight she calls for aid immediately and uses her spells to support her children in battle.

Morale She fights to the death to defend her home and her eggs.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 18, **Con** 14, **Int** 16, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 23 (+35 vs trip)

Feats Craft Wondrous Item, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack, Iron Will, Selective Channeling, Weapon Focus (web)

Skills Acrobatics +10, Climb +20, Diplomacy +16, Heal +15, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +9, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (religion) +13, Perception +18 (+22 in webs), Sense Motive +12, Stealth +14 (+18 in webs) **Racial Modifiers** +4 Perception (+8 in webs), +4 Stealth (+8 in webs), +16 Climb

Languages Elven, Gnome, Skis'raal, Undercommon

SQ aura, healer's blessing

Gear mithral and silk armor (as a mithral chain shirt), *silk sash of resistance* +2 (as cloak), *pearl of power* (2nd)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 18; *frequency* 1/round for 4 rounds; *effect* 1d3 Strength damage; *cure* 1 save.

Web (Ex) The creature can use webs to support themselves and up to one additional creature of the same size. In addition, they can throw a web up to eight times per day. This is similar to an attack with a net but has a maximum range of 50 feet, with a range increment of 10 feet, and is effective against targets up to one size category larger than the web spinner. An entangled creature can escape with a successful Escape Artist check or burst the web with a Strength check. Both are standard actions with a DC 17. Attempts to burst a web by those caught in it take a -4 penalty.

Web spinners can create sheets of sticky webbing up to three times their size. They usually position these sheets to snare flying creatures but can also trap prey on the ground. Approaching creatures must succeed on a DC 20 Perception check to notice a web; otherwise they stumble in and become trapped as though by a successful web attack. Attempts to escape or burst the webbing gain a +5 bonus if the trapped creature has something to walk on or grab while pulling free. Each 5-foot-square section of web has 10 hit points and DR 5/—.

A creature can move across its own web at its climb speed and can pinpoint the location of any creature touching its web.

MAP W THE CURSED BOG (CR 6)

W-1 POOL OF WEIRD BLUE SLIME

The PCs come upon a natural oddity - a pool of bright blue slime with a small stone island in the center. Hidden with the thick viscous slime are a dozen slime zombies - drow, svirfneblin, dwarf and myceloid are all represented amongst the infected. They emerge when the living get within reach of the slime.

Slime Zombies (12)

CR 1/2

XP 200 each (2,400 XP total)

NE Medium undead

Init +0; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 10, flat-footed 12 (+2 natural)

hp 12 (2d8+3)

Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +3

Immune undead traits

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee slam +4 (1d6+4 plus disease)

Special Attacks death burst

TACTICS

During Combat The zombies emerge from the slime and attack the nearest living eager to spread their contagion and create more of their cursed kind.

Morale A slime zombie knows no fear and fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 17, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 10

Base Atk +1; CMB +4; CMD 14

Feats Toughness^B

SQ staggered

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Death Burst (Ex) When a slime zombie dies, it explodes in a burst of festering slime. All creatures adjacent to the slime zombie are exposed to this virulent goo as if struck by a slam attack and must make a Fortitude save or contract blue slime rot.

Disease (Su) The slam attack — as well as any other natural attacks — of a slime zombie carries the blue slime rot.

Blue Slime Rot: slam; save Fort DC 11; onset 1d4 days; frequency 1/day; effect 1d2 Con, this damage cannot be healed while the creature is infected; cure 2 consecutive saves. Anyone who dies while infected rises as a slime zombie in 2d6 hours.

Staggered (Ex) Zombies have poor reflexes and can only perform a single move or standard action each round. A zombie can move up to its speed and attack in the same round as a charge action.

Even defeating the zombies does not permanently remove this danger. Anything that dies near this pool will rise as a slime zombie. One of the drow zombies still wears a mithral pendant of House Sevastia. It is worth 100 gp and could be useful in Act III.

W-2 THE STRANGE OBELISK

There is a three foot tall obelisk appears to be weathered stone. Closer observation and a Knowledge (nature) or Heal check DC 15 reveals that this is a chip of bone. This is a miniscule fragment of a bone of the primal god that birthed the Fungal Jungle. It has created this pool. The only way to permanently destroy the pool is to cast *cure disease* on the infected bone and then bury it properly so the rot cannot return.



MAP
X

THE NORTHERN ENTRANCE TO THE FUNGAL JUNGLE

□ = 5'



MAP X THE NORTHERN ENTRANCE OF THE FUNGAL JUNGLE (CR 6)

The northern entrance to the fungal jungle is currently manned by a patrol of a dozen drow soldiers led by a spurned consort of House Sevastia named Hestia Sevastia, a distant cousin of the Baroness Satha. Hestia displeased the Baroness at her last feast and so has earned this dreadful duty.

The mission of this guard posting is to make sure that nothing that emerges from the Fungal Jungle catches Vothys off guard. If any large force does approach, then Hestia immediately dispatches the two fastest of her troops to head back to Vothys (a five day trip even for these runners).

Hestia herself is not willing to die but she is eager to prove herself worthy enough that she will get taken off this abysmal post. So, she puts forth a valiant effort to hold this entrance. However, if defeat is eminent, she will surrender and try to sell out her cousin.

Hestia's greatest value is if she can be taken prisoner. She has lived in Vothys for the last three years since the ascension of the Baroness. She knows every room of the place and details about its defenses. She will happily sell out her family if she believes it will save her own life.

However, Hestia is no fool. If taken prisoner by dwarves she knows how much such individuals idiotically value honor and honesty. She will demand a sworn oath (preferably by a holy man) that if she aids them she will be released unharmed with a month's worth of provisions and all her equipment.

Hestia is tired of Vothys, angry at her cousin and furious as what she sees as her mistreatment. She is eager to return to Taaryssia, the city of her birth, and so could serve as a guide (especially for Overlords). Of course, Hestia is still a chaotic evil drow so trusting her is dangerous. She will seek to escape and any promises she makes will be broken without hesitation to secure her freedom or her return to her homeland.

Even if she can't escape, she will do whatever she can to spread dissension and distrust amongst whoever she travels with. She is willing to seduce a captor if she thinks it will help her situation. In short, she may be a knowledgeable guide, but she may also be more trouble than she is worth.

Hestia Sevastia, Spurned Drow Noble Consort

CR 4

XP 1,200

hp 22 (see page 83)

Drow Common Soldier (12)

CR 1/3

XP 135 each (1,620 XP total)

hp 5 (see page 21)

TEN ENCOUNTERS IN THE FUNGAL JUNGLE

As the PCs are traveling through the Fungal Jungle, they have a 10% each day of having a random encounter. Roll 1d20 to determine which:

- | | |
|-------|---------------------------------|
| 1 - 5 | 1. The Violet Mist |
| 6 - 7 | 2. The Auroch Herd |
| 8 - 9 | 3. Pack of Fungal Wolves |
| 10-11 | 4. Pale Hunters |
| 12 | 5. Ascomoid |
| 13 | 6. Drow Patrol |
| 14-15 | 7. Xan Forage Band |
| 16-17 | 8. Skis'raal hunters |
| 18 | 9. Svirfneblin Relic Collectors |
| 19-20 | 10. Cave Boar |

1. THE VIOLET MIST

Great clouds of hallucinogenic and poisonous spores sweep through the Fungal Jungle. Sometimes the PCs can find themselves in one of these mists quite suddenly. They must make a DC 15 Perception check to detect the cloud before it is upon them. If they detect the cloud, they may try to escape the mist by fleeing. If they fail to detect the cloud, they are automatically affected by the cloud for one round.

Each cloud has a random DC (8+1d8). This is the target number to flee via a Dexterity check. For every 5 ft. they are slower than 30 ft. add +2 to the difficulty. For every 5 ft. they are faster than 30 ft. lower the difficulty by +2. Even if the mist overtakes the party, it passes by in 1d10 rounds. 1d6 determines cloud type:

1. **Harmless:** The cloud smells strange but otherwise has no effect.

2. Poisonous

Poisonous Mist CR 4

The Poison Mist slowly overcomes its victims. For every round you spend in the mist, roll a DC 13 Fortitude save or take 1d2 Con ability damage. Those immune to poison are unaffected by this cloud.

3. **Poisonous to humanoids:** As 2 but only affects humanoids.

4. **Poisonous to animals:** As 2 but only affects animals and magical beasts.

Hallucinogenic Mist CR 4

The Hallucinogenic Mists boosts arcane magical abilities, increasing the effective caster level of arcane casters within the mist by two. In addition, it unleashes visions hidden in the recesses of the mind. Upon entering an area filled with the mist, a creature must make a DC 16 Fortitude save or be affected as per the spell *confusion* for the next 5 minutes as they experience vivid hallucinations. Even after failing a save against the gas, a confused creature may make a DC 15 Will save to ignore the *confusion* effect for that round and act normally

5. **Insanity Inducing:** The mist is hallucinogenic.

6. **Healing:** Everyone in the cloud is healed 1d8+1 hp.

2. THE AUROCH HERD

There is one great herd and several smaller herds of cave auroch that roam the Fungal Jungle. The great herd has more than 3,000 members and tramples paths through the fungus as it passes. Roll 1d6:

1. The party encounters a group of 1d6 aurochs grazing peaceably plus 1d3-1 helpless youngsters. The PCs can go hunting if they wish or avoid this encounter.
2. The party encounters four wary aurochs that have already caught their scent. The party must beat the aurochs' Perception check (+9) with their Stealth or be charged by four furious beasts.
3. The PCs meet a mad bull charging straight at them.
4. The party encounters a small herd (3d6 adults and 1d6 helpless calves) peaceably grazing on mushrooms. They clearly have not yet noticed the PCs.
5. The party encounters two bulls sparring for dominance. Any interference causes them to charge.
6. The PCs climb a crest and see aurochs as far the eye can see, feeding amidst the mushrooms. Mark this hex. It has a resource: the Great Herd. This will be important in Book Two as the PCs manage their kingdom.

Cave Auroch

CR 2

XP 600

N Large animal

Init +0; Senses darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 9, flat-footed 13 (+4 natural, -1 size)

hp 22 (3d8+9)

Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +1

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee gore +7 (1d8+9)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

Special Attacks stampede, trample (2d6+9, DC 17)

TACTICS

During Combat Aurochs trample smaller foes and gore larger ones.

Morale If wounded or threatened, aurochs try to stampede away from foes. If cornered or enraged, though, they fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 23, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 4

Base Atk +2; CMB +9; CMD 19 (23 vs. trip)

Feats Endurance, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Perception +9

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Stampede (Ex) A stampede occurs if three or more creatures with stampede make a trample attack while remaining adjacent to each other. While stampeding, the creatures can trample foes of their size or smaller, and the trample's save DC increases by +2.

Trample (Ex) As a full-round action, a creature with the trample ability can attempt to overrun any creature that is at least one size category Smaller than itself. This works just like the overrun combat maneuver, but the trampling creature does not need to make a check, it merely has to move over opponents in its path. Targets of a trample can make an attack of opportunity, but at a -4 penalty. If targets forgo an attack of opportunity, they can attempt to avoid the trampling creature and receive a Reflex save to take half damage. A trampling creature can only deal trampling damage to each target once per round, no matter how many times its movement takes it over a target creature.

3. PACK OF FUNGAL WOLVES

Though called fungal wolves, these strange beasts are not wolves at all. They are actually a very aggressive form of carnivorous fungus that roams the Fungal Jungle in packs craving living meat. The PCs have encountered 1d6 of the beasts.

Fungal Wolf CR 2

XP 600

N Medium plant

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +8

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex)

hp 13 (2d8+4)

Fort +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

Immune plant traits

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee bite +2 (1d6+1 plus trip)

Special Attack Poison Spore Cloud (DC 13)

TACTICS

During Combat These brutal pack hunters surround their foes, try to trip them and rip them apart with their barbed fungoid fangs.

Morale Fungal wolves are ravenous, frenzied beasts that fight to the death when they have discovered prey.

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 15, **Con** 15, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14 (18 vs. trip)

Feats Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Perception +8, Stealth +6, Survival +1 (+5 scent tracking);

Racial Modifiers +4 Survival when tracking by scent

SQ Poisonous Blood

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison Spore Cloud (Ex) Once per day, a fungal creature can release a choking cloud of spores in a 15-foot-radius spread. The spore cloud lingers visibly in the air for 10 rounds, but it dissipates normally on the wind. This cloud functions as an inhaled poison.

Each breathing creature in the cloud must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 13) or take 1d2 points of Constitution damage and be fatigued for 1 minute. The next round, the effected creature must succeed on a second save (whether or not it succeeded on the first) or take 1d2 points of Constitution damage and become fatigued (or exhausted if already fatigued).

A creature that continues to inhale the spores continues to make Fortitude saves against their effects. Multiple spore clouds from multiple fungal creatures require multiple saves from any creature in an area where the clouds overlap. Creatures that are immune to poisons are immune to poison spore clouds.

Poisonous Blood (Ex) A fungal creature's blood and flesh function as ingested poisons. Any creature that makes a bite attack against a fungal creature, swallows one whole, or otherwise ingests part of one must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 13r) or take 1 point of Strength damage and 1 point of Dexterity damage. One minute later, the creature must make a second save at the same DC or be nauseated for 1 minute and take 1d6 points of Strength damage and 1d6 points of Dexterity damage.

4. PALE HUNTERS

The PCs encounter a hunting wing of 1d4 Pale Hunters.

Pale Hunters CR 3

XP 800

hp 32 (see page 67)

5. ASCOMOID

These bizarre carnivorous fungi roam the jungle crushing their prey and imbedding the carcass with spores. When Ascomoids are younger, they are tethered to the ground. Only when they are mature do they release and go on a spore-spreading rampage.

Ascomoid CR 5

XP 1,600

N Large plant

Init +1; **Senses** tremorsense 60 ft.; **Perception** +0

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 16 (+1 Dex, +7 natural, -1 size)

hp 52 (7d8+21)

Fort +8, **Ref** +3, **Will** +2

DR 10/piercing; **Immune** plant traits; **Resist** electricity 10, fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee slam +8 (2d8+6)

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

Special Attacks poison, spores, trample (2d8+6, DC 17)

TACTICS

During Combat The Ascomoid tramples and spews spores.

Morale Ascomoids fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 13, **Con** 17, **Int** —, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 21 (can't be tripped)

Feats Improved Overrun^B

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Spores—inhaled; save Fort DC 16; frequency 1/round for 6 rounds; effect 1d2 Str damage; cure 2 saves. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Spores (Ex) Once per round as a free action, an ascomoid can release a jet of deadly spores to a range of 30 feet. Upon impacting a solid surface, such as a wall or creature, the jet billows out into a cloud of spores that fills a 10-foot-radius spread. This cloud lasts for 1 round before dispersing. Any creature in the cloud must make a DC 16 Fortitude save or become nauseated as long as it remains in the cloud. Any creature that fails to save against this nausea is also exposed to the ascomoid's poison (see above). The save DC is Constitution-based.

6. DROW PATROL

This patrol consists of six drow guards and two hunting leopards. Their mission is to make sure no army moves against Vothys and to retrieve resources or prisoners the Baroness might find interesting.

For Explorers this is a combat encounter. The drow seek to imprison any surface races they meet to be taken back for torture and interrogation. With Overlords, there is room for roleplaying. The sergeant despises this duty and might betray the Baroness if given incentive. The sergeant knows the password into Vothys: "Satha serith azbariel" (lit. Satha prays for my return).

Drow Patrol(6) CR 1

XP 400 each (2,400 XP total)

hp 18 (see page 77 as drow guards)

Shaokyri (drow hunting leopards (2)) CR 2

XP 600 each (1,200 XP total)

hp 19 (see page 82)

7. XAN FORAGE BAND

A small band of 2d6 Xan hunters moves quietly through the fungal jungle both collecting exotic mushrooms for the Alchemist and hunting game. These mushroom men are not particularly interested in fighting, though they may take an opportunity to ambush enemies of their people (anyone with a Faction Score of -20 or lower). What they will do is trade if approached in a friendly manner. They have 1d4-1 kinds of weird fungus (see page 75) they are willing to trade and have a 25% chance of having something else.

Roll 1d6:

- 1 Cave boar tusks worth 120 gp. They are willing to trade them for metal goods worth half that amount.
- 2 2d10 days' worth of salted pteranodon jerky.
- 3 A strange gnome artifact. There is a 50% chance it is a worthless piece of junk and a 50% chance it is a 1st level wand or minor magic item (perhaps a *formula alembic*). The Xan hunters have no idea what it is.
- 4 1d3 *potions of cure moderate wounds* made by the alchemist of Xan himself.
- 5 1d3 mithral chain shirts, rapiers and hand crossbows. Only dropped once.
- 6 Four quart-sized clay pots of Xan-made black beer laced with a mild hallucinogen. Worth 20 gp each.

Xan Hunter CR 4

XP 1,200 each
hp 37 (see page 43)

8. SKIS'RAAL HUNTERS

A pack of 1d4+1 skis'raal hunters stalks the jungle looking for prey. They have been told to avoid humanoids and will try to do so unless those they meet are known enemies (Faction Score -20 or less). However, if discovered and not attacked, they will speak. The skis'raal have little to trade but might be persuaded to lead someone back to their caverns to meet their leader, The White Spider (see Map V above).

Skis'raal Hunters CR 3

XP 800 each
hp 30 (see page 66)

9. SVIRFNEBLIN RELIC COLLECTORS

A small band of adventurous svirfneblin relic collectors from Kladdenvallt roam the Fungal Jungle looking for lost Vaustenstad (see map R-2). They are uncertain of its specific location. The band consists of a minor deep gnome noble, Lord Junius Remembers-What-Others-Forget, and his half dozen resolute guards.

10. CAVE BOAR

These shaggy beasts are on the verge of extinction. Overhunted for their ivory and meat, it will be less than twenty years before there are no cave boars in the Fungal Jungle. The few that remain are furious and aggressive creatures, eager to defend their turf.

