



HEROIC

1-10

SIEGE OF BORDRIN'S WATCH

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How can we forget the suffering of our kin during the Age of Chains? How can we set aside those ancient grudges when the risk of slavery is now greater than ever? Fellow warriors, the orcs are upon us, marching once more to the beat of the giants' drum. It falls to us to stop them—to hold fast no matter their numbers. If we falter, we give into fear. It's not just ourselves and our way of life that will suffer; all people of the Elsir Vale will perish as well. War is upon us. Now is the time for men and women of courage to stand up and defend those who cannot defend themselves.

WHAT'S AN ADVENTURE PATH?

Scales of War is the fourth Adventure Path to appear in the pages of *Dungeon Magazine*. But what, you ask, is an Adventure Path? Quite simply, it is a series of related adventures intended to form a complete D&D campaign that takes your players from 1st level all the way to, in the case of Scales of War, 30th level.

Previous Adventure Paths, presented with the 3rd Edition D&D rules, took characters from 1st to 20th level. But with all three tiers in the new edition ripe and ready to explore, we're pushing the limit with Scales of War. Each tier takes roughly six adventures to traverse, which means we'll finish off this Adventure Path in about eighteen issues. Each adventure advances characters from between one and a half to two levels of experience. We recognize that not everyone will meet every encounter or complete every quest, however, so periodically, we'll point you to a supplemental Side Trek or short adventure to keep your PCs on pace. Plus, roughly every few months, *Dragon* will feature new support content for Scales of War.

Finally, this Adventure Path is intended to function as a complete D&D campaign. That means we'll be making some assumptions about the history of the world as we move along, just as you would in any campaign you run. We'll be borrowing heavily from the D&D mythology of 4th Edition, as well as all the great ideas that have cropped up in other products over the years—including the pages of past issues of *Dungeon*!

Enjoy your stay in Scales of War, and keep an eye out for next month's installment.

"Siege of Bordrin's Watch" is an adventure for five 3rd-level characters. By the end of the adventure, the characters should be halfway through 4th-level. You can run this adventure as the sequel to "Rescue at Rivenroar," continuing the unfolding story of the Scales of War campaign, or run it as part of a campaign of your own design. This adventure features exploration, roleplaying opportunities, and combats in dynamic environments, making it a perfect addition to any campaign.

In this adventure, a new threat looms to the west: A vast horde of orcs and their despicable kin emerge from the barren lands bent on plunder and conquest. While the Elsir Vale and other lands mobilize their meager forces to respond to the danger, a call has gone out to those heroes of the Vale to join forces and help to push back this new evil before it's too late.

BACKGROUND

The lands west of the Stonehome Mountains have been a festering mire of want and suffering. This parched and barren landscape is suited only for orcs, goblinoids, and other fell creatures. From time to time, a warlord gathers a small army and tumbles out of these badlands to test their strength and arms against the stalwart dwarf defenders, but never have they crossed the mountains because straddling its single pass is an ancient dwarven stronghold named Bordrin's Watch. No matter how many orcs muster, they die upon its walls, painting the sturdy stone with their black blood. So the rumors of a new host in these forlorn bogs and dead woods seemed a small threat—nothing the guardians could not handle. This army, though, is different. Unlike all the many times

the orcs have emerged, they now have a leader who can keep them together long enough to win.

The orc leader is an overlarge warrior and chieftain named Tusk. Not a true orc, he has the blood of ogres in his veins, which makes him larger, tougher, and eminently more dangerous. Having slaughtered half a dozen orc chieftains, he drew together the unruly tribes to mount an offensive against Bordrin's Watch to lay claim to the soft lands beyond its walls. Tusk knows the history of the Stonehome Mountains well, knowing that unless he can find some way to bypass the fortress in the mountains, it won't matter how many warriors he commands since he would fail. What Tusk needs is a way around the fortress.

Ever resourceful and with numerous contacts and allies, Tusk turned to his occasional lover and advisor, a shadar-kai witch named Myrissa. He sent her back to the Shadowfell to recruit allies to help his cause, and a short time later she returned with a small army of dark ones, led by a mysterious and sinister dark creeper, known as the emissary. This leader offered to assist Tusk in exchange for an exclusive arrangement in which they would supply Tusk's armies with weaponry for whatever price the dark creeper and his fellows asked, and in exchange, the dark creepers would find a way through the mountains. Tusk readily agreed and paid the exorbitant price, gaining a fine arsenal, and also, he hoped, the key to victory.

Not long after, the dark creepers returned and revealed a number of tunnels burrowed beneath the mountain. They showed the chieftain the locations of each, explaining how the passages connected one side of the mountains to the other. No tunnel was large enough to accommodate his entire army, so, Tusk gave his horde their marching orders, sending them to climb the mountain slopes, while his scouts moved

ahead to secure the tunnels and prepare the way for Tusk and his elite warriors to strike the fortress from below.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

Even though the dwarves have been successful in containing the orc hordes in the past, this time it's different and the dwarves of Overlook are concerned that the walls of the Bordrin's Watch might not be enough to staunch the flood. All their misgivings stem from the reports brought back by their own scouts, who mention endless ranks of orcs, trolls, and worse marching inexorably to the Stonehome Mountains. To shore up the thin number of defenders to man the Watch, Overlook dispatched a call to arms, beseeching able-bodied men and women across the Elsir Vale to mobilize at Overlook and then join forces with the defenders in the mountains. With the memory of the last war that ravaged the Vale, militias formed up and adventurers from as far away as Brindol answered the call.

This adventure assumes the characters are among those who go to aid the dwarves. Being seasoned adventurers and with some notoriety for their success in Rivenroar, it should be clear from the locals and any NPC allies the characters might have made that joining the dwarves is the right thing to do. Of course, if the PCs need a bit more prompting, you might convince them to head in this direction by throwing a few orcs at their current residence to drive home the severity of the threat. Alternatively, Overlook is a city of some size, and it makes an ideal place for the characters to spend their hard-earned gold.

Along the way, the characters encounter a patrol of orcs, which suggests that the orcs have somehow crossed the mountains. Armed with this information, the characters should approach the Council of Elders to reveal the new threat. With this revelation, the Council believes they have been compromised and that the tunnels beneath the mountains breached. Even though this development poses great danger to their defenses, the orc horde is still far enough away that there is time to seal the tunnels and prevent the orcs from coming through the tunnels. Thus, it falls to the PCs and two other groups to secure the tunnels and seal the Nexus to prevent the orcs from breaching the defenses.

The Council of Elders assigns the task of securing the tunnels beneath the Monastery of the Sundered Chain to the PCs, and they dispatch other groups to the other weak points in their defenses. Once the characters arrive at the old monastery, it is clear the other locations might be compromised and the other adventuring groups might be overmatched. Assuming the PCs find Kalad (see page 38), the heroes learn the dwarf paladin already secured the tunnel to Bordrin's Watch, but discover the Vents are likely not secure. So, the characters must travel down to the lower tunnels, make their way past the orc invaders, and locate the ancient Nexus to complete their mission before the orc hordes arrive. Sealing the Nexus, then, constitutes a major quest worth 750 XP.

THE QUEST

"Siege of Bordrin's Watch" offers the opportunity for PCs to earn quest XP in a couple of places. Provided here is the list of quests, and their rewards, in the adventure.

Major Quest—Sealing the Nexus

The PCs must travel down to the lower tunnels, make their way past the orc invaders, and locate the ancient Nexus to complete their mission before the orc hordes arrive.

Reward: 750 XP (and 1,000 gp [four parcels]).

PREPARING FOR ADVENTURE

“Siege of Bordrin’s Watch” takes the characters into a deadly environment and pits them against the advance troops of a deadly orc horde. As such, the characters venture into enormous chambers and use their talents against terrifying foes, all the while racing to reach the Nexus before the horde arrives. Obviously, a good reading of the adventure can only help, but if you’re under the gun, you can skip over the introductory materials and go straight to the adventure. You should, at the very least, review the encounters, while paying attention to the creatures, their powers, and the settings in which the characters face them.

WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY

This adventure includes the encounters the PCs face as they explore and adventure in the area. It also provides tactical maps and more for the adventure. If you and your players haven’t read through the *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS 4th Edition* rules yet, that is your first best step so that you make certain you understand the rules. Also as mentioned above, read through at least the first few encounters described in this adventure before starting. This review enables you to become familiar with the material and the style of presentation. You might also want to take a look at the sections below regarding the adventure format.

USING TACTICAL ENCOUNTERS

Each encounter includes several common elements, as described below.

ENCOUNTER LEVEL

Each tactical encounter assumes a group of five player characters. An encounter of average difficulty is one where the encounter level is equal to the level of the party. Encounters that are 1 or 2 levels lower than the party are easy encounters, while encounters that are 2 or more levels higher than the party are difficult encounters.

For overcoming an encounter, a group earns the XP value listed beside the encounter level. This amount should be divided by the number of group members, and an equal amount should be awarded to each character.

SETUP

This section of a tactical encounter provides you with the basic parameters of the encounter. First, it provides context or background information for the encounter. Next, it provides a key to the monsters in the encounter so you can locate them on the tactical map. The map of each encounter area indicates where the monsters are located when the encounter begins. The setup section also describes what monsters are doing and how they react when the PCs arrive.

READ-ALoud TEXT

Read aloud text provides information about what the characters can see and are aware of. You do not have to read it word for word; feel free to paraphrase and use your own words when describing this information. Use read aloud text wisely; they are written for the most common approach to a particular situation and what your player characters do might require you to alter the information in any number of ways.

MONSTER STATISTICS

Encounters include stat blocks for each monster type present in the encounter. If more than one monster of a particular kind is present, the stat block indicates how many creatures can be found.

TACTICS

This entry describes special actions the monsters take to defeat the adventurers. Sometimes this means the monsters take advantage of special features of the area or make use of special powers or equipment.

MAP

Each encounter includes a map keyed with the initial locations of each monster. The map also indicates the location of any special features of the area.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

This section describes special features noted on the map. If the location has items or areas of interest with which the characters can interact, those features are described here. Look here to see if a door is out of the ordinary, if an altar has a secret compartment, or if the area includes treasure.

TREASURE PREPARATION

As with the first installment of the Scales of War campaign, “Siege of Bordrin’s Watch” makes use of the parcel system of treasure rewards as described in the *Dungeon Master’s Guide*. The characters should accumulate 15 parcels by the end of the adventure. Of these, they should gain the reward for completing the mission (four parcels for 1,000 gp), and then whatever treasures they find along the way (the remaining eleven). You can supply these treasures in whatever way you wish, but the following sidebar presents the

most likely rooms to bear treasure. During your preparation, assign parcels from those that follow to the rooms in the spaces provided. Use the players' wish lists to come up with magic items for the first six parcels.

STARTING THE ADVENTURE

You can kick off the adventure in two ways: quick and slow. Use the quick-start method if you want to move straight to the action. The slow start emphasizes roleplaying and stretches out the opening sequence to build the tension leading up to the major quest.

QUICK START

When using this method, read aloud the following text and proceed to the skill challenge described under the Monastery of the Sundered Chain on page 27.

War approaches. A week ago, a call to arms sounded throughout the Elsir Valley, summoning warriors to help defend Bordrin's Watch in the Stonehome Mountains far to the west. Word of an army of orcs on the march had spread through the Vale for months, but now, it appeared the rumors were true.

You, along with militia groups and other adventurers from all over the Vale, marched west until you came to the city of Overlook, a large fortified community raised by dwarves centuries ago. Once there, you and two other groups were invited to attend the Council of Elders, where you learned the Bordrin's Watch had already been compromised—advanced parties of orcs had uncovered the tunnels beneath the mountains and were already coming through

TREASURE PARCELS

Parcel A: _____,	M-2.
Parcel B: _____,	M-4.
Parcel C: _____,	M-4.
Parcel D: _____,	M-5.
Parcel E: _____,	M-5.
Parcel F: _____,	M-5.
Parcel G: _____,	V-3.
Parcel H: _____,	V-3.
Parcel I: _____,	V-4.
Parcel J: _____,	V-4.
Parcel K: _____,	V-4.

Based on the guidelines in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, the following parcels can go in the lines above. Rely on the wish lists your players gave you for the first four parcels.

- Parcel 1: Magic item, level 7
- Parcel 2: Magic item, level 7
- Parcel 3: Magic item, level 6
- Parcel 4: Magic item, level 5
- Parcel 5: Magic item, level 5
- Parcel 6: Magic item, level 4
- Parcel 7: Two *potions of healing*, two gems worth 100 gp, 80gp
- Parcel 8: One *potion of healing*, 250 gp art object, 40 gp

- Parcel 9: 80 gp, 300 sp
- Parcel 10: One *potion of healing*, 90 gp
- Parcel 11: 50 gp, 400 sp

Adapting the Adventure: "Siege at Bordrin's Watch" is designed with five players in mind. This said, you can adapt the adventure for larger groups easily by adding more treasure and inserting a few extra monsters using the guidelines presented in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. When adapting the adventure for larger groups, keep it simple. Where possible, just add one monster whose level equals the encounter level for each additional PC. Otherwise, look for appropriate monsters from this adventure and the *Monster Manual* to help stiffen up the resistance.

This adventure is also designed for 3rd-level characters. As written, a group of 2nd-level characters can play through the adventure, as could a slightly larger party of 1st-level characters, but be sure to give the characters plenty of chances to take extended rests so that they can have a fair shot at surviving the expedition. For higher-level groups, adapting the adventure takes a bit more work. You'll need to add monsters and increase the treasure rewards to amounts appropriate for the characters. In all, adjusting the adventure is not too arduous, and with a little work, you can run this scenario for groups of three to eight players, and for characters of 1st through 5th level.

to harass supply trains and reinforcements bound for the fortress. The Council asked your group and the others to descend into these tunnels, clear them out, and seal them off before the main host of the enemy army arrived. For your efforts, the Council promised to pay each group 1,000 gp upon their return. Your team is to head to the old Monastery of the Sundered Chain to the southwest, where they can gain access to the tunnels below, while one group heads for Bordrin's Watch to secure those passages, and the other to Bordrin's Watch. With your mission clear, you and your companions head for the mountains to meet your destiny.

SLOW START

Rather than jumping straight into the adventure, you can extend the opening sequence to allow the adventure to unfold more naturally, giving the players the chance to develop their characters and participate in the events leading up to the adventure proper. Consider using some or all the following events summarized in the quick start.

◆ Have the characters hear about the call to arms while spending some downtime in their favorite watering hole or someplace else the characters spend a lot of time. Interested characters might do some snooping about to learn more about the nature of the threat, Bordrin's Watch, and the Stonehome Mountains. You could resolve this through roleplaying alone, portioning out information from local NPCs or other characters introduced in the previous adventure. At some point, the town council approaches the PCs and asks that they lend their support to the dwarves. Mercenary characters might engage in a social challenge to negotiate the terms of their service. This level 3 skill challenge has a complexity of 2 and uses Bluff, Diplomacy, Insight, and Intimidate as the primary skills. A success grants the characters

a monetary reward (choose one or two parcels and don't use them later in the adventure). A failure results in a monetary reward (one parcel) and a general frostiness (-2 penalty to all Diplomacy checks) whenever the PCs return to Brindol.

◆ Once the characters set out from Brindol, they need to travel along the Dwarfroad or the Elsir River to reach Overlook. Along the way, they might have a few encounters in the wilderness (especially if the PCs aren't quite 3rd level when the adventure begins). Wilderness Encounters on page 23 provides several options.

◆ After a long (and possibly uneventful) journey out of the Elsir Vale, the characters stumble onto a band of orcs just outside the Westdeep. These scouts left the mountains—against orders—to do a bit of looting in the countryside. The characters face two orc raiders and five orc drudges. Astute players might realize if orcs are on this side of the mountain, perhaps this means the enemy has already breached Bordrin's Watch!

At Overlook, the adventurers are free to explore the city, resupply, and purchase new equipment. Not long after they arrive, they should learn they aren't the only adventurers in the city. In fact, the city crawls with them. Also, the Council of Elders convenes shortly after the PCs enter Overlook to discuss the threat to the city and the vale beyond, and then they summon the various adventuring groups, militias, and others to Caer Overlook (see page 10).

Once there, the PCs and other adventurers are led through a maze of corridors until they reach the High Hall. Standing on the 20-foot tall dais are the five elders. Each of the three male dwarves have long beards that hang to their feet, and two are old, being

gray and wrinkled. The third is younger, with black hair and hard features. The two female elders are both attractive, one with red hair and the other with brown. All five wear the robes of their office—luxuriant purple and silver damask. Arranged beneath them, filling the chamber completely, is a motley crowd of common soldiers, militia, and adventurers, with each race and occupation represented, and most standing in small groups, but a few mingling.

Characters that met any other groups while in the city—the Freeriders, the Farstriders, or others (see page 26 for names)—should see them here as well as any other parties you design. Allow the characters to mingle with these groups as the players like, but few groups know much about what's going on and if the PCs faced orcs, they likely know more than the rest of the host. Most groups are polite, but the Farstriders drip with self-confidence bordering on arrogance.

When ready to proceed, the youngest male elder steps forward and addresses the crowd. Read or paraphrase the following text:

Welcome to High Hall friends. I am Elder Cadrick. I don't much see the point in bandying words, so I'll lay it out for you. War is upon us. A great host of orcs comes from the west. Their intention is clear. They will come through the mountains bent on slaughter. Those they spare can look forward to a short life of slavery. Overlook, and Bordrin's Watch in the mountains, have long held fast against these raids, but our scouts say never has such an army gathered. Thus, we turn to you brave souls to help defend not only Overlook, but also all the Elsir Vale.

When the orcs arrive, we're certain they will come up through the pass. We know this because already there have been attacks from the tunnels below, compromising the

fastness. The defenders have fought back the savages, but it's clear the rest are coming and fast.

So here's the plan. Durkik Forgeheart will lead the militias and most of you to bolster Bordrin's Watch. Orc trailblazers infest the tunnels below, so we've tasked their security to the Farstriders. One more mission remains, though. We need a group to evacuate the monastery on the other side of the mountains. It's dangerous work, what with the orcs and all, but priests need a warning of what's coming if they don't know already.

Do we have any volunteers?

No one steps forward to take this mission, so it falls to the PCs to do so. When they volunteer, Edgar Sommerfield, the leader of the Farstriders, angrily steps forward and says, "Should I remind the Council of our previous arrangement?" Cadrick responds with a nod and a placating gesture, thanks the PCs for their service, and dismisses the gathered crowd. The elder speaks with the Farstrider's leader for a few moments, after which Sommerfield storms out of the hall. Cadrick holds the PCs and promises them 1,000 gp upon their return. Unless the PCs have any other business, you're free to proceed with the adventure at the Monastery of the Sundered Chain described on page 27.

Troubleshooting: The PCs might be curious about the Farstriders, and a little chatting (DC 15 Streetwise) reveals the group has a storied career, having slain a black dragon, wiped out tribes of savage humanoids, recovered fabled relics, and more. Should the characters ask Cadrick about them, he mentions that the Farstriders met with the Council earlier and negotiated for the job with the most danger and glory, which is why they are descending into the mountains to secure them.

If the group doesn't step forward, you can have the Freeriders (see page 24) or another group step up instead. The Council sends the PCs to defend Bordrin's Watch. Not long after they arrive, word comes that the other group hasn't yet returned, so an officer sends the PCs to find out what happened, though with only half the reward. Assuming they don't mutiny, proceed with the Monastery as normal.

OVERLOOK

The city of Overlook stands on the eastern slopes of the Stonehome Mountains, a hoary range of crumbling peaks as old as the world. The city's founding lies sometime far back in the mists of time, at a point after the dwarves in this region threw off the shackles of slavery and chased the giants and orcs west across the mountains at the end of the Age of Chains. Overlook, and the fastness of Bordrin's Watch, were raised to safeguard the liberated dwarf peoples and to be the first line of defense should their ancient enemies forget their defeat and seek to enslave the dwarves once more.

Since its founding, Overlook has never come under attack, though Bordrin's Watch has time and again, at least once every century. Overlook supplies the mountain pass with soldiers, supplies, and needed resources, ensuring the Watch is never without the goods they need to live up to their ancient responsibility. While doughty dwarf warriors hold the Watch, the city is far more cosmopolitan and includes peoples of nearly every race and culture known in this corner of the world. Dwarves are still the dominant group, but humans and halflings make up a close second, followed by dragonborn, tieflings, and a

smattering of eladrin and elves, and an assortment of other, less familiar, races.

Overlook is largely a trading center, and people on both sides of the mountain come to the city to exchange goods, rumors, and information. The city's numerous markets and bustling streets makes it the ideal place to do business, thus characters in search of a particular tool or device are more likely to find it here than anywhere for miles around.

Supplementing its trade is a robust mining industry. The mountains are rich in iron, silver, tin, and no few gemstones. Dwarf and human miners and prospectors set out from Overlook each day, some working in the blackness of the deep mines, while others scour the heights in search of treasures—some succeeding, others failing, and others still vanishing in the misty peaks never to be seen again.

Although the city depends on Bordrin's Watch to endure most of the attacks from the west, the city is not without its own defenses. The dwarves erected steep walls to protect themselves, but as the city outgrew its original protections, the inhabitants raised more walls to encircle the growing population. So far, this has happened four times, giving the city four sets of walls, one inside of the other. The shantytown, the unofficial ninth district, grows beyond the eastern walls and it's just a matter of time before the Council decides to raise another wall and add those squatters to the rest of the city.

Piercing each wall, on both the western side and the eastern side, is a large gate flanked by two square stone towers. Most times, the gates stand open, even in the dead of night, but when trouble looms, such as now, the gates are closed at dusk, and the inner gates—the ones leading into High Hall—might close even earlier.

The outer walls are 100 feet tall,—taller where they travel over higher elevation. Each inner wall stands another 20 feet tall. Guards patrol the walls infrequently, though the gatehouses are held by a half-dozen warriors (dwarf bolters, *Monster Manual*, page 97).

DISTRICTS

Overlook has eight districts, each distinguished by the types of its people there as well as the industry one finds there.