Lord Junius Remembers-What-Others-Forget CR 3

XP 800

Male svirneblin aristocrat 4
CG small humanoid (gnome)
Init +3; Senses darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 16, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +2 dodge, +1 size)
hp 26 (4d8+8)
Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +7
SR 15

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.
Melee mwk rapier +8 (1d6+2/19-20)
Ranged light crossbow +6 (1d6/19-20)
Special Attack +1 to attack vs. dwarven and reptilian humanoids
Spell-like Abilities (CL 4th)
Constant – *nonetection*
1/day – *blindness/deafness* (DC 12), *blur*, *disguise self*

TACTICS

During Combat Junius uses his rapier to deadly effect.

Morale Lord Junius surrenders at 6 hp or lower.

STATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10
Base Atk +3; CMB +5; CMD 18
Feats Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (rapier)
Skills Bluff +7, Craft (Alchemy) +2, Diplomacy +7, Knowledge (History) +8, Perception +10, Sense Motive +8, Stealth +5 (+7 underground); **Racial Modifiers** +2 Craft (Alchemy), +2 Perception, +2 Stealth (+4 underground)
Languages Gnome, Undercommon
SQ stonecunning
Trait History - Knowledge (History) +1 and a class skill
Combat Gear 20 bolts
Other Gear masterwork rapier, light crossbow, chain shirt, 120 gp

Gnome Soldier CR 1/2

XP 200 each

hp 12 (see page 18)

Cave Boar CR 4

XP 1,200

N Large animal
Init +4; Senses darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 9, flat-footed 15 (+6 natural, -1 size)
hp 42 (5d8+20)
Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +2
Defensive Abilities ferocity

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.
Melee gore +8 melee (2d6+9)

TACTICS

During Combat These angry pigs charge and gore anything that gets in their way.

Morale Cave boars are creatures of almost elemental fury and fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 23, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 8
Base Atk +3; CMB +10; CMD 20
Feats Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness
Skills Perception +12

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Ferocity (Ex) The cave boar remains conscious and can continue fighting even if its hit point total is below 0. The creature is still staggered and loses 1 hit point each round. The cave boar still dies when its hit point total reaches a negative amount equal to its Constitution score (-17 hp).

FORAGING WITHIN THE FUNGAL JUNGLE

The Fungal Jungle is an alchemist's dream. Weird and magically active ingredients grow everywhere and in startling abundance. The PCs as an option may take a day to hunt for such components in the jungle. They still have a chance for random encounters (10% per day). Make a Survival (DC 20) or Knowledge (Arcana) (DC 20) to find strange mushrooms. If failed, the day is wasted. If the roll succeeds, roll 1d20:

1 - 3 Lantern Caps

These enormous bioluminescent mushrooms grow conical caps that can get as big as two feet long. When picked and agitated they glow like torches for twenty four hours. A craft (alchemy) can extract enough lantern cap goo to make 1d10x10 gp worth of *sunrods*, *candle rods* or *glowing ink*.

4 - 5 Blackfire Frill

These strange frilly mushrooms produce a spore that when mixed with mud makes *blackfire clay*. This patch has enough to make 2d6 blocks of the stuff.

6 - 7 Brown Bleeders

These plain brown mushrooms exude (or 'bleeds') a greenish ichor that is incredibly sticky. This ichor is 1d6 applications of *alchemical glue*.

8 Violet Chanterelles

These vividly violet mushrooms, if eaten, count as *anti-toxin* (there are 1d3 doses in this patch). If dried, they keep their potency almost forever.

9 Candycaps

These white puffy mushrooms taste almost like marshmallows. These are not only delicious; they are also highly desired trade goods. This patch is worth 1d10x20 gp.

10 Padzahr

The Padzahr mushroom (a small pink capped fungus) is one of the few fungus in the Fungal Jungle not unique to this place but that makes it no less prized. This patch contains enough mushrooms to make 1d3 doses of the healing *padzahr* alchemical remedy.

11 Black Salamander

This strange looking mushroom actually twitches to create the illusion of being a poisonous black salamander. In fact, it is a fungus that if dried counts as one dose of *soul stimulant*.

12-13 Firesoul Fungus

This patch of brightly orange capped fungus is mildly warm to the touch. Properly refined (DC 20 Craft [Alchemy check]) this patch can make 1d6 doses of alchemist's fire.

14 Striped Toadstool

These bizarre striped toadstools are a vicious poison. This patch contains one dose worth of striped toadstool poison. These are dangerous to pick if the harvester does not have the Poison Use feature. If not, the harvester must roll a DC 12 Reflex save. Failure, means that harvester has poisoned himself with striped toadstool.

15-16 Blue Shaggies (or Blue Blessings)

These distinctive looking mushrooms have a bright blue shaggy cap. They count as a potion of *cure light wounds* if eaten within 24 hours of being picked. After that, they lose their potency.

17 Blue Shaggies (or False Blessings)

These mushrooms look almost identical to the beneficial blue shaggies. It takes an expert to tell them a part in fact (DC 25 Knowledge [Dungeoneering] check). But instead of being a healing fungus, eating them counts as consuming a dose of *dark reaver powder*. These too lose their potency after 24 hours of being picked.

18 Ochre Puffballs (or "Itchies")

This patch of ochre puffballs releases an irritating spore cloud known locally as an "itchy". One patch contains enough puffballs to make 1d3 doses of *itching powder*. However, this stuff can be tricky to harvest. Make a DC 12 Reflex save or puncture a puff ball and get affected by *itching powder* immediately.

19 Azathyrian Shriekers

There are dangers to going mushroom hunting in the Fungal Jungle and this is one of the worse. Normal shriekers do not grow here. Instead, the shriekers here are tiny little mushrooms that rarely go taller than six inches. Still, they are no less loud. The PCs have found a patch of small purple toadstools. If they don't make a Knowledge (Dungeoneering) DC 25 check, they will not recognize these for what they are until it is too late. The toadstools begin to shriek so loud they can be heard for miles. The chance of a random encounter increases to 75%.

20 Jade Cap Fungus

This delicate fungus has a green cap that is almost translucent, like jade. The cap itself is almost electric to the touch. There is enough fungus here to make 1d6 applications of *bot-tled lightning*.



ACT THREE: VOTHYS

Vothys is the very edge of drow power within the Azathyr. It was built centuries ago to hold the strategic Pit of Hezzarian (or the Great Jumping Off Point as the gnomes call it) so that incursions from the surface would be more difficult. As the seismically active Earth's Wound (see Book II) closed off the openings within the Fungal Jungle, this became unimportant and Vothys was largely forgotten. Now, the only invaders the drow typically need worry about are deep gnomes and they are not regarded as dangerous. The Watchtower of Vothys is used now primarily to banish troublesome nobles too well connected to merely execute who the rulers of Taaryssia (see Book IV) wants out of the city.

Still, it may seem odd that Vothys is located neither at the Fungal Jungle nor at the Pit of Hezzarian. The truth is that when the drow first came to the upper Azathyr, a pair of nobles decided there were two major goals the tower needed to accomplish. The fortress needed to both secure the Pit of Hezzarian and allow for the exploitation of the Fungal Jungle. Their conflict over which was more important caused Vothys to be put directly beside neither but instead in the middle – truly the sort of solution that only a committee could endorse. It is two days travel from the Pit and a week's travel from the Fungal Jungle. In short, it accomplishes neither role particularly well.

What it does accomplish is choke off access to the Lower Azathyr from the upper regions. Thus conflict between the Baroness of Vothys and the PCs (either Explorer or Overlord) is all but inevitable. It does not help that Lady Satha is an ambitious, treacherous noble drow furious at her banishment from Taaryssia to this backwater who wants to build her own kingdom, raise an army and get bloody revenge against everyone who ever slighted her. It was she who both organized the army that attacked Fasturvalt and sent her assassin to kill the commanders of that army after victory was achieved. Both Overlords and Explorers have good cause to want her dead.

Furthermore, she possesses the only key to open the warded gate (detailed below) that blocks access past the main tower. If the PCs somehow get past that gate without the key, she will know it and she will send minions after them. In short, she will trouble your adventurers until they deal with her.

Vothys has seven notable locations: the Outer Wall, the Garden of Barbs, the Small Spire, the Warded Gate, the Slave Pits, the Main Tower and the Commoner Camp.

The **Outer Wall** (shown on Map Y below) is Vothys' first line of defense. It is detailed on page 77.

The **Garden of Barbs** (see pg. 80) is a decorative stone garden where formations have been shaped into wicked barbed statuary by a previous baron.

The **Small Spire** (see pg. 80) guards access across the Garden of Barbs and into the main tower.

The **Warded Gate** is described on page 80.

The **Slave Pits** are beneath Vothys (connected to 1-2 in the main tower) and are detailed on pg. 81 below.

The **Main Tower** is the central part of Vothys and is the seat of power of the Baroness Satha. It is described in detail, level by level, on page 82.

The **Commoner Camp** is a large cavern behind the main tower where common drow once lived. This group of rabble and adventurers were mostly outcasts and scum who accumulated here over the years after fleeing Taaryssia and the Heart of the Web far beneath this outpost. I use "were" because the commoner's camp is now empty (and thus not mapped). The Baroness recruited the hundred elf army that attacked Fasturvalt from this camp. Anyone who didn't want to be part of that assault force fled, fearing being conscripted. Everyone else attacked Fasturvalt.

This is Vothys today. It is a place of misery and wickedness, but also of profound stagnation. The Baroness rarely holds court anymore in her throne room. Instead, she broods on the fifth floor of her tower awaiting word from the front. Since the attack has almost certainly failed (either defeated by Explorers or subverted by ambitious Overlords), it is possible she already knows her schemes have ended in disaster. This only causes her to retreat more into her fortress.

In truth, the conquest of Fasturvalt was a desperation gambit. The Baroness dares not send out more soldiers as that would leave Vothys defenseless. She committed her army and her most capable assassin to the mission. If they have failed, she has been denied the wealth of Fasturvalt she planned to use to hire a mercenary army of conquest. She realizes it could be decades before she can gather another army strong enough to try again to birth her personal empire.

Once the failure is confirmed, the Baroness sinks into despair at never leaving this backwater. She takes what comfort she can in her consorts, but secretly hopes that the deep gnomes dare to counterattack. She is confident such an attack would fail. But at least a battle would take her mind off her endless banishment to the hellhole known as Vothys.

THE OUTER WALL

The cavernous passage where you first catch sight of Vothys starts high above the great cavern that contains the watchtower. This vantage point is shown on page 79 below. Use this as a handout to your players (permission is granted to copy that page for personal use).

The wall is solid stone. Any seams of individual bricks were long ago magically removed, so the wall presents nothing but a solid smooth front, unbroken save for decorative ribwork. The moat is actually an abyss, dropping a hundred feet to lightless rough stone far below. The drow guards rarely bother to fetch corpses that fall such a great distance. If some actually goes down the moat and searches, they'll find a drow corpse who died with a 250 gp ruby in his stomach. This poor exile was shot long ago and left to rot.

W-1 THE GATEHOUSE (CR 6)

This so-called gatehouse is little more than a wider part of the wall with a stairway that leads down to the ground level. This defensive point overlooks the only gap in the wall. Four drow guards and two siege engineers are always posted here, rotating out every twelve hours. A solid metal drawbridge is the only easy way to cross the moat and though the illustration shows it in the down position, it is most commonly raised.

The ballista is a relic of better days. It is a +1 *ballista* (worth 4500 gp; 20 shots) so cunningly mounted it does not suffer the usual -4 penalty when crewed by medium-sized users. If dismounted from the wall-mount, it would lose this bonus. The siege engineers fire the ballista every other round. They are +7 to hit and do 3d8+1 (crit. 19-20). If one crew is killed, the survivor can still fire, but takes two rounds to reload.

One of the guards is a sergeant (though mechanically identical to the other guards) who decides who may cross. Any non-drow is fired upon. Even drow are in danger unless they use the password of "*Satha serith azbariel*" (lit. Satha prays for my return). Without it, drow will be denied entry and attacked if they don't leave immediately or offer insult. Still, the sergeant is no genius and can be deceived. The best way to deceive him is to pretend to be a returning patrol (with the password). The sergeant finds it far-fetched that anyone else on this side of Vothys could have business with the baroness, but a DC 24 Bluff check persuades him otherwise. A bribe worth at least 100 gp adds a +5 to this check. Also presenting a pendant of House Sevastia adds +5 as well. Any attack makes deception impossible. If the guards repulse an assault, the number of guards doubles to eight.

Story Award: Give a CR 6 (2,400 XP) award for talking their way past the gatehouse.

Drow Guards of Vothys

CR 1

XP 400

Male or female drow warrior 3

CE Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +3; Senses darkvision 120 ft.; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+6 armor, +3 Dex)

hp 18 (3d10+3)

Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +2; +2 vs. enchantment

Immune sleep; SR 9

Weaknesses light blindness

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee rapier +6 (1d6+1/18–20) or

mwk glaive-guisarme +6 (1d10+1/x3)

Ranged hvy crossbow +6 (1d10/19–20 plus poison)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd)

1/day—*dancing lights*, *darkness*, *faerie fire*

TACTICS

During Combat They prefer to take cover behind their battlements and use their crossbows (favoring poison bolts so they can take slaves). In melee they use their glaive-guisarmes, resorting to the rapier only for close fighting and dueling.

Morale These guards are not fanatics but they also know that the baroness shows no mercy to shirkers. If three-quarters of their numbers fall or they are reduced to 6 hp or less, they flee.

STATISTICS

Str 13, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12

Base Atk +3; CMB +4; CMD 17

Feats Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (glaive-guisarme)

Skills Intimidate +7, Perception +6, Stealth +5; Racial Modifiers +2 Perception

Languages Elven, Undercommon

SQ poison use

Gear breastplate, light steel shield, masterwork glaive-guisarme, rapier, hvy crossbow with 20 bolts, drow poison [3 doses], 4d6 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison Use (Ex) Drow are skilled in the use of poison and never risk accidentally poisoning themselves. Drow favor an insidious toxin that causes its victims to lapse into unconsciousness—this poison allows drow to capture slaves with great ease.

Drow Poison—injury; save Fort DC 13; frequency 1/minute for 2 minutes; initial effect unconsciousness for 1 minute; secondary effect unconsciousness for 2d4 hours; cure 1 save.

Drow Siege Engineers

CR 1

XP 400

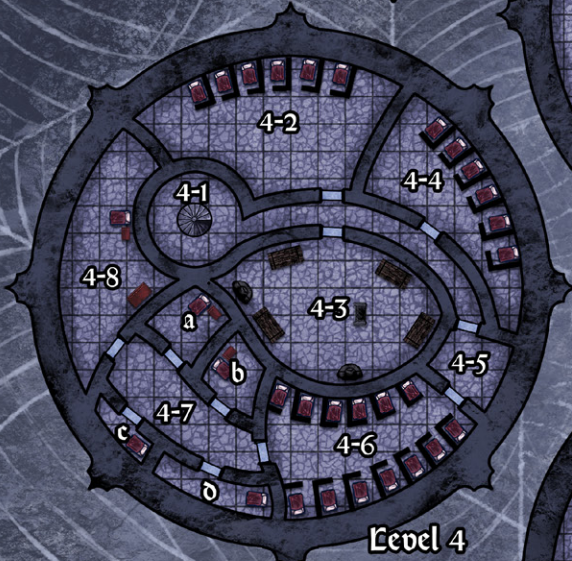
hp 18 (stats are identical to drow guards, above, except they lack glaive-guisarmes and replace the feat Weapon Focus [glaive-guisarme] with Exotic Weapon Proficiency [ballista].)

W-2 THE WALL

The rest of the wall and the round tower at its far end are crewed by another four guards and two siege engineers with a +1 *ballista* identical to the one in W-1 above. These soldiers likely see anyone approaching first. As in W-1, non-drow are greeted with a volley of poisoned crossbow bolts and a ballista shot. Drow are watched and a guard is sent to alert the sergeant at the gatehouse. The soldiers then watch the visitors. If the gatehouse attacks, they join in support with ranged attacks. Otherwise, they return to playing a game of chance and betting away their meager pay. If a drow tries to talk with them, they refer them to the sergeant.

DOTHYS

□ = 5'



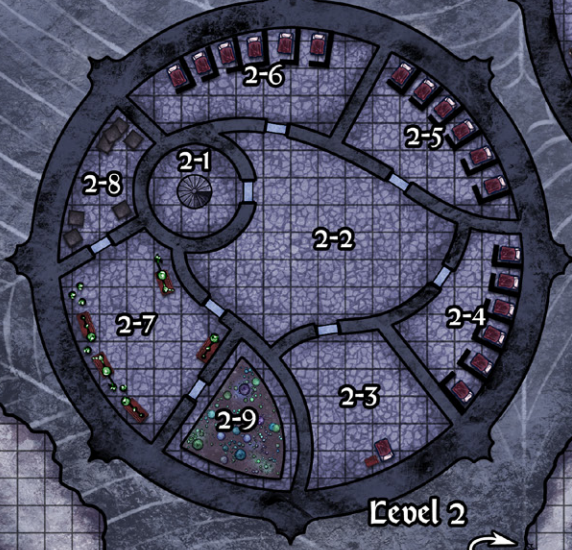
Level 4



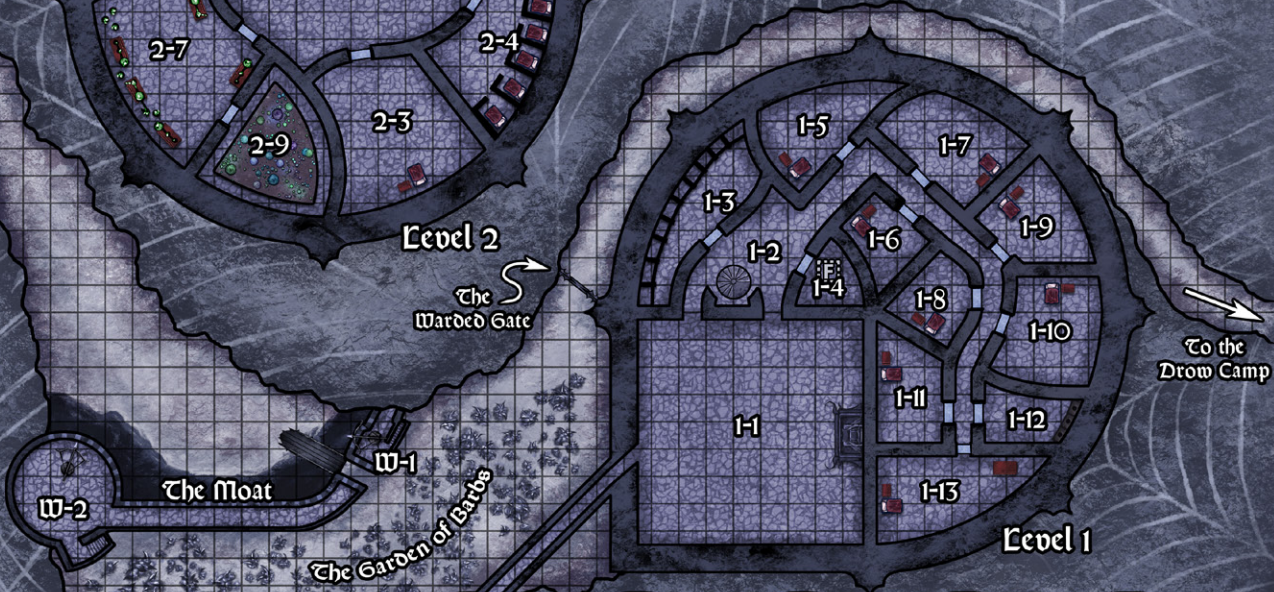
Level 5



Level 3



Level 2



Level 1



The Small Spire



Level 1



Level 2



Level 3



Level 4



Level 5



THE GARDEN OF BARBS

Long ago, when Vothys was a critical outpost, influential and powerful drow nobles were sometimes assigned here. One of those nobles, at great expense, had the Garden of Barbs created. Using *stone shape*, a magical artisan crafted the living cavernous formations themselves into baroque works of twisted art. The garden still survives to this very day.