BLISTER

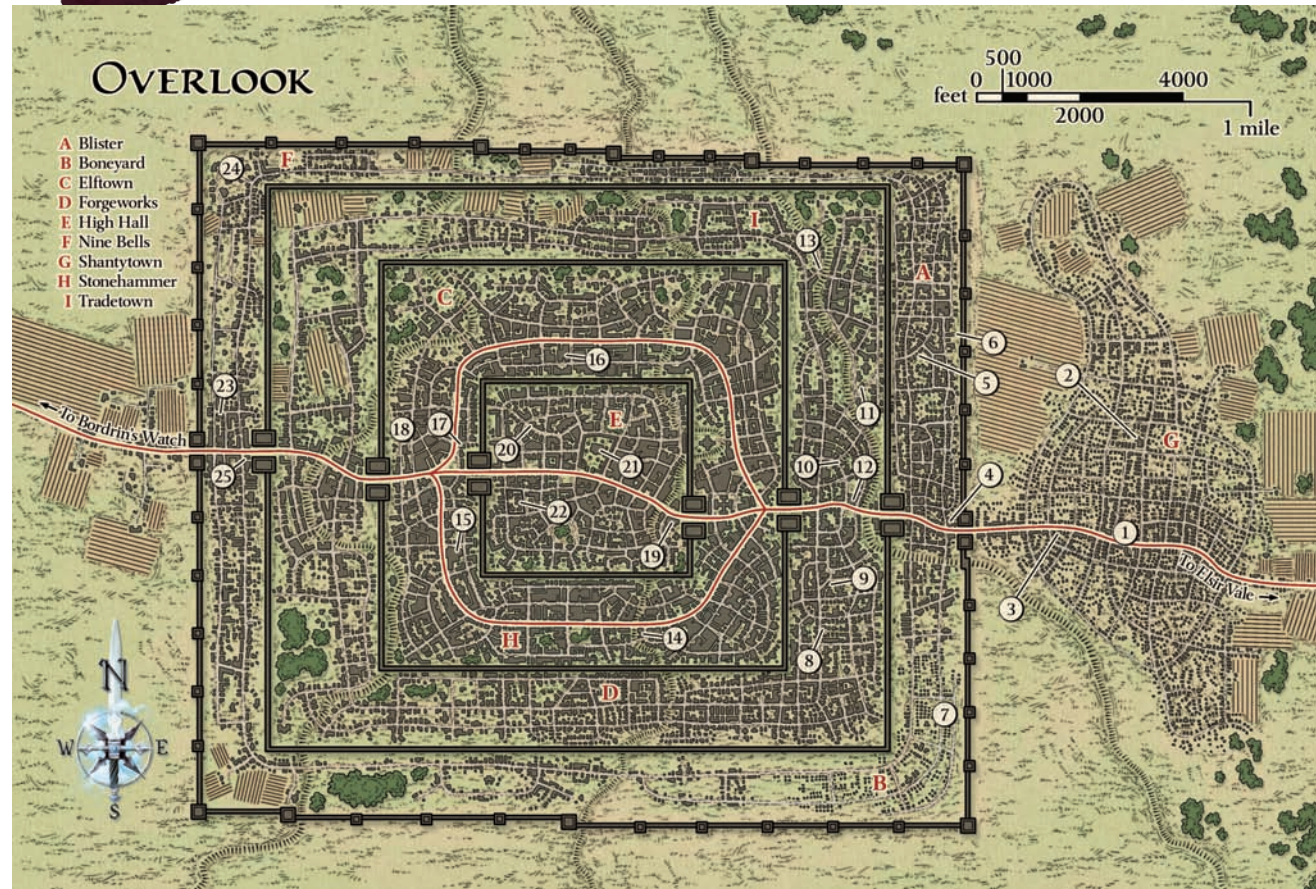
“Looking for work? You ought to prick the blister an’ see what bubbles up . . .”

The Blister is a rough-and-tumble section of the city, populated by mercenaries, adventurers, and the usual sort of traveling folk with few roots. Characterized by a great number of winesinks, taverns, pleasure dens, gambling halls, and bordellos, Blister is not a place to get lost.

Buildings: Blister’s buildings are a mix of timber and stone of architectural styles ranging the gamut. Old dwarven buildings stand next to almost organic tiefling dreaming halls, while a halfling gambling den sits in the shadow of an old temple dedicated to Sehanine in her more larcenous aspect.

Streets: Blister’s roads thread their way through the press of buildings, darkened by shadows cast by structures built too close together. Filth and detritus clog the alleys, sometimes spilling out onto the major thoroughfares—that is, roads large enough to accommodate a horse.

People: Humans, halflings, and dragonborn have the largest numbers in Blister, though one can find a variety of races here. As mentioned, most are adven-



turers, thieves, and traveling folk, representing the city’s most diverse population.

Sights: Visitors and inhabitants alike might see a pair of human thugs beating a half-orc with their clubs in an alley, a scantily clad man calling out to passersby, a street magician performing tricks, an elderly alchemist selling cure-alls, street preachers prophesizing the end of the world, tents and stalls, clotheslines stretched across the streets, and bands of adventurers looking for trouble.

Smells: All sorts of odors waft up from Blister, including smells of exotic cuisine to the expected

stench of a crowded district. Wood smoke hangs over the streets, mixing with other, more sinister smells.

Sounds: Merchants hawk their wares amid laughter, screams, the murmur of crowds, the clatter of kitchens, cries of “thief!,” the whistle of a constable in pursuit, the sounds of barking dogs, the hiss of cats, and the growls of spiretop drakes.

BONEYARD

“Not much to do in the Boneyard aside from sicking up.” Occupying the southeast corner of Overlook, Boneyard has every distasteful business and venture,

including everything from the city's slaughterhouses, renderers, tanners, dyers, and even the city's graveyards.

Buildings: As an industrial corner of the city, most buildings are plain and functional, and they are constructed to serve the operation and little else.

Streets: The Boneyard features broad roads in good repair so wagons can easily navigate the district.

People: Humans are the largest group of people here and most are dirty, lacking in sophistication, and

inured to the foul odors wafting up from the more toxic parts of the district.

Sights: Common sights include wagons laden with animal carcasses, workers trudging to their jobs, plumes of acrid smoke, and pipes leaking toxic fluids into the gutters. The Boneyard is as unpleasant to look at as it is to smell.

Smells: A pall of smoke stinking of urine and sulfur hangs over the Boneyard, turning the sun a pale shade of brown. Even though the locals do their

best to keep the streets free of rubbish, the materials and industries produce ripe odors a shade better than death.

Sounds: One can hear the creaks of wagons, the spillage of liquids, crackling fire, the screams of animals at the slaughter, and the grunts of hard labor.

ELFTOWN

"Don't know why they still call it Elftown; can't say as I've ever seen an elf there."

Elftown covers the northwestern corner of the inner city and takes its name from the one elf to live there some seventy years ago. The community consists of upscale and well-off entrepreneurs, merchants, bankers, lawyers, physicians, and other members of Overlook's upper crust, and many folk elsewhere want to inhabit a small house on the edge of this fine quarter.

Buildings: With fine buildings of astonishing architecture, white-washed or painted in pastel colors, Elftown has some of the nicest homes and shops in the city. Even the smaller houses are sumptuous compared to those of pretty much anywhere else in the city, and all are accented by parks, lawns of green grass, statuary, and beds of exotic flowers and semimobile plants.

Streets: Aside from the broad Dwarfroad that winds through Elftown, most streets are large enough to accommodate two carriages side by side. The roads are covered in pale white stone and maintained by a legion of well-paid servants. Even the side streets are clean and lit with everburning torches contained in iron lanterns to chase away the shadows.

People: In spite of the name, few, if any, elves live in Elftown, though several eladrin are affiliated with the ambassador who takes residence here. Instead,

OVERLOOK

This city of stone stands on the side of the Stonehome Mountains. Constructed as a haven for newly liberated dwarves from their former giant masters, Overlook has since outgrown its noble roots and become a haven for peoples all over the Elsir Vale and beyond.

Population: 12,250; about another 5,000 people live in small settlements scattered on the lower slopes. The people of Overlook are mostly dwarves, humans, and halflings, though pockets of dragonborn, tiefling, eladrin, and elf communities are isolated in their own ethnic neighborhoods. Overlook's importance as a trade center results in great numbers of travelers from faraway lands and of a wild assortment of races, cultures, and beliefs, lending the city its cosmopolitan atmosphere.

Government: The Council of Elders, a group of five male and female dwarves, governs Overlook. Each is elected to office and serves a 10-year term. The dwarves see ruling as a burden and none relish the job, preferring to hand power off to someone else. Heading up the Council is the Great Elder, Morgoff Stonefirst, an aging dwarf who's ready to retire.

One representative from each of the eight districts of Overlook attends the Council, serving as

advisors and also to air the grievances of their particular constituencies. Although these individuals have the power to influence, they have no real authority in the city, though many are wealthy and powerful by means other than the office they hold.

Defense: Overlook keeps a standing garrison of 150 warriors armed and ready for any threat. In times of trouble (such as now), Overlook can muster another 500 warriors from the local militia, and another 100 from the outlying settlements. At Bordrin's Watch, another 500 hundred warriors protect the mountain pass from within its steep walls and skyscraping towers.

Districts: Blister, Boneyard, Elftown, Forgeworks, High Hall, Nine Bells, Stonehammer, Tradetown, Shantytown (unofficial).

Inns: Belden's Rest; Cadrick's Boarding House; Clean Sheets; House of Sleep; Mountain's Hearth; Polliver's; the Turned Spoon; and numerous others.

Taverns: Coxcomb Spirits; Dergan's XXX Brewery; Michael's Blond; Pickled Imp; Pig and Bucket; the Salty Mug; and numerous others.

Supplies: Dungeoneer's Survival Emporium; Elsir Consortium; Merty's; Stonehome Treasures.

Temples: Divine Knot (various); Shrine of Erathis; Stone Anvil (Moradin).

wealthy humans and dwarves command this section of the city, though one can be sure to find a handful of dragonborn, a smattering of tieflings, and a few reckless halflings.

Sights: Observers can see black carriages pulled by teams of matching horses, patrols of uniformed guards, and fountains sending spray into the air, as well as servants painting houses, cleaning the streets, and avoiding attention.

Smells: One is likely to smell fine cooking, fresh-cut grass, the perfume of brilliant flowers, incense, and other pleasant aromas.

Sounds: Notes played on a harp, the singing of a lovely young woman (or a younger man), a haughty noble screaming at a servant, the whinny of horses, and the clink of gold are common sounds.

FORGEWORKS

“Let me tell you about this place I know. If you’re looking for armor, I can think of nowhere better to go.”

The Forgeworks, or just the Forge, is a middle-class district given over to successful artisans, tradesfolk, and other men and women who work hard and are successful in their professions. More than half of the buildings here are workshops with apartments overhead. Warehouses, businesses, stables, and other places of industry round out the rest. The Forgeworks stands in the Middle City, south of Tradetown.

Buildings: Small shops with flats above line the streets, punctuated with the occasional tavern, shrine to Moradin or Erathis, and speckled with overlarge warehouses.

Streets: Broad streets, wide enough to accommodate aurochs and wagons, run through this district, while narrow alleys branch off to disappear in the maze of buildings beyond. Cobbles cover the ground



and most are even to provide smooth transport to and from the Forge.

People: Dwarves and humans live side by side in the Forgeworks, but one can also find a small population of half-elves, gnomes, and a few others as well. During the day, business here brings folk from all over the city to do business.

Sights: Blacksmiths hard at work at their forges, weavers chatting while working their looms, painters, tailors, and a host of other shops and business, all produce goods for the citizens of Overlook and beyond.

Smells: The air is pregnant with the smells of sweat, smoke, and industry. Street vendors sell meat

pies, sausages, and other portable foods for workers and visitors alike, lending the pleasant (or not so pleasant) aromas of their fare to the atmosphere. Although a busy part of Overlook, the Forgeworks is surprisingly clean.

Sounds: Frequent sounds are hammers on anvils, a sharp curse, the hum of conversation, wagons creaking, aurochs straining in their traces, and the sound of footfalls from passersby.

HIGH HALL

“The heart and soul of Overlook, son, High Hall is where the movers and shakers make all the decisions.”

High Hall, or the Old City, is where the city leaders convene to govern Overlook. Few folk still live in High Hall since nearly every inch of available space is given over to the various ministries making up the city's government. Thus, aside from a few extremely wealthy folks, most people funnel out of High Hall at the end of the day to head home to Elftown, Stonehammer, or elsewhere.

Buildings: High Hall consists of a forest of massive buildings packed tightly inside its walls. Towers thrust up from the fortresslike structures, climbing high above the walls and affording a look at the entire city and the lands all around. Most buildings house one of the dozen or so ministries that see to keeping the city operating. Examples include the Ministry of Commerce, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of War, and so on. Each operates out of a marble or brick building fronted by impressive statues of dwarf warriors, artisans, and historical figures, while the walls themselves bear intricate carvings and bas-reliefs capturing key moments from the city's history.

The outer edge of High Hall holds the businesses and few homes of those who grease the engines of politics. Restaurants, inns, and a few shops provide patronage to the city's elite, but they shut down at nightfall.

Streets: Suffering from too many buildings in a confined space, High Hall's roads are positively perilous. Tight and cramped while winding through the heart of Overlook, they contain numerous shadowy alcoves, dead-ends, and limited range of sight as they turn and twist. Although High Hall doesn't have a thievery problem, it does suffer from hired killers. The dwarves deal honorably with one another, but the same cannot be said for all the city's representatives, and rival humans, tieflings, and others might resort

to murder to eliminate an inflexible politician. Thus, most high-ranking officials surround themselves with guards, making travel anywhere in High Hall all the harder.

People: The Council of Elders might all be dwarves, but the rest of the city's government is as diverse as the city. Bureaucrats, functionaries, messengers, and palanquins bearing representatives from other districts all make their way through High Hall throughout the day, and sometimes at night.

Sights: Buildings, buildings, and more buildings crowd the district, their carved façades telling ancient stories of heroic dwarves, the end of the Age of Chains, and other historical events that helped shape this region. One might see workers cleaning up a murder scene, while street vendors sell everything from amulets that promise to bring good luck in the courts, to food dealers, and tattered street lawyers searching for clients.

Smells: Overcrowding and the malaise of too many people gives High Hall an unpleasant aroma in spite of the fact that the Council spares no expense in keeping this part of the city clean. Wafting up from the streets is a mix of rubbish, food, and sweat, but compared to other sections of Overlook, High Hall is tolerable.

Sounds: Throughout the day, a steady hum of conversation sounds, punctuated with the ringing of bells, the angry shouts of guards as they escort their worthy charges through the press of people, voices raised in protest at some new law, and an assortment of other noises make High Hall loud. At night, however, it becomes deathly quiet.

NINE BELLS

"Nine Bells, Nine Hells, all the same to me."

Nine Bells district takes its name for the nine temples found in the heart of the district. Since these temples cater to the sick and the poor, this district draws the hungry, the diseased, and the destitute to its streets. Before the walls were raised here, Nine Bells was a place of great wealth—a community favored by those rich citizens who wanted to escape the clamor of the city. However, after it was annexed along with Blister and the Boneyard, the estates were abandoned and the folks fled to Stonehammer or Elftown to escape the flood of destitute people that washed into the place. Now, Nine Bells is the worst part of the city and is ever a source of embarrassment for the city's elite.

Buildings: With rotting estates, old vineyards now overrun by tents and wooden shacks, sagging row-houses, and communities of tents, Nine Bells decays even while the rest of the city grows strong. The businesses, such as they are, cater to darker interests, including dreaming halls, sinister taverns, fighting pits, and disease-ridden brothels. Huddled in one corner of this district are nine great temples, raised long ago, but faced, on all sides, by poverty, despair, and the worst sorts of people imaginable. Called the Divine Knot, a few of these temples have been abandoned, while the rest keep small staffs of dedicated servants who soldier on to fight the misery plaguing this district.

Streets: As one might expect, Nine Bells' streets are muddy lanes and narrow alleys, all filthy and most worming through the press of decaying buildings. Closest to the temples, the muddy roads gain cobbles, typically clean and free of debris.

People: Nine Bells is the bottom of the barrel, so to speak, and it welcomes anyone who has nowhere

else to go. Humans, dwarves, tieflings, halflings, gnomes, and even a few half-orcs scratch out an existence in this wretched mire. Despair is strong here and it drives many of its people to commit unspeakable acts to survive. Drugs, prostitution, and even slavery can all be found here.

Sights: A dead dog rotting in the streets, a swarm of rats cornering a gaunt gnome in a darkened alley, a hideous crone hobbling under the weight of her scavenged scraps, a gang of children armed with sharp knives and hungry eyes, and a robed priest swinging a smoking censer to chase away the spirits can all be found in Nine Bells.

Smells: A fecal stench hangs in the air, mixed with the equally nauseating odors of vomit, rot, and rubbish. People here are unclean and their odors mingle with that of the befouled air to create a symphony of noxious odors. Nearest to the temples, the air grows a bit more tolerable thanks to incense and the modicum of respect the people show the men and women of the cloth.

Sounds: Within this area, one can hear mad laughter echoing out of a darkened ally, a woman's cry, a wailing child, the sound of flies devouring an abandoned carcass, the splash of effluvia, and the whisper of a threat.

STONEHAMMER

"There's a different kind of stench in Stonehammer . . . it's the stench of arrogance."

Stonehammer occupies the southern half of the inner city, and it wraps around High Hall up to the Dwarfroad. Like Elftown, Stonehammer is home to the wealthy citizens of Overlook, specifically the dwarves. Since this district is cleaner, safer, and more exclusive than other parts of the city, great deal of resentment

exists toward the folks of Stonehammer from those of lower means and status.

Buildings: Stonehammer is the most dwarven of districts, and its buildings are grand, sweeping, and magnificent to behold. Towers that thrust up from lower levels rival those found in High Hall in terms of height and grandeur. Since space is at a premium, the dwarves here have built upward. The wealthiest citizens live in the aeries, while servants, low-born dwarves, and all those who support the sumptuous lifestyles of the elite dwell in the 'Dark—the bowels of Stonehammer.

Streets: The towers feature wide, sturdy bridges of stone, each fitted with high railings to prevent accidents and equipped with everburning torches for safety. In the 'Dark, the roads are tight and twisting, threading around the towers' bases, and plunged in nearly perpetual darkness.

People: Stonehammer is exclusively a dwarven district and nondwarves are not permitted to live here. Other races often work in the 'Dark, but even they must keep their residences outside the district. Folk here are wealthy and powerful, and they represent the best the city has to offer.

Sights: A knot of dwarf priests bestow blessings on a newly completed bridge, a palanquin borne by a dozen human thralls bears a dwarf lady to an upscale market, a pompous dwarf aristocrat waxes on about his successful ventures in Tradetown, and stern-faced guards armed with halberds block access into the innards of an impressive tower.

Smells: None; the air is clean, although a breeze might push the fetid odors from the rest of the city, but such occasions are rare and brief. In the 'Dark, dust, sweat, and wood smoke fill the air, tinged with a faint chemical smell.

Sounds: Deep, resonating laughter, the bass voice of a dwarf noble, the grunt of a thrall bearing the weight of his charge, the hiss of a spiretop drake, and the sounds of good living permeate the district.

TRADETOWN

"Have a care in Tradetown, son. You can go there with a full purse and come out with nothing more than a pail of beans."

Tradetown is a melting pot of all races, cultures, and occupations. In many ways, Tradetown is a lot like the Blister, but it has been established for longer and it has a mix of fabulous wealth and appalling poverty. Tradetown, as one might expect, is a commercial and retail district, where merchants, tradesfolk, and prospectors come to do business. Most middle-tier business-inclined people have homes here and gather in coffee houses, upscale bars, and bathhouses to do business. In stark contrast to the bustling commerce, Tradetown is also home to a powerful thieving guild named the Lost Ones. A clandestine organization, they have agreements with nearly all the major enterprises here, offering protection (or rather exemption) from thievery and the promise to leave their customers alone.

Buildings: Tradetown is a hodgepodge of stone buildings (many of dwarven architecture), wooden structures, warehouses, shops, inns, taverns, and everything and anything a person might want in a city of this size.

Streets: Tradetown is every bit as cramped as the Blister and in some ways more so for the vendors and hawkers crowding the streets. Moving merchandise into Tradetown is a chore and often requires porters rather than wagons to transport anything of size. The

roads are cobbled, but alleys and side-streets might be muddy and covered in rubbish.

People: Tradetown is home to a dizzying number of people, from elves and eladrin to lumbering half-orcs and goliaths. Humans and gnomes rub elbows in taverns, while dwarves of low character might engage in backroom deals with sinister tieflings.

Sights: Merchants line the roads, selling an assortment of goods that range from magic items, ritual ingredients, and curiosities, to common goods such as pots, pans, cutlery, trade goods, and everything in between. Shady men and women walk the streets, eyes in constant motion as they search for new marks, while grifters and charlatans peddle cure-alls or use trickery to part their customers from their coin. Urchins run through the alleys, leading visitors through the safer parts of Tradetown, while disguised halflings lead other visitors to the nastier corners, where the travelers can find beatings and robberies instead of their destinations.

Smells: An unsettling mixture of roasting meats, beer, ale, and spices blends with excrement, sweat, and the strange odors of illegal substances, wreathing the district in a perpetual haze.

Sounds: One can hear woman's laughter, a dragonborn's growl, an argument, a shout of "thief!", children playing, a yelping dog, a persistent merchant's pitch, and the whispered invitations from second-story rooms overlooking the narrow streets.

SHANTYTOWN

"You think Nine Bells is bad? Spend a night in the Shantytown."

Not a true district, Shantytown clings to the back of the city like festering boil. Shantytown is a wretched maze of tents, shacks, and rotting wooden buildings,

and it is home to the poorest and most desperate of people that have nowhere else to go. Most of Shantytown's people are refugees from other lands, victims of tragedy and circumstance, or exiles who keep a low profile so they can go about their wicked business without attracting attention. Thus, Shantytown's people are beggars, destitute farmers, maimed adventurers, undead, necromancers, cultists, and worse, all thrown together in one of the most desperate spots in the region.

Buildings: Tents and lean-tos make up the majority of "buildings" in Shantytown, though some wooden structures rise up from the mess like islands in a sea of misery.

Streets: Little better than muddy paths wending through heaps of debris and filth, no one is sure if the mud is actually mud. . . .

People: People of all races and from all lands live here, though humans appear to be the most numerous. Most have hard luck stories, but a few live here by choice—for easy hunting or to escape notice.

Sights: One can see a filthy child screaming in the middle of a street, a flock of chickens fleeing from a hungry cat, a brown-clad cultist with a rat skull on a thong around his neck, a shrine dedicated to a sinister god, and a bloated corpse ripening in the sun.

Smells: Filth, filth, and more filth—the stench of Shantytown is staggering.

Sounds: Within this area one can hear laughter and crying, moans and sighs, the squelch of foot-falls, the grunt of pain, the short shriek of butchered animal, the howl of a dog in pain.

KEY LOCATIONS

The districts are broadly described so you can stock them with shops, temples, and inns as you need, but a

few locations warrant mentioning. Each entry corresponds with a location shown on the Overlook map.

1. DWARFROAD

The old Dwarfroad emerges from the Elsir Vale and climbs the slopes of the Stonehome Mountains, moving through Overlook and ascending up to Bordrin's Watch and down the other side into the badlands beyond. The old road is far older than Overlook, having been paved during the Age of Chains by dwarf slaves for their giant masters. After the dwarves successfully rebelled, the Dwarfroad served as a primary trade route for the old dwarven kingdom that followed, but over the last century or so, goblins, bandits, and worse, have made travel along it perilous. Still, closer to Overlook, the road is somewhat safe and folk near the city still make use of it.

2. THE GRAY REDOUBT OF RUFUS CRUMLEY

The so-called "gray redoubt" is a leaning tower of gray and black stone that has the dubious distinction of being the tallest structure in Shantytown. Speculated as being as old as the city, the tower has had many owners over the centuries, but is currently the home to one Rufus Crumley.