The garden is a masterpiece of refined wicked art. The stalagmites have been transformed from simple dripstone into an elaborate fantasy of razor-sharp barbed stone and a celebration of sentient suffering. Within the stonework are stylized images of drow enemies impaled upon the barbs. Anyone who makes a Knowledge (religion) or (planes) DC 15 will recognize also that the stonework contains the jagged iconography of abyssal runes honoring demon lords and other foul gods of the outer planes. The garden is difficult terrain. All the statuary is firmly rooted into the floor. There is nothing small enough to be portable and digging up this “art” would destroy its value.

If the PCs attack the main tower directly, crossing the Garden of Barbs puts them in direct line of sight of the small spire’s upper level (S-5). The drow guards up there will rain down crossbow fire upon the intruders. As long as the PCs take cover behind larger statuary they can gain cover, but if they move, the guards know this terrain well and where they will be exposed. Further if the PCs move at anything more than half speed, they may catch themselves upon the barbs. They must make a DC 12 Reflex save each round or take 1d6 damage and become entangled for one round.

THE SMALL SPIRE

S-1 ENTRY INTO THE SMALL SPIRE

At the base of small tower sheltered away from the Garden are spiral stairs that leads up to this landing. At the top is a small stone trapdoor that seals off the small spire, but unless the alarm is raised it is left unlocked. If the alarm is raised, the iron padlock is locked from the inside. The lock is crude (DC 15) but inaccessible from outside. It must be forced (DC 18 Strength check to break the ancient stone door). The landing also connects to the main tower (1-1) via a narrow bridge.

Normally this landing is empty.

S-2 2ND LEVEL OF THE SMALL SPIRE

A spiral staircase continues up to the third level. Guards could be stationed here to hold the tower from attackers, but usually this level is empty.

S-3 3RD LEVEL OF THE SMALL SPIRE

Another empty level with little besides the spiral staircase leading up.

S-4 4TH LEVEL OF THE SMALL SPIRE

As S-3.

S-5 5TH LEVEL OF THE SMALL SPIRE (CR 4)

A contingent of four guards is always kept here along with a large iron gong that if struck reverberates through the entire main tower. It has been a long time since Vothys has been attacked and with the Baroness and the guard captain busy with their own problems, the guards here have grown lax. After all, they reason, the guards at the gate will keep out intruders. Why should they care? Thus the small spire is used by the tower guards as a duty shift that isn’t really a duty shift.

The guards sit up here, drink wine and throw dice. Half the time, they are doing more than that. The bored, decadent drow guards are out of their armor and engaged in some sort of carnal pleasure with each other. In a life of dull drudgery here in this far outpost, drawing a shift in the spire is one of the guards’ few pleasures. Nothing short of repeated shouts and the sounds of intense combat from the wall will alerted these distracted individuals. Of course if Captain Quoll (see 4-8 below) knew this was going on, he would have these guards flayed by the tower’s torturer, Gorval Harak (see 4-3), as an example to the rest.

Still, in armor or not, if alerted these four guards’ poisoned heavy crossbows can extract a dear toll upon anyone crossing the Garden of Barbs. The guards have improved cover from the ground.

Drow Guards (4)

CR 1

XP 400 each (1,600 XP total)

hp 18 (stats are identical to drow guards, pg. 77.)

THE WARED GATE

This sturdy iron gate adorned in metal thorns controls access from Vothys to the long winding path leading to the Great Jumping Off Point (location Z below). This door, like the ballistae on the walls, is a relic from better days. The door has a superior lock with an *arcane lock* cast by a 14th level caster. That means it takes a DC 40 skill check to pick or *knock* and a DC 25 check to remove with *dispel magic*. Further the gate is all but indestructible (hardness 12, 90 hp, Break DC 30). Breaking it down will definitely alert the guards. In short, it is all but impassable for the PCs. To get past the gate, you almost certainly need the Baroness’ key.

The only other way is trickery or magic. The gate is not air tight, so *gaseous form* will suffice. Also on the other side is a bell (DC 15 Perception to notice). Ringing it summons the guards (W-1). If the bell went off mysteriously (say by *mage hand*) the guards would eventually summon Captain Quoll (4-8) to investigate the mystery. The baroness entrusts the captain with her key when she deems a matter routine or boring.

SLAVE CAMP

Beneath Vothys, connected by a staircase down from 1-2 in the main tower is an open ovoid chamber approximately half a mile at its widest. Within the pits, kobold slaves toil under the eyes of their drow overlords harvesting mushrooms, raising a stock pool of cave fish and tending a small herd of cave auroch captured from the Fungal Jungle years ago. The lot of these roughly two hundred and sixty kobolds is a miserable one. Most work their entire lives in these stinking pits to feed drow masters who can scarcely be bothered to look at them. It has been decades since the last slave uprising and that was put down so harshly that the kobolds dare not raise a hand against their masters.

Still, the baroness is short-handed and there are only six overseers at any time scattered amongst the countless kobolds. If someone could foment an uprising, the kobolds would rise up. A DC 25 Diplomacy check would begin this uprising. If the rabble rouser appears to be a kobold add +2 to this check. If the overseers are dead add +5. If the kobolds are rallied, they storm out of the slave pits, overwhelm the Small Spire and the wall (W-1 and W-2) killing all its defenders. They then flee into the Fungal Jungle. Many die along the way, but some survive. The PCs will be responsible for creating a new village within the jungle. Award the PCs XP for any guards the kobolds kill in the uprising.

Kobold Slave

CR 1/4

XP 100

Male or female kobold warrior 1
LE Small humanoid (reptilian)
Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+1 Dex, +1 natural, +1 size)
hp 5 (1d10)
Fort +2, Ref +1, Will -1
Weaknesses light sensitivity

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee club +1 (1d4-1)
Ranged sling +3 (1d3-1)

TACTICS

During Combat The kobolds avoid combat, but if given no choice they prefer to attack enmasse using their makeshift slings.
Morale If wounded, outnumbered or a quarter of their number are killed, the kobolds flee in blind panic.

STATISTICS

Str 9, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8
Base Atk +1; CMB -1; CMD 10
Feats Skill Focus (Perception)
Skills Craft (trapmaking) +6, Perception +5, Stealth +5; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Craft (trapmaking), +2 Perception, +2 Profession (miner)
Languages Draconic, Undercommon
SQ crafty
Gear club, sling, 10 rocks, tattered slave garments

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Crafty (Ex) Craft (trapmaking) and Stealth are always class skills.

Drow Overseer (6)

CR 1

XP 400 each (2,400 XP total)

hp 18 (as drow guards, pg. 77, but they also carry whips)

VOOTHYS SLAVE CAMP

1" = 200 ft.



THE MAIN TOWER OF VOTHYS

LEVEL 1

1-1 THE COURT OF THE BARONESS

This large and imposing chamber is composed of black stone walls as barbed and baroque as the exterior of the tower. The ceiling rises to a high vault, twenty feet above the tiled floor. The room is ringed by high friezes adorned with imagery of drow soldiery victorious over a wide variety of enemy: elf, duergar, deep gnome, aboleth and others. Against the western wall is a throne made of jet and crimson stone, adorned with demonic iconography. Above the throne is a stylized image of a great drow metropolis and a carving that reads "Mighty Taaryssia, forever triumphant".

This is the audience chamber and court of the Baroness Satha of Vothys. It is likely empty. The Baroness has few visitors and the inhabitants of the tower rarely congregate here. Still, if the PCs (particularly drow) manage to talk the gate guards into granting an audience, this place may become a bustling center of activity. If court is called it will be attended by Zethra Morgan (1-13), Andaria Sevastia (2-3), Captain Tethyr Quoll (4-8), the three drow consorts (5-2), twenty guards, and of course the Baroness herself (5-4).

1-2 STAIRWELL

This open hallway has a spiral stairway that leads down into the slave camp (see above) and up to level 2 of the main tower (2-1). There are also two doors and a hallway. There are usually two guards posted here who control access to the rest of the tower and keep any eye on the court (1-1) as well. These guards attack any non-drow they see, call out an alarm and try to unleash the leopards housed in 1-3 (see below).

Drow Guards (2)

CR 1

XP 400 each (800 XP total)

hp 18 (stats are identical to drow guards, pg. 77.)

1-3 LEOPARD KENNELS

This door is locked with a crude iron padlock (DC 15). When the drow fled underground, they didn't go alone. They took with them their hunting cats. Now after countless generations the drow have bred these cats to live in the perpetual gloom of the underworld. Called the shaokyri in the drow tongue, or cave leopard, they are hunters perfectly adapted to life in the realms below. This kennel holds the baroness prized three cats named Zari, Zathi and Gaath. Though they are well-trained not to attack any drow (unless ordered by the Baroness), they happily pounce on anyone else.

1-4 ABANDONED GUARDROOM

This small chamber was once used by guards to rest during their long duty shifts. However, now when there are so few guards it is empty and unused.

Shaokyri (drow hunting leopards) (3)

CR 2

XP 600 each (1,800 XP total)

N Medium animal

Init +4; Senses darkvision 120 ft., scent; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 11 (+4 Dex, +1 natural)

hp 19 (3d8+6)

Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee bite +6 (1d6+3 plus grab), 2 claws +6 (1d3+3)

Special Attacks pounce, rake (2 claws +6, 1d3+3)

TACTICS

During Combat These leopards pounce any foe, biting and clawing and raking when they can.

Morale The leopards flee if reduced to 6 or less hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 16, Dex 19, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 6

Base Atk +2; CMB +5 (+9 grapple); CMD 19 (23 vs. trip)

Feats Skill Focus (Stealth), Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +8, Climb +11, Perception +5, Stealth +11 (+15 in caves); Racial Modifiers +4 on Stealth in caves

1-5 GUEST QUARTERS #1

This chamber is furnished with a bed, chair and desk. The furnishings are well-made and comfortable but adorned in the baroque, sinister style so typical of the drow. There is nothing here of any particular value.

For an Explorer campaign, this chamber is the quarters of Garius Malathorn, the drow emissary (see pg. 31). If he somehow escaped the drow defeat at Fasturvalt, then he is once more quartered here after having an audience with a furious Baroness. Afraid for his life, he is uncertain how long it will be before the Baroness orders his death. If confronted again by the same dwarves that defeated him, he doesn't fight. He falls to his knees and surrenders, pleading for mercy. Malathorn is a cowardly worm that will gladly sell out the other drow and draw a map of the main tower to save his own skin. He could become a sort of guide throughout the underworld, though ultimately an untrustworthy one who will eventually attempt to betray his captors and escape.

For an Overlord campaign, this is one of the PCs former quarters.

1-6 GUEST QUARTERS #2

For an Explorer campaign, this is room is unoccupied but otherwise equipped exactly as chamber 1-5.

For an Overlord campaign, is similarly empty but the former quarters of one of the PCs.

1-7 GUEST QUARTERS #3

As 1-6 above.

1-8 GUEST QUARTERS #4

As 1-6 above.

1-9 GUEST QUARTERS #5

As 1-6 above.

1-10 GUEST QUARTERS #6

As 1-6 above.

1-11 GUEST QUARTERS #7

Furnished exactly as 1-6, these quarters were up until recently inhabited by Hestia Sevastia (see pg. 71).

1-12 PRIVY

This is the privy for 1st floor of Vothys (mainly serving the guest quarters). Waste drops via a small pipe into the slave camp below.

1-13 GUEST QUARTERS #8

The quarters of the assassin Zethra Morgus. If he survived the Battle of Fasturvalt, then he will return here. After reporting to the Baroness, he returns to his quarters. Zethra now rests here awaiting his next assignment. Besides his gear, there is nothing of any particular value here. If the alarm is raised, Zethra will join a group of guards and go investigate its source.

LEVEL 2

2-1 STAIRWELL

This room holds spiral stairs that lead down to 1-2 and up to 3-1, but is otherwise empty and featureless.

2-2 2ND FLOOR GUARDROOM

This large chamber connects to all the other rooms on this floor. It is guarded twenty four hours a day by three guards. Unless the alarm has been raised, these guards are bored and inattentive.

Drow Guards (3) **CR 1**

XP 400 each (1,200 XP total)

hp 18 (stats are identical to drow guards, pg. 77.)

2-3 ALCHEMIST'S QUARTERS

These are the quarters of Vothys' resident poison expert, the alchemist Andaria Sevastia. Andaria is capable combatant and an utter sadist. Her greatest joy is to watch beings die from her poisons. She was exiled with her half-sister Satha and though not of pure noble blood, she was once very devoted to the Baroness. Still, she has begun to see the Baroness' regime unraveling and she might be persuaded to betray her kin if promised power. A competent group of Overlords could gain Andaria's aid. She is a potential source of a cohort and she knows this tower well. However, if Andaria is not allowed to occasionally poison someone she will eventually become dissatisfied with her new masters and betray them as well.

Her chambers are nice enough, but devoid of anything of any real value. She is here 25% of the time.

Zethra Morgus, The Baroness' Assassin

CR 4

XP 1,200

Male drow rogue (knife master) 5

CE Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft.; **Perception** +12

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 15(+4 armor, +4 Dex, +1 shield, +1 dodge)

hp 33 (5d8+10)

Fort +2, **Ref** +8, **Will** +3; +2 vs. enchantment

Immune sleep; **SR** 11

Weaknesses light blindness

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 *kukri* +9 (1d4+3/18-20 plus poison) or

rapier +7 (1d6+2/18-20) or

dagger +8 (1d4+2/19-20 plus poison)

Ranged dagger +8 (1d4+2/19-20 plus poison)

Special Attack sneak attack +3d8 with daggers, +3d4 with other weapons

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th)

1/day—*dancing lights*, *darkness*, *faerie fire*

TACTICS

During Combat Zethra poses as a typical drow soldier until just the right moment and then strikes. Do not forget that surprise attacks do maximized sneak attack damage (i.e. +24 damage).

Morale Zethra is actually Satha's cousin and is fanatically devoted (and in love) to her. He will fight to the death to defend her.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 18, **Con** 12, **Int** 12, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 19

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (dagger)

Skills Bluff +9, Disable Device +12, Disguise +9, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (local) +9, Perception +12, Sense Motive +10, Sleight of Hand +12 (+14 to conceal light blades), Stealth +12; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Perception

Languages Elven, Gnome, Undercommon

SQ blade sense +1, evasion, hidden blade, poison use, rogue talents (underhanded, weapon master), trapfinding, uncanny dodge

Combat Gear drow poison (6 doses), 2 potions of cure medium wounds

Gear leather, mithral chain shirt (worn under leather), light steel shield, rapier, +1 *kukri*, 10 daggers, masterwork thieves tools, 55 gp.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison Use (Ex) Drow are skilled in the use of poison and never risk accidentally poisoning themselves. Drow favor an insidious toxin that causes its victims to lapse into unconsciousness—this poison allows drow to capture slaves with great ease.

Drow Poison—injury; *save* Fort DC 13; *frequency* 1/minute for 2 minutes; *initial effect* unconsciousness for 1 minute; *secondary effect* unconsciousness for 2d4 hours; *cure* 1 save.

2-4 BARRACKS

This room houses six off-duty guards. They are either resting (50%) or carousing (50%). Either way they are unarmored unless the alarm has been raised.

Drow Guards (6)

CR 1

XP 400 each (2,400 XP total)

hp 18 (stats are identical to drow guards but unarmored, pg. 77.)

2-5

As 2-4, but the room houses siege engineers (pg 77).

2-6

As 2-4 but the room houses slave overseers (pg 81).

2-7 ALCHEMIST'S WORKSHOP

This chamber is a wonderland of strange vials, bubbling cauldrons and esoteric apparatuses essential to alchemy. This room houses a masterwork alchemist's lab. There are 250 gp worth of components. Further, in a small locked chest (DC 20) are four potions: two *cure moderate wounds* and two *invisibility*. Andaria is in one of the labs (2-7, 2-8 or 2-9) 75% of the time.

2-8 POISON FACTORY

This is where Andaria makes the poison so ubiquitous amongst the drow. There is a small barrel holding twenty doses of the sleep poison. 450 gp of components useful in the creation of poisons are here as well.

2-9 MYCOLOGICAL LABORATORY

This darkened chamber houses a bizarre wonderland of fungi that grow in small clay vessels beneath a violet luminescent slime that covers the ceiling and causes the fungi here to flourish. Most are small but two are man-sized and have a pulsating brain-stem.