A dabbler in necromancy and the dark arts, Crumley is a wildly unpopular figure in the Shantytown, but powerful enough that no one dares report him to the authorities. For the most part, Crumley keeps to himself, working in his laboratory to master the secrets of undeath and foul magic. It's whispered that undead horrors guard the tower, so not even the thieves of the "district" dare attempt burglary. It's well known that Crumley pays good gold for cadavers and

Rufus Crumley	Level 9 Elite Controller	
Medium natural humanoid, human	XP 800	
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +8	
HP 188; Bloodied 94		
AC 25; Fortitude 20, Reflex 24, Will 22		
Saving Throws +2		
Speed 6		
Action Points 1		
⬇️ Dagger (standard; at-will) Poison, Weapon	+13 vs. AC; 1d4 + 3 damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).	
🌀 Ray of Rot (standard; at-will) Necrotic	Ranged 10; +13 vs. Fortitude; 1d6 + 6 necrotic damage, and the target is slowed until the end of Rufus's next turn.	
✳️ A Grave Wind (standard; recharge ⏳) Necrotic	Area burst 2 within 10; +14 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 6 necrotic damage. A swirling cloud of souls appears in the area and remains until the end of Rufus's next turn. It grants concealment, and any creature that starts its turn in the area takes 6 necrotic damage.	
Invisibility (standard; sustain: standard; encounter) Illusion	Rufus can turn invisible until the end of his next turn.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Infernal, Supernal	
Skills Arcana +16, Religion +13		
Str 11 (+4)	Dex 16 (+7)	Wis 19 (+8)
Con 14 (+6)	Int 22 (+10)	Cha 14 (+6)
Equipment patched robes, dagger, staff		

is knowledgeable in a few rituals useful for removing afflictions, and, if it can be believed, thwart death.

DM Tip: Although Rufus deals in black magic, he doesn't pose much of a threat to Overlook since his work is largely theoretical. Should the PCs need discreet healing for an ailment or death, Rufus provides it with no questions asked, making him a useful, if shady ally.

3. CLEAN SHEETS

A sagging, rotting building leaning out over the old Dwarfroad, this inn hasn't had clean sheets since it first opened for business a decade ago. What it does offer is shelter and a suspicious meal. Clean Sheets' accommodations include a pair of private rooms, or

a cot in a large common room in the attic. The main floor consists of a kitchen and dining hall where a patron can buy a burned or undercooked meal, tepid beer, and cloudy water for a reasonable price.

DM's Tip: Yerrin Dalovoy, a halfling with a wicked scar on his left cheek, runs the place, having won it in a game of *Three Dragon Ante* a few years back. He uses the inn as a front to smuggle drugs and poisons into Overlook, supplying his contacts in the Lost Folk with useful commodities for their criminal interests.

4. MOUNTAIN'S HEARTH

Just inside the east gates and facing the old Dwarfroad is a three-story inn named the Mountain's Hearth. Famed for its clean and neat accommodations, fine meals, and pleasant staff, the Hearth is one of the more popular stops in Overlook. The dwarf matron Reggen runs the place like clockwork, and her persistence and dedication has paid off. Unfortunately, the Lost Folk have been putting pressure on her to pay for protection. So far, she has resisted and has paid the price for her refusal in the vandalism and dark threats she has endured. She'd pay well if someone could get these thugs off her back.

5. PIG AND BUCKET

One of the Blister's most famous dives, the Pig and Bucket is a one-story tavern squashed between two boarding houses of ill-repute. Most of the tavern consists of the beer hall, where booths line the walls, and row tables and benches fill the open area in the center. A wooden bar, replete with names and curses carved onto its surface, runs along the back wall, where a dozen casks hold a variety of beers.

Adventurers and mercenaries loiter in the Pig and Bucket, because it's a good place to find work and exchange news. Merchants, wizards, and shady types drift in and out the bat-wing doors day or night, so one doesn't have to wait long before someone blows in with a job offer. Kyle Rester cultivates this atmosphere since he was an adventurer in his youth. His bright red hair has gone to gray and his freckled face is creased and wrinkled with age, but he's competent and knows his way around a sword.

6. DUNGEONEER'S SURVIVAL EMPORIUM

A narrow building, but deep, the Dungeoneer's Survival Emporium is a general store specializing in common goods such as rope, packs, tents, and bedrolls—all available for reasonable prices. The shop doesn't deal in weapons or armor, but if a customer flirts enough with Myra Edgerton, a half-elf of prodigious size, he might just gain access to the store of wondrous items she has collected over the years.

DM's Tip: Myra is in fact a doppelganger assassin (*Monster Manual*, page 71) and uses her cover to avert suspicion toward her nocturnal ventures. She's careful to conceal her true nature, and she acts as a facilitator for those needing a discreet blade, claiming she knows people, when in fact, she is the "people."

7. TOMBS

Adventurers don't have much reason to explore the Boneyard unless they're in need of leathers, dyes, or a funeral service. In fact, the thing that brings most people to the Boneyard is the Tombs, Overlook's old graveyard. As large above ground as it is below, Tombs contains the burial vaults for citizens dating back to the city's founding. The city eventually swallowed it

up when it annexed the Boneyard a hundred years ago. For as much as the groundskeepers maintain Tombs, the cemetery is a grim and foreboding place, aided by the overlarge temple of the Raven Queen that crouches in the heart of the maze of headstones, vaults, and crypts.

DM's Tip: Although not advertised, Tombs loses a dozen cadavers every year. No one is sure where they go or if there are robbers about, but the attendants—who leave much to be desired in their vigilance—see the loss as acceptable.

8. DERGAN'S XXX BREWERY

Dergan's XXX Brewery is home of Dergan's XXX Stout, a full-bodied black lager brewed using a recipe passed down through a dozen generations of dwarf brewmasters. The current brewer is a dwarf by the name of Forsworth Clangman, and he takes pride in continuing his family's tradition. The Brewery is beloved by laborers throughout the Forgeworks, and off-duty workers come each day to drink away their wages in the comfort of this dark tavern and brewery.

9. STONEHOME TREASURES

Mikal Rensfield runs Stonehome Treasures, an unassuming shop specializing in selling goods produced in and around Overlook. Rensfield, an enterprising human merchant, solicits finished materials from artisans in the city and from the outlying villages and turns them around for a profit in the Forgeworks. His merchandise is an eclectic mix of mundane equipment, weapons, armor, and a smattering of magic items he has picked up for a steal from local explorers. Treasures, as it's often called, does a brisk business in the city, and adventurers of discerning taste shop here exclusively.

10. BELDEN'S REST

An adorable elderly couple runs Belden's Rest. Rory Teng, human, and his wife Ruth, half-elf, have operated the inn since it was first built, and the inn has a reputation for its comfortable rooms, excellent food, and courteous staff. Prices are reasonable and the owners find new ways to surprise and please their guests during their stay. The inn consists of a lounge and restaurant on the main floor, with the upper two floors given over to private rooms. They're best known for their pressed duck.

DM's Tip: Rory and his wife are secret cultists of Asmodeus and the couple keeps a shrine to the dark god in a secret room attached to their cellar. On (un)holy days, they and their fellow dedictees gather beneath the inn to perform blood sacrifices to their master. They hide their activities well, but the fact that tieflings stay here for free is a big clue to where their loyalties truly lie.

11. THE SALTY MUG

This tavern nestles between the steep cliff that runs through the Tradetown and the middle wall, so the sun shines upon the building only in the middle of the day. The rest of time, shadows cloak the place, providing a fitting atmosphere for a haven of thieves and scum. Founded a dozen years ago by an ex-pirate named Kyne, the Salty Mug immediately attracted the worst sort of clientele—prostitutes, thugs, murderers, thieves, and, of course, adventurers. Fights break out here all the time and murders are common enough that when a stabbing occurs, the bartender—a brutish hobgoblin named Krunk, collects the body and sells it to the renderer the next morning.

In spite of the danger, the Salty Mug is a good place to pick up rumors and happenings in the city. People

haunting its booths are connected and they keep a finger on the pulse of the city.

12. MERTY'S

This gaudy shop fronts the old Dwarfroad as it passes between Tradetown and Forgeworks. The place is painted in pastel colors and big glass windows in the front display adventurers battling with papier-mâché monsters. Merty's sells a variety of gear and equipment, all for 150% above the normal prices. What the place lacks in good deals, it more than makes up for in variety, making this shop an excellent choice for adventurers looking to track down ingredients, magic items, and other hard-to-find gear. A halfling named Riley Swifttoe owns the place and keeps a gnome artificer on hand to put together custom goods.

13. SHRINE OF ERATHIS

In the heart of Tradetown stands a small shrine dedicated to Erathis. Little more than a covered altar, littered with stubs of incense and scraps of paper containing prayers offered up by locals for good fortune, and a large idol of the goddess looking off to the horizon, people come here throughout the day or night. A gentle old woman named Haelyn attends the shrine and accepts tithes from penitents and those seeking the deity's blessings. Haelyn might know a few rituals to remove afflictions, but she is not, in fact, a cleric.

14. COXCOMB SPIRITS

A proud rooster adorns a hanging sign above the entrance to Coxcomb Spirits. More restaurant than tavern, Coxcomb Spirits offers a fine selection of wines, beers, ales, and liquors to accompany the artful meals prepared by Chef Drebben. The Spirits

caters mostly to the city's elite, and a nonpolitician might wait for months for reservations.

Ironically, a ghost in its cellar haunts the Spirits. Drebben has contained the unruly and unwanted guest by arranging holy symbols around its lair, but he fears his solution is temporary at best. He'd hire someone to clear out the ghost, but fears it would be bad for business.

15. STONE ANVIL

Easily one of the largest buildings in Overlook, Stone Anvil is a grand cathedral dedicated to Moradin. The church's foundation extends deep into the earth, where copyists work to transcribe the holy texts of Moradin, write holy books, and compile ritual books for the clergy. Some say these cavernous vaults hold far more than the legion of scribes and that ancient relics from the Age of Chains are buried in the deepest of vaults.

Above, stone walls assembled from blocks of stone larger than many homes climb far above the bridges and buildings of Stonehammer. Its uppermost levels are studded with leaded windows that sparkle in the sun, each of which is shaped to resemble hammers. Doors to the worship hall rise 40 feet and require six dwarves to open or close them such is their great weight.

The Stone Anvil is open to all who would pay homage to Moradin, but its placement in the city as well as an unwelcoming atmosphere results in its congregation being nearly all dwarves. The current high priest is Durkik Forgeheart, and he has served three decades. Durkik, a dwarf, began his career as a pious servant of his god, but years of corruption, wealth, and status have chipped away at his idealism, leaving him grasping and opportunistic, which makes him

little better than any of the bureaucrats choking the life from the city.

16. HOUSE OF SLEEP

The House of Sleep specializes in exemplary service and keeps out unwanted guests with its exorbitant prices. A great tower that stands seven stories tall and is pierced with so many arched windows, the building appears as if it has more glass than stone in its construction. The House offers private accommodations only; each suite of pleasant rooms includes a small kitchen, lounge, and bedroom, as well as the service of two servants who see to the guest's every need.

Kalaban Whisperwind, an eladrin expatriate, owns the House of Sleep and dotes on his guests. A cultured and educated man, his life is one of service. Those who can afford a room here are never disappointed.

17. THE TURNED SPOON

The Turned Spoon is a quaint restaurant on the southern edge of Elftown. Founded by a cadre of halfling chefs from the riverlands to the south, they offer a large menu and a dizzying array of spirits. The restaurant is comfortable, with padded chairs and low tables. Deemed a romantic spot by the elite, and the epitome of excess by everyone else, the Turned Spoon offers large meals of unimpeachable quality.

18. ELSIR CONSORTIUM

Forty years ago, a group of merchants set aside their differences and combined their businesses to found the Elsir Consortium. Their unified front allowed them to expand their individual markets to nearly every community in the Elsir Vale until a decade later, and they have emerged as one of the most pow-

erful commercial forces in the region. Ever since, the Consortium has only grown larger and more successful, which is a fact not lost on the folk of Tradetown and elsewhere who have begun to resent the Consortium's influence.

Overlook houses the Consortium's warehouses and production facilities in Elftown. Fronting these buildings is a small shop that provides goods, weapons, armor, and other materials (none of which is magical) at a 10% discount below those prices listed in the *Player's Handbook*.

DM's Tip: The Consortium is indeed a powerful merchant conglomerate, but its interests extend much further than moving mundane goods around the Elsir Vale. The Consortium has turned hungry eyes at a bigger prize; they hope to oust the ruling Council and install a government friendlier to the Consortium's interests, preferably consisting of individuals hand-picked by the merchants. A small cadre believes the coming conflict will be good for them, since they expect that a disastrous defeat at Bordrin's Watch will weaken the Council's influence and open the door for a coup. When this occurs, the Consortium intends to move in with their mercenary soldiers, which are hidden throughout the city, seize the government, and shatter the orc armies themselves.

19. POLLIVER'S

Polliver's is a small inn and club used by visiting officials and for local officials in need of clandestine meetings. A large building, four stories tall, it sits atop a tower near the eastern gate into the High Hall. Tall glass windows face out on all sides, with burgundy curtains inside that can be drawn closed for privacy, while a pair of golden griffons stands watch to either side of the bronzed doors. The inside is just as grand

as the outside, with high ceilings, patterned floors in priceless woods, and a legion of servants that cater to their guests. Large rooms, on scale with those found in the House of Sleep, fill the upper levels, while a bar, restaurant, game room, and smoking lounge fill out the main floor.

Officials and envoys use Polliver's to conduct private meetings, to make secret deals, and to chart the course for the future of Overlook. As such, membership is gained by not only circumstances of birth and wealth, but also for a candidate's discretion. Being a member of Polliver's is an expense many in Overlook find worthwhile.

20. MICHAEL'S BLOND

In stark contrast to Polliver's and the other pricey establishments in High Hall and Stonehammer, Michael's Blond is a down-to-earth tavern that specializes in serving the working class, offering honest fare, good brew, and a comfortable environment all for a modest fee. Few officials would sully their names by having dinner here, but those looking for information on the elite might pry a few secrets from disgruntled servants deep in their cups.

21. CAER OVERLOOK (GOVERNMENT)

Rising above all the other districts and buildings in the city is Caer Overlook, a sprawling fortress of stone hauled out from the depths of the earth from the very mines the dwarves excavated during the dark days of their enslavement. The castle consists of eight round towers arranged in a star pattern surrounding a central keep capped with a domed roof. Hedging in all the towers and the keep is another stone wall, taller than the wall bounding the High Hall, and it raises 200-foot tall.

If the scale were not impressive enough, the architecture in the details establishes the fortress as one of the greatest in the lands. Carvings, engravings, and bas-reliefs adorn the walls, capturing moments of dwarven history and inscribing those grudges to which all dwarves still cling. Scrollwork bears threats and promises, vows of vengeance against orcs, giants, and anyone or anything else that had wronged these people.

Inside, the same degree of artistry appears throughout the building, from the brilliant tapestries to the inlaid stone work covering the floors, and statues of the courageous Firstborn who sacrificed their lives to liberate their kin. All this, inside and out, pales before the brilliant majesty of the Council Chamber: the High Hall. This magnificent room measures 200 feet in diameter with a great dome overhead. A dais, raised 20 feet above the echoing chamber, holds the five high-backed chairs for the councilors. The floor around the dais is polished to a mirror finish to reflect the mural on the dome overhead. In it, one can see an artist's rendition of Moradin's wrath against the primordials, telling the story of the god's gift, the betrayal, the Age of Chains, and culminating in the dwarves' liberation.

Caer Overlook provides quarters for the elders as well as smaller apartments for the districts' representatives and their families. Each is a sumptuous room with high ceilings and marble floors. Fireplaces large enough for a grown man to stand hold roaring fires, heating the entire castle through a feat of engineering, while everburning torches illuminate the halls and chambers with a soft white light. Few, however, have the chance to behold the splendor of this place, since the guardians protecting the councilors are

vigilant in safeguarding the private rooms and inner vaults.

22. MINISTRY OF WAR

The Ministry of War is more compound than single structure, consisting of six buildings arranged inside a walled-in courtyard. Three buildings are barracks for the garrison that protects and patrols the city. The fourth serves as an armory and smithy, producing weapons, ammunition, and armor for recruits. The fifth building houses the officers quarters, while the sixth contains the officers of the War Minister.

The Ministry of War produces both soldiers and watchmembers, and their training regimens are nearly identical. The Ministry accepts most candidates provided they are fit and able, but it allocates recruits to the city watch or garrison. Some candidates, no matter how eager, are refused. Topping the list are gnomes, any goblinoids (reformed or not), orcs (and their kin), and any other individual that lacks the strength, discipline, or ethical substance to serve.

DM's Tip: Rumors tell of a third branch of the Ministry of War, a covert group of operatives that combine teams of individuals with untraditional talents, such as wizards, warlocks, and others. If such a group exists, the Council and the Ministry both deny their existence.

23. CADRICK'S BOARDING HOUSE

When other districts provide lodgings, one might wonder why anyone would rent a room in the Nine Bells. There are few good reasons and those who do seek out a place to stay here are either too poor or too desperate to hunker down anywhere else, or, worse, need or have to keep a low profile. In any event, Cadrick's Boarding House welcomes any and all

inside its mildewed walls, offering dirt cheap rates that even include a loaf of bread (with crunchies!) and a pail of murky water. One never fears being alone in the rooms, because lice, fleas, and other vermin infest the straw mattress beneath stained sheets. No detail is spared in this interesting place, with peeling wall-paper revealing swathes of black, quivering mold, clouds of flies, and spiders so big, a shoe large enough has not been cobbled to silence their scuttling.

Wendell the Sott owns the Boarding House and is not sure who Cadrick was, though he'll tell you he did at one time if he can be sobered up long enough to reply. An army of sycophants and hangers-on lurk in the shadows of this building, taking residence here thanks to Wendell's good graces or his obliviousness.

DM's Tip: The folk loitering around Cadrick's Boarding House are a band of a rabble-rousers and agitators—anarchists that want to see the Council dissolved and laws removed, letting the city go back to a more natural state. They hide their intentions and their purpose well, except for the bits of graffiti that show up all around the inn, with such profundity as “Dwarves suck! Orcs Rooll!” and “Armen wuz here.” Clearly, this group is disorganized and doomed to failure, but if an individual could unite them and give them some direction, there are enough of them to be dangerous.

24. DIVINE KNOT

The Divine Knot is the name given to the nine temples filling out the northwest corner of the Nine Bells district. Each temple is a grand house of worship designed to honor the gods, but is marred by the squalor and filth contaminating this district. For years, the priests worked to clean up their environs but frequent failures have chipped away at their

resolve, leading a few of the temples to close their doors (specifically Ioun, Moradin, and Pelor). The rest—Avandra, Bahamut, Erathis, Kord, the Raven Queen, and, oddly, Zehir—remain, but with small clergies and smaller congregations.

25. PICKLED IMP

The Pickled Imp is an infamous tavern located just inside the Nine Bells. Taking its name from the large jar containing a dead imp suspended in brown fluid sitting proudly on the old wooden bar, the Pickled Imp is no place for the meek. Tucked away on a side street a few blocks away from the western gates, the Pickled Imp squats at the end of a foul alley, which is littered with slop tossed from the windows of tenements on all sides. The favored watering hole of beggars, storytellers, vagabonds, madmen, and shiftless folk, the Pickled Imp provides watery wine and a bitter yellow fluid that passes for beer. Fights are common, and in the cellar, the Imp's patrons can watch kobolds fight brutal death matches.

URBAN ENCOUNTERS

Between expeditions, the characters can retreat to Overlook to rest and recover, to acquire rituals and gear, or gather additional information. While in the city, you can use any of the following encounters to make their time in the city more interesting.

ANARCHISTS (LEVEL 1; XP 498)

- ◆ 2 human bandits (level 2 skirmisher; *Monster Manual*, page 162)
- ◆ 8 human rabble (level 2 minion; *Monster Manual*, page 162)

Fear about the orc army spreads through Overlook like a cancer, but it also emboldens groups who see the confusion and chaos as a singular opportunity for mischief. A group of anarchists emerges from Nine Bells to cause trouble in a higher-class district.

OUTRAGED DRAKES (LEVEL 1; XP 500)

- ◆ 5 spiretop drakes (level 1 skirmisher; *Monster Manual*, page 90)

Years ago, Overlook brought in spiretop drakes to control the growing rat problem. It worked, but now the drakes are everywhere. Generally, the drakes are comfortable enough around humanoid races, but if their eggs are disturbed, they can become fierce, as in the case of this clutch. An enterprising thief sought to snatch a few eggs and turn a profit outside the city and for his trouble, he found death instead of gold.

PRESSGANGS (LEVEL 1; XP 524)

- ◆ 2 halfling thieves (level 2 skirmisher; *Monster Manual*, page 152)
- ◆ 2 human lackeys (level 7 minion; *Monster Manual*, page 162)
- ◆ 4 human rabble (level 2 minion; *Monster Manual*, page 162)

Overlook has sounded the call to war, and many people have answered without the need of having to pressgang folk into service. A few gangs, however, emerged from Nine Bells, Blister, and the Boneyard, and they now roam the streets, ambushing anyone they find in the name of patriotism and delivering their bloody charges to the Ministry of War for fresh recruits.

LOST ONES (LEVEL 2; XP 675)

- ◆ 1 human mage (level 4 artillery; *Monster Manual*, page 163)
- ◆ 4 human bandits (level 2 skirmisher; *Monster Manual*, page 162)

The characters stumble onto a group of Lost Ones intimidating a shop owner into coughing up gold for “protection.” These enforcers respond with violence to any interference, but they scatter if the mage is taken out. Henceforth, the PCs gain the Lost Ones as enemies, and during the adventurers’ stay, they discover that some shops and taverns refuse them service and that their steps are dogged by gangs of these criminals.

MYSTERIOUS KILLERS (LEVEL 3; XP 750)

- ◆ 2 doppelganger sneaks (level 3 skirmisher; *Monster Manual*, page 71)
- ◆ 3 human guards (level 3 soldier; *Monster Manual*, page 162)

While moving through the city, the PCs come upon a vicious fight in a darkened alley. There, the attackers are finishing up slaughtering another group of adventurers. Should the PCs defeat the attackers, they find on them a list of names, some unknown, others known, including those of the Freeriders (see page 24) and four of the five player characters. These killers were hired by a mysterious agency in the city who’s working to eliminate potential problems as his plans unfold. A future adventure can provide greater revelations in this sinister plot.

BEYOND OVERLOOK

Overlook is one of the most interesting features of the Stonehome Mountains, but it isn’t the only one. Ruins of the old dwarven kingdom dot the peaks for hundreds of miles to the north and south, while old caves lead to tunnels worming through the rock. Closest to the Overlook, though, the land is safer and is home to numerous villages and other places of interest.

Armistice: Purported to be the site of victory of the giants and orcs, here the freed dwarves signed a compact of peace that would bind them into one nation. Now the kingdom is no more, so Armistice is just a relic of the past filled with old codgers who think back on better days.

Bordrin’s Watch: Straddling the old Dwarfroad is a mighty fortress that was raised to control traffic across the mountains and protect the Elsir Vale from attack. Bordrin’s Watch contains one of the three access points to the tunnels beneath the mountains. The stronghold consists of a long wall, which is 150-foot tall and over 80 feet thick at the base, and it is punctuated with steep towers fitted with arrowslits. Battlements cap the wall, allowing sentries to watch the pass and defend the fortress from attack. Atop each tower is a pair of catapults. Ballistae and scorpions are positioned every 40 feet along the wall’s length.

In the center of the pass is a massive gate. Its doors stand 100-foot tall, and it takes 40 aurochs to pull them open. The gatehouse surrounding the doors consists of two towers, each as tall as the wall and wider than three standing towers together.