Andaria Sevastia, drow alchemist CR 5

XP 1,600

Female drow alchemist 6

CE Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +3 Senses darkvision 120 ft.; Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 17 touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +3 Dex)

hp 33 (6d8+6)

Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +4; +2 vs. enchantment; +4 vs. poison

Immune sleep; SR 11

Weaknesses light blindness

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee dagger +3 (1d4-1 plus poison)

Ranged bombs +8 (3d6+3 acid plus 6 splash plus entangle plus 1d6 acid damage next round on direct hits, DC 16)

Special Attacks bomb 9/day (DC 16), mutagen (+4 Dex, -2 Wis, +2 natural armor, 60 minutes)

Alchemist Extracts Prepared (CL 6th)

2nd—*cure moderate wounds*, *bear's endurance*, *invisibility*, *lesser restoration*

1st—*bomber's eye*, *cure light wounds* (2), *expeditious retreat*, *shield*

Spell Like Abilities (CL 6th)

1/day—*dancing lights*, *darkness*, *faerie fire*

TACTICS

During Combat Andaria eschews melee weaponry and uses her bombs. She prefers to fight in support of front-line warriors and tries to summon guards or her pet fungi to her aid.

Morale She is an outcast with nowhere to go if Vothys falls. She fights to the death against outsiders but surrenders to drow at 11 hp.

STATISTICS

Str 8, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 14, Cha 12

Base Atk +4 CMB +3 CMD 16

Feats Brew Potion, Throw Anything. Weapon focus (bomb)

Skills Craft (Alchemy) +12, Disable Device +8, Heal +7, Know.

(arcana) +12, Know. (nature) +12, Perception +13, Sleight of Hand +8, Spellcraft +12, Survival +11; Racial Modifiers +2 Perception

Languages Dwarven, Elven, Gnome, Skis'raal, Undercommon

SQ discoveries (acid bomb, precise bomb, tanglefoot bomb), poison resistance +4, poison use, swift alchemy, swift poisoning

Combat Gear alchemist's fire (2), potion of cure moderate wounds (2), potion of bear's endurance, thunderstone (2), drow poison (6)

Gear mithral shirt, dagger, fine silk clothing worth 50 gp, 65 gp

Andaria has made many expeditions to the Fungal Jungle over the years, but her greatest find was a tissue sample of the primal god that birthed the place. She has cultivated that sample into two cerebriic fungi. The creatures are not malevolent but can sense hostility and will attack if threatened. If these two creatures are not harmed and brought before Xan-Zara (see pg. 53) the Mu Spore will reabsorb the lost splinters of its own mind. It will reward such effort by exuding a strange spore mass. If eaten, the spore mass grants a one-time +1 inherent bonus to each PC's ability of choice.

Cerebriic Fungus (2)

CR 3

XP 800 each (1,600 total)

N Medium plant

Init +4; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +12

Aura unsettling appearance (60 ft., DC 14)

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15 (+5 natural)

hp 30 (4d8+12); fast healing 2

Fort +7, Ref +1, Will +6

Defensive Abilities otherworldly mind; Immune plant traits; Resist cold 5; Weaknesses vulnerable to sonic

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee bite +5 (1d6+2), 2 tendrils +3 (1d4+1 plus pull)

Space 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft. (15 ft. with tendrils)

Special Attacks pull (tendrils, 5 ft.), star-shriek

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th; concentration +6)

Constant—*detect thoughts* (DC 14)

At will—*touch of madness* (DC 14)

3/day—*calm emotions* (DC 14), *touch of idiocy* (DC 14)

TACTICS

During Combat The fungus prefer to use their considerable magical abilities to reduce enemies to gibbering idiots, but failing that they will attack with their maw and tendrils.

Morale The fungi have nowhere to flee to. They fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 11, Con 16, Int 15, Wis 20, Cha 15

Base Atk +3; CMB +5; CMD 15 (21 vs. trip)

Feats Improved Initiative, Multiattack

Skills Bluff +6, Diplomacy +6, Perception +12, Stealth +7

Languages telepathy 100 ft.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Otherworldly Mind (Ex) Any creature attempting to contact a cerebriic fungus's mind or read its thoughts with a divination spell or similar ability must succeed at a DC 16 Will save or be overwhelmed by the alien thoughts in the creature's head. Those who fail take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage and are confused for 1d6 rounds, and the divination effect immediately ends. The save is Charisma-based and includes a +2 racial bonus.

Star-Shriek (Ex) Once per day as a full-round action, a cerebriic fungus can unleash a shrill scream of madness. All creatures (except other cerebriic fungi) within 30 feet must make a DC 15 Will save or be nauseated for 1d4 rounds. This is a sonic, mind-affecting effect. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Touch of Madness (Sp) The cerebriic fungus may daze one living creature by making a touch attack. The target must make a DC 14 Will save, or be dazed for 4 rounds. The dazed subject is not stunned (so attackers get no special advantage). This is a mind-affecting enchantment, equivalent to a 2nd-level spell.

Unsettling Appearance (Su) A cerebriic fungus constantly scans the nearby minds, projecting a confusing collage of images gleaned from their thoughts. Creatures within 60 feet that see the fungus must make a DC 14 Will save or take a -2 penalty on attack rolls. This is a mind-affecting effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

LEVEL 3

3-1 STAIRWELL

This chamber contains a spiral staircase that leads up to 4-1 and down to 2-1. It is otherwise empty and unguarded.

3-2 SERVANTS QUARTERS

Originally this level was meant to serve as housing for visiting dignitaries and emissaries. Now it is mostly used for storage and food preparation. A half-dozen common servants of the baroness dwell here, keeping the tower clean and awaiting their mistress commands. The accommodations here are sparse but comfortable and there is nothing here of great value.

Still, these servants could be of use to infiltrators. If captured, they know Vothys' entire floor plan and where all guards are posted. Though loyal to the Baroness (by drow standards), they are easily threatened into revealing information. The guards take little notice of these commoners. Commoners even sometimes visit the baroness' private quarters (level 5) to collect garments in need of cleaning and to change bedding. If the PCs impersonate these servants and the alarm was not raised they could move freely about Vothys.

Drow Servants (6) CR 1/2

XP 200 each (1,200 XP total)

Male or female drow commoner 3

CE Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +1; Senses darkvision 120 ft.; Perception +9

DEFENSE

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

hp 13 (3d6+3)

Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +2; +2 vs. enchantment

Immune sleep; SR 9

Weaknesses light blindness

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee dagger +1 (1d4/19-20 plus poison)

Ranged dagger +2 (1d4/19-20 plus poison)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th)

1/day—dancing lights, darkness, faerie fire

TACTICS

During Combat Noncombatant, the servants try to avoid combat, fighting only if cornered and given no other choice.

Morale If wounded, the servants surrender.

STATISTICS

Str 10, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 12

Base Atk +1; CMB +1; CMD 12

Feats Alertness, Toughness

Skills Perception +9, Profession (Servant) +7, Sense Motive +3 Racial

Modifiers +2 Perception

Languages Elven, Undercommon

SQ poison use

Combat Gear drow poison (1 dose)

Gear leather, dagger (poisoned), tabard of House Sevastia

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Drow Poison—injury; save Fort DC 13; frequency 1/minute for 2 minutes; initial effect unconsciousness for 1 minute; secondary effect unconsciousness for 2d4 hours; cure 1 save.

3-3 3RD FLOOR GUARDROOM

Four bored guards are here. This level, largely forgotten and disused, is rarely visited and so the guards are usually playing thavvek, a drow card game. A small table is littered with cards, a bottle of wine plundered from the pantry (3-9 below) and the guard's coinage.

Drow Guards (4)

CR 1

XP 400 each (1,600 XP total)

hp 18 (stats are identical to drow guards, pg. 77.)

3-4 TORTURER'S QUARTERS

The drow torturer Gorval Harak (see 4-3 below) keeps his personal quarters here, having occupied one of the unused emissary's quarters. The furnishings here are elegant and once beautiful, but now are ill-maintained and dirty. The servants (see 3-2) are afraid of Gorval and so rarely visit his chambers. There is a 25% chance that Gorval is here instead of in his beloved torture chamber.

There is a scroll besides the bed that details methods of vivisection on elves, dwarves, gnomes and humans. It is finely illustrated but vile and written on deep gnome skin. This "treasure" would fetch 250 gp from a drow merchant and if studied for two weeks provides a +2 bonus to skill rolls related to torture. Non-evil races will find this item utterly abhorrent.

3-5 EMPTY QUARTERS

This finely appointed chamber sits unused at the Baroness' order. If ransacked it contains silk sheets, a silver candelabra and a few small ivory serving dishes that weigh 20 lbs. and are worth 300 gp.

3-6 EMPTY QUARTERS

Identical to 3-5 above.

3-7 PRIVY

This is the privy for the upper levels of the tower.

3-8 KITCHEN

This kitchen is stocked with normal gear and holds nothing of value. There is a 50% chance at any given time that 1d4 servants from 3-2 are here working.

3-9 PANTRY

This well stocked larder holds the labor of the kobold's in the slave camp below. Mushrooms, salted au-roch beef, dried fish, mushcakes and other provisions are heaped here in great quantities. There are two hundred man-days worth of food here. There is also a small locked chest (DC 30 lock) that contains 400 gp worth of rare spices (weighing 5 lbs.) from the surface. There are also one hundred bottles of common wine (worth 1 gp each) and two bottles of the baroness' favorite brandy (worth 50 gp a bottle).

LEVEL 4

4-1 STAIRWELL

The spiral staircase here leads up to 5-1 and down to 3-1. Otherwise this chamber is empty.

4-2 BARRACKS

This room houses six off-duty guards. They are either resting (50%) or carousing (50%). Either way they are unarmed unless the alarm has been raised.

Drow Guards (6) CR 1

XP 400 each (2,400 XP total)

hp 18 (stats are identical to drow guards but unarmed, pg. 77.)

4-3 TORTURE CHAMBER

This chamber of horrors is the domain of perhaps Vothys' most loathsome inhabitant, Gorval Harak. Equipped with racks, manacles, braziers, a collection of knives and even more horrific implements, this torture chamber can "service" four guests at a time. Gorval himself relishes his duties considering them a religious exercise in service to the goddess of pain.

Gorval Harak, Drow Torturer CR 4

XP 1,200

Male drow expert 6

CE Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +2 Senses darkvision 120 ft.; Perception +14

DEFENSE

AC 14 touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor, +2 Dex)

hp 39 (6d8+12)

Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +6; +2 vs. enchantment

Immune sleep; SR 11

Weaknesses light blindness

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk morningstar +7 (1d8+2)

Ranged hand crossbow +6 (1d4/19-20 plus poison)

Spell Like Abilities (CL 6th)

1/day—*dancing lights*, *darkness*, *faerie fire*

TACTICS

During Combat Gorval is at heart a coward and prefers to avoid fair fights altogether. He always tries to summon help. But if forced, he prefers to smash foes with his sturdy reliable morningstar.

Morale Gorval surrenders if reduced to 19 hp or less. He will gleefully tell everything he knows if he thinks it will spare his life.

STATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 10

Base Atk +4 CMB +6 CMD 18

Feats Alertness, Skill Focus (Profession [Torturer]), Toughness

Skills Heal +10, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (religion) +10, Perception +14, Profession (Torturer) +13, Sense Motive +12; Racial Modifiers +2 Perception

Languages Abyssal, Elven, Undercommon

SQ poison use

Combat Gear potion of cure light wounds (2), drow poison (2), 20 bolts

Gear mwk leather armor, mwk flail, hand crossbow, bloody smock with a pocket full of gnome and drow ears, unholy symbol of the goddess of pain, 12 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Drow Poison—injury; save Fort DC 13; frequency 1/minute for 2 minutes; initial effect unconsciousness for 1 minute; secondary effect unconsciousness for 2d4 hours; cure 1 save.

4-4 BARRACKS

As 4-2 above.

4-5 GUARDROOM

This guardroom is manned by three guards. They are bored and inattentive unless the alarm is raised.

Drow Guards (3) CR 1

XP 400 each (1,200 XP total)

hp 18 (stats are identical to drow guards, pg. 77.)

4-6 BARRACKS

As 4-2 but there are many empty beds for drow currently out on patrol.

4-7 SERGEANT'S QUARTERS (A-D)

These four small cells are the quarters of Vothys' four guard sergeants. At any time, half of the sergeants are guarding the wall (W-1 above) or securing the Baroness' quarters (5-3 below). The other two are either here or reporting to Captain Quoll about one matter or another. The drow sergeants are mechanically no different from typical guards. The biggest difference is that the sergeants were chosen for loyalty and will fight to the death to defend Vothys. These chambers hold nothing else of any particular value.

Off-duty Drow Sergeants (2) CR 1

XP 400 each (800 XP total)

hp 18 (stats are identical to drow guards but unarmed, pg. 77.)

THE GUARDS OF VOTHYS

There are seventy-two drow guards scattered about the Watchtower of Vothys. Having a few battles against them at key points (the wall, the spire, supporting the captain and defending the baroness) is a good idea. Having identical battles against these drow in small groups though is likely to get boring and repetitive. So how can this be avoided?

Remember that these are chaotic evil drow. After a few organized parties of their fellows have been slaughtered wholesale, the guards will get less motivated in fighting on the behalf of the Baroness. Particularly once Captain Tethyr Quoll is slain, morale fails. If the PCs are drow themselves, the guards may surrender to them. If the PCs are outsiders, the guards instead grab valuables and try to flee. What the guards will not do is face the Baroness herself. They are terrified of the Lady Satha (with good reason). They will flee rather than face her wrath.

4-8 CAPTAIN QUOLL'S PERSONAL CHAMBERS

For a hundred and seventy years, Captain Tethyr Quoll has kept Vothys secure for far Taaryssia. Unlike most of the drow here, he was not banished here. The Captain was born in the nearby commoner's camp. He raised himself by slaying everyone who got in his way. And now, he is the most veteran soldier in this tower. In truth, he despises the Baroness. But he also believes she is the only way to keep this tower safe. Any drow who defeats the Baroness and pledges to leave Vothys unharmed will gain this grim murderer's allegiance.

The Captain's quarters are spartan. The furnishings have little value. However, there is a stout iron chest with a superior lock (DC 30). Inside are the funds with which he rewards the guards. There is currently 1200 gp in drow coinage in the chest, 6 *potions of cure moderate wounds* and an *instant bridge*. Money is valued by the guards even though drow merchants visit Vothys less than once a year. After all, ascending the Great Jumping Off Point is a daunting journey.

Tethyr Quoll, Drow Captain CR 5

XP 1,600

Male drow warrior 6

CE Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +3 Senses darkvision 120 ft.; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 18 touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +1 shield)

hp 45 (6d10+12)

Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +3; +2 vs. enchantment

Immune sleep; SR 11

Weaknesses light blindness

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 cold iron keen rapier +11/+6 (1d6+3/15-20 plus poison)

Ranged mwk hand crossbow +10 (1d4/19-20 plus poison)

Spell Like Abilities (CL 6th)

1/day—*dancing lights*, *darkness*, *faerie fire*

TACTICS

During Combat Tethyr loves his rapier, which he habitually keeps poisoned. He favors it in combat above all else.

Morale Tethyr is too proud to surrender to any non-drow foe and fights to the death. To drow he will surrender if reduced to 11 hp or less, but will immediately betray them unless he believes they will keep Vothys intact and secure.

STATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 12

Base Atk +6 CMB +8 CMD 21

Feats Toughness, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (rapier)

Skills Acrobatics +9, Intimidate +10, Perception +9; Racial Modifiers +2 Perception

Languages Elven, Gnome, Undercommon

SQ poison use

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds* (2), *potion of haste*, thunderstone, drow poison (6), 20 bolts;

Gear mithral shirt, masterwork buckler; +1 cold iron keen rapier, masterwork hand crossbow, fine silk cloak worth 50 gp, silver pendant of office worth 25 gp, miscellaneous other jewelry and medals worth 250 gp, 50 gp in drow coinage, key to payroll chest

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Drow Poison—injury; save Fort DC 13; frequency 1/minute for 2 minutes; initial effect unconsciousness for 1 minute; secondary effect unconsciousness for 2d4 hours; cure 1 save.

LEVEL 5

5-1 STAIRWELL

The spiral stairs that runs throughout the tower of Vothys terminates here. It connects down to chamber 4-1. Two doors to connect to 5-2 and 5-3. The door to 5-3 is always locked by a superior lock (DC 30).

5-2 CONSORT'S CHAMBERS

This ornate chamber houses the noble consorts who serve and advise the Baroness. Like her, they are exiles. This room is lavishly furnished and clearly once quartered four instead of three. The fourth consort Hestia Sevastia (see pg. 71) was first banished to a lower floor (1-11) and then banished from Vothys altogether for displeasing the Baroness. The others have learned their lessons and do nothing to anger Lady Satha. All of the consorts (Tyvonne, Bethara and Jezarael by name) have since becoming doting sycophants. There is a 25% chance the consorts are not here but in 5-4 attending to the Baroness' needs. The silk sheets, noble clothing and rare perfumes here are worth 850 gp.

Drow Noble Consorts (3) CR 4

XP 1,200 each (3,600 XP total)

Male and Female drow noble aristocrat 5

CE Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +8 Senses darkvision 120 ft.; Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 19 touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +4 Dex, +1 shield)

hp 22 (5d8)

Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +6; +2 vs. enchantment

Immune sleep; SR 16

Weaknesses light blindness

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk rapier +9 (1d6+1/18-20 plus poison)

Ranged hand crossbow +7 (1d4/19-20 plus poison)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th)

Constant—*detect magic*

At will—*dancing lights*, *deeper darkness*, *faerie fire*, *feather fall*, *levitate*

1/day—*divine favor*, *dispel magic*, *suggestion* (DC 16)

TACTICS

During Combat They use *divine favor* to strengthen themselves and then attack with poisoned rapiers and spell-like abilities.

Morale The consorts fight to 7 hit points. If Satha is slain, they flee.

STATISTICS

Str 12, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 16

Base Atk +3 CMB +4 CMD 18

Feats Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (rapier)

Skills Bluff +11, Diplomacy +11, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (local) +6, Knowledge (nobility) +6, Perception +12, Sense Motive +10; Racial Modifiers +2 Perception

Languages Abyssal, Elven, Undercommon

SQ poison use

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds* (2), *potion of haste*, thunderstone, drow poison (6), 20 bolts;

Gear mithral shirt, masterwork buckler; masterwork rapier, hand crossbow, noble finery worth 150 gp, 45 gp in drow coinage, pendant of House Sevastia worth 100 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Drow Poison—injury; save Fort DC 13; frequency 1/minute for 2 minutes; initial effect unconsciousness for 1 minute; secondary effect unconsciousness for 2d4 hours; cure 1 save.

5-3 BARONESS' AUDIENCE CHAMBER

This is most likely where the battle against the Baroness will take place. There are always two guards here and at the first sign of trouble, they at least yell (a free action) or better yet strike the large brass gong in this chamber (a standard action). A yell will alert the Baroness, who emerges from her private chambers fully prepared for a fight five rounds later. The gong summons every drow on this level who survives. If the consorts are alive when this fight begins, two come to the aid of Baroness immediately and one runs down stairs trying to summon every guard they can locate.

Beside the guards this chamber is baroquely decorated with black and crimson stone. Braziers of pale glowing incense fully illuminate the room for those with darkvision. At the center of the chamber is the baroness' personal throne.

Baroness' Personal Guard (2)

CR 1

XP 400 each (800 XP total)

hp 18 (stats are identical to drow guards, pg. 77.)

5-4 SATHA'S PRIVATE QUARTERS

This large and sumptuously adorned chamber is the private quarters of the Baroness herself. She is usually here. Sometimes she is alone, meditating on recent matters. 25% of the time 1d3 of the consorts are here (see 5-2 above). If no news of any disturbances has reached their ears, they will be unclothed and perhaps even intimately engaged, though weapons and consumables will be close at hand. If there has been any word of attack or intrusion, then they will be dressed for battle and discussing the present situation.

The room is filled with the baroness' finery. The Lady Satha has an extensive collection of perfumes. There are 10 doses of exotic perfume that grant a +2 circumstance bonus to diplomacy checks with drow that alone is worth 1000 gp. In addition, there is also silk clothing (including some positively shocking lingerie), a fine silver mirror, a collection of mithral and ruby jewelry and an assortment of rare narcotics worth 2650 gp. In a small cabinet is also Satha's spellbook.

Satha's Spellbook "The Codex Sevastia"

Bound in black metal and the crimson, scaled leather of some indeterminate reptilian beast, this large locked tome bears its title in fine elvish script. Inside is found not just spells but a family history of the House of Sevastia. The text reveals a brutal tale of internecine warfare and betrayal that eventually led to the family being cast out of a far drow city named Taaryssia.

Protection The edges of the first three pages are coated with nitharit poison (contact; save Fort DC 13; frequency 1/minute for 6 minutes; effect 1d3 Con damage; cure 1 save); Average lock (DC 25)

Value 825 gp

SPELLS

3rd – *dispel magic*, *fly*, *lightning bolt*

2nd – *bear's endurance*, *bull's strength*, *invisibility*, *mirror image*, *scorching ray*, *web*

1st – *alarm*, *comprehend languages*, *disguise self*, *grease*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *shield*, *true strike*

Lady Satha Sevastia, Baroness of Vothys

CR 8

XP 4,800

Female noble drow magus (kensai) 8

CE Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +12 **Senses** darkvision 120 ft.; Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 21, flat-footed 18 (+6 armor, +2 Dex, +7 dodge, +2 deflection)

hp 48 (8d8+8) [64]

Fort +7 [+9], **Ref** +4, **Will** +8; +2 vs. enchantment

Immune sleep; SR 19

Weaknesses light blindness

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +2 *longsword* +11/+6 (1d8+6/19-20 plus poison)

Magus Spells Prepared (CL 8th; concentration +14)

3rd – *dispel magic*, *lightning bolt* (DC 19)

2nd – *bear's endurance*, *bull's strength*, *mirror image* (2), *scorching ray*

1st – *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement* (2), *shield*, *true strike*

0th – *acid orb*, *arcane mark*, *daze*, *prestidigitation*

Arcane Pool 10; **Magus Arcana** - arcane accuracy, empowered magic

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th)

Constant—*detect magic*

At will—*dancing lights*, *deeper darkness*, *faerie fire*, *feather fall*, *levitate*

1/day—*divine favor*, *dispel magic*, *suggestion* (DC 16)

TACTICS

Before Combat If given warning of an impending attack, the Baroness will prepare by casting *bear's endurance* (dur: 8 min.), *bull's strength* (dur: 8 min), *mirror image* (1d4+2 images, dur: 8 min.), *shield* (8 min.), and *divine favor* (1 minute). She will also drink a potion of haste (dur: 6 rnds) and spend one point of her arcane pool to transform her sword into +2 *frost shock longsword* (1 min). That takes 5 rounds and transforms her melee attack into: **melee** +2 *frost shock longsword* +16/+16/+11 (1d8+10 + 1d6 cold + 1d6 electricity/19-20 plus poison)

During Combat The baroness is a ruthless combatant who holds nothing back against her adversaries. She starts most battles with an empowered *lightning bolt*. She uses her improved spell combat to fight sword and spell. She uses *ray of enfeeblement* to weaken melee opponents. She uses *dispel magic* to cut through magical defenses. If she is having trouble hitting a foe, she will use arcane accuracy and *true strike*. Every hit she will use perfect strike to maximize damage until her arcane pool is exhausted.

Morale The Baroness knows she has nowhere to hide. She fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 14 [18], **Dex** 15, **Con** 12 [16], **Int** 22, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +6 **CMB** +8 [+10] **CMD** 20 [22]

Feats Combat Casting, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Spell Penetration, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword)

Skills Bluff +10, Diplomacy +14 (+15 to gather information), Intimidate +14, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +13, Sense Motive +14, Spellcraft +17, Perception +12; Racial Modifiers +2 Perception

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Celestial, Dwarven, Elven, Gnome, Skis'raal, Undercommon

SQ canny defense, fighter training (5th level fighter), iajitsu, improved spell combat, perfect strike, poison use, spell strike

Traits Noble Courtesan, Princess

Combat Gear potion of cure moderate wounds (2), potion of haste, drow poison (3)

Gear +2 *mithral shirt*, +2 *longsword*, *headband of vast intellect* +2, *ring of protection* +2, *mithral and ruby pendant of House Sevastia* worth 600 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Drow Poison—injury; save Fort DC 13; frequency 1/minute for 2 minutes; *initial effect* unconsciousness for 1 minute; *secondary effect* unconsciousness for 2d4 hours; *cure* 1 save.



Z THE GREAT JUMPING OFF POINT

The Great Jumping Off Point is nothing but a great vertical shaft in the earth that leads down to the lower Azathyr. If the PCs are ever going to find Dammerhall or Taaryssia or whatever their ultimate destination may be, they must go down it. There are several ways to traverse this great pit. *Levitate* or *feather fall* will not work (at least with a single casting by a 5th or 6th level caster). The pit is just too deep! *Fly* will make it, though combat with bats may make even that spell dangerous.

Of course, the PCs could simply climb down. The pit is angled so it is actually an easy climb most of the way (DC 10). The PCs can take 10 if they travel at half-speed. The only dangerous part is at Z-2 (see below) the switch back near the bat cave. At that point, the PCs must either traverse the great gap to the other side or climb upside down along the western wall (DC 15 climb check for 120 ft.). Spells like *spider climb* will of course make all of this much simpler.

The most dramatic way to traverse the pit is the gnomish balloon salvaged from the observatory (R-4 above) on the Isle of Seven Horns in the Fungal Jungle. Using the *svirfneblin* balloon, the PCs can simply drift down, having then to worry only about the great bats that prowl this pit.

If Knivy Ivy is still with the party by this point, she has heard of the pit and knows that is extremely deep. "Two thousand feet at least! Some name it the deepest hole in the world." Drow from Vothys also know this.

Z-1 THE RIM

This is the lip of the Great Jumping Off Point. The view from the rim is pictured on page 92. No bottom is visible. Small eyeless bats fly everywhere hunting small fluttering insects that infest the pit.

Z-2 HUNTERS IN THE DARK

This is where the pit begins to bend and then switch back. It is also a great natural blind and where the so-called Hezzarian Hunters prefer to feed. Four of these great bats lurk here, hanging off the far wall using their blindsense to hunt from movement. If detected, they leap from the wall to the attack.

Z-3 BAT CAVES

This is the lair of the Hezzarian Hunters, a crack in the side of the pit wall. The entrance way is only twenty feet tall and fifteen feet high. And yet the Hunters, which are bats are large as tigers have no problem flying out from the entrance way. Altogether eight more adult hunters live in this small cavernous complex. They attack anyone foolish enough to venture here.

Hezzarian Hunters

CR 3

XP 800

Variant advanced dire bat

N Large animal

Init +2; Senses blindsense 120 ft.; Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +3 natural, -1 size)

hp 27 (5d8+5)

Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +3

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 40 ft. (good)

Melee bite +5 (1d8+4)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

TACTICS

During Combat The hunters use flyby attack to swoop past their foes taking a bite as they pass. They each repeat this until they have slain one medium sized victim they can take back to the cave to consume.

Morale In the pit, the hunters flee when reduced to half points (13 hp or less). In their caves (Z-3) they fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 17, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 6

Base Atk +3; CMB +7; CMD 19

Feats Alertness, Flyby Attack, Stealthy

Skills Fly +9, Perception +12, Stealth +5; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception when using blindsense

Z-3a. The Dining Hall – This cavern is strewn with bones both animal, dwarven, elven and gnomish. Amidst the bones are 126 gp in mixed coinage and a garnet ring worth 500 gp still attached to a bony finger.

Z-3b. Den #1 – Two Hunters nest here.

Z-3c. Den #2 – One Hunter nests here.

Z-3d. Den #3 – Two Hunters and three non-combat young hang from the ceiling. Amidst the bones is a *ring of feather falling* (DC 20 Perception to find).

Z-3e. Den #4 – Three Hunters and a dozen non-combat young dwell here.

Z-4 HOW DEEP DOES THIS GO?

At a depth of 1600 ft., the pit twists the other way and forms a false bottom.

Z-5 THE BOTTOM

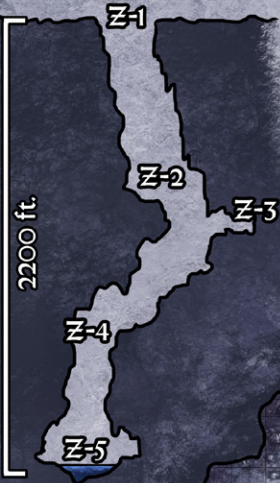
At last, almost 2200 ft. down, the Great Jumping Off Point ends. The massive pit ends in a pool of still water enriched by countless generations of bat droppings. Small insects unique to this place swarm here. If examined closely, the bugs are miniature dragonflies, pure white, blind and pearlescent. They are no threat. The pool at its deepest is a hundred feet deep and is also home to blind cave fish and glass-clear cave shrimp. Both of these are edible, if the PCs are in search of food. And besides the pool of water there are also three passages that trail off into darkness. These passages no doubt lead towards the Earth's Wound...

Here ends Book One of *Throne of Night*.



THE GREAT JUMPING OFF POINT

□ = 10'



Z-3

a

b

c

d

e



CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

With the defeat of the Baroness, the PCs now control a small under-empire that stretches from Fasturvalt to Vothys. Whether they have taken this empire by brutal conquest or by defending the deep gnomes and avenging their attackers matters little. They have built an empire in the dark. Perhaps they have even explored quite a bit of the Fungal Jungle and discovered some valuable resources there as well. Perhaps they have made allies or enemies amongst the skis'raal or the Xan. Perhaps they have explored the ruins of lost Vaustenstad and are considering resurrecting this svirfneblin ghost town. All of these actions will have consequence upon their fledgling empire. Next book we'll present rules (compatible with Paizo's Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Campaign book) for ruling this newly conquered empire and seeing it flourish or falter.

And of course below the Great Jumping Off Point there is an entirely new region of the underworld to explore and conquer. We have only begun to explore the Azathyr. The Earth's Wound, Dammerhall, the Sunless Seas, Taaryssia City-Without-Mercy and the Heart of the Web and the Deeps of Dyzan all await our discovery. We have only just begun to discover the destiny of our Throne of Night.

TROUBLESHOOTING

Throne of Night is a sandbox. There is some hints of a greater plotline (the restoration of Dammerhall for Explorers, the possibility of immortality by replacing the demigod Queen of Taaryssia, the menace of the neothelid) but overall, the PCs cannot go "off the rails". Anything is up for grabs. Still, some implications may not be obvious. So here we give a little advice.

My players are terrified of the drow army. They want to flee from Fasturvalt rather than help defend it.

It is understandable that first level PCs may decide to flee against such superior odds. Before the PCs leave town have Old Tammar come to them and say this:

"You're leaving aren't you? Don't lie to me. I can see it in your eyes. It's alright. It's the sensible thing to do. Staying here might very well be the last mistake you ever make. But you know who can't leave? All of us. This is our home. We've got nowhere else to go. This ... this is all we know."

"For a brief moment, I thought we might have found friends brave enough to lead us against the darkness that threatens to overwhelm us. I've heard great tales about the bravery of the dwarves. But I guess that's all they were in the end. They were just stories. Good journeys, my friends. Perhaps we'll meet again."

Nope. Guilt didn't work. They're still leaving.

Let them. Fasturvalt is taken and transformed into a slave-hold. Drow patrols now roam the Upper Azathyr and begin charging tolls upon the Gnome King's Highway. A drow civil war breaks out between the baroness and the commander as both vie for dominance. Can the PCs take advantage of that confusion, liberate Fasturvalt and save the gnomes from slavery?

Lord Geirni is dead from poisoned candy. The crossbows in the armory are burned. My PCs failed to save the six soldiers. Malathorn got away and gleefully blabbed to the commander about these calamities. Are my PCs doomed at the Battle of Fasturvalt?

These are setbacks but none guarantee defeat. The PCs can raise a militia armed with picks. Perhaps some of the villagers own hunting crossbows. The townsfolk cobble together 10 light crossbows and 100 bolts. This makeshift army plus the PCs equals a fighting chance. Remember, things often look darkest just before the dawn.

My drow utterly failed to conquer Fasturvalt. What now?

They can't go home and report a failure to the baroness. This being their first failure, Lady Satha will let them off with only the briefest amount of torture before their public execution. She is generous that way.

So, they must try again. But now, without an army, they must be crafty. This is not a bad thing. They could sneak into town disguised as traders and assassinate their enemies. They could take over the skis'raal colony and lead a spider invasion. They could explore the Fungal Jungle, find a fortune and hire duergar mercenaries travelling the gnome king's highway. Be creative! The second Battle of Fasturvalt will be very different from the first.

My characters attacked Xan-Zara (see pg. 53) Should I kill them all?

Yes. ... No, wait. First warn them just before they charge this demigod-level foe. *"There is something about this beast that fills you with the deepest dread. It seems old beyond all understanding, powerful beyond all your experience. This foe is clearly beyond you."*

If they still charge, kill a random PC or ally in one blow and have Xan-Zara pause. *"Ah, mortality. I had forgotten what death was like. Intriguing. Perhaps we should talk rather than battle."*

And if they still attack? Yeah, kill 'em all.

My players have missed something in the Fungal Jungle I really wanted them to encounter. What should I do?

The location of everything is just a suggestion. Feel free to move encounters to better suit the movements of your party. Merely note the change on your map so you can keep track of the new location.

In an Overlord campaign, do the drow nobles know the password to Vothys?

No. The Baroness changed the password as soon as they left. She was hoping they would not return (thanks to her assassin), but even if they did she could never trust them at the head of such an army.

Is there any way for Overlord PCs to make peace with the Baroness?

Honestly, probably not. The Baroness sees the PCs as deadly rivals. She sees within them the same ambition and potential that she herself possesses. She will never believe that they will not betray her and seek her death. So she must see them dead.

Perhaps if they promise to give her Fasturvalt and forever leave down the Pit of Hezzarian never to return she will consider letting them go. But even then, how can she trust them? No, she will think it better to act like she is letting them leave and then send soldiers after them to kill them. For the PCs to build their empire below, the Baroness must die.

What happens if the PC drow go back to Vothys and try to pretend they are still loyal subjects of the Baroness and seek an audience?

If they come alone, the Baroness will not believe her luck. The sergeant on the wall will be stunned that the PCs dared return so brazenly. He will summon Captain Quoll (see pg. 87) and the captain and a dozen soldiers will escort the PCs into the Throne Room (1-1) where the Baroness will assemble with all her subjects. She will question the PCs about how the battle went and the current status of Fasturvalt. She will listen with great interest, trusting not a word they say. At first, she will play the role of the grateful lord pleased at this great gift they have given her.

However, when the PCs are finally done with their report, she speaks: *"Truly, you have done a great deed in conquering Fasturvalt. But do not think you talk to a fool. I discovered the poisoned wine you left in my chambers. So this was your plan. So slay me and return to reclaim Vothys for your own. Your plan has failed, miscreants, and now you must die! Seize them my guards!"*

Of course the poisoned wine story is a complete fabrication. The Baroness is simply inventing charges to give a legal reason to slay her rivals. Within this court, her word is law and, surrounded by her loyal courtiers and guards, the PCs are likely facing a battle they cannot win. Still, they can yet escape. The wall is now at half strength. If they can escape the throne room, the Baroness will not pursue them into the wild instead organizing a few hunting groups. The PCs will have a few hours head start to evade their pursuers.

Out in the wild, they can rebuild their army and return to Vothys once more. This time, they will know exactly where they stand with the treacherous Lady Satha Sevastia.

My Overlord PCs didn't come alone. They brought an army of drow, skis'raal, gnome slaves, etc.

If the sergeant at the wall (see pg. 77 above) sees an army of victorious drow returning to Vothys, it will shake his resolve to hold the gate. Against a few outcasts, he is confident he can slay them. But an army? The guards of Vothys are not fanatics and not eager to commit suicide for the Baroness. The sergeant will send a runner to fetch Captain Quoll (see pg. 87) who will arrive accompanied by a dozen guards.

If Quoll sees an army he believes can sack Vothys, he will negotiate with the PCs. He secretly despises the Baroness and is in no mood to die for her sake. On the other hand, neither does he want to face the deadly lady Satha in combat. He has seen her powers at work on several different occasions and has no interest in becoming her next victim.