Bordrin’s Watch can accommodate 3,000 soldiers on the walls and in the towers, but the grounds on the eastern side of the pass can hold up to 100 times this number if need be. Granaries are replenished

each season, fed by towns, hamlets, and communities all under Overlook’s protection. The stores can keep a modest-sized force fed and watered for up to six months without needing to resupply.

Like the Monastery, the Watch contains a secret staircase that winds down into the mountain and connects at a large room called the Nexus. There, soldiers at the Watch could move beneath the feet of their enemy and strike them from behind. This passage hasn’t been used in centuries and only a scant few know of its existence.

Elsir River: The headwaters of the Elsire River flow in a series of waterfalls that drain the mountains back into the valley to the east. West of Sodden (see below), the river is too rough and hides too many rocks for boats to navigate, though from Sodden, one can travel across the valley, going as far as Brindol.

Feud: Two dwarf families dominate this tiny hamlet and, as their name indicated, they are prone to violence. The only thing they can’t stand more than one another is outsiders.

Hope: Another speck of a town, Hope appeared after prospectors found a vein of silver nearby. Once the vein played out, most of the miners moved north to Armistice, but a few stubborn folk live here still, working the mines in search of precious metals. Travelers have reported that something is not right with these people and there’s a feeling that the citizens of Hope are hiding something sinister.

Lantern: A minuscule settlement of just fifty souls, Lantern is little more than a logging camp.

Monastery of the Sundered Chain: About eighteen miles southwest of Overlook stands the old Monastery of the Sundered Chain. Raised to house an order of holy warriors in service to Moradin, the templars have largely withdrawn from Overlook,

seeing the city as having lost its identity. Even though the relationship is strained, the monastery and the city remain allies. The monastery contains one of three access points to the tunnels beneath the Stonehome Mountains. The templars are reputed to be the only ones with the knowledge of how to close off the tunnels.

Myler's Stone: This town was once a large city, but years of decay, disease, and tragedy reduced the place to a handful of desperate people eking out an existence in the ruins of the past.

Old Den: A trade depot used by rangers and elves alike, this site is a cluster of wooden buildings surrounded by a palisade.

Shackles: Overlook's sister, Shackles was a powerful city and was the former capital of the fallen dwarven kingdom. It fell nearly two centuries ago when the orcs sacked it before the kingdom could respond.

Sodden: A small town at the headwaters of the Elsir River, this is a quaint community of farmers and fisherfolk. They work well with the elves, which is perhaps the only thing that stops the elves from erasing Lantern altogether.

The Vents: Natural fissures vent steam from a superheated underground lake. The tunnels are dangerous since they are also choked with foul monsters of the Underdark, dangerous flora, and vicious fauna. For more information on the Vents, see page 39.

The Westdeep: This dense forest grows in the narrow depression between the Stonehome and Wyrmsmoke Mountains. A dangerous place, several tribes of xenophobic elves live here, and they do not take kindly to trespassers. Conflict between the loggers at Lantern and the elves has come close to open war, and it's known that if the elves attack, the dwarves will be forced to respond.



WILDERNESS ENCOUNTERS

The characters have plenty of opportunities to get in trouble while traveling to Overlook or when they explore the city's surrounding countryside. They can stumble into trouble while attempting to complete their mission, or if the characters aren't quite of the level they need to be to survive this adventure, you can add any of the following encounters.

OPPORTUNISTS (LEVEL 1; XP 500)

- ◆ 1 bugbear warrior (level 5 brute; *Monster Manual*, page 135)
- ◆ 2 goblin warriors (level 1 skirmisher; *Monster Manual*, page 137)
- ◆ 4 goblin cutters (level 1 minion; *Monster Manual*, page 136)

A brutish bugbear named Rorrag leads a small force out of the Westdeep to strike the smaller settlements for plunder and slaughter. Rorrag is aware of the approaching orc horde and seizes the chance to strike

these hamlets while their garrisons defend the Vale against the attack.

DESERTERS (LEVEL 1; XP 518)

- ◆ 1 human berserker (level 4 brute; *Monster Manual*, page 163)
- ◆ 2 human bandits (level 2 skirmisher; *Monster Manual*, page 162)
- ◆ 3 human rabble (level 2 minion; *Monster Manual*, page 162)

Not all those called to defend Elsir Vale have the courage to do so, and as reports have filtered in from the west, a few warriors have abandoned their posts. Since deserters face death if captured, these men and women have turned to banditry to survive.

ORC SCOUTS (LEVEL 1; XP 520)

- ◆ 2 orc scouts (level 3 skirmisher; page 53)
- ◆ 5 orc drudges (level 4 minion; *Monster Manual*, page 203)

A band of orcs, having slipped through the vents, now prowl the countryside, ambushing militias, adventurers, and anyone else they encounter to soften up the defenses against the horde's attack. All these orcs have the tell-tale tusks that mark their allegiance to their orog chieftain.

WESTDEEP ELVES (LEVEL 2; XP 625)

- ◆ 2 elf archers (level 2 artillery; *Monster Manual*, page 106)
- ◆ 3 elf scouts (level 2 skirmisher; *Monster Manual*, page 106)

Elf hunters patrol the fringes of the Westdeep, scouring the forest for loggers and trappers. They aren't interested in a fight with the PCs, unless the characters are despoiling the forest in some way. This said, characters treating the elves with respect might learn about orcs who have slipped through the mountains. Resolve this as a complexity 2 social challenge, using Bluff, Diplomacy, Insight, and Nature as the key skills. A success (six successes before three defeats) reveals the elves have encountered orcs in the forest, but not in considerable numbers. They suspect they might be part of the horde since their armor and weapons bristle with boar tusks.

THE FREERIDERS

The characters aren't the only band of adventurers called to help defend Bordrin's Watch; and numerous groups, of varying skill and expertise, have come to Overlook to lend their talents in the fight against the approaching army. Most of these adventuring groups are pleasant enough, but rivalries, even good-natured ones, are bound to arise. During their stay in Overlook, the characters should eventually cross paths with the Freeriders. If you're using the slow start option, consider introducing these adventurers before the PCs are called to the Council of Elders.

The Freeriders formed up six months ago in Elsir's Crossing. They left the small community and headed east, where they dealt with a foul cabal of cultists in an isolated town called Beacon. After, they returned to Brindol for some down time and learned of the impending threat. Like the PCs, the Freeriders went west to do their part in defending their homeland.

MEGAN SWIFTBLADE

Megan Swiftblade was the pretty daughter of a poor farmer not far from Brindol. When the Red Hand invaded the Vale, the goblins and dragonspawn slew her family and left her scarred—physically and emotionally. She spent the last decade honing her fighting skills, vowing she would give her life to protect innocents from the encroaching darkness so other young people would never face the horrors she was forced to endure.

Megan Swiftblade		Level 3 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid, human		XP 150
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +3	
HP 44; Bloodied 22		
AC 19; Fortitude 18, Reflex 15, Will 16		
Speed 5		
⚔ Longsword (standard; at-will) ◆ Weapon		
+11 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage, and the target is marked until the end of Megan's next turn.		
⚔ Longbow (standard; at-will) ◆ Weapon		
Ranged 20/40; +4 vs. AC; 1d10 + 1 damage.		
⚔ Sure Strike (standard; at-will) ◆ Weapon		
+13 vs. AC; 1d8 + 1 damage.		
⚔ Tide of Iron (standard; at-will) ◆ Weapon		
Requires shield; +11 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage, and the target, if Large or smaller, is pushed 1 square. The target is marked until the end of Megan's next turn. Megan can shift into the space the pushed target vacated.		
⚔ Dance of Steel (standard; encounter) ◆ Weapon		
+11 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage, and the target is marked and slowed until the end of Megan's next turn.		
No Opening (immediate interrupt, when an enemy attacks and has combat advantage; encounter)		
Megan cancels the combat advantage she was about to grant.		
Alignment Good	Languages Common, Goblin	
Skills Intimidate +6		
Str 18 (+5)	Dex 13 (+2)	Wis 14 (+3)
Con 12 (+2)	Int 11 (+1)	Cha 10 (+1)
Equipment scale armor, light shield, longsword, longbow with quiver of 20 arrows, adventurer's kit		

As the leader of the Freeriders, Megan sees her fellow adventurers as extended family and is protective of them—protective to the point that conflicts sometimes arise. She can come off as brusque, but she means well and is fearless in battle. Megan is sword thin with an attractive figure, keeps her blond hair cut short, and has a vicious scar that runs from her forehead and down her left cheek.

RAGNUM DOURSTONE

The heart of the Freeriders is Ragnum Dourstone, a graying dwarf priest of Moradin. Born and raised in Overlook, he left the city in disgust after witnessing the decay in his church. Although estranged from his kin, he would not abandon the city to the orc armies and so he convinced his companions to make the journey west.

Ragnum is just over 4-1/2 feet tall and weighs upward of 200 pounds. He has auburn hair streaked with gray and a thick beard he wears in braids. Gruff and serious, he believes in doing his duty with honor and is an implacable foe when crossed.

SYLEN LEAFRUNNER

Born in the Westdeep, Sylen left his woodland home, disagreeing with their distrust and remembering how his people aided in the defense of the Vale against the Red Hand. He fell in with Megan and began a torrid love affair that has endured over the years. Although he feels strongly for the woman, he is secretly ashamed, feeling as though he has betrayed his people and his culture by his dalliance in human realms.

Sylen is whip thin, with long brown hair and angular features that give him the look of a fox. He's most comfortable in his hunting garb and wears clothing

Ragnum Dourstone	Level 3 Controller (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid, dwarf	XP 150
Initiative +1 Senses Perception +4; low-light vision	
HP 46; Bloodied 23	
AC 17; Fortitude 16, Reflex 13, Will 16	
Saving Throws +5 against poison effects	
Speed 5	
⬇ Warhammer (standard; at-will) ⬆ Weapon	+8 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage.
⤵ Crossbow (standard; at-will) ⬆ Weapon	Ranged 15/30; +5 vs. AC; 1d8 damage.
⬇ Priest's Shield (standard; at-will) ⬆ Weapon	+8 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and Ragnum or one adjacent ally gains a +1 power bonus to AC until the end of Ragnum's next turn.
⬇ Wrathful Thunder (standard; encounter) ⬆ Thunder, Weapon	+8 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 thunder damage, and the target is dazed until the end of Ragnum's next turn.
⬅ Healing Word (minor; 2/encounter [1/round]) ⬆ Healing	One ally; the target spends a healing surge and regains an additional 1d6 + 3 hit points.
⬇ Cure Light Wounds (standard; daily) ⬆ Healing	Melee touch; the target regains a number of hit points equal to its surge value + 3.
Stand Your Ground	
When an effect forces a dwarf to move—through a pull, a push, or a slide—the dwarf moves 1 square less than the effect specifies. When an attack would knock the dwarf prone, the dwarf can roll a saving throw to avoid falling prone.	
Alignment Lawful good	Languages Common, Dwarven
Skills Dungeoneering +6, Endurance +5, Religion +6	
Str 16 (+4)	Dex 10 (+1) Wis 16 (+4)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 11 (+1) Cha 13 (+2)
Equipment chainmail, warhammer, crossbow with case of 10 bolts, symbol, adventurer's kit	

died in greens and browns. He's friendly and a constant companion, keeping his secret guilt close to his heart.

GHENA TENSON

An arcanist of some talent, Ghena was apprenticed to a wizard who helped save the Elsir Vale from the

Sylen Leafrunner	Level 3 Skirmisher
Medium fey humanoid, elf	XP 150
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +10; low-light vision	
Group Awareness aura 5; all allies inside the aura gain a +1 racial bonus to Perception checks.	
HP 44; Bloodied 22	
AC 19; Fortitude 15, Reflex 17, Will 15	
Speed 7	
⬇ Longsword (standard; at-will) ⬆ Weapon	+8 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage.
⤵ Longbow (standard; at-will) ⬆ Weapon	Ranged 20/40; +9 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage.
Elven Accuracy (free; encounter)	
Sylen can reroll an attack roll. It must use the second roll, even if it's lower.	
Hunter's Quarry (minor; at-will [1/round])	
Closest enemy becomes Sylen's quarry. Once per round, Sylen can deal an extra 1d6 damage on an attack against his quarry. Sylen can have just one quarry at a time.	
⤵ Twin Strike (standard; at-will) ⬆ Weapon	Requires longbow; ranged 20/40; +9 vs. AC, two attacks; 1d10 damage per attack.
⤵ Cut and Run (standard; encounter) ⬆ Weapon	Requires longbow; ranged 20/40; +9 vs. AC, two attacks; 1d10 + 4 damage per attack. Sylen can shift up to 3 squares after the first or second attack.
Yield Ground (immediate reaction, when damaged by a melee attack; encounter)	
Sylen can shift 2 squares and gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses until the end of his next turn.	
Alignment Good	Languages Common, Elven
Skills Nature +10, Stealth +10	
Str 14 (+3)	Dex 18 (+5) Wis 15 (+3)
Con 12 (+2)	Int 11 (+1) Cha 10 (+1)
Equipment leather armor, longsword, longbow with a quiver of 20 arrows, adventurer's kit	

Red Hand a decade past. When she had learned all she could, she left to find her own place in the world. Ghena is content to work with the Freeriders, but sees it as a short-term venture, since she believes she's destined for greatness, far more than her current companions will ever achieve.

Short, pudgy, with a round face and small eyes, she has shoulder-length blond hair, a face full of

Ghena Tenson	Level 3 Controller
Medium natural humanoid, human	XP 150
Initiative +2	Senses Perception +3
HP 44; Bloodied 22	
AC 19; Fortitude 15, Reflex 18, Will 16	
Speed 6	
⊕ Quarterstaff (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+5 vs. AC; 1d8 damage.	
⊗ Magic Missile (standard; at-will) ♦ Force	
Ranged 20; +7 vs. Reflex; 2d4 + 4 force damage. This power counts as a ranged basic attack.	
✱ Cloud of Daggers (standard; at-will) ♦ Force	
Area burst 1 within 10; +7 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 4 force damage. The power's area is filled with sharp daggers of force. Any creature that enters the area or starts its turn there takes 2 force damage. The cloud remains in place until the end of Ghena's next turn.	
↵ Color Spray (standard; encounter) ♦ Radiant	
Close blast 5; +7 vs. Will; 1d6 + 4 radiant damage, and the target is dazed until the end of Ghena's next turn.	
Shield (immediate interrupt, when hit by an attack; encounter)	
Ghena gains a +4 power bonus to AC and Reflex defense until the end of her next turn.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common, Draconic
Skills Arcana +10, History +10, Religion +10	
Str 10 (+1)	Dex 13 (+2) Wis 14 (+3)
Con 12 (+2)	Int 18 (+5) Cha 10 (+1)
Equipment robes, staff, spellbook, adventurer's kit	

freckles, and long, slender fingers. She wears traveling clothes and carries a black staff with silver ferrules at either end.

MADRICK

Madrick never planned on becoming an adventurer; he was content in his forest home in the Feywild with his pet raccoon, Bandit. However, the formorians raided his community, and only by his quick wit and a timely warning from Bandit did Madrick escape. Unfortunately for him, he went through a doorway into the natural world. Confused, surprised, and a little homesick, Madrick took up with the Freeriders for lack of anything else to do and has remained with

Madrick	Level 3 Skirmisher
Small fey humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +6	Senses Perception +6; low-light vision
HP 44; Bloodied 22	
AC 18; Fortitude 14, Reflex 16, Will 16	
Speed 5	
⊕ Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+8 vs. AC; 1d4 + 1 damage.	
⊗ Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 5/10; +10 vs. AC; 1d4 + 3 damage.	
⊕ or ⊗ Sly Flourish (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Requires dagger; melee 1 or ranged 5/10; +10 vs. AC; 1d4 + 6 damage.	
⊕ Positioning Strike (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon	
Requires dagger; +10 vs. Will; 1d4 + 3 damage, and slide the target 3 squares.	
Sneak Attack	
Once per round, Madrick's attack deals an extra 2d6 damage to a target he has combat advantage against.	
Fade Away (immediate reaction, when Madrick takes damage; encounter) ♦ Illusion	
Madrick is invisible until he attacks or until the end of his next turn.	
Reactive Stealth	
If Madrick has cover or concealment when he makes an initiative check, he can make a Stealth check to escape notice.	
Fleeting Ghost (move; at-will)	
Madrick can move his speed and make a Stealth check. He does not take the normal penalty from movement on this check.	
Alignment Good	Languages Common, Elven
Skills Arcana +4, Stealth +11, Thievery +9	
Str 13 (+2)	Dex 16 (+4) Wis 11 (+1)
Con 12 (+2)	Int 12 (+2) Cha 16 (+4)
Equipment leather armor, 5 daggers, adventurer's kit, raccoon named Bandit	

them ever since. Although he enjoys their company, he's always looking for a way back to his home so he might rescue his captured kin.

Madrick is short, with pale skin, and large black eyes. He wears brown and gray clothing to help him sneak about. His best friend in the world is Bandit and the raccoon is never far from his side.

OTHER ADVENTURING GROUPS

Numerous other adventuring bands have come to Overlook, including the Farstriders, the Green Hand, the Company of Wolves, the Slayers, and others. You can flesh these out as needed, or just drop their names, and others of your own creation, into the background to emphasize the severity of the threat to the city.

Of these other groups, only the Farstriders bear special mention. Led by Edgar Sommerfield, a warlord of some fame, the Farstriders are far and above the most successful adventuring party in these lands, hence their being tasked with the Vents. They've slain a black dragon, ousted a nest of kobolds, and even undertaken an expedition into the Shadowfell. Aside from Sommerfield, the group includes twin elf rangers, Uulath and Reiner, a half-elf warlock named Jen, and Corben, a human fighter. Their statistics aren't necessary since they are all slain in their attempt to seal the Nexus, leaving it to the PCs to save Overlook and the Elsir Vale from the attackers.

DM's Tip: If the characters spend any time in Overlook before they head out for the monastery, you could introduce this party along with the Freeriders. This experienced group might serve as mentors, for a time, or close friends, making their deaths all the more poignant when the characters find their corpses.



MONASTERY OF THE SUNDERED CHAIN

Constructed centuries ago to house an elite fighting force of Moradin dedictees, the Monastery of the Sundered Chain preserves the memories of the hardships endured at the hands of the giants, and it trains initiates in fighting arts useful for battling these foes. For generations, the monastery has stood as a symbol of dwarven perseverance and expertise in the fighting arts and one who trains there not only receives an

excellent education in religion and combat, but also gains a mark of pride and honor.

The monastery is about 20 miles from Overlook, higher up in the mountains, and just beneath the Hammer, a great peak that loosely resembles a downturned hammer. The trip to the monastery can be free of danger, or, if the PCs are in need of additional experience points, can be reached safely with an extended skill challenge.

Setup: The PCs must navigate the mountains using their expertise and cunning to avoid monsters

and hazards lurking at the higher elevations between Overlook and the monastery.

Level: 3.

Complexity: 1 (requires 4 successes before 3 failures).

Primary Skills: Endurance, Nature, Perception, Stealth.

Special: Once the characters reach the monastery, they gain a +2 bonus to all checks each time they repeat this challenge.

Endurance (DC 15): A trek through the trackless wilderness is slow and arduous. At least two characters must make Endurance checks to preserve their stamina and avoid fatigue, injury, and exhaustion. Failed checks result in everyone in the party losing 1 healing surge in addition to counting as a failure.

Nature (DC 20): The mountain paths are twisting and confusing, making it easy to become lost. In addition to counting as a failure, two failed Nature checks result in the characters losing 1 healing surge since they have to backtrack and reorient themselves to regain their bearings.

Perception (DC 20): The character notices an easier route up to the monastery, granting a +2 bonus to all Endurance, Nature, and Stealth checks for the remainder of the journey.

Stealth (DC 15): The characters move cautiously through the mountains, being careful not to attract attention. A failure closes off this approach for the duration of the challenge.

Success: The characters reach the monastery or Overlook without trouble.

Failure: Roll on the following table and begin a combat encounter with the indicated monsters. After finishing the encounter, the PCs must start their challenge over again to reach their intended destination.

WILDERNESS ENCOUNTERS

d%	Monsters Encountered
01-10	3 griffons
11-20	2 cave bears
21-30	5 hippogriffs
31-60	6 orc raiders
61-70	Orc eye of Gruumsh and 4 orc berserkers
71-80	5 wights
81-90	5 ghouls
91-100	4 gnomish marauders

When arranging the battlefield, use a mountain map with difficult terrain (rubble, scree), cover (rocky outcroppings and defiles), and concealment (deep shadows) to create a dynamic fight. Orcs fight until slain; all other monsters flee when reduced to 10 hit points or fewer. None of these encounters has treasure.

DUNGEON FEATURES

Certain elements of the dungeon are universal throughout the complex.

Doors: Unless otherwise mentioned, none of the doors are locked and all can be opened by depressing a lever in the handle. Doors open inward, and so the hinges are in the room's interior.

Stairs: Stairs count as difficult terrain. Unless otherwise called out in the text, stairs are made from stone.

EXTENDED REST

Few places are safe enough inside the dungeon for an extended rest since the orcs constantly move about, carrying plunder up to the temple proper. To take an extended rest, the characters have to leave the monastery and find a safe place to hide in the surrounding countryside. Any attacks are noticed while the characters are gone, and the orcs reinforce cleared rooms with fresh troops drawn from other locations.

MONASTERY OF THE SUNDERED CHAIN OVERVIEW

The monastery includes the following areas.

MONASTERY

This area includes the monastery, the courtyard, and the outer walls. The entire site butts up against the mountains, which serve as the fourth wall. The outer walls stand 50 feet tall and plinths spaced at regular intervals reinforce it. Access to the courtyard comes by way of a pair of 30-foot tall double doors, which are never locked.

Inside the walls is the Hall of Moradin and the surrounding courtyard. Fine sand covers the courtyard and the spaces between endless rows of statues, each carved to commemorate the deeds of an ancient dwarf hero.

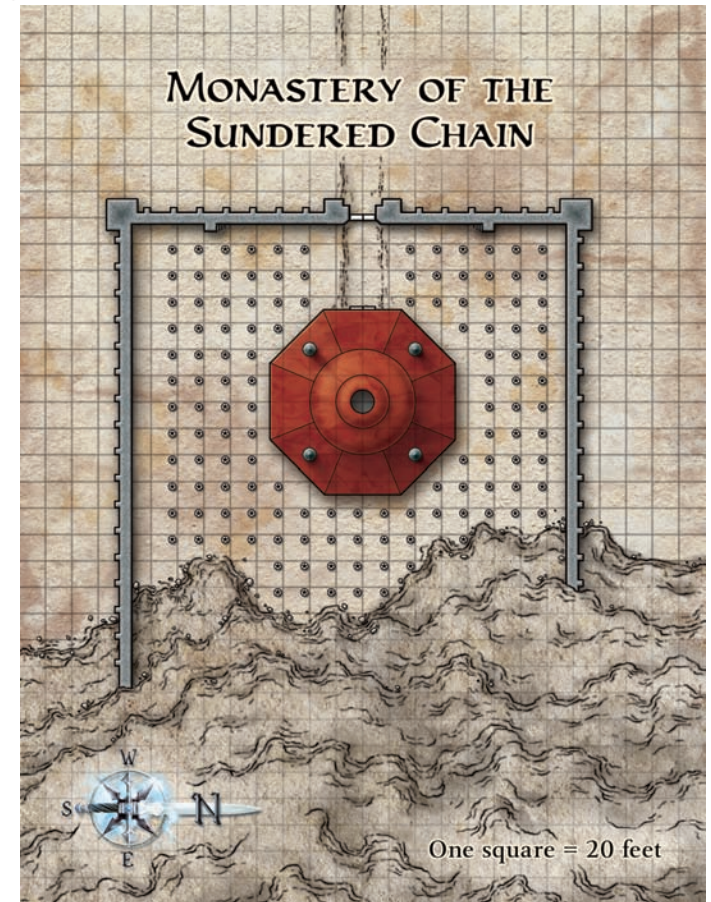
The monastery is a looming structure capped with a red-tiled roof. Bas-reliefs adorn its exterior, capturing religious events and heroes in perfect stone carvings.