If the PCs are at all reasonable and polite, he will make this bargain: *"All my guards know this secret passphrase 'Tonight the viper sleeps'. Say it and they will stand aside and let you pass. All that will remain in the main tower are the Lady Satha and her courtiers and servants. The Lady Satha is on the fifth floor. If you can defeat her, then you will gain my service. If you cannot and try to flee the tower, my guards will kill you. They may enter the tower...without your army. Agreed?"* His password works on all the regular guards save for the Baroness personal guard. It does not cause any of the other named individuals to stand down.

Story Award: Award a CR 7 (3,200 XP) for convincing Quoll and his guard to betray the Baroness.

I need a random cave map. Which map should I use?

On the next page you will see find an assortment of random caverns and passage maps. Use them whenever you need a place to set an encounter.

MISCELLANEOUS CAVES AND PASSAGES

□ = 5'

Cavern
of
Crystal

An
Intersection

A Cair

A Hidden
Cavern

Side Chambers

A Dead
End

A Natural
Ambush Site

A Convergence
of
Passages

A Cavernous
Ford

A fine
place
to make
camp

A Natural
Stairway

APPENDIX: SONS OF DAMMERHALL

What more is there to say about dwarves? So much has already been written about this arguably most iconic of fantasy races and it is certainly not possible in four pages to equal that already herculean effort. Between the Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook and the Pathfinder RPG Advanced Race Guide, you already have a massive array of mechanical options for these short but resilient heroes.

Instead, in these few pages we will discuss how to dwarves unique and distinctive in a “Throne of Night” of campaign and how to create a party entirely of dwarves and yet still have a group of characters where PC niches do not too much overlap. In short, I am not here to tell you once more that dwarves often hail from the mountains and are famed as craftsmen and miners. I think you already know that. Instead, I’m going to try and show how run the greatest and most definitively dwarf campaign ever.

ROLEPLAYING DWARVES

Typically, a party of adventurers in any fantasy adventure campaign is a band of diverse wanderers thrown together by fate who in time become close friends and together manage to accomplish great things. Playing in an all dwarven campaign allows you an opportunity to change that fundamental dynamic and play a different sort of party. Here we’ll consider a few suggestions that can make for an interesting departure from a typical adventuring party.

WE ARE FAMILY

One dynamic than an all dwarven campaign allows is the possibility that all the PCs are related by blood. In fact, at the Game Master’s discretion, it may be required for all the PCs to share a common bloodline and are members of the same dwarven noble house now bereft of its birthright by a cruel turn of fate.

If that’s the case, you should work out who is related to who and how. Are some of the PCs siblings? Are there any twins? If the PCs are related, who is the oldest? Who is whose cousin? Who is any given PC’s father, mother, uncles and aunts?

Take a moment to draw out a family tree of the PC’s noble house. This need not be an exercise in complex genealogy. A few minutes of discussion and a quick sketch can give much ample fodder for roleplaying. Your dwarven fighter is no longer simply Thrundi Steel-Axe. He has become Thrundi son of Thrane, called the Steel-Axe first by his now dead father at the Battle of Bryden Pass.

The PCs needn’t worry about filling out exactly what all that means at campaign’s start. Just establish a few names and shared events and as the campaign begins and you can fill out more details as the story unfolds. For example, later in the campaign, events could make it clear how father Thrane died and why Thrundi blames himself for his death and how this quest allows a guilty son a long overdue chance to redeem himself.

Family dynamics allows for all sorts of interesting roleplaying situations. If a PC is captured by a drow patrol in the Fungal Jungle, it’s not a random friend you met a few weeks ago who is facing torture and death at the hands of the cruel Baroness of Vothys. It’s your younger brother. How much more urgent does that make his rescue?

Family relationships are also a great source of manageable but entertaining intra-party conflicts. Siblings may squabble. Older family members may decry younger, bolder relations as reckless. One branch of the family may not see eye to eye with the other. Ultimately such conflicts should not become so intense that they sunder the party. Instead, they should be the sort of conflicts that make events of the campaign more meaningful.



WE ARE ROYALTY

A variation upon playing a family is not just playing any family of dwarves. The PCs are instead all that remains of the once great house of the High Kings of Dammerhall. In the blood of their veins flows the royal claim to rule all dwarves throughout the realms. Just as in any family, you should still establish who is related to who, but now the Game Master should also establish the order of succession. Who should be king first? If one of the PCs dies who is next in line for the throne? Are some of the dwarves here not full blooded members of the royal house, but instead more distant relations or household retainers?

You should also choose a name for the royal house. In the campaign, by default, the royal house of Dammerhall is called House Tarnhammer. But there is no reason a Game Master could not change that to something the PCs concocted on their own. Rather than dictating what it means to be dwarven royalty, let the PCs discover that on their own.

As not just any family, but a royal family, the PCs have all the intricacy of normal familial relations with the additional pressure of dynasty and destiny. Will they succeed in reclaiming their lost birthright or are they destined to be the last of their royal name?

WE ARE OUR PEOPLES' LAST HOPE

One very important theme in the "Throne of Night" Explorer's campaign is that the dwarves are a scattered people in decline. The calamity of the destruction of Dammerhall has been a blow that has all but destroyed this proud race. The widespread, fast-breeding, energetic race of men now seems poised to become the world's true masters. The grandeur of the dwarves fades with every passing year. Their great sagas are but tales to be told...

The PCs are the last chance to change that fate. If they cannot find a way to restore dwarven glory, then no one will. The quest of the PCs ultimately is not about a place. Dammerhall is just a ruin. Instead the real heart of this quest is to build once more a powerful, independent dwarven realm. The world has not seen such a thing in a hundred years.

This mission cannot be accomplished in the surface realms. The myriad kingdoms of men are too entrenched. The dwarves have neither the will nor the numbers to fight against humanity. Instead, if there is to be hope, it must come from below. Within the underworld, there is space enough for the dwarves to thrive and rebuild. The task will not be easy, but it is, with courage and resolve, at least possible. The dwarves have not yet sung their last song of glory.

DWARVEN XENOPHOBIA

One thing that each party must determine on their own is how willing they are to make allies. It seems natural that a party of good-aligned dwarves would naturally be friendly to allies. And in Book One, there are some potentially very bizarre allies to be made indeed: mushroom men, deep gnomes and intelligent spiders just to name a few.

But in fantasy literature, there is also a deep tradition of dwarves been a mysterious and xenophobic people who trust only their own kind. Adopting this position can make for some interesting roleplaying situations and conundrums. Yes, the deep gnomes need the dwarves and vice versa. But can they overcome their own petty mistrust and bigotry to work together against a common foe?

And if this quest is truly about reclaiming dwarven glory, how can that be accomplished in a realm overrun with and built by the efforts of non-dwarves? Perhaps the great lesson of this campaign is that what led the dwarves to ruin in the first place was the belief that they needed no one. When Dammerhall faced its greatest peril, the dwarves did not seek much needed outside help. Instead, they closed their gates and ensured their own destruction. Will this happen again?

DO DWARVES SING?

In the most famous dwarven quest of them all – J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Hobbit" – the answer is an unqualified yes. Dwarves sing to remember ancient defeats, to unify their purpose and to lift their own spirits. So, how should this be represented in game?

The most obvious way to represent this is to have a dwarven bard in the party. The bard class is rich in mechanics for how songs can strengthen the band. When the dwarves hear the ancient songs of the fore-fathers they are driven to do even greater deeds today.

Also encourage your players to write an actual poem describing their deeds. You are not looking for Tennyson here. Just a few lines in simple rhyming verse can create a very memorable campaign accessory. If you are using the optional "Hero Point" system from the Advanced Player's Guide be sure to reward such efforts with a point or two.

MAKING DWARVEN CHARACTERS

Making a dwarven character for the “Throne of Night” Adventure Path is similar to making characters for any campaign using The Pathfinder Roleplaying Game with just a few modifications.

STEP 1 – DETERMINE ABILITY SCORES

Any method will do, but we present here an alternate method appropriate to this adventure path called ‘Focus and Foible’. Besides that one, the 25 point buy method is also recommended.

OPTIONAL SYSTEM: FOCUS AND FOIBLE

Choose a Focus, an ability score at which you excel. You receive an 18 in that score.

Choose a Foible, an ability score that is your weakness. You receive an 8 in that score.

The other four, roll 1d10+7 four times in order. There are no rerolls or moving of ability scores. Those are your other four scores.

STEP 2 – PICK YOUR RACE

This is simple. You are playing a dwarf.

OPTIONAL SYSTEM: ABILITY SCORE TRAITS

In order to make dwarven characters more versatile a game master might allow dwarves to spend one of their two traits selecting an Ability Score Trait. These replace the usual dwarven racial ability score modifiers: +2 Constitution, +2 Wisdom, -2 Charisma.

CLEVER HANDS

You are born artisan, cunning and quick with your hands. Whether you have chosen to use these gifts for noble pursuits or becoming a thief does not matter, you are mistrusted regardless by your fellow dwarves.

Benefit: +2 Dexterity, +2 Intelligence, -2 Charisma

RESPECTED SPEAKER

You are a rare dwarf who is both eloquent and a born leader. Your words are given extra consideration amongst your people. However, by dwarven standards you are physically inept.

Benefit: +2 Charisma, +2 Wisdom, -2 Strength

SCHOLAR OF THE ANCIENT WAYS

You are a learned dwarf, well steeped in the ancient lore of your people. However, all this focus upon book learning has kept you away from more physical pursuits. You are thus small and sickly by dwarven standards.

Benefit: +2 Intelligence, +2 Wisdom, -2 Constitution

TRICKSTER AND SINGER

Dwarves have a reputation as being a stolid, humorless people. But there are few dwarves, usually fine singers and storytellers, who are given leeway for being charismatic and quick of hand and wit. Of course, these brash tricksters are still often in trouble,

Benefit: +2 Charisma, +2 Dexterity, -2 Wisdom

WARRIOR OF LEGEND

You were born for war. No one matches your prowess in battle, but alas also no one matches your recklessness.

Benefit: +2 Constitution, +2 Strength, -2 Wisdom

STEP 3 – PICK YOUR CLASS

All classes are permitted but a few classes require some special considerations.

Clerics, Inquisitors and Oracles are permitted but if the PCs are using the optional Patron system below, be sure that these characters worship either that Patron or a god who is philosophically compatible with that Patron. It might be advisable simply to require any divine PC to worship the Patron chosen by the party to avoid unnecessary intra-party religious conflict.

Druids are permitted but face some unique challenges in an underground campaign. Normally common components such as mistletoe or berries will be hard to find. Animal companions who can operate in the dark (such as dire bats or giant beetles) will have an edge over more typical choices. Also the cave druid archetype is a good choice to make this class more viable.

Gunslingers are permitted but this adventure path assumes by default that firearms do not exist. There are no guns found in the treasure or adversaries who use firearms. If you want to play a gunslinger, you should talk to the Game Master about this. If they approve this choice, then they will need to modify the campaign accordingly to accommodate your character.

Ninja and Samurai are permitted but the campaign as written makes no special allowances for them. Thus there are no eastern weapons or armor in the treasure (katana or naginata, for example). Further you must explain how a dwarven samurai came to be allied with western dwarves. Much like the gunslinger above, talk to the Game Master and work out these special needs.

Rangers will find that Humanoid (elf) and Aberration are solid choices for their favored enemy.

Sorcerers of any bloodline are permitted. Elemental (earth) sorcerers are a particularly good choice.

STEP 4 – PICK SKILLS AND SELECT FEATS

This step is unchanged.

However, this campaign lends itself more than most to a house rule that gives everyone two more skill points per level. The PCs will often be on their own in the underworld for much of the campaign and will have difficulty relying on others for skills. This house rule will make them more self-reliant.

STEP 5 – BUY EQUIPMENT

Characters begin with normal starting equipment.

STEP 6 – FINISHING DETAILS

As normal except that evil alignments are not allowed in an Explorer campaign.

DWARVEN CAMPAIGN TRAITS

These traits are specific to “Throne of Night” and any dwarf may take them if traits are being used.

ANVIL HEART

You were born in a forge and for you, such places will always be home. You are the heir of a long tradition of dwarven craftsmanship.

Benefit: You receive a +2 trait bonus to one craft skill involving metal-working (for example, blacksmithing, weaponmaking or armorsmithing). That skill is always a class skill for you.

CAST IRON STOMACH

There is little you cannot gain sustenance from.

Benefit: +2 trait bonus versus ingested poisons or drugs and “get along in the wild” survival skill rolls that are trying to find food for you receive a +2 bonus.

DWARVEN NOBILITY

Within your veins flows the true blood of dwarven nobility.

Benefit: You receive a +1 trait bonus on saving throws against spells, spell-like abilities, and poison.

HEIR OF DAMMERHALL

You have a direct claim to the title of High King of Dammerhall and the royal Tarnhammer clan. Of course without possession of Dammerhall and the crown, scepter and sash of the High King this title is only symbolic. Still it earns you great respect amongst other dwarves.

Benefit: +1 trait bonus to Diplomacy skill checks made when dealing with dwarves. Also if you take the Leadership feat, gain a +1 trait bonus to your Leadership score as long as all your followers are dwarves.

IMPRESSIVE BEARD

Your beard invokes nothing less than awe and respect amongst your fellow dwarves. As a cultural bias, they tend to trust your word perhaps more than they should.

Benefit: +1 bonus to both Bluff and Diplomacy skill checks made with dwarves.

KEEPER OF SONGS

You know by heart an impressive repertoire of old dwarven songs. When you sing them, your fellow dwarves are inspired by your tales and may even sing along strengthening your bardic magic.

Benefit: +1 bonus to Perform (sing) skill checks when dealing with dwarves and a +1 trait bonus to Perform (sing) checks on any bardic performance when dwarves are present.

LEGENDARY DRINKER

Your ability to hold your liquor is almost without equal. In fact, you feel nowhere as at home as in a bar with your fellow dwarves enjoying fine dwarven ale.

Benefit: You are never sickened by drinking alcohol and a night spent in a bar restores you hit points equal to your level.

OLD MONEY

Your family possesses great wealth.

Benefit: Your starting cash increases to 900 gp.

RELIC OF THE DWARVEN SMITHY

You possess a weapon forged in the foundries of old Dammerhall.

Benefit: You begin the campaign with a free masterwork melee weapon of dwarven construction. It is missing a gemstone from a socket. If that gem were restored, the weapon would likely become magical.

SCHOLAR OF DWARVEN LORE

You know much of the rich history of your people and can recall it without a moment's hesitation.

Benefit: You get a +1 trait bonus to all Knowledge checks that deal with dwarven matters.

SECRETS OF THE DWARVEN BREWERS

You are privy to the secrets of the dwarven brewers of old. You can, with the right equipment, make beer of legendary quality.

Benefit: You receive a +2 trait bonus to Craft (Brewing) skill checks and Craft (brewing) is always a class skill for you.

APPENDIX: LORDS OF THE AZATHYR

Much like the dwarves, the dark elves have become an iconic fantasy race. Since their first appearance in a roleplaying game way back in 1977, they have inspired the imagination of gamers and been a fan favorite as villains. As PCs, the drow would have to wait until 1988 to achieve icon status when R.A. Salvatore introduced a certain sullen drow ranger via his novels.

What the “Throne of Night” overlord campaign hopes to accomplish is to open up the possibilities of playing drow to include them being both villains and PCs simultaneously. That Fire Mountain Games would attempt this effort should not be too surprising given the success of our first adventure path “Way of the Wicked”. In these few pages, we will attempt to make that possible.

ROLEPLAYING DROW

A band of chaotic evil drow is anything but a typical adventuring party. Almost all the usual elements that tie together a PC group are missing from these black-hearted villains. They aren’t friends. They aren’t bound by any ethical constraint or moral limitations. They aren’t here to save the world or restore their people. So why do they work together? With the drow, solidly establishing this at campaign start is critical.

THE SEVEN SIBLINGS CAMPAIGN

One way to unite a band of chaotic evil drow is to make them all family and not just any sort of family. The PCs are very rare elven septuplets. Born from the same mother on the same unhallowed day, their birth was seen as a sign from the demon lords who hold sway over drow society. They were destined for some great purpose. What that purpose is, who can say? But ever since their birth, the septuplets have been feared by those in power in drow society.

It was this very fear that caused the septuplets to be banished from the city of their birth Taaryssia (detailed in Book IV of “Throne of Night”). They were sent to the farthest, most remote corner of the drow empire – forgotten Vothys. The new baroness, Lady Satha, was not eager to receive such a gift. She too was weary of what such an obvious divine band of miscreants could do to her little empire. But she accepted the seven, because she had no choice.

Now the septuplets have come of age. They are no longer seven hapless orphans (their mother was killed long ago by the vicious infighting that plagues drow society). Instead, they are now seven young adults bound by blood and divine purpose to change drow society forever here in the Azathyr.

Every one of the PCs shares a memory of their priestess mother. As young children, she conducted bizarre blood rituals. She later told you that the purpose of the rituals were both to make the seven stronger but also to place a curse upon any of the siblings who dared harm their brothers or sisters. Is the curse real or merely a tactic by their mother to unite them? So far none of the seven siblings has been willing to test the truth of this.

But what is certain is that there is something strangely divine about the PCs. Whenever all seven of the siblings fight together, they are automatically under the effect of a *bless* spell. At fifth level, this upgrades to *prayer* (these spells always count as being created by a caster equal to the PCs average level). For further details about the divine source of their power, see the Patron system on pg. 104.

The Seven Siblings campaign solves several problems inherent with a chaotic evil campaign. The PCs have a reason to work together and not betray each other at every turn. When they work together, they are definitely stronger. Further, drow society has made them outcasts. The fear and jealousy of their fellows means that they have only each other. Everyone other drow is a potential enemy, but the seven siblings know that they are in this together.

OTHER RACES

It is possible to run “Throne of Night” with races beside drow and dwarf. In some of the later books we will even be exploring these in some details (for example, the duergar). Still, in the meantime if players choose to make up a standard adventuring party of other surface races, then the plot works largely unchanged. For predominately heroic groups, run the Explorer campaign. For predominately villainous parties, run the Overlord campaign.