Orcs have overrun the place, with a band outside in the courtyard and a second group in the Hall. The latter is defacing Moradin's altar.

HALL OF HEROES

Accessed by way of a concealed staircase inside the Hall of Moradin, the Hall of Heroes stretches out hundreds of feet below the monastery above it. Here, the monks slept and reflected on their devotion to their god. The Hall's north end opens onto a switchback stair that drops even deeper into the mountain to the workshops far below.

The once sacred areas house only carnage, for the orcs overran the dwarves and slew them all, leaving their bodies to rot where they lay.

**CHAMBER OF WORKS**

At the bottom of the great staircase is the Chamber of Works, where the monks honored their gods by producing fine dwarfcraft weapons, armor, and other goods, which they sold to feed and clothe themselves. The orcs now use this room to tease out the secrets from their prisoners, subjecting them to awful torment before feeding their bones to the fires.

ORC SENTRIES

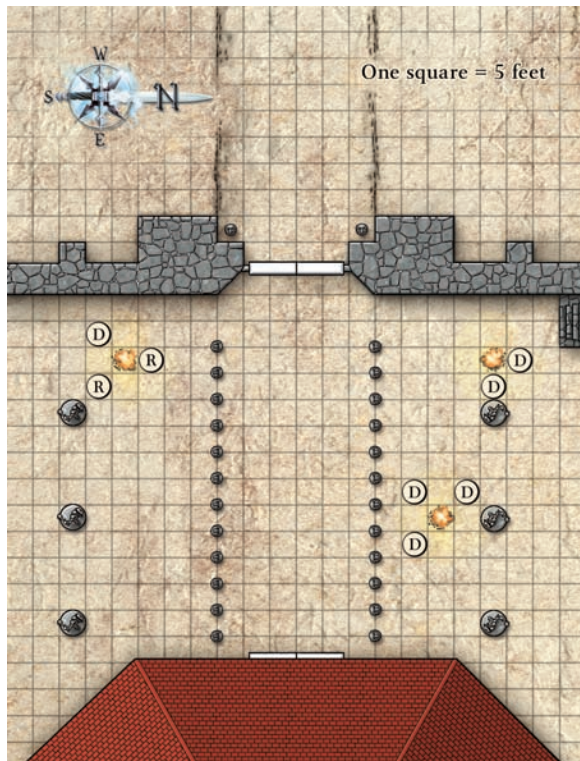
Encounter Level 1 (564 XP)

SETUP

A small force of orcs camps in the courtyard outside the monastery, and they keep their eyes out for intruders. Each group has settled around campfires where indicated on the tactical map. The characters can access the courtyard by moving through the closed double doors or by climbing the wall.

2 orc raiders (R)

6 orc drudges (D)



When the characters approach, read:

A grand edifice rises above steep walls, which are about 50-foot tall. These walls encircle the compound and run up to the higher slopes of the mountain beyond.

When the characters move inside the wall, read:

Near the gate, you see three bonfires burning, where gray and green-skinned savages cook haunches of meat that look suspiciously like arms and legs.

Perception Check

DC 10: *The characters spot smoke rising from the courtyard.*

TACTICS

Although charged with guard duty, the orcs are lax and more interested in feeding their hunger. At the

2 Orc Raiders (R)	Level 3 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150 each
Initiative +5	Senses Perception +1; low-light vision
HP 46; Bloodied 23; see also warrior's surge	
AC 17; Fortitude 15, Reflex 14, Will 12	
Speed 6 (8 while charging)	
⚔ Greataxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+8 vs. AC; 1d12 + 3 damage (crit 1d12 + 15).	
☞ Handaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 5/10; +7 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage; see also killer's eye.	
⚔ Warrior's Surge (standard, usable only while bloodied; encounter) ♦ Healing, Weapon	
The orc raider makes a melee basic attack and regains 11 hit points.	
Killer's Eye	
When making a ranged attack, the orc raider ignores cover and concealment (but not total concealment) if the target is within 5 squares of it.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common, Giant
Skills Endurance +8, Intimidate +5	
Str 17 (+4)	Dex 15 (+3) Wis 10 (+1)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 8 (+0) Cha 9 (+0)
Equipment leather armor, greataxe, 4 handaxes	

first sign of trouble, they toss aside their meals and leap to their feet to engage the enemies.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: At night, the cook fires shed bright light in a 20-square radius.

Ground: Fine sand covers the ground throughout the courtyard, and while somewhat slippery, it does not interfere with movement.

Stairs: Stairs lead to the battlements 10 squares above the battlefield. Refer to the temple map on page 28 for a larger look at the area.

Statues: Two rows of stone statues line the approach to the doors. Characters standing in a space adjacent to a statue gain cover. Climbing a statue requires a DC 10 Athletics check. Each statue has AC 22, other defenses 20; hp 50; resist 10 to all damage.

Massive Statues: Hulking statues of dwarf champions spread out from this approach. Statues provide total cover to those standing behind them. Climbing a massive statue requires a DC 15 Athletics check. Finally, each massive statue has AC 22, other defenses 20; hp 500; resist 10 to all damage.

Campfires: Any creature entering or starting its turn in one of these spaces takes 1d6 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).

6 Orc Drudges (D)	Level 4 Minion
Medium natural humanoid	XP 44 each
Initiative +0	Senses Perception +0; low-light vision
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 16; Fortitude 15, Reflex 12, Will 12	
Speed 6 (8 while charging)	
⚔ Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+9 vs. AC; 5 damage.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common, Giant
Str 16 (+5)	Dex 10 (+2) Wis 10 (+2)
Con 14 (+4)	Int 8 (+1) Cha 9 (+1)
Equipment hide armor, club	

HALL OF MORADIN

Encounter Level 2 (651 XP)

SETUP

The orcs took the dwarf priests by surprise, coming up from below through the hidden door in the altar. The battle was vicious and the dwarves were eventually slain, leaving this once breathtaking chamber in the hands of cruel orcs to despoil and destroy. An orc witch doctor (W) completes its prayers to Gruumsh by defacing the altar, while a pair of orc bolt throwers stands guard in the balcony.

At the start of the second round, an orc sergeant (S) leads a squad of 4 orc drudges (D) out from the depths of the temple. At the start of the second round, place their miniatures in available spaces next to the altar.

- 1 orc sergeant (S)
- 1 orc witch doctor (W)
- 2 orc bolt throwers (B)
- 4 orc drudges (D)

When the characters enter this chamber, read:

The dome of this massive chamber features a brilliant mural of dwarves fighting giants in what looks like the same mountains through which you have traveled. At the center of the room is a dais ringed with blood-spattered steps. Atop it stands a cracked anvil, clearly an altar, but now desecrated by dripping gore and smears of filth. A hideous orc crone dressed in tattered rags screeches when she sees you, hopping from one leg to the other in outrage.

Perception Check

DC 17: *You spot movement coming from the balcony overhead—a figure wielding an impossibly large crossbow in two hands drools with excitement as it levels the weapon at you.*

TACTICS

The orc witch doctor is none too thrilled to see the PCs and screams in the hopes of hurrying along the reinforcements from below. She and her bolt throwers buy time until the orc sergeant and the drudges arrive.

The witch doctor spits curses, delaying her action until one or more PCs come within her range. The first PC to close the distance receives her *unspeakable filth* for his or her bravery and when the rest converge, the witch doctor follows up on the second round with *curse of Gruumsh*. Should any enemies reach her, she switches tactics and lays into her foes with her *disgusting claws*.

The orc bolt throwers stay on the balcony, taking advantage of the cover. They pick off soft targets first, but switch their targets to any who try to engage in melee. After a couple of shots, the bolt throwers' bloodlust gets the better of them and they rush down to engage their enemies.

When the sergeant arrives on the second round, he takes over, directing his drudges to move and charge the closest PCs and keep them off the witch doctor. He fights from behind the drudges, using his reach weapon to press the attack, while benefiting from protection provided by his expendable troops. The drudges fight as directed, charging the PCs and fighting until slain.

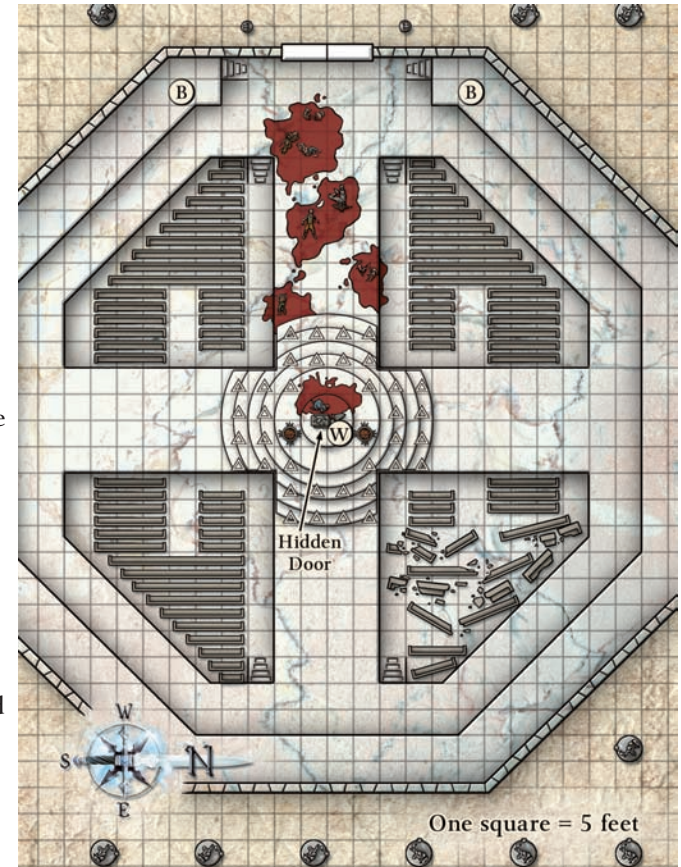
The orcs know the way out is sealed behind them thanks to Kalad (see M5), so they fight to death, giving and expecting no quarter.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Two braziers atop the dais fill the room with bright light.

Ceiling: The ceiling stretches 140 feet overhead.

Balcony: Two staircases (difficult terrain) lead up to a balcony that overlooks the hall. Characters on the balcony gain cover from attacks made from below.



Sunken Areas: Stairs lead down to sunken seating areas filled with pews. The pews are packed densely enough to count as difficult terrain in any space containing a pew.

Dwarf Corpses: The remains of the brave dwarf priests and paladins litter the floor, their blood cooling on the stone floor.

Dais: The steps leading up to the dais count as difficult terrain.

Altar: On the center of the dais is a large altar dedicated to Moradin, cut from black basalt and carved to resemble a large anvil. The orc witch doctor has desecrated the holy stone, smearing excrement on its surface and mingling the filth with the spilled entrails of murdered priests. Orcs in spaces adjacent to the defaced altar gain a +1 power bonus to their attack rolls.

Hidden Door: The altar slides on a cunningly crafted base to reveal a staircase going down. Normally, a DC 25 Perception check is required to find the hidden door, but the orcs coming through it reveals its presence to any who can see them when they first emerge.

Steps and Dais: Statuary, rubble, bones, trees, crates, boxes, and so on are on the steps and dais.

Braziers: A character can tip over a brazier by making a DC 10 Strength check, or dealing 20 damage to it. When knocked over, the brazier makes a close blast 3 attack against each creature in the area; +6 vs. Reflex; 1d10 fire damage (crit 2d10 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage [save ends]).

Orc Sergeant (S)	Level 3 Soldier (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +2	Senses Perception +5; low-light vision
Lead by Fear aura 1; orcs inside the aura gain a +1 power bonus to attack rolls.	
HP 46; Bloodied 23; see also <i>warrior's surge</i>	
AC 19; Fortitude 17, Reflex 13, Will 14	
Speed 6 (8 while charging)	
⊕ Glaive (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 2d4 + 4 damage.	
⊕ Warrior's Surge (standard, usable only while bloodied; encounter) ♦ Healing	
The orc sergeant makes a melee basic attack and regains 11 hit points.	
Back to the Front! (immediate reaction, when orc ally within 5 squares is forcibly moved; at-will)	
Slide triggering ally 1 square.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common, Giant
Skills Endurance +5, Intimidate +5	
Str 19 (+5)	Dex 9 (+0)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 11 (+1)
	Cha 11 (+1)
Equipment chainmail, glaive, tattered cloak	

2 Orc Bolt Throwers (B)	Level 1 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid	XP 100
Initiative +2	Senses Perception +4; low-light vision
HP 26; Bloodied 13; see also <i>warrior's surge</i>	
AC 13; Fortitude 14, Reflex 14, Will 11	
Speed 6 (8 while charging)	
⊕ Battleaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+6 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage	
⊕ Bellybow (standard; at-will; recharges when the creature uses a move action to reload it) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 20/40; +8 vs. AC; 1d12 + 2 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square.	
⊕ Warrior's Surge (standard, usable only while bloodied; encounter) ♦ Healing	
The orc bolt thrower makes a melee basic attack and regains 6 hit points.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common, Giant
Skills Stealth +7	
Str 14 (+2)	Dex 15 (+2)
Con 14 (+2)	Int 9 (-1)
	Cha 8 (-1)
Equipment leather armor, battleaxe, bellybow with 10 bolts	

Orc Witch Doctor (W)	Level 2 Controller
Medium natural humanoid	XP 125
Initiative +2	Senses Perception +3; low-light vision
HP 33; Bloodied 16	
AC 15; Fortitude 13, Reflex 14, Will 17	
Speed 6 (8 while charging)	
⊕ Disgusting Claws (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison	
+7 vs. AC; 1d6 + 1 damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).	
⊕ Curse of Gruumsh (standard; recharge Ⓜ) ♦ Acid	
Ranged 10; +6 vs. Fortitude; target is blinded (save ends), and the orc witch doctor makes a secondary attack.	
Secondary Attack: Close burst 1 centered on primary target; +6 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 4 acid damage, and ongoing 2 acid damage (save ends).	
⊕ Unspeakable Filth (standard; at-will)	
Ranged 5/10; +5 vs. Reflex; 1d4 + 4 damage, and the target takes -2 penalty to attack rolls until the end of the orc witch doctor's next turn.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common, Giant
Skills Arcana +6, Intimidate +10	
Str 11 (+1)	Dex 12 (+2)
Con 9 (+0)	Int 11 (+1)
	Cha 18 (+5)
Equipment befouled rags, bone rod	

6 Orc Drudges (D)	Level 4 Minion
Medium natural humanoid	XP 44 each
Initiative +0	Senses Perception +0; low-light vision
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 16; Fortitude 15, Reflex 12, Will 12	
Speed 6 (8 while charging)	
⊕ Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+9 vs. AC; 5 damage.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common, Giant
Str 16 (+5)	Dex 10 (+2)
Con 14 (+4)	Int 8 (+1)
	Cha 9 (+1)
Equipment hide armor, club	

HALL OF HEROES

Encounter Level 4 (889 XP)

SETUP

The orcs boiled up from the depths and spilled into this grand hall, killing everything they encountered. In the aftermath of the violence, the orcs are scouring the remains in search of treasure, hidden enemies, and a way to unseal the passage through the mountain.

- 1 orc berserker (B)
- 3 orog militants (M)
- 6 orc drudges (D)

When the characters descend the stairs and reach this room, read:

The carnage in this grand hall is obscene. Dead dwarves, some still in their nightclothes, litter the floor, blood painting the gray stone tiles, walls, and columns. In the light cast by burning braziers, you see the butchers: more orcs.

Important!: Have the characters make Stealth checks as they descend the stairs. If their results are 12 or higher, they take the monsters by surprise.

TACTICS

The orcs howl in rage when they spot new enemies and surge forward to slaughter the PCs.

The orc berserker charges the closest character on its first action, moving first if needed to set up the charge. The berserker viciously attacks with its greataxe each round until it's bloodied, at which point

it uses *warrior's surge* before resuming its attack. The berserker fights to the death.

The orog militants are far more cautious in their approach. They stay close to their allies to employ their *fierce counterstrike* power and *discipline*, preferring to stay close to other orogs or the berserker to the drudges. If the militants are bloodied, they shift back and spend their second wind, jumping back into the thick of battle at the start of their next turn.

The orc drudges are reckless and overconfident. They fling themselves at their foes with little regard for strategy.

All monsters here fight to the death.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Braziers in each of the four corners shed light in a 10-square radius, illuminating all but the center of this massive room. Tipping a brazier requires a DC 10 Strength check or attacks that deal a total of 20 damage. When knocked over, the brazier makes a close blast 3 attack against each creature in the area; +6 vs. Reflex; 1d10 fire damage (crit 2d10 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage [save ends]).

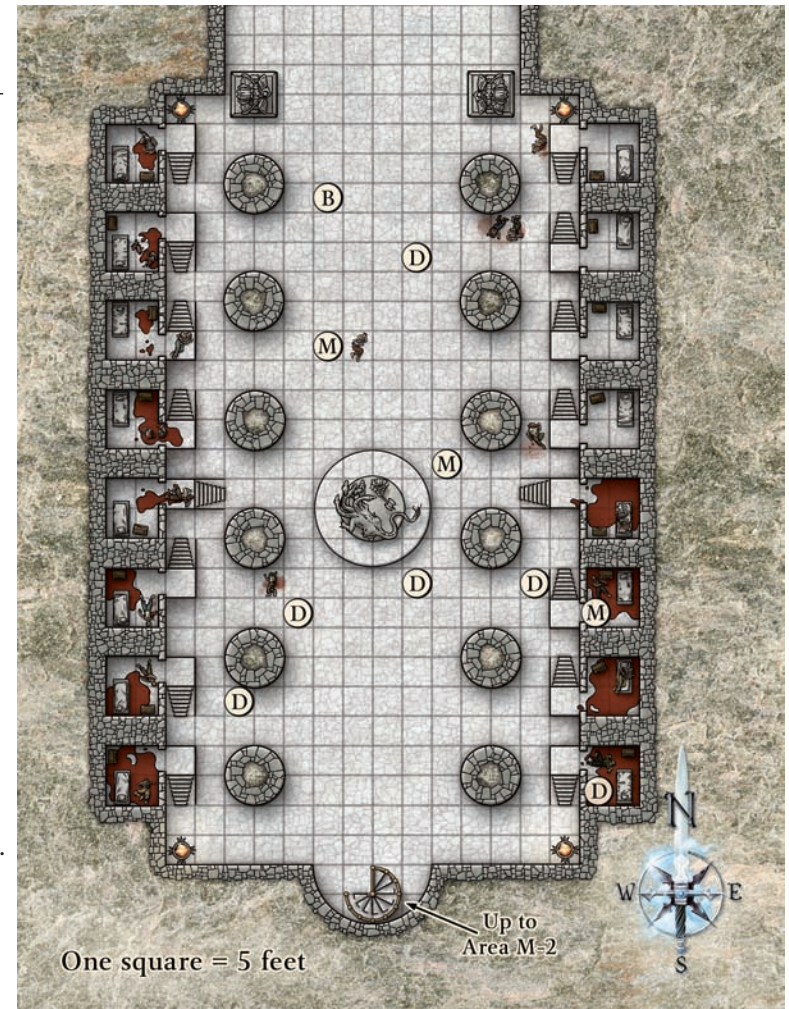
Ceiling: The ceiling is 20 squares overhead.

Stairs: A spiral staircase at the southern end of the room leads up to room 1-2. The stairs count as difficult terrain.

Adjoining Rooms: All along either side of the room are stairs that climb 30 feet up to a landing and the entrance to

one of the priests' cells. The steps count as difficult terrain.

The cells are bare and devoid of much of interest. Each contains a cot, a trunk filled with personal effects such as spare robes, smallclothes, and a few relics from the dwarves' lives before they joined the monastery. The items have no worth beyond their sentimental value.



Columns: Two rows of 10-foot diameter columns support the ceiling overhead. Climbing a column requires a DC 25 Athletics check. Each column has AC 20, other defenses 18; hp 100; resist 10 to all damage. Destroying a column triggers a cave-in (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 91). The columns provide total cover to creatures standing behind them.

Statue: A massive statue of a dwarf warrior battling a hydra dominates the center of the room, standing nearly as tall as the ceiling. A DC 20 History check reveals the statue describes a famous battle between Dergan Fellfist and a legendary hydra that devoured 300 warriors until the dwarf hero killed the beast in single combat. It's said Dergan's bones were interred somewhere in the mountains and, given the statue's presence, it's a safe bet that his remains are sealed beneath the statues. Climbing the statue requires a DC 20 Athletics check. The statue has AC 25, other defenses 18; hp 300; resist 15 to all damage.

Dwarf Statues: At the north end of the room, flanking the exit, is a pair of 30-foot tall statues of grim dwarf warriors, each holding an axe, with the head down, between its feet. The statues wear helmets that conceal all but their beard. The statues do not depict particular dwarf warriors, but rather are idealized versions of Moradin's chosen servants. A DC 15 Perception check reveals that the base of the statues are smooth and dark, caused by the countless hands that have touched them for the blessing they are thought to bestow.

Climbing the statue requires a DC 20 Athletics check. The statue has AC 20, other defenses 18; hp 100; resist 10 to all damage.

Corpses: The orcs took the dwarves by surprise. The dwarves fought bravely, but lacking their armor, they could not stand against the weapons and numbers of the invaders.

Orc Berserker (B)	Level 4 Brute
Medium natural humanoid	XP 175
Initiative +3	Senses Perception +2; low-light vision
HP 66; Bloodied 33; see also <i>warrior's surge</i>	
AC 15; Fortitude 17, Reflex 13, Will 12	
Speed 6 (8 while charging)	
⊕ Greataxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+8 vs. AC; 1d12 + 5 damage (crit 1d12 + 17).	
‡ Warrior's Surge (standard, usable only while bloodied; encounter) ♦ Healing, Weapon	
The orc berserker makes a melee basic attack and regains 16 hit points.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common, Giant
Skills Endurance +10, Intimidate +6	
Str 20 (+7)	Dex 13 (+3) Wis 10 (+2)
Con 16 (+5)	Int 8 (+1) Cha 9 (+1)
Equipment leather armor, greataxe	

6 Orc Drudges (D)	Level 4 Minion
Medium natural humanoid	XP 44 each
Initiative +0	Senses Perception +0; low-light vision
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 16; Fortitude 15, Reflex 12, Will 12	
Speed 6 (8 while charging)	
⊕ Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+9 vs. AC; 5 damage.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common, Giant
Str 16 (+5)	Dex 10 (+2) Wis 10 (+2)
Con 14 (+4)	Int 8 (+1) Cha 9 (+1)
Equipment hide armor, club	

3 Orog Militants (M)	Level 3 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150 each
Initiative +3	Senses Perception +2; low-light vision
HP 48; Bloodied 24	
AC 20; Fortitude 17, Reflex 13, Will 14; see also <i>discipline</i>	
Speed 5	
⊕ Bastard Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the orog militant's next turn.	
‡ Relentless (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Requires bastard sword; +10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square. The target is marked until the orog's next turn. The orog militant can shift into the vacated square as a free action.	
‡ Fierce Counterstrike (immediate reaction, when adjacent ally is first bloodied; encounter) ♦ Weapon	
Requires bastard sword; +10 vs. AC; 2d10 + 4 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square. The orog militant can shift into the vacated square as a free action.	
Discipline	
Orogs gain a +2 bonus to saving throws against any ongoing effects when adjacent to an ally.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Giant
Str 19 (+5)	Dex 10 (+1) Wis 13 (+2)
Con 16 (+4)	Int 9 (+0) Cha 11 (+1)
Equipment plate armor, heavy shield, bastard sword	

INTO THE DEPTHS

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 3 (751 XP)

SETUP

The dwarves constructed this series of staircases and landings to reach the bottom of the chasm, where it connects to the deeper tunnels under the mountain.