You should also include this trait. It allows everyone to possess a rudimentary darkvision. Though this trait is likely not balanced for other campaigns, here it is essential.

ATTUNED TO DARKNESS

You have some connection the underworld that makes your particularly attuned to the endless dark.

Benefit: Gain Darkvision 30 ft.

Of course, a problem with the seven siblings campaign is that it makes replacing dead PCs all but impossible. However, seven is more than the typical number of players in a campaign. This gives several replacement non-player siblings who can fill in when a PC dies. Because the player characters need each other, the Game Master can give the PCs the chance to go on a quest to somehow resurrect the fallen PC. Until that is done, the other NPC siblings can be used as backup characters so that players never sit idle without a character to play.

THE LOST HOUSE CAMPAIGN

In Book IV of "Throne of Night," the PCs will be able to visit the drow city of Taaryssia. During that time they will learn that one of the great noble houses of the city has been recently wiped out during one of the more brutal intrigues of the drow nobility. The PCs could be the last scions of that noble house. It turns out that the PCs were not exiled in Vothys so much as they were hidden so that the current drow leadership could not find them.

By default the destroyed noble house is known as House Vytharia. Of course, the GM is more than welcome to change this name to suit the PCs. In this setup the PCs are related by blood. Take a moment to establish a family tree. How are all the PCs related and who is first in line to rule the house if it were ever restored to greatness?

You should leave exactly what happened to the noble house slightly vague for now. In Book IV there will be a lot more information about the byzantine world of drow politics in Taaryssia, the City Without Mercy. For now, suffice to say, that the PC's family was slaughtered and they were lucky to leave the city alive. They must be careful about using their old family name. If the rulers of Taaryssia knew that there were survivors of House Vytharia then assassins would be dispatched to finish the job.

This campaign setup gives the PCs a common enemy – the other noble houses and the queen of the drow herself. This common enemy can unite these scions of destruction and give them something outward to focus their wicked impulses upon rather than turn upon each other.

This campaign can be combined with the Seven Siblings to create an outcast band of noble septuplets being hunted by the current regime of Taaryssia. Perhaps because there was prophecy made that it will be these seven who will finally manage to slay the Queen and bring a new order to the drow of the Azathyr.

HELL COMES TO THE AZATHYR

In this campaign, the PCs are not chaotic evil demon-worshippers. Instead, the PCs serve the infernal god Asmodeus. The campaign then takes on a tone of a religious war amongst the drow. The PCs seek to replace the old demonic order with their new infernal faith.

This has the advantage of ensuring that the PCs are predominately lawful evil in alignment (in fact the GM might require they be this alignment). Lawful evil is a much more manageable evil alignment. The PCs are much more likely to cooperate in service to their infernal overlord. They can use their increased cooperation to powerful effect. Where the other drow noble houses and temples are paralyzed by infighting and treachery, the new devil-worshipping cult is unified and organized. It will be this very advantage that allows bringing a new order to the Azathyr.

For further advice on running a lawful evil campaign, see Fire Mountain Games "Way of the Wicked" adventure path, a level 1-20 lawful evil adventure path.



MAKING DROW CHARACTERS

Making drow characters for the “Throne of Night” Adventure Path is similar to making characters for any Pathfinder Roleplaying Game campaign with just a few modifications.

STEP 1 – DETERMINE ABILITY SCORES

Any method will do, but we present here an alternate method appropriate to this adventure path called ‘Focus and Foible’. Besides that, the 25 point buy method is also recommended.

OPTIONAL SYSTEM: FOCUS AND FOIBLE

See page 96 for details

STEP 2 – PICK YOUR RACE

You are playing a drow.

OPTIONAL SYSTEM: DROW NOBILITY

There is a second drow race called Drow Noble. It makes characters considerably more powerful, but in a chaotic evil campaign that is not necessarily unwarranted. The GM has two choices here: they can either make drow nobility a series of four feats detailed in the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Advanced Racial Guide: Drow Nobility, Greater Drow Nobility, Improved Drow Nobility and Noble Spell Resistance or they can simply make every PC a drow noble. If the second option is used, you should always consider your PCs a level higher than their level would suggest.

OPTIONAL SYSTEM: ABILITY SCORE TRAITS

In order to make drow characters more versatile a game master might allow players to spend one of their two traits selecting an Ability Score Trait. These traits’ benefits replace the usual drow racial ability score modifiers: +2 Charisma, +2 Dexterity, -2 Constitution.

CRUEL SLAVER

You are enslaver of the helpless and slayer of any who oppose your clan and cause. However, as mighty as you are, you are also reckless and overly quick to anger.

Benefit: +2 Constitution, +2 Strength, -2 Wisdom

DEVOTEE OF DARK POWERS

You are a follower of a wicked or even demonic faith and are destined to lead a cult to great and terrible glory.

Benefit: +2 Charisma +2 Wisdom, -2 Constitution

MASTER OF ARCANES SECRETS

You would use your great intelligence and experience to lead yourself and your clan to dominate all others.

Benefit: +2 Intelligence, +2 Wisdom, -2 Constitution

SILENT KILLER

You are a born assassin, ready to slay for family, your cult or perhaps even for the sheer pleasure of the kill.

Benefit: +2 Dexterity, +2 Strength, -2 Charisma

TREACHEROUS INFILTRATOR

There is no lie you cannot sell, no lock you cannot pick and no enemy you will not strangle in their sleep. But in a straight fight, you are out of your element.

Benefit: +2 Dexterity, +2 Charisma, -2 Strength

STEP 3 – PICK YOUR CLASS

All classes are permitted save for Paladins but a few classes require some special considerations.

Assassins are a solid choice for this campaign. Subtle killing can potentially be useful again and again. Yes, this is a prestige class not a core class. But it’s a great prestige class to work towards from level one.

The Anti-paladin from the Advanced Player’s Guide is well suited thematically for this campaign.

Clerics, Inquisitors and Oracles are permitted but if the PCs are using the optional Patron system below, be sure that these characters worship either that Patron or a god who is philosophically compatible with that Patron. It might be advisable simply to require any divine PC to worship the Patron chosen by the party to avoid unnecessary intra-party religious conflict.

Druids are an unusual choice but are permitted nonetheless. Druid face some unique challenges in an underground campaign. Normally common components such as mistletoe or berries will be hard to find. Animal companions who can operate in the dark (such as dire bats or giant beetles) will have an edge over more typical choices. Also the cave druid archetype is a good choice to make this class more viable.

Gunslingers are permitted but this adventure path assumes by default that firearms do not exist. There are no guns found in the treasure or adversaries who use firearms. If you want to play a gunslinger, you should talk to the Game Master about this. If they approve this choice, then they will need to modify the campaign accordingly to accommodate your character.

Ninja and Samurai are permitted but the campaign as written makes no special allowances for them. Thus there are no eastern weapons or armor in the treasure. Further you must explain how a drow samurai came to exist and be allied with this drow band. Much like the gunslinger above, talk to the Game Master and work out these special needs.

Rangers will find that Humanoid (elf) and Aberration are solid choices for their favored enemy.

Sorcerers of any bloodline are permitted. Abyssal and Deep Earth bloodlines are particularly good choices.

STEP 4 – PICK SKILLS AND SELECT FEATS

This step is unchanged.

However, this campaign lends itself more than most to a house rule that gives everyone two more skill points per level. The PCs will often be on their own in the underworld for much of the campaign and will have difficulty relying on others for skills. This house rule will make them more self-reliant.

STEP 5 – BUY EQUIPMENT

Characters begin with normal starting equipment.

STEP 6 – FINISHING DETAILS

As normal except that good alignments are not allowed in an Overlord campaign.

DROW CAMPAIGN TRAITS

These traits are specific to “Throne of Night” and any drow may take them if the optional trait system is used.

DANGEROUS BEAUTY

The drow are famed for their dark beauty and you are a fine example of this. There is something alluring about you that draws victims into your web.

Benefit: +1 trait bonus on Bluff and Diplomacy checks made against anyone potentially attracted to you.

DEMONIC BARGAINER

You have a particular affinity for dealing with the denizens of the abyss.

Benefit: You gain a +2 trait bonus on Diplomacy and Intimidate checks when dealing with creatures of the demon subtype.

EXILE’S STOLEN TREASURE

Before you were driven out of Taaryssia you managed to take one piece of magical or well-made gear with you.

Benefit: You have one item (be it a masterwork weapon, armor or minor magic item) worth 900 gp.

GIFTED POISONER

You have worked with poisons all your life and have become a virtuoso at their use.

Benefit: +1 trait bonus to poison saves and a +1 trait bonus to any knowledge skill roll concerning poisons.

HATRED OF SURFACE DWELLERS

You have a particular hatred for those who hail from above. Perhaps you believe them invaders or perhaps you carry an ancient grudge. Whatever the cause, you are eager to see them die.

Benefit: You inflict +1 damage against any surface dweller you encounter.

IMPROVED DARKVISION

Even for the drow, your darkvision is impressive.

Benefit: You gain Darkvision 180 ft.

MEMORIES OF TAARYSSIA

Though you have been longed exiled (or perhaps even exiled as a child), you still remember the great city of the drow Taaryssia.

Benefit: +1 trait bonus to Knowledge (local) and Knowledge (nobility) and one of those is always a class skill for you.

NOBLE COURTESAN

At some point you have been a courtesan. Perhaps you did this out of desperation or perhaps you simply enjoyed the lifestyle. Regardless, you know how to listen and how to ask without asking.

Benefit: You gain a +1 trait bonus on Sense Motive checks and Diplomacy checks to gather information, and one of these skills (your choice) is always a class skill for you.

RUTHLESS

You never hesitate to strike a killing blow.

Benefit: You gain a +1 trait bonus on attack rolls to confirm critical hits.

SKILLED BACKSTABBER

Fair fights have never held any interest to you. You much prefer to strike unseen from the shadows.

Benefit: You gain a +2 trait bonus on melee weapon damage rolls made against foes that cannot see you.

TERRIFYING

There is something about your words and mannerisms that strike fear into all who meet you.

Benefit: You gain a +1 trait bonus to Intimidate skill checks and a +1 save DC to any spell with the fear descriptor.

APPENDIX: PATRONS

Described here is an optional subsystem for cooperatively generating a divine patron for a party of adventurers, be they wicked villains or noble heroes.

WHAT IS A PATRON?

A Patron is a powerful divine entity (be they god, archdevil, demon lord or celestial) who for some reason has chosen to interfere with the mortal realm. They act subtly because direct intervention would invite direct opposition from rival players. Their chosen method of influencing the mortal sphere is a small band of heroes. These are the PCs.

WHY WOULD A GM WANT TO USE PATRONS?

Giving the party a patron is a very natural way to unite a band of adventurers and give them common purpose. A patron can become a cornerstone of a campaign, or it can be a minor element providing occasional roleplaying possibilities. The choice is yours. This system works particularly well if you have already decided to use the optional Hero Point system published in the Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide.

The Patron system can find particular use in "Throne of Night" when running an Overlord campaign. The Overlord track has a band of chaotic evil characters that must somehow be unified. How better than to forge an alliance between them via a powerful demon lord watching their every move. The demon lord will aid them when it suits his purposes, but also demands that they accomplish their immortal master's dread purpose here on the mortal sphere.

Even though Explorers likely need unification less than Overlords, Patrons still have their place in such a campaign. Patrons can turn a band of dwarves with a vague motivation to find a way into lost Dammerhall into a dwarven crusade of devotees of Father Mountain, bent on saving the dwarven people from destruction and decline. The stones themselves cry to the dwarves that their mission is a holy one. How can they deny their destiny?

WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF PATRONS?

In the Ray Harryhausen epic "Jason and the Argonauts" (1963) the Goddess Hera aids a band of heroes to find the golden fleece. What makes this a great example is that her help is limited but valuable. She doesn't spare our heroes danger but instead prepares them for it and gives them a fighting chance against foes much greater than Jason and his Argonauts. Also, her ability to assist is limited by Zeus who imposes a sense of divine fairness on this "game of the gods".

For an example of an inarguably evil patron, consider the "Omen" series of movies. Damien Thorn is the devil's chosen agent on earth (the anti-Christ actually). But the devil never directly manifests as a great pillar of infernal fire to aid his son Damien. Instead, the patron sends Damien aid in the form of followers, subtle (but often murderous) assistance and protection at key moments. Damien still faces real danger (and in fact, at the end of the Omen III is slain and defeated). But there is no doubt, he is being helped by a formless evil entity through out his entire life.

THE BASICS OF THE PATRON SYSTEM

Using the Patron system is a five step process that begins after the GM has decided whether a campaign will be Explorer or Overlord but before the players finish creating their characters.

1. Choose Twenty Descriptors

The GM begins the patron-building process by first deciding that there will be a patron and what possible options there are to describe this divinity.

2. Creating the Patron Together

This is a group activity where the PCs and the GM work together to pick the descriptors, virtues and sins of the Patron. The domains tell you what sort of power the Patron embodies. The goals tell you what the patron wants. The sins describe what angers your Patron.

3. Describe the Patron

Now the GM takes what the party has created together and fills in details, integrating the patron into the game world. This step can involve as little work as choosing a name and picking domains or it can be a more involved process of fleshing out a new faith.

After this step is complete, the PCs should finish creating their characters.

4. The Patron and the PCs

Each player must now decide how the Patron effects their character. For some characters (say clerics, inquisitors, paladins and oracles) this may be obvious. For other it may take some thought. For those who prefer to let chance decide, we have included a random table of possibilities.

5. The Patron in Play

Now the Patron is described and integrated into the party and becomes a part of your play experience.

Each of these five steps is described in detail below.

1. CHOOSE TWENTY POSSIBLE DESCRIPTORS

The GM makes a list of twenty words or short phrases that might describe the nature and interests of the patron. These words should be general enough to leave room for interpretation, but solid enough to provoke the thought process. A good place to begin finding these descriptors is the list of divine domains in the Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook. If you wish to be spared the work of this step, here are two lists that should serve, one for Explorers and one for Overlords.

EXPLORER

Arcane Magic is an Abomination
 Arcane Magic is our Greatest Tool
 Beauty
 Blacksmiths and Metalworkers
 Bravery
 Brewing
 By this Axe I Rule
 Elemental Earth
 Fortune Favors Us
 Glory
 Honor
 Knowledge
 Law and Tradition
 Liberate the Enslaved
 Mercy and Healing
 Prowess in Battle
 Secrets beneath the Mountain
 Songs and Stories
 The Rightful High King
 Travel and Exploration

OVERLORD

Assassins
 Demons and the Might of the Abyss
 Depravity
 Devils and all the Powers of Hell
 Elemental Earth
 Elemental Fire
 Enchantment Makes Slaves of the Weak
 Ice Magic as Cold as My Heart
 Necromancy
 Nobility
 Number Seven
 Prowess in Battle
 Scorpions
 Serpents
 Shadows
 Spiders
 Trickery
 Vampirism
 Vengeance
 War and Conquest

IS THERE SUCH A THING AS BAD DESCRIPTOR?

Yes. Only include descriptors that you would want to be chosen by your players. If you do not want to make spiders important to your drow then remove it from the Overlord list and replace with a better choice.

Also descriptors that are too broad or could describe any divine entity are to be avoided. For example, "Immortal", "Divine" or "Powerful" are to be avoided.

It's also a good idea to avoid descriptors that are purposefully comical (if you are trying to run a serious campaign) or that you are uncomfortable making the focus of roleplaying. For example "Farts", "Sex" or perhaps even "Romance" are likely not good choices.

Also there is no need to put "Good" on the Explorer list and "Evil" on the Overlord list. Those are assumed.

2. CREATING THE PATRON TOGETHER

Present the PCs with the list of twenty descriptors and give them a moment to read it. Tell them this:

This is a list of twenty descriptors that describe the nature and interests of your parties patron. Don't ask any questions about what they mean right now (unless perhaps there is a word you need defined) and don't discuss them amongst yourselves. Simply read the list and then secretly write down two you like.

When this is done, collect the votes. If there are any duplicate votes, a descriptor need only appear once. If there are only three, then you're done. If there are less than three, then GM should choose enough to get the number up to three.

If there are more than three, then give the PCs a moment to discuss why they like a particular descriptor and think it would be fun to have a divine patron with that attribute or interest. Keep the discussion brief and then call for a vote. Each PC chooses their three favorites. The three highest vote recipients are the three descriptors. In the case of a tie, then remove any descriptor that got no votes and call for a revote. Again, allow a round of discussion.

If a second vote is not enough, then the GM resolves any ties by voting himself. The goal is to end up with the three most popular descriptors. If all else fails, roll a d20. High roll takes the slot.

For Example: Four PCs in an Explorer campaign pick Bravery, Bravery, Brewing, Elemental Earth, Glory, Honor, Honor and Knowledge. Removing the duplicates gives the PCs six choices. After a round of voting, Brewing, Elemental Earth and Knowledge get the most votes. These are the patron's three descriptors.

GOALS AND SINS

The GM should consider those three traits and makes a brief summary of what they might mean.

For example: *"Brewing is a quintessentially dwarven profession and so you follow a quintessentially dwarven god. Beer is served at every religious ceremony of any importance and treated with reverence. Elemental Earth represents that the god often manifests as a living rock. The Patron is as much the mountain itself as it lives within the mountain. And knowledge represents that this patron wishes you to reclaim the lore that the dwarves lost when Dammerhall fell."*

Simply improvise something like this. Don't worry too much about the specifics. You'll have plenty of time to change and refine the subject later.

Based on this description, everyone (PC and GM) must now write down on a note card or sheet of paper something the patron would reward (a virtue) and something the patron would punish (a sin). This should again be done without any discussion. These virtues and sins should not complicated affairs. They should be described by a single simple sentence. A good sin from the example above would be "The willful destruction of dwarven lore".

As soon as everyone is ready, each presents a virtue and sin. The PCs again vote as above and the three most popular are adopted. You now know nine things about the patron: three descriptors, virtues and sins.

3. DESCRIBE THE PATRON

Now it's the GM's turn to flesh out the patron from these bare bones. The first rule here is to respect what the PCs have chosen. If they chose to emphasize brewing more than you would like, don't use this step to devalue their decision. Instead, if you don't want brewing to be potentially important part of your campaign, then remove it in Step One above.