- 1 orog champion (C)
- 1 spiretop drake (S)
- 3 orc bolt throwers (B)
- 4 orc drudges (D)

When the characters enter this room, read:

The floor gives way to a massive cavern. A long staircase and series of landings lead down to the cavern floor nearly 100 feet below. A group of orcs climbs the stairs.

TACTICS

The orc bolt throwers concentrate their attacks against the ranged attackers, while the spiretop drake swoops in to harass characters that try the staircase going down. The orog scarred champion and the drudges race up the stairs to confront the PCs.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Braziers provide bright light in a 10-square radius.

Stairs: The stairs connecting the various landings count as difficult terrain.

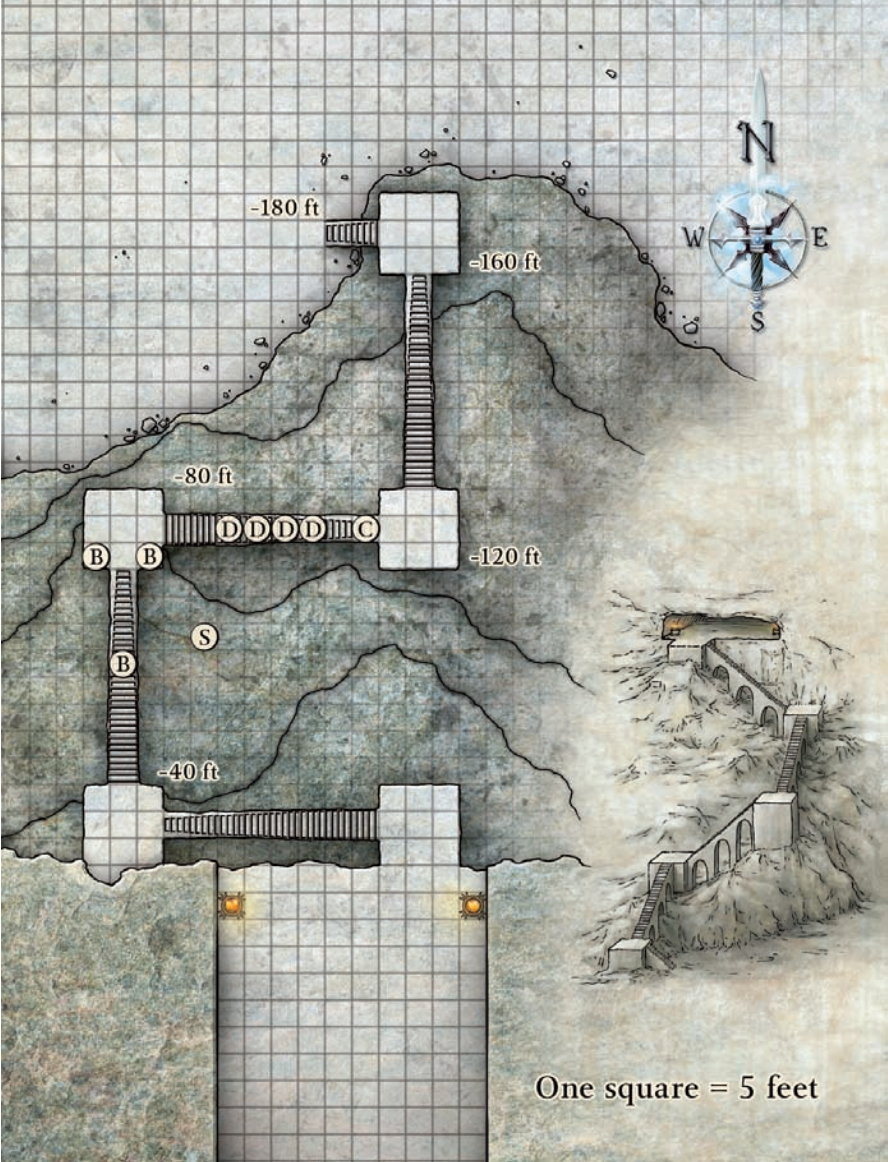
Chasm: A fall from the ledges is likely lethal, dealing damage as appropriate for the height of the fall.

Orog Scarred Champion (C)	Level 4 Brute
Medium natural humanoid, orc	XP 175
Initiative +2 Senses Perception +8; low-light vision	
HP 66; Bloodied 33; see also <i>champion's scorn</i>	
AC 17; Fortitude 19, Reflex 14, Will 15	
Speed 5	
⬇ Greatsword (standard; at-will) ⬆ Weapon	
+10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 5 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the orog scarred champion's next turn.	
⬅ Winnowing Slash (standard; recharge when first bloodied) ⬆ Weapon	
Requires greatsword; close burst 1; +7 vs. AC; 2d10 + 5 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square.	
⬅ Champion's Scorn (minor; at-will) ⬆ Fear	
Close blast 5; one creature; the target becomes the object of the orog's scorn. The orog scarred champion's melee attacks deal an extra 1d10 damage to the target, and if the scarred champion reduces the target to 0 hit points, it regains 16 hit points.	
Alignment Chaotic evil Languages Common, Giant	
Skills Intimidate +6	
Str 20 (+7) Dex 10 (+2) Wis 12 (+3)	
Con 16 (+5) Int 9 (+1) Cha 8 (+1)	
Equipment plate armor, greataxe	

Spiretop Drake (S)	Level 1 Skirmisher
Small natural beast (reptile)	XP 100
Initiative +6 Senses Perception +3	
HP 29; Bloodied 14	
AC 16; Fortitude 11, Reflex 14, Will 13	
Speed 4, fly 8 (hover); see also <i>flyby attack</i>	
⬇ Bite (standard; at-will)	
+6 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage.	
⬇ Snatch (standard; at-will)	
+4 vs. Reflex; 1 damage, and the spiretop drake steals a small object from the target, such as a vial, scroll, or coin.	
⬇ Flyby Attack (standard; at-will)	
The spiretop drake flies up to 8 squares and makes one melee basic attack at any point during that movement. The drake doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when moving away from the target of the attack.	
Alignment Unaligned Languages –	
Str 11 (+0) Dex 18 (+4) Wis 16 (+3)	
Con 13 (+1) Int 3 (-4) Cha 11 (+0)	

3 Orc Bolt Throwers (B)	Level 1 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid	XP 100 each
Initiative +2 Senses Perception +4; low-light vision	
HP 26; Bloodied 13; see also <i>warrior's surge</i>	
AC 13; Fortitude 14, Reflex 14, Will 11	
Speed 6 (8 while charging)	
⬇ Battleaxe (standard; at-will) ⬆ Weapon	
+6 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage	
⌚ Bellybow (standard; at-will; recharges when the creature uses a move action to reload it) ⬆ Weapon	
Ranged 20/40; +8 vs. AC; 1d12 + 2 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square.	
⬇ Warrior's Surge (standard, usable only while bloodied; encounter) ⬆ Healing	
The orc bolt thrower makes a melee basic attack and regains 6 hit points.	
Alignment Chaotic evil Languages Common, Giant	
Skills Stealth +7	
Str 14 (+2) Dex 15 (+2) Wis 9 (-1)	
Con 14 (+2) Int 9 (-1) Cha 8 (-1)	
Equipment leather armor, battleaxe, bellybow with 10 bolts	

4 Orc Drudges (D)	Level 4 Minion
Medium natural humanoid	XP 44
Initiative +0 Senses Perception +0; low-light vision	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 16; Fortitude 15, Reflex 12, Will 12	
Speed 6 (8 while charging)	
⬇ Club (standard; at-will) ⬆ Weapon	
+9 vs. AC; 5 damage.	
Alignment Chaotic evil Languages Common, Giant	
Str 16 (+5) Dex 10 (+2) Wis 10 (+2)	
Con 14 (+4) Int 8 (+1) Cha 9 (+1)	
Equipment hide armor, club	



CHAMBER OF WORKS

Encounter Level 6 (1,264 XP)

SETUP

The Chamber of Works served two purposes. First, it connected to the deeper tunnels through a long, downward-sloping passage, and second, it housed the forges and workshops used by the priests to honor their god. The orcs discovered this passage in their searching beneath the mountain and came up through this room, slaughtering the dwarves as they raced into the complex to finish off the defenders.

Their haste to overrun the temple above caused them to miss Kalad, a devout dwarf paladin. While the orcs fought his kin upstairs, Kalad pulled the lever and collapsed the tunnel, thus cutting off the route for more orcs to breach the mountain. When Og, the orog hero, returned and found the tunnel caved-in, he was enraged and has spent the last few hours beating Kalad, bringing him to the brink of death.

1 raging fire

Og, orog hero (O)

1 orc eye of Gruumsh (G)

2 orc berserkers (B)

6 orc drudges (D)

When the characters enter this room, read:

A fearsome blaze rages on one side of this natural cavern, making silhouettes of the orcs gathered here. They seem intent on something on the opposite side of the room, where you can hear grunts and shouts above the roar of the flame.

Perception Check

DC 10: The character spots a dwarf being beaten by a hulking orog warrior.

DC 15: The character hears the orog demand in broken Common that the dwarf open the tunnel.

TACTICS

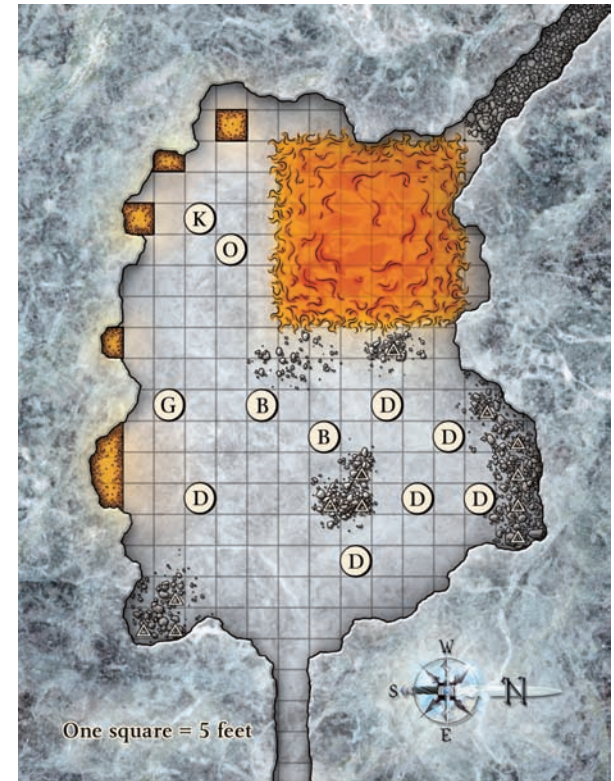
The orcs are distracted by Og and his prisoner and so they aren't paying attention when the PCs arrive, which allows the PCs to take advantage of surprise. Once the combat begins, the orcs turn, almost as one, loose angry shouts, and throw themselves recklessly at the intruders.

Og drops Kalad to the floor, draws his bastard sword and wades into the battle. He's irate, so if orc drudges block his path to the PCs, he doesn't think twice about cutting his way through to reach the characters. Once there, he uses *fearsome sweep* to rip through his opponents, adjusting his position each round to catch as many enemies as he can. The first character to hit him with a melee attack receives *lay him open* on Og's next turn. Og knows he has failed in his mission and sees this battle as his chance to redeem himself.

The eye of Gruumsh hangs back, knowing not to get in Og's way. He supports Og by hitting the PCs early with *chaos hammer* and then directs the battle by using *swift arm of destruction* to prod the berserkers into the thick of things. Even if the PCs corner the orc, he fights back with ferocity, using *bull rush* to shove PCs into forges or into the raging fire.

The orc berserkers sweep around from different directions to hit the PCs from either side, barking promises to each other that they'll meet in the middle. The drudges hoot and bark as they surge toward the intruders, laughing even as the PCs cut them down.

Should the battle turn against the orcs, Og pulls back to murder Kalad, who is too wounded to resist. After-



ward, Og makes his stand adjacent to the flames to grab and flings his enemies into the roaring fire.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The roaring fire fills the room with bright light.

Ceiling: The ceiling is 30 feet overhead.

Rubble: When Kalad collapsed the tunnel to the deeper tunnels, parts of the ceiling in this room collapsed, killing a number of orcs in the process. Squares contain a substantial amount of rubble and count as difficult terrain.

Forge: All the intact forges are lit and roar with flame. Characters starting their turns adjacent to a

Og, Orog Hero (O) Medium natural humanoid, orc	Level 6 Elite Soldier XP 500
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +8; low-light vision HP 144; Bloodied 72 AC 24; Fortitude 23, Reflex 19, Will 16 Speed 5	
⊕ Bastard Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon +14 vs. AC; 1d10 + 5 damage, and the target is marked until the end of Og's next turn.	
↵ Fearsome Sweep (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon Requires bastard sword; close burst 1; +14 vs. AC; 1d10 + 5 damage, and the target is marked until the end of Og's next turn.	
⊕ Og's Rebuke (immediate reaction, when marked target shifts, moves, or makes an attack that does not include Og as a target; at-will) ♦ Weapon Og makes a basic attack.	
⊕ Lay Him Open (standard; recharge when first bloodied) ♦ Weapon Requires bastard sword; +14 vs. AC; 2d10 + 5 damage, and ongoing 5 damage (save ends). Miss : Half damage, and no ongoing damage.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Giant
Skills Intimidate +7	
Str 20 (+8)	Dex 15 (+5) Wis 10 (+3)
Con 16 (+6)	Int 11 (+3) Cha 9 (+2)
Equipment plate armor, shield, bastard sword	

2 Orc Berserkers (B) Medium natural humanoid	Level 4 Brute XP 175 each
Initiative +3 Senses Perception +2; low-light vision HP 66; Bloodied 33; see also <i>warrior's surge</i> AC 15; Fortitude 17, Reflex 13, Will 12 Speed 6 (8 while charging)	
⊕ Greataxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon +8 vs. AC; 1d12 + 5 damage (crit 1d12 + 17).	
⊕ Warrior's Surge (standard, usable only while bloodied; encounter) ♦ Healing, Weapon The orc berserker makes a melee basic attack and regains 16 hit points.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common, Giant
Skills Endurance +10, Intimidate +6	
Str 20 (+7)	Dex 13 (+3) Wis 10 (+2)
Con 16 (+5)	Int 8 (+1) Cha 9 (+1)
Equipment leather armor, greataxe	

6 Orc Drudges (D) Medium natural humanoid	Level 4 Minion XP 44 each
Initiative +0 Senses Perception +0; low-light vision HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. AC 16; Fortitude 15, Reflex 12, Will 12 Speed 6 (8 while charging)	
⊕ Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon +9 vs. AC; 5 damage.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common, Giant
Str 16 (+5)	Dex 10 (+2) Wis 10 (+2)
Con 14 (+4)	Int 8 (+1) Cha 9 (+1)
Equipment hide armor, club	

Orc Eye of Gruumsh (G) Medium natural humanoid	Level 5 Controller (Leader) XP 200
Initiative +6 Senses Perception +3; low-light vision Wrath of Gruumsh aura 10; orcs in the aura can use <i>death strike</i> (see below). HP 64; Bloodied 32; see also <i>warrior's surge</i> and <i>death strike</i> AC 19; Fortitude 17, Reflex 14, Will 15 Speed 6 (8 while charging)	
⊕ Spear (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon +10 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage.	
⊕ Warrior's Surge (standard, usable only while bloodied; encounter) ♦ Healing, Weapon The eye of Gruumsh makes a melee basic attack and regains 16 hit points.	
⊕ Death Strike (when reduced to 0 hit points) The eye of Gruumsh makes a melee basic attack.	
↘ Eye of Wrath (minor; at-will) ♦ Fear Ranged 5; +8 vs. Will; the target takes a -4 penalty to AC (save ends).	
↘ Swift Arm of Destruction (standard; recharge ☼ ☼) ♦ Healing Ranged 5; one orc within range makes a melee basic attack (as a free action) and regains 15 hit points on a hit or 5 hit points on a miss.	
✱ Chaos Hammer (standard; encounter) ♦ Force Area burst 1 within 10; +8 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 3 force damage, and the target is knocked prone. Miss : Half damage, and the target is not knocked prone.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common, Giant
Skills Endurance +9, Intimidate +10, Religion +7	
Str 17 (+5)	Dex 14 (+4) Wis 12 (+3)
Con 16 (+5)	Int 11 (+2) Cha 17 (+5)
Equipment leather armor, fur cloak, spear	

forge take 5 fire damage. Forges count as difficult terrain and characters entering or starting their turn inside a space containing a forge take 10 fire damage and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).

Caved-In Tunnel: The tunnel leading through the mountain has been collapsed for at least 2 miles. Movement through the tunnel is impossible.

Raging Fire Level 2 Blaster
Hazard XP 250

Damage to one of the forges caused hot coals to spill onto the floor and set fire to discarded materials. The fire is now out of control and is spreading across the room. At the start of the encounter, the fire fills a 6-square-by-6-square area.

Hazard: A 6-by-6 square area has a fire.

Perception

No check is necessary to notice the fire.

♦ DC 16: The character notices the fire is spreading.

Trigger

When a creature enters a space adjacent to the raging fire or starts its turn in a space adjacent to or inside the raging fire, the raging fire attacks.

Attack

Free Action **Melee** 1

Target: The triggering creature

Attack: +6 vs. Reflex

Special: The raging fire gains a +5 bonus to its attack roll if the target stands inside the fire.

Hit: 2d6 fire damage and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).

Miss: Half damage, and no ongoing damage.

Effect: The fire also provides concealment to all creatures inside it and within 2 squares of it.

Special: Each time the fire attacks, it spreads into its target's space whether it hits or misses.

Countermeasures

♦ A character can move into a square of raging fire or a square adjacent to the raging fire without triggering the attack with a DC 20 Acrobatics check.

♦ Two gallons of water destroys 1 square of raging fire.

♦ Targeting 1 or more squares with a water attack automatically destroys the fire in those squares.

KALAD

Once the characters defeat Og and his warriors, they can find Kalad crumpled on the floor in the space indicated on the tactical map. Assuming the characters stopped Og before he could kill the dwarf, the PCs can talk with the last dwarf of the monastery. Failing that, the characters might take Kalad's remains back to Overlook to have him raised by the Raise Dead ritual or converse with him using Speak with Dead. In any event, Kalad is helpful, for he knows what's at stake if the orcs come through the mountains.

USING KALAD

Provided Kalad survives (or is restored to life), the dwarf can be an invaluable aid to the PCs as they work to complete their quest. Kalad knows how



to seal the Nexus, thus closing off all the passages through the mountains and forcing the orcs and orogs to face Bordrin's Watch. He also has a good idea about how to reach the Nexus (granting a +2 bonus to all checks made to navigate the Vents; see below). Finally, he also has a score to settle against the orcs and gladly accompanies the PCs on the final leg of their mission with no convincing required. Should any of the PCs think to mention the tunnels beneath Bordrin's Watch, Kalad mentions they are already sealed, for he closed them a few days ago after the news of the approaching army grew dire.

As for the Vents, Kalad insists they go to the tunnels to make certain the other group completed their mission. "There's too much at stake, friends!" He adds, "it's a labyrinth down there, easy to get turned around. Would you risk the lives of everyone in that valley on the efforts of just one group?"

DESCRIPTION

Kalad is tall for a dwarf, thickly muscled, but his beard was savagely cut from his face and his injuries are extensive (he's at 1 hit point and out of healing surges). His armor and weapon are still inside the Chamber of Works, and he dons them when he can. Even when fully recovered, he has a haunted look about him, for he's plagued with the horrors of the attack and he won't know peace until the orcs are stopped.

Deeply pious, as one would expect of a holy warrior, Kalad spends a portion of each day in deep prayer, calling out to his god for guidance, comfort, and a renewal of his resolve to continue his fight against the darkness. Outside these private times, Kalad is friendly,

Kalad the Paladin		Level 4 Elite Soldier
Medium natural humanoid, dwarf		XP 350
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +4; low-light vision	
HP 54; Bloodied 27		
AC 21; Fortitude 17, Reflex 14, Will 16		
Saving Throws +2; +7 against poison effects		
Speed 5		
Action Points 1		
⊕ Greataxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+8 vs. AC; 1d12 + 3 damage (crit 1d12 + 18), and the target is marked until the end of Kalad's next turn. If the target moves or makes an attack that does not include Kalad as the target, the target takes 5 radiant damage.		
⊕ Arcing Smite (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon		
One or two creatures; +8 vs. AC, one attack per target; 1d12 + 3 damage (crit 1d12 + 18) damage, and the target is marked until end of Kalad's next turn.		
⊕ Holy Strike (standard; at-will) ♦ Radiant, Weapon		
+8 vs. AC; 1d12 + 3 damage (crit 1d12 + 18) radiant damage, and if Kalad marked the target, he deals an extra 2 radiant damage.		
⊕ Sacred Circle (standard; daily) ♦ Zone		
Close burst 3; the burst creates a zone that, until the end of the encounter, gives Kalad and allies within it a +1 power bonus to AC.		
Divine Strength (minor; encounter)		
Kalad applies his Strength modifier as extra damage on his next attack this turn.		
Stand Your Ground		
When an effect forces Kalad to move—through a pull, a push, or a slide—he moves 1 square less than the effect specifies. When an attack would knock Kalad prone, he can roll a saving throw to avoid falling prone.		
Alignment Lawful good	Languages Common, Dwarven	
Skills Dungeoneering +6, Endurance +11, Heal +9, History +7, Religion +7		
Str 17 (+5)	Dex 10 (+2)	Wis 14 (+4)
Con 14 (+4)	Int 11 (+2)	Cha 14 (+4)
Equipment plate armor, greataxe		

if gruff, constant in his support, but always detached. He doesn't have much use for humor and ignores the banter of those around him. He has a mission and he intends to see it to its end. He might be reserved in his relations, but the PCs couldn't ask for a more

committed ally. Kalad sees the PCs as divine agents—heroes sent by the gods to save him and reveal to him his life's purpose. Thus, he watches the characters for further revelations that might shed light on what lies in store for him next.