At the least you need to pick a name and as much information as your find in the Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook about a deity (an alignment, portfolio, five domains and favorite weapon). Sometimes these choices will be obvious. But if they are not, don't be afraid to expand upon what has already been decided.

If you want to take it a step beyond this, write a single page about the patron. What are the patron's holy days? What rites honor the patron? Does the patron have divine allies or enemies? Include no secret information here. You are going to show this page to the PCs. For now, keep it simple. There will be plenty of time to develop additional detail during play.

4. THE PATRON AND THE PCS

After each PC has a chance to read and absorb what you've created, it's time to integrate the Patron in their background. Why are they a part of this quest? Why do they serve this patron? How do you know that the patron supports what you are doing? Have the PCs write down their answers. Keep it brief though. Answering these questions shouldn't take more than a paragraph or two and definitely keep it to a single typed page or less. Brevity means flexibility.

One PC in the party (but only one) is allowed to be the Doubting Thomas. They either don't think the patron is real or don't believe that the patron cares about the party. Of course experience in the campaign will likely show them that they're wrong, but for now this PC cares nothing for the patron.

If a PC has trouble with this, have them roll a d20:

1. **Doubting Thomas.** As above. If there is already one in the party, reroll this result.
2. **The patron saved your life.** You'd be dead without the patron's aid. But why were you saved?
3. **The patron gave you a vision.** You saw something you cannot forget and it drives you on this quest.
4. **The patron spoke to you.** In your darkest hour, you heard the voice of the divine. You are not sure entirely what the words meant, but it has given you purpose.
5. **The patron sent a messenger.** You saw an angel, demon or some other creature and it gave you a mission.
6. **The patron gave you a token.** The holy symbol or trinket you carry is a gift from the patron.
7. **The patron changed you.** A miracle happened and you were physically marked as the patron's chosen.
8. **The patron brought you here.** You were mystically teleported or transported to this place.
9. **The patron is testing you.** Recent trials are a test of your faith. You must prove yourself worthy!
10. **Your bear the mark.** A sacred birthmark foretold by prophecy reveals you as the patron's chosen agent.
11. **You were born on the Patron's holy day.**
12. **You were an orphan found on the temple steps.**
13. **You were raised by a priest of the Patron.** He recognized in you the Patron's favor.
14. **When you cry the Patron's name, you have never known defeat.**
15. **You followed a prophet.** Even though the prophet is now dead, still you remember the sacred teaching.
16. **Your dying parent told you of your destiny.**
17. **Your life so far fulfills a prophecy in a holy text.**
18. **Your friend (another PC) believes in the patron.** So what's the harm of humoring the friend?
19. **The patron might be your father.**
20. **The patron made you his agent.** Whatever character class you thought you were playing, you are now a divine servant (cleric, paladin, etc.) of the patron.

5. THE PATRON IN PLAY

So, you have a fleshed out patron that has been designed with PC input. What do you do with this? There are many ways to use the patron. The patron can have a direct mechanical effect or it can be used as a plot device but the patron system is at its best when it does a little of both. Let us examine this in detail.

HERO POINTS

If you are using the Hero Point system in the Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide, then exemplifying the patron's virtues should earn the PCs Hero Points. Be sparing with these gifts. Hero Points are never given for trivial deeds. They should always be a meaningful reward given for a meaningful act.

If you are not using the Hero Point system, then you could simply keep track of these patron points as free d20 rerolls. Every time the PCs advance the goals and desires of their patron in a meaningful way, they receive a single reroll useable at any time. They must keep the second roll, even if it is a worse result.

CUSTOM MAGIC ITEMS

Instead of having the PCs find standard magic items, instead tailor one magic item per character to be a gift from the patron. The magical axe is not simply a +2 *keen greataxe*. Instead it is the *Axe of Father Mountain*, a minor artifact with a few elemental earth powers and that grants a bonus to remembering obscure pieces of dwarven lore. These artifacts may be slightly better than the usual treasure, but they should lose power if the PC defies their patron.

For example, the *Axe of Father Mountain* may once per week grant *stoneskin* to wielder as swift action, but if Father Mountain is ever angered it loses its magical properties altogether and become merely a masterwork greataxe.

UNIQUE SPELLS

Demons whisper lost secrets to wizards in the dead of night. Mysterious scrolls appear amongst their gear written in mithral ink. A new spell, written in angel's blood, is scrawled upon a once blank page of their spellbook. Such events are a memorable way to dispense unusual spells the PCs would probably never choose on their own and to maintain a constant sense of the patron's presence in the character's lives.

If you are like the author, you have countless sources of new Pathfinder RPG-compatible spells. You can use service to the patron as a dramatic way to put those unique spells into the hands of your players. And if they ever betray the patron, perhaps the spells begin to malfunction producing terrifying results...

ACCESS TO PRESTIGE CLASSES AND UNIQUE FEATS

Feats and prestige classes also make fine rewards. Any feat or prestige class can have a special requirement that requires devotion to a patron. The secrets of a prestige class can only be taught by a demonic agent or a celestial herald. The combat techniques of the ancient dwarven lords are not easily mastered without the patron's help. Father Mountain does not whisper its secrets to unbelievers.

SINS AS PLOT COMPLICATIONS

Committing sins on the other hand, should invite the wrath of the patron. Hero Points may be lost. Divine powers may fade. Magical gifts may lose their potency and disasters may ensue. Divine curses may fall upon the unfaithful.

You can use this to great plot effect to create quandaries. For example, if the PCs pledged never to destroy dwarven lore, then have the PCs discover a great mural carved long ago that foretells one of their deeds and reveals an important piece of dwarven lore. Do they leave the mural intact, allowing even your enemies to discover the prophecy or do you defy your patron and vandalize this irreplaceable part of your heritage?

THE PATRON AS AN INFORMATION SOURCE

The patron can be used to give information to PCs who may be feeling lost or without direction in the campaign. "Throne of Night" is a sandbox and one of the dangers of this style of play is that the number of choices can be overwhelming. The Fungal Jungle is so vast that "where should we explore first?" could become a genuinely daunting question.

If the PCs faithfully followed their patron, when they seem the most in danger or uncertain what to do next, you can have an agent of the patron appear and give them direction. The agents never give the PCs exactly as much information as they want. But they give them just enough to get the adventure back on track.

This device must be used sparingly. If the PCs come to believe that they need not keep track of what is going on because an angel will appear and show them the way, then the campaign could easily seem boring and non-challenging. But used sparingly, a divine visitation can be a potent moment in any campaign.

TO BE CONTINUED...

There will be more information about patrons in Book II of *Throne of Night*. In particular, we'll present several example patrons and a host of example magic items, spells and feats to be used as PC rewards. We'll also introduce some curses for vengeful patrons to inflict upon those who have strayed into sin.

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a) "Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) "Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) "Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) "Product Identity" means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product Identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) "Trademark" means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) "Use", "Used" or "Using" means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) "You" or "Your" means the licensee in terms of this agreement.

2. The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.

3. Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.

4. Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.

5. Representation of Authority to Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.

6. Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content You Distribute.

7. Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.

8. Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.

9. Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.

10. Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.

11. Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.

12. Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may Not Use any Open Game Material so affected.

13. Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.

14. Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.

15 COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Open Game License v 1.0a Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

System Reference Document. Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, based on material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook. Copyright 2009, Paizo Publishing, LLC; Author: Jason Bulmahn, based on material by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, and Skip Williams.

Pathfinder RPG Bestiary. Copyright 2009, Paizo Publishing, LLC; Author: Jason Bulmahn, based on material by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook and Skip Williams.

Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2. Copyright 2010, Paizo Publishing, LLC; Authors Wolfgang Baur, Jason Bulmahn, Adam Daigle, Graeme Davis, Crystal Frasier, Joshua J. Frost, Tim Hitchcock, Brandon Hodge, James Jacobs, Steve Kenson, Hal MacLean, Martin Mason, Rob McCreary, Erik Mona, Jason Nelson, Patrick Renie, Sean K. Reynolds, F. Wesley Schneider, Owen K.C. Stephens, James L. Sutter, Russ Taylor and Greg A. Vaughan, based on material by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, and Skip Williams.

Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3. Copyright 2011, Paizo Publishing, LLC; Authors Jesse Benner, Jason Bulmahn, Adam Daigle, James Jacobs, Michael Kenway, Rob McCreary, Patrick Renie, Chris Sims, F. Wesley Schneider, James L. Sutter, and Russ Taylor, based on material by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, and Skip Williams.

Advanced Player's Guide. Copyright 2010, Paizo Publishing, LLC; Author: Jason Bulmahn.

Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Advanced Race Guide © 2012, Paizo Publishing, LLC; Authors: Dennis Baker, Jesse Benner, Benjamin Bruck, Jason Bulmahn, Adam Daigle, Jim Groves, Tim Hitchcock, Hal MacLean, Jason Nelson, Stephen Radney-MacFarland, Owen K.C. Stephens, Todd Stewart, and Russ Taylor

Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Magic. Copyright 2011, Paizo Publishing, LLC; Authors: Jason Bulmahn, Tim Hitchcock, Colin McComb, Rob McCreary, Jason Nelson, Stephen Radney-MacFarland, Sean K. Reynolds, Owen K.C. Stephens, and Russ Taylor.

Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat. Copyright 2011, Paizo Publishing, LLC; Authors: Jason Bulmahn, Tim Hitchcock, Colin McComb, Rob McCreary, Jason Nelson, Stephen Radney-MacFarland, Sean K. Reynolds, Owen K.C. Stephens, and Russ Taylor.

Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Ultimate Equipment © 2012, Paizo Publishing, LLC; Authors: Dennis Baker, Jesse Benner, Benjamin Bruck, Ross Byers, Brian J. Cortijo, Ryan Costello, Mike Ferguson, Matt Goetz, Jim Groves, Tracy Hurley, Matt James, Jonathan H. Keith, Michael Kenway, Hal MacLean, Jason Nelson, Tork Shaw, Owen K.C. Stephens, and Russ Taylor.

Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Ultimate Campaign. © 2013, Paizo Publishing, LLC; Authors: Jesse Benner, Benjamin Bruck, Jason Bulmahn, Ryan Costello, Adam Daigle, Matt Goetz, Tim Hitchcock, James Jacobs, Ryan Macklin, Colin McComb, Jason Nelson, Richard Pett, Stephen Radney-MacFarland, Patrick Renie, Sean K. Reynolds, F. Wesley Schneider, James L. Sutter, Russ Taylor, and Stephen Townshend.

Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide. Copyright 2010, Paizo Publishing, LLC; Authors: Cam Banks, Wolfgang Baur, Jason Bulmahn, Jim Butler, Eric Cagle, Graeme Davis, Adam Daigle, Joshua J. Frost, James Jacobs, Kenneth Hite, Steve Kenson, Robin Laws, Tito Leati, Rob McCreary, Hal Maclean, Colin McComb, Jason Nelson, David Noonan, Richard Pett, Rich Redman, Sean K. Reynolds, F. Wesley Schneider, Amber Scott, Doug Seacat, Mike Selinker, Lisa Stevens, James L. Sutter, Russ Taylor, Penny Williams, Skip Williams, Teeuwynn Woodruff.

The Book of Experimental Might. Copyright 2008, Monte J. Cook. All rights reserved.

Tome of Horrors. Copyright 2002, Necromancer Games, Inc.; Authors: Scott Greene, with Clark Peterson, Erica Balsley, Kevin Baase, Casey Christofferson, Lance Hawvermale, Travis Hawvermale, Patrick Lawinger, and Bill Webb; Based on original content from TSR.

Fungus Weird from the Tome of Horrors Complete, Copyright 2011, Necromancer Games, Inc., published and distributed by Frog God Games; Author Scott Greene.

Monstrous Crayfish from the Tome of Horrors Complete, Copyright 2011, Necromancer Games, Inc., published and distributed by Frog God Games; Author Scott Greene, based on original material by Gary Gygax

Mudbog from the Tome of Horrors Complete, Copyright 2011, Necromancer Games, Inc., published and distributed by Frog God Games; Author Erica Balsley.

Slime Zombie from the Tome of Horrors Complete, Copyright 2011, Necromancer Games, Inc., published and distributed by Frog God Games; Author Scott Greene, based on original material by Gary Gygax

Advanced Bestiary. Copyright 2004, Green Ronin Publishing, LLC. Author: Matthew Sernett.

Kobold Quarterly issue 11, ©2009, Open Design LLC, www.koboldquarterly.com. All rights reserved.

Kobold Quarterly issue 12, ©2009, Open Design LLC, www.koboldquarterly.com. All rights reserved.

Pathfinder Companion: Dwarves of Golarion ©2009, Paizo Publishing, LLC; Authors: David A. Eitelbach, Russ Taylor, JD Wiker, Keri Wiker, and Hank Woon

Pathfinder Player Companion: Blood of the Night, © 2013 Paizo Publishing, LLC; Author: Tork Shaw.

Pathfinder Player Companion: Faiths of Corruption © 2011, Paizo Publishing, LLC; Author: Colin McComb.

Pathfinder Player Companion: Blood of Fiends © 2012, Paizo Publishing, LLC; Authors: Hal Maclean and Colin McComb.

Throne of Night Book One -- Dark Frontier. Copyright 2013, Fire Mountain Games LLC; Author: Gary McBride.

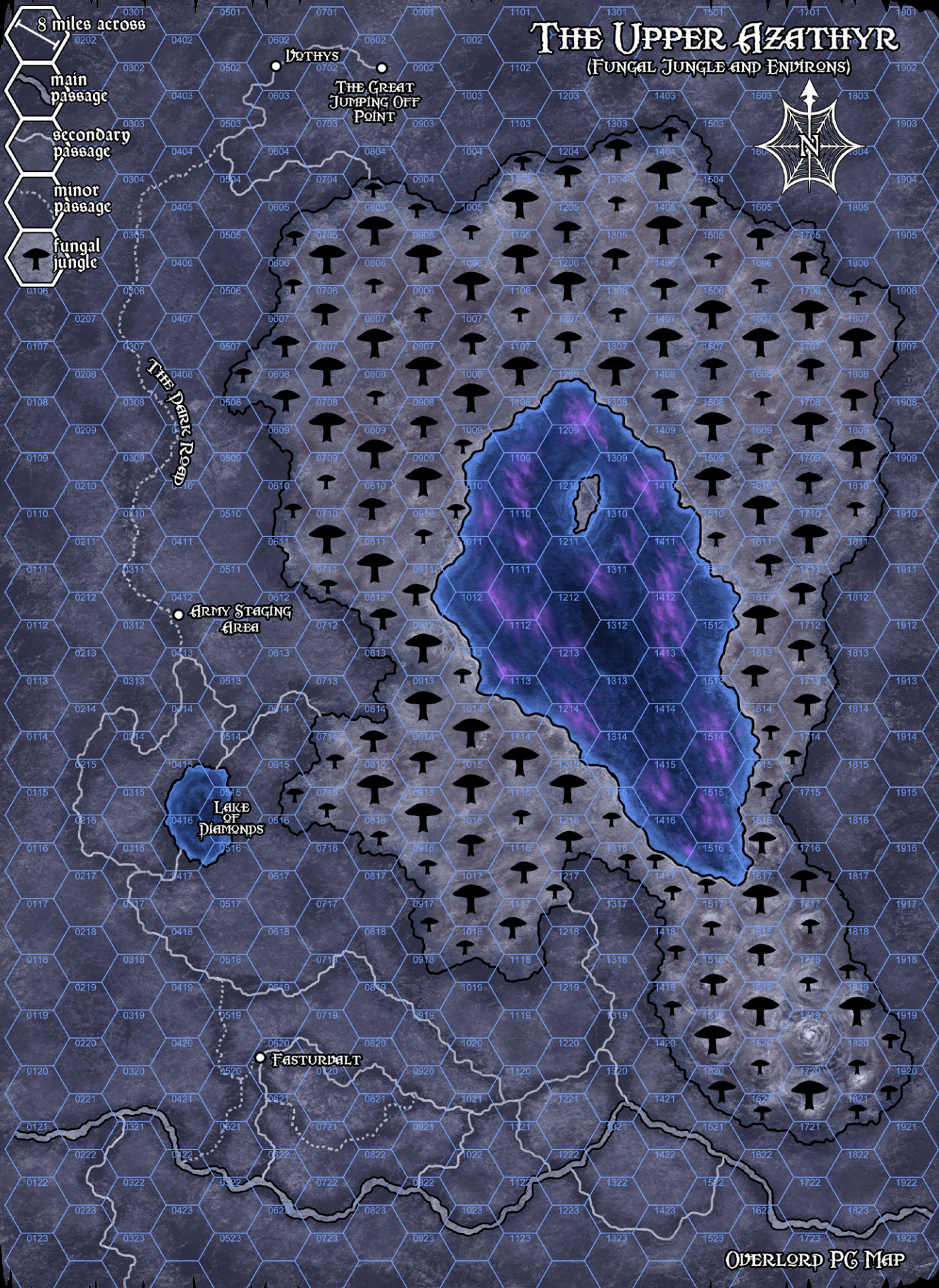
The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes.

--Marcel Proust

- 8 miles across
- main passage
- secondary passage
- minor passage
- fungal jungle

THE UPPER AZATHYR

(FUNGAL JUNGLE AND ENVIRONS)



THRONE OF NIGHT

DARK FRONTIER

CONQUER THE DARKNESS

Build an empire beneath the earth! The drow call this region of the underworld the Azathyr. It is a vast sprawling labyrinth full of wonders and horrors. For the unwary, it is a death trap. For the bold and resourceful it is a gateway to power and riches. Are you clever enough to tame this weird wilderness? Do you have what it takes to claim for yourself a Throne of Night?

Welcome to the first chapter of "Throne of Night," a subterranean sandbox adventure path.

Inside you'll find:

- "Dark Frontier," a Pathfinder compatible adventure for characters 1st through 5th level written by Gary McBride
- Full color maps and illustrations by Michael Clarke
- Advice for running this campaign with an all dwarven party of noble explorers or an all drow party of wicked overlords
- An optional system for creating divine patrons to support your band of heroes.
- And more!

The quest to build your empire in the depths of the earth begins here!



PATHFINDER
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE


**Fire Mountain
Games**

www.firemountaingames.com

FRM1007