UNEXPECTED DEVELOPMENTS

Upon rescuing Kalad, the adventurers learn that the dwarf paladin has sealed two of the three possible routes through the mountain. If the PCs didn't save the paladin or if they dismiss his warnings, the characters might head up to Bordrin's Watch to

Even when fully recovered, he has a haunted look about him, for he's plagued with the horrors of the attack . . .

lend support to the troops, or worse, head back to Overlook, believing their mission is complete. Both possibilities can cause difficulties in resolving the adventure, since extended time in the city or at the fortress takes the adventure into unexpected directions. Naturally, if you're comfortable with reworking the plot on the fly or even adapting the adventure for a different sort of outcome, you can go with the flow. On the other hand, you could try any of the following options to get the adventure back on track.

Extend the Timetable: For groups at the fortress or the city, you can extend the length of time it takes for Tusk's armies to arrive. Eventually, when the Farstriders never make it back, the Council of Elders

grow worried enough to send the PCs or the Freeriders into the Vents to make sure the job was done.

Shift the Perspective: Without Kalad, the characters have an even chance of going back to the city or heading up to the fortress. To deal with this eventuality, adjust the plot so that, in the case of Bordrin's Watch, the tunnel was never sealed and the characters stumble across the entrance while patrolling the walls of the fortress, or, in the case of the city, all three groups succeed, but a fourth entrance exists, but this time underneath Caer Overlook. In either case, you can use the encounters described under the Vents by changing the location of the entrance.

Let the Orcs Through: For particularly stubborn groups, you might just let the orcs break through.

A host of a thousand orcs spilling out of the Vents ought to be enough to grab their attention. Just treat the orcs as an advance force so the PCs, should they choose to enter the dungeon, can still face Tusk at the conclusion.

Go with the Flow: Finally, no group likes to be "railroaded" by an adventure. Take a step back, relax, and let the players decide what to do and where to go. Depending on the players' choices, you might shift the action so that it occurs in different ways. Perhaps instead of braving the Vents, the PCs fail to close the Nexus and the orcs encircle Overlook and crush Bordrin's Watch. The PCs might be trapped in the city, hiding behind the walls along with everyone else. They might undertake a mission to infiltrate the

orc armies to find and destroy Tusk in the hopes of unraveling the glue that holds this force together. This doesn't require a lot of work; you need only change the dynamics of the battlefield, alter the order of encounters, insert a few extra ones, and remove a few unnecessary ones and the adventure can still come to a satisfactory end.

THE VENTS

The Vents are easy to find, even if they are several miles away near the foot of the mountains, for the steam rising from the fissures is visible from quite a distance, so there is no challenge in reaching the these caves. Once the characters reach the vents, read or paraphrase the following text:

Scattered across the lower slopes are numerous steaming fissures, some as small as tiny cracks in the stone with others large enough to accommodate an ogre. The rocks here are slippery and aside from ropes of brown-black fungus, moss, and lichen, nothing lives here. The air stinks of sulfur and grows stronger nearest the plumes of acrid smoke wafting up from the holes.

About a hundred feet down from the lowest cracks is a campsite. There, you see five horses tied up and empty feedbags hanging from their heads.

Perception Check

DC 18: A smothered campfire sits a few yards away from the horses.

DC 22: Footprints lead into one of the larger openings.

DC 26: There are five different sets of prints. There's no sign of any prints coming out.

The Farstriders camped outside the tunnels when they arrived and set out at first light on the day after the PCs set out for the monastery. These adventurers went in and never came out again, falling victim to the orcs already infesting the tunnels.

When the PCs are ready to proceed, they can enter through any of the entrances and make their way through the maze of tunnels. A map is not provided for the first leg of their descent, since the characters must rely on instincts and cunning to make their way to the deeper tunnels and, eventually, the Nexus.

Setup: The entrances on the mountainside all worm into the rock, tangling into a convoluted network of passages and chambers that are thick with mist and slippery with moisture. The adventurers must navigate these passages using a variety of skills to reach the deeper tunnels.

Level: 3.

Complexity: 2 (requires 6 successes before 3 failures).

Primary Skills: Athletics, Dungeoneering, Endurance, Perception.

Special: If Kalad is with the PCs, they gain a +2 bonus to all checks made during the challenge. Once the characters succeed on the challenge, they gain a +2 bonus to all checks each time they repeat it.

Athletics (DC 15): Working through the tunnels, the characters need to squeeze through tight spots, leap across smoking cracks, climb slippery walls, and perform a variety of physical stunts. At least three characters must make a successful Athletics checks to overcome these obstacles. In addition to counting as a failure, a failed check indicates each party member loses 1 healing surge from injuries sustained while traveling.

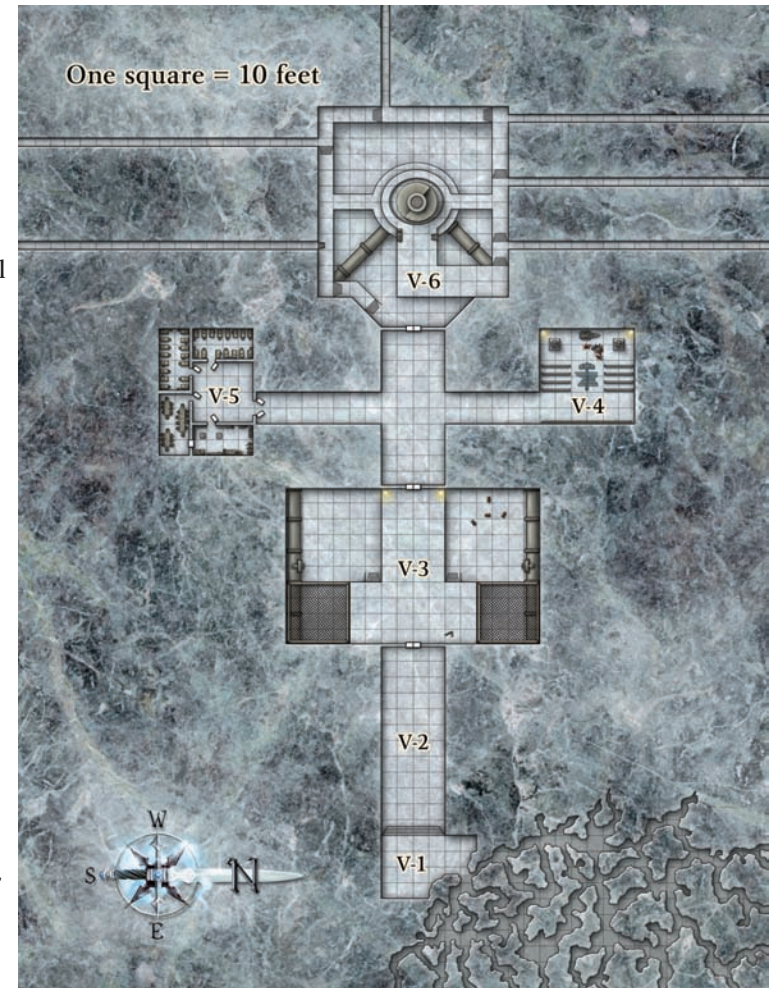
Dungeoneering (DC 20): A character experienced in spelunking can make a successful Dungeoneering check to help navigate the tunnels. A successful check counts as a success or removes 1 failure. A successful DC 25 Dungeoneering check also grants the characters an extra +4 bonus to all other checks related to this skill challenge (one-time bonus).

Endurance (DC 15): There's nothing easy about this descent and the poor air and dangerous environment is taxing. At least two characters must make successful Endurance checks to preserve their stamina and avoid fatigue, injury, and exhaustion. Failed checks result in everyone in the party losing 1 healing surge in addition to counting as a failure.

Perception (DC 20): A character can attempt a Perception check to notice tracks left by the Farstriders. A successful check counts as two successes. Once made, the characters cannot use Perception again for this skill challenge.

Success: The characters reach the lower tunnels intact.

Failure: The characters are turned around and come to a cave mouth 3d6 squares from the cave they first entered. They must start the skill challenge again to reach the deeper tunnels, though they gain a +2 bonus to their skill checks since they eliminate one possible route from their travels.



DEEPER TUNNELS

Once the characters successfully make their way through the Vents, they reach an old network of excavated passages and chambers. An advance troop of orcs have breached these tunnels, but they have not yet found their way through the Vents. As they make ready to plunge into the misty tunnels, Tusk and his cadre are even now closing in on the Nexus, leading

a large force through the western tunnels to take Bordrin's Watch from behind.

EXTENDED REST

Once the characters enter the deeper tunnels, they have no place to take an extended rest safely, so they must use their resources wisely, preserving their strength until the final encounter. Should disaster strike, the characters can retreat to the Vents and hole up there until they recover enough to complete the adventure. Unless you have an unusually small group of characters, let the PCs use this option once. If they try to do it again, Tusk should break free. See Unexpected Developments on the previous page for tips on how to adjust the plot for this potential outcome.

THE VENTS OVERVIEW

The Vents are a complex series of tunnels that leak out a sulfurous steam and the occasional burst of noxious smoke. Navigating the Vents is dangerous because it's easy to get turned around and hidden dangers lurk in the dark.

The vents include the following encounter areas.

V1. ENTERING THE VENTS

Beyond the mazelike Vents is the buried passage, a hidden route through the mountains beneath Bordrin's Watch far above. Opening onto the rest of the complex is a simple antechamber, shrouded in mist. Here a band of orcs, having survived a gauntlet of traps, argue about their next course of action.

Tactical Encounter: "Entering the Vents" (page 42).

V2. THE GAUNTLET

To safeguard the deep passage, the dwarf architects constructed a nasty trap and placed construct guardians in this long corridor. Evidence of its lethality can be seen in the orc corpses littering the floor.

Tactical Encounter: "The Gauntlet" (page 43).

V3. THE BOILER ROOM

Central to protecting the subterranean route is the ability to close off the Nexus (see V6) by filling that room with water. This chamber houses the water reservoirs, which are kept at boiling temperatures to scald as well as drown intruders. Currently, Tusk's agents explore this chamber to ascertain its purpose and function.

Tactical Encounter: "The Boiler Room" (page 44).

V4. SHRINE TO MORADIN

The dwarves that built this place were devout followers of Moradin and in between shifts of guarding and expanding the tunnels, they congregated here to receive the blessings and protections of their priests. Now, the site is the lair of a ravenous cave troll and its handlers.

Tactical Encounter: "Shrine to Moradin" (page 46).

V5. DWARF QUARTERS

These chambers once billeted the dwarf miners, warriors, and priests, but little of their presence remains with the orc infestation. Orc soldiers explore these rooms in search of plunder and grow frustrated by the spartan rooms.

Tactical Encounter: "Dwarf Quarters" (page 48).

V6. THE NEXUS

When the tunnels are compromised by enemy forces, the dwarves can seal off access by activating a complex trap that causes the doors to seal shut and the room to fill with water. However, with the dwarves largely wiped out, the orcs control this room and they intend to use it to breach Bordrin's Watch above.

Tactical Encounter: "The Nexus" (page 49).

CONCLUSION

Once the characters seal the Nexus and defeat Tusk, they have completed their mission, but more importantly, they have delivered a deathblow to the orc hordes. With their leader dead and cut off from the tunnels, the orcs have no choice but to attack Bordrin's Watch. The fighting is brutal, for even though the orcs have lost their advantage, they are still numerous and powerful. After five days of fighting, the defenders on the walls turn back the hordes, sending them back into the badlands once more. With the threat at an end, the surviving PCs are welcomed as heroes and given badges of distinction to recognize their courageous efforts and their parts in saving Overlook and Elsir Vale. During the ceremony, the adventurers are free to relax, drink, and enjoy some well-deserved downtime, but they can't help but feel like they're being watched.

ENTERING THE VENTS

Encounter Level 1 (500 XP)

SETUP

Having survived the Gauntlet (V2), the orcs have rested and now make ready to venture into the Vents. The orcs lost most of their drudges in the trapped corridor behind them, so they are demoralized and a bit nervous about what is ahead.

- 1 orc sergeant (S)
- 1 orc bombardier (B)
- 2 orc freaks (F)

When the characters enter this room, read:

Four orcs engage in a heated argument, one pointing back into the corridor behind them. The biggest of the lot points in your direction, growling deep in his chest.

2 Orc Freaks (F)		Level 2 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid		XP 125 each
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +5; low-light vision		
HP 38; Bloodied 19; see also <i>warrior's surge</i>		
AC 15; Fortitude 15, Reflex 14, Will 11		
Speed 6 (8 while charging)		
⊕ Battleaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+6 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage.		
⊕ Savage Strike (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon		
Make two attacks; +6 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage per attack.		
If both attacks hit the same target, the target also takes ongoing 5 damage (save ends).		
⊕ Warrior's Surge (standard, usable only while bloodied; encounter) ♦ Healing, Weapon		
The orc freak makes a melee basic attack and regains 9 hit points.		
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common, Giant	
Skills Athletics +9		
Str 17 (+4)	Dex 15 (+3)	Wis 8 (+0)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 8 (+0)	Cha 7 (-1)
Equipment hide armor, 2 battleaxes		

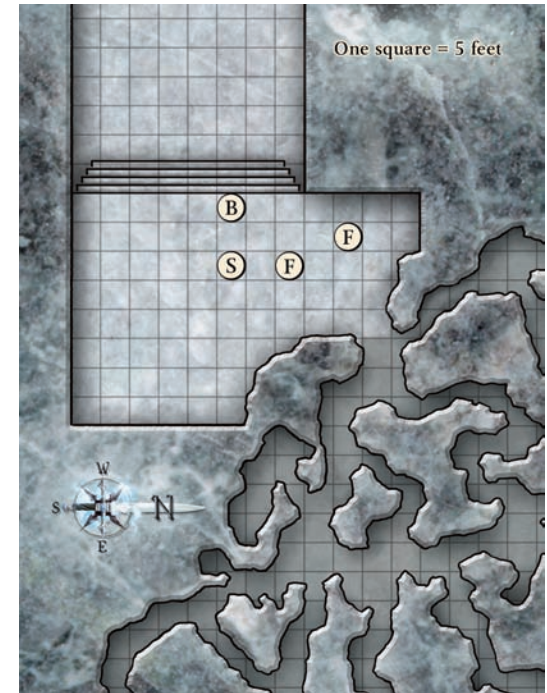
TACTICS

The orcs are arguing, but they abandon their dispute at the first sign of intruders. If the sergeant falls, the bombardier and the freaks move back into V2 to trigger the trap and cause a bit more mayhem.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

- Illumination:** One of the orcs carries an ever-burning torch, which fills the room with bright light.
- Ceiling:** The ceiling is 15 feet tall.
- Mist:** The tunnels leading to the Vents are filled with mist. Characters inside these tunnels gain concealment.
- Stairs:** The western stairs lead down to V2. Each square containing stairs counts as difficult terrain.

Orc Bombardier (B)	Level 1 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid	XP 100
Initiative +3 Senses Perception -2; low-light vision	
HP 24; Bloodied 12; see also <i>warrior's surge</i>	
AC 13; Fortitude 13, Reflex 15, Will 11	
Speed 6 (8 while charging)	
⊕ Battleaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+5 vs. AC; 1d10 + 2 damage.	
⊕ Warrior's Surge (standard, usable only while bloodied; encounter) ♦ Healing, Weapon	
The orc bombardier makes a melee basic attack and regains 6 hit points.	
⚡ Cinderbomb (standard; recharge ☞ ☞ ☞) ♦ Fire	
Area burst 2 within 10; +4 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 3 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends). On a crit, the orc bombardier knocks the target prone. <i>Miss:</i> Half damage, and no ongoing damage.	
⚡ Detonation (no action, when reduced to 0 hit points; encounter) ♦ Fire	
The orc bombardier must have at least one cinderbomb left; close burst 2; +4 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 3 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends) (crit knock prone). <i>Miss:</i> Half damage, and no ongoing damage.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common, Giant
Str 13 (+1)	Dex 17 (+3) Wis 7 (-2)
Con 12 (+1)	Int 8 (-1) Cha 9 (-1)
Equipment battleaxe, 3 cinderbombs, everburning torch	



Orc Sergeant (S)	Level 3 Soldier (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +2 Senses Perception +5; low-light vision	
Lead by Fear aura 1; orcs inside the aura gain a +1 power bonus to attack rolls.	
HP 46; Bloodied 23; see also <i>warrior's surge</i>	
AC 19; Fortitude 17, Reflex 13, Will 14	
Speed 6 (8 while charging)	
⊕ Glaive (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 2d4 + 4 damage.	
⊕ Warrior's Surge (standard, usable only while bloodied; encounter) ♦ Healing	
The orc sergeant makes a melee basic attack and regains 11 hit points.	
Back to the Front! (immediate reaction, when orc ally within 5 squares is forcibly moved; at-will)	
Slide triggering ally 1 square.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common, Giant
Skills Endurance +5, Intimidate +5	
Str 19 (+5)	Dex 9 (+0) Wis 13 (+2)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 11 (+1) Cha 11 (+1)
Equipment chainmail, glaive, tattered cloak	

THE GAUNTLET

Encounter Level 3 (775 XP)

SETUP

The dwarves created a trio of homunculi to protect the Nexus. Supporting the guardians is a nasty trap. If the group dealt with the orcs in V1 easily, assume the trap in this room is already sprung.

- 1 arbalester (A)
- 2 iron defenders (I)
- 4 crossbow turrets (T, turrets; P, pressure plates)

When the characters can see the corridor, read:

A wide corridor stretches before you and ends at a pair of double doors. About halfway down, you see a strange creature that resembles a crossbow with legs, flanked by two iron dogs.

TACTICS

The defenders guard the arbalester, while the arbalester guards the doors. If an intruder moves for the control panel, a defender moves to intercept.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

- Illumination:** None. This room is dark
- Ceiling:** The ceiling here is 20 feet tall.
- Double Doors:** A pair of bronze doors stand closed at the end of the hall. The doors are not locked.

Magic Crossbow Turret Trap	Level 3 Elite Blaster 300 XP
<i>Four armored crossbow turrets drop from the ceiling at the edge of the room. Each round they pepper the area with quarrels.</i>	
Trap: Four crossbows attack each round on their initiative after they are triggered.	
Perception	
♦ DC 22: The character notices the trigger plates.	

- ♦ DC 27: The character notices the location of the turrets.
- ♦ DC 22: The character notices the location of the hidden control panel.

Initiative +3

Trigger

The trap activates and rolls initiative when a character enters one of the four trigger squares in the room.

Attack

Standard Action **Ranged 10**

Targets: Each crossbow attacks one intruder (any nondwarf, nonhomunculus). It magically distinguishes intruders from the natives of the dungeon.

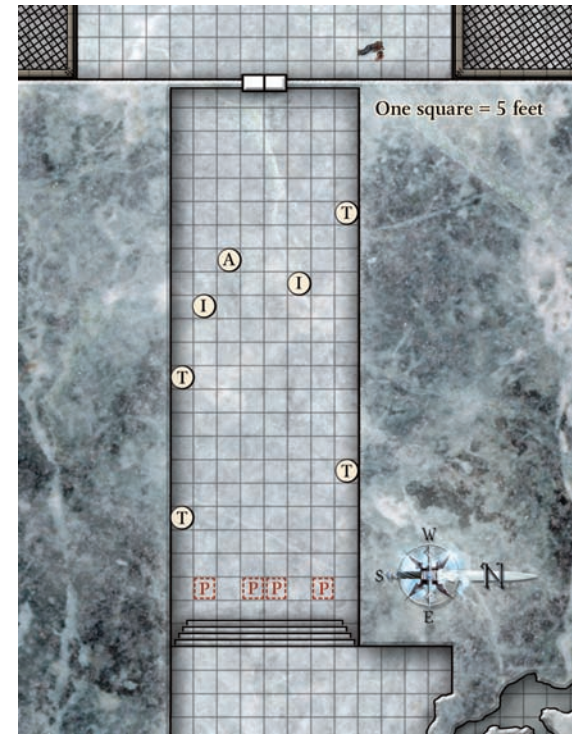
Attack: +8 vs. AC

Hit: 2d8 + 3 damage

Countermeasures

- ♦ A character who makes a successful Athletics check (DC 6 or DC 11 without a running start) can jump over a single pressure plate square.
- ♦ An adjacent character can disable a trigger plate with a DC 27 Thievery check.
- ♦ Attacking a trigger plate (AC 12, other defenses 10) only triggers the trap
- ♦ A character can attack a turret (AC 16, other defenses 13; hp 38). Destroying a turret stops its attacks.
- ♦ A character can engage in a skill challenge to deactivate the control panel to explode (close blast 3, 2d6 + 3 damage to all creatures in blast) and the trap remains active.

2 Iron Defenders (I)	Level 3 Soldier
Medium natural animate (construct, homunculus) XP 150 each	
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +6; darkvision	
HP 47; Bloodied 23	
AC 18; Fortitude 16, Reflex 15, Will 13	
Immune disease, poison	
Speed 6	
⊕ Bite (standard; at-will)	
+8 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage.	
⊕ Guard Creature (immediate reaction, when an adjacent enemy attacks the creature guarded by the iron defender; at-will)	
The iron defender makes a bite attack against the enemy.	
Pursue and Attack	
When the iron defender makes an opportunity attack, it shifts 1 square before or after the attack.	
Alignment Unaligned Languages –	
Str 16 (+4)	Dex 15 (+3) Wis 11 (+1)
Con 15 (+3)	Int 5 (-2) Cha 8 (+0)



Arbalester (A)	Level 4 Artillery
Medium natural animate (construct, homunculus) XP 175	
Initiative +6 Senses Perception +8; darkvision	
HP 43; Bloodied 21	
AC 17; Fortitude 16, Reflex 18, Will 15	
Immune disease, poison	
Speed 6	
⊕ Slam (standard; at-will)	
+4 vs. AC; 1d4 + 2 damage.	
⊕ Bolt (standard; at-will)	
Ranged 20/40; +9 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage.	
⊕ Double Shot (standard; recharge ☐☐☐☐☐☐; see also guard area)	
The arbalester makes a bolt attack against two different targets within 5 squares of each other.	
Guard Area	
At the start of the arbalester's turn, if an enemy is in its guarded area, the arbalester recharges its <i>double shot</i> power.	
Alignment Unaligned Languages –	
Str 15 (+4)	Dex 18 (+6) Wis 12 (+3)
Con 13 (+3)	Int 5 (-1) Cha 3 (-2)

BOILER ROOM

Encounter Level 5 (1,095 XP)

SETUP

The dark one emissary is one of the servants of Tusk who arranged the deal to assist the orog chieftain in infiltrating the tunnels below the Stonehome Mountains. He and his cohorts have just arrived in this chamber, and he's examining one of the valves to determine its function. The orcs are milling around, waiting for him to finish.

- 1 dark one emissary (D)
- 3 orc scouts (S)
- 3 fire beetles (F)
- 5 orc drudges (O)

When the characters enter this room, read:

The doors open a platform overlooking an enormous chamber. A group of orcs turns to face you, growling with rage and drooling with anticipation for the kill. Behind and below the orcs lies a sunken section of the chamber, where you see iron tubes as tall as a man running across the room. On the north side of the pit, you spot several large beetles, their mottled hides glowing red as if aflame.

Perception Check

DC 22: A short humanoid wearing a long black cloak is examining an iron wheel connected to the southern pipe.

TACTICS

The orcs mobilize when they notice the PCs, and the drudges charge while the scouts fall back to hit the PCs with ranged attacks. The fire beetles, while not allied with the orcs, are hungry and attack the closest

living creature they can reach. The orcs fight to the death.

The dark one emissary is far more cautious. It joins the fight straightaway, but stays on the edge, moving in to stab at the PCs, using *dark step*, and then darts away. If the dark one becomes bloodied, it flees through the door to the west to warn the creatures in V4 of the impending attack.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Two everburning torches sit in iron sconces on either side of the iron door set in the center of the west wall.

Ceiling: The ceiling, from the main level, is 20 feet overhead.

Stone Walk: Bisecting this room, at the level at which the doors stand, is a stone walkway connecting the eastern doors to the west.

Scaffolding: Branching out to the south and north is a floor made of iron mesh. The mesh allows sight to the level below but blocks all attacks.

Lower Level: Beneath the stone walk and scaffolding is a lower level, about 20 feet below the

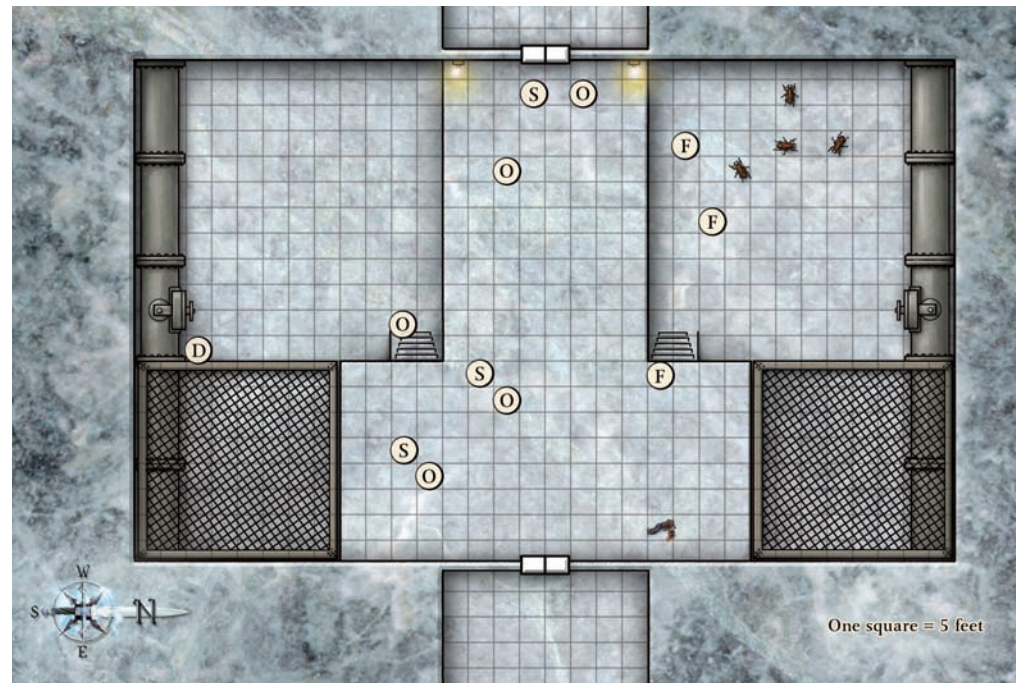
doors leading into and out of this room, and reached by twin staircases descending from the eastern platform.

Iron Door: The iron door to the north is closed, but not locked. It has been magically treated to resist rust.

Fire Beetle Carcasses: The fire beetles attacked the first group of orcs, but were driven back. The carcasses mark those beetles killed by the orcs. Squares containing dead beetles count as difficult terrain.

Stairs: The stairs leading to the lower level count as difficult terrain.

Hot Pipe: Two 10-foot wide pipes run across the lower level of the room, emerging from the eastern wall and exiting through the west. The pipes carry scalding water to the Nexus. The valves (see below)



are closed, so only the pipes east of the valves are hot. If the valves are opened, the entire pipe becomes hot. Characters touching a hot pipe take 5 fire damage.

Valves: Each pipe is fitted with a valve that can be opened or shut with a successful DC 13 Strength check. Opening the valves is necessary to seal the Nexus. A DC 22 Dungeoneering check reveals the general function of these valves. If Kalad is present, once the creatures are all dealt with, he moves to open each valve.

Dead Adventurer: Sprawled across the floor is the beheaded remains of Jen, the half-elf warlock and member of the Farstriders. She was killed by the orc sergeant at V1.

3 Orc Scouts (S)	Level 3 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150 each
Initiative +5	Senses Perception +6; low-light vision
HP 46; Bloodied 23; see also <i>warrior's surge</i>	
AC 17; Fortitude 16, Reflex 15, Will 13	
Speed 6 (8 while charging)	
⬇ Scimitar (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+8 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage (crit: +1d8).	
⌚ Longbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 20/40; +7 vs. AC; 1d10 + 2 damage.	
⬇ Warrior's Surge (standard, usable only while bloodied; encounter) ♦ Healing, Weapon	
The orc scout makes a melee basic attack and regains 11 hit points.	
Overeager (immediate reaction, when the orc scout drops an enemy with a ranged attack; encounter)	
The orc scout draws its scimitar and charges the closest enemy.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common, Giant
Skills Athletics +9, Endurance +8, Intimidate +5, Stealth +8	
Str 16 (+4)	Dex 15 (+3) Wis 10 (+1)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 8 (+0) Cha 9 (+0)
Equipment leather armor, scimitar, longbow with quiver of 20 arrows	

Dark One Emissary (D)	Level 5 Lurker
Small shadow humanoid	XP 200
Initiative +11	Senses Perception +9; darkvision
HP 48; Bloodied 24; see also <i>killing dark</i>	
AC 20 (see also <i>dark step</i>); Fortitude 16, Reflex 20, Will 17	
Speed 6	
⬇ Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+10 vs. AC; 1d4 + 5 damage.	
⌚ Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 5/10; +10 vs. AC; 1d4 + 5 damage.	
⬅ Killing Dark (when reduced to 0 hit points)	
Close burst 1; targets enemies; each target is blinded (save ends). When slain, a dark one emissary explodes in a spout of darkness.	
Cloak of Shadow (minor; at-will) ♦ Illusion	
The dark one emissary shifts 1 square and gains concealment until the end of its next turn.	
Combat Advantage	
The dark one emissary deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Dark Step (move; at-will)	
The dark one emissary moves up to 4 squares, gains a +4 bonus to AC against opportunity attacks, and gains combat advantage against any target that it ends its move adjacent to.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common
Skills Bluff +9, Intimidate +11, Stealth +12	
Str 13 (+3)	Dex 20 (+7) Wis 15 (+4)
Con 12 (+3)	Int 14 (+4) Cha 14 (+4)
Equipment black garments, 5 daggers	

3 Fire Beetles (F)	Level 1 Brute
Small natural beast	XP 100 each
Initiative +1	Senses Perception +0
HP 32; Bloodied 16	
AC 13; Fortitude 13, Reflex 12, Will 11	
Resist 10 fire	
Speed 6	
⬇ Bite (standard; at-will)	
+5 vs. AC; 2d4 + 2 damage.	
⬅ Fire Spray (standard; recharge ⏏ ⏏) ♦ Fire	
Close blast 3; +4 vs. Reflex; 3d6 fire damage.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages –
Str 14 (+2)	Dex 12 (+1) Wis 10 (+0)
Con 12 (+1)	Int 1 (-5) Cha 8 (-1)

5 Orc Drudges (O)	Level 4 Minion
Medium natural humanoid	XP 44 each
Initiative +0	Senses Perception +0; low-light vision
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 16; Fortitude 15, Reflex 12, Will 12	
Speed 6 (8 while charging)	
⬇ Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+9 vs. AC; 5 damage.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common, Giant
Str 16 (+5)	Dex 10 (+2) Wis 10 (+2)
Con 14 (+4)	Int 8 (+1) Cha 9 (+1)
Equipment hide armor, club	

SHRINE TO MORADIN

Encounter Level 3 (764 XP)

SETUP

The orcs in this room are responsible for their cave troll ally. The cave troll goes where and does what it likes. The orcs watch the monster devour the last of the Farstriders with a mixture of fear and envy.

- 1 cave troll (T)
- 2 orc bombardiers (B)
- 6 orc drudges (D)

When the characters enter this room, read:

Eight orcs and one big, hulking brute befoul this sacred chamber by their mere presence. The orcs, a mix of hideous humanoids, shout warnings when they see you, causing the cave troll to turn, which reveals the blood and gore painting its chest.

Perception Check

DC 18 (dwarf only): *You notice the altar shines brilliantly, as if Moradin was calling for you to purify this chamber.*

TACTICS

The orcs and troll surge into battle, with the drudges charging where possible and the cave troll grabbing the first creature it can to use as an improvised weapon. The bombardiers hold back, flinging cinderbombs until they exhaust their supplies, at which point they close to fight hand to hand.

Cave Troll (T)	Level 7 Brute
Large natural humanoid	XP 300
Initiative +6 Senses Perception +9; low-light vision	
HP 99; Bloodied 49; see also <i>troll healing</i>	
Regeneration 10 (if the cave troll takes acid or fire damage regeneration does not function until the end of its next turn)	
AC 19; Fortitude 21, Reflex 19, Will 17	
Speed 8	
⚔ Claw (standard; at-will)	
Reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 2d4 + 5 damage, and the target is grabbed (until escape). A cave troll can grab up to two targets at once.	
⚔ Improvised Weapon (standard; at-will)	
Requires grabbed creature; reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage, and the grabbed creature takes half this damage and is dazed (save ends). When grabbing a creature wearing heavy armor, the cave troll deals +5 damage with this attack, but the grabbed creature is not dazed.	
Troll Healing ♦ Healing	
If the cave troll is reduced to 0 hit points by an attack that does not deal acid or fire damage, it rises on its next turn (as a move action) with 10 hit points.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Giant
Skills Athletics +13, Endurance +12	
Str 21 (+8)	Dex 16 (+6) Wis 12 (+4)
Con 19 (+7)	Int 5 (+0) Cha 8 (+2)

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Two everburning torches in iron sconces fill the room with bright light.

Ceiling: The ceiling in this room is 20 feet tall.

Stone Pews: Spaces containing stone pews count as difficult terrain. A DC 17 Strength check is required to shove a stone pew 1 square. If used in conjunction with a bull rush, the attack takes a -2 penalty, but the target is also knocked prone.

Altar: Any dwarf that starts its turn in a space adjacent to the altar gains a +2 power bonus to attack rolls until the end of the encounter.

Tapestry: The tapestry recounts the construction of the Nexus. Characters who study it and succeed on



a DC 18 Perception check determine that they must open the valves in room V3 to seal off the Nexus.

Dwarf Statues: The statues in this room stand 15-feet tall and depict dwarf warriors, head bowed as if in prayer or reflection. The statues are carved so the warriors look like they're wearing plate armor and both are armed with hammers. Climbing a statue requires a DC 20 Athletics check. The statue has AC 20, other defenses 18; hp 100; resist 10 to all damage.

Dead Adventurers: The troll has been eating the remaining members of the Farstriders. Bits of flesh, bone, and gear litter the floor here.

Orc Bombardier (B) Level 1 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid XP 100

Initiative +3 **Senses** Perception -2; low-light vision
HP 24; **Bloodied** 12; see also *warrior's surge*
AC 13; **Fortitude** 13, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 11
Speed 6 (8 while charging)

⊕ **Battleaxe** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+5 vs. AC; 1d10 + 2 damage.

⊕ **Warrior's Surge** (standard, usable only while bloodied; encounter) ♦ **Healing, Weapon**
The orc bombardier makes a melee basic attack and regains 6 hit points.

✱ **Cinderbomb** (standard; recharge ☐☐☐☐☐☐) ♦ **Fire**
Area burst 2 within 10; +4 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 3 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends). On a crit, the orc bombardier knocks the target prone. *Miss*: Half damage, and no ongoing damage.

⬅ **Detonation** (no action, when reduced to 0 hit points; encounter) ♦ **Fire**
The orc bombardier must have at least one cinderbomb left; close burst 2; +4 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 3 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends) (crit knock prone). *Miss*: Half damage, and no ongoing damage.

Alignment Chaotic evil **Languages** Common, Giant
Str 13 (+1) **Dex** 17 (+3) **Wis** 7 (-2)
Con 12 (+1) **Int** 8 (-1) **Cha** 9 (-1)

Equipment battleaxe, 3 cinderbombs

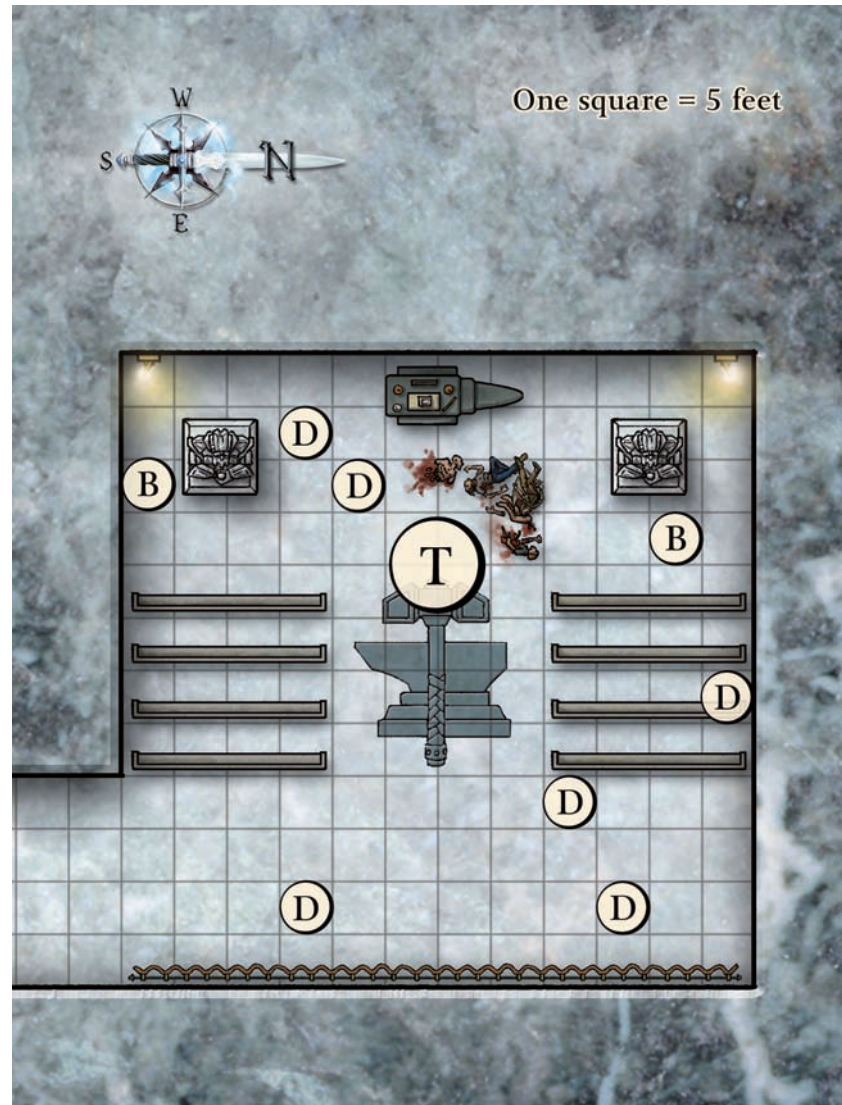
6 Orc Drudges (O) Level 4 Minion
Medium natural humanoid XP 44 each

Initiative +0 **Senses** Perception +0; low-light vision
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.
AC 16; **Fortitude** 15, **Reflex** 12, **Will** 12
Speed 6 (8 while charging)

⊕ **Club** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+9 vs. AC; 5 damage.

Alignment Chaotic evil **Languages** Common, Giant
Str 16 (+5) **Dex** 10 (+2) **Wis** 10 (+2)
Con 14 (+4) **Int** 8 (+1) **Cha** 9 (+1)

Equipment hide armor, club



DWARF QUARTERS

Encounter Level 2 (645 XP)

SETUP

The orc freaks led a band of drudges here in search of loot. Unfortunately, the dwarves emptied these chambers years ago. What the orcs haven't discovered, however, is the presence of the cavern choker prepared to kill the first creature to enter the kitchens.

- 1 cavern choker (C)
- 2 orc freaks (F)
- 5 orc drudges (D)

When the characters near this room, read:

Flickering torchlight shines through an open door at the end of the hall.



2 Orc Freaks (F) Medium natural humanoid	Level 2 Skirmisher XP 125 each
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +5; low-light vision	
HP 38; Bloodied 19; see also <i>warrior's surge</i>	
AC 15; Fortitude 15, Reflex 14, Will 11	
Speed 6 (8 while charging)	
⊕ Battleaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon +6 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage.	
‡ Savage Strike (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon Make two attacks; +6 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage per attack. If both attacks hit the same target, the target also takes ongoing 5 damage (save ends).	
‡ Warrior's Surge (standard, usable only while bloodied; encounter) ♦ Healing, Weapon The orc freak makes a melee basic attack and regains 9 hit points.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common, Giant
Skills Athletics +9	
Str 17 (+4)	Dex 15 (+3) Wis 8 (+0)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 8 (+0) Cha 7 (-1)
Equipment hide armor, 2 battleaxes	

When the characters enter this room, read:

Two orcs hold torches, shining light in this cavernous chamber. Stone doors stand open, leading into other rooms.

TACTICS

The orcs charge the PCs and fight to the death. The choker uses the resulting chaos as its chance to escape, striking a PC as it backs into the hall.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The orc freaks carry torches, each shedding bright light in a 10-square radius. Once combat begins, the orcs drop the torches. Each round, at the start of their turns, there's a 50% chance that the torch gutters out.

Ceiling: The ceilings here are 20-feet tall.

Barracks: The barracks hold bunk beds and empty chests.

5 Orc Drudges (D) Medium natural humanoid	Level 4 Minion XP 44 each
Initiative +0 Senses Perception +0; low-light vision	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 16; Fortitude 15, Reflex 12, Will 12	
Speed 6 (8 while charging)	
⊕ Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon +9 vs. AC; 5 damage.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common, Giant
Str 16 (+5)	Dex 10 (+2) Wis 10 (+2)
Con 14 (+4)	Int 8 (+1) Cha 9 (+1)
Equipment hide armor, club	

Cavern Choker (C) Small natural humanoid	Level 4 Lurker XP 175
Initiative +9 Senses Perception +3; darkvision	
HP 42; Bloodied 21	
AC 17 (see also <i>chameleon hide</i>); Fortitude 15, Reflex 15	
Will 13	
Speed 6, climb 6 (spider climb)	
⊕ Tentacle Claw (standard; at-will) Reach 2; +9 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage, and the target is grabbed (until escape). A target trying to escape the grab takes a -4 penalty to the check.	
‡ Choke (standard; at-will) Grabbed target only; +9 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 3 damage.	
Chameleon Hide (minor; at-will) The cavern choker gains concealment until the start of its next turn. It can't use this power while grabbing a creature or while grabbed.	
Body Shield (immediate interrupt, when targeted by a melee or a ranged attack against Reflex or AC; recharges when the choker makes a successful <i>tentacle claw</i> or <i>choke</i> attack) The cavern choker makes its grabbed victim the target instead. The choker cannot use this power to redirect attacks made by a creature it is currently grabbing.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common
Skills Stealth +10	
Str 17 (+5)	Dex 17 (+5) Wis 13 (+3)
Con 12 (+3)	Int 6 (+0) Cha 6 (+0)

Mess Hall: Dusty tables and benches fill out this room. Squares containing tables count as difficult terrain.

Kitchens: This room's walls are lined with empty cabinets and cold hearths.

THE NEXUS

Encounter Level 7 (1,590 XP)

SETUP

When the characters first enter this chamber, there are no creatures. Once the PCs start climbing to the top, have the players roll for initiative. At the start of each round until the adventurers seal the Nexus, a wave of creatures enters the chamber. Roll 1d6 to determine which tunnel the enemies appear in and then roll for their initiative as normal, placing them at the mouth of the tunnel at the start of their turn. If the die results in a tunnel sealed off by the activated control panel, no additional creatures appear that round.

This encounter includes the following creatures organized by waves.

Wave One

2 orc drudges (D)

Wave Two

2 orc militants (M)

2 orc drudges (D)

Wave Three

Tusk (T)

Myrissa, shadar-kai dark warlock (S)

2 orc bolt throwers (B)

Wave Four and Onward

3 orc drudges (D)

When the characters enter this room, read:

You step into a massive chamber in which the ceiling rises 100 feet above you. At the center of the chamber is a pillar of solid steel that is screwed into the stone and that stand as tall as the ceiling. Two bronze and steel pipes emerge from the eastern walls and travel toward the steel column before vanishing into the stone. Rising around the outside of the room is a stone catwalk that connects to steel grating that wraps around the steel pillar like scaffolding. Dark tunnels pock the walls, leading to who knows where.

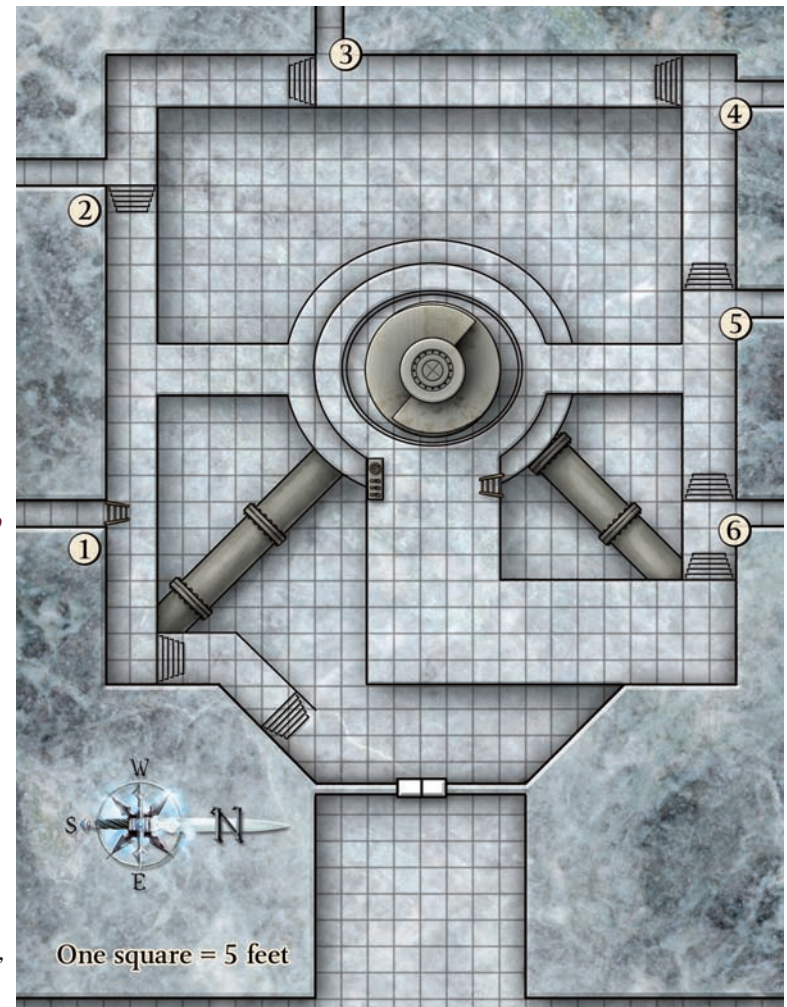
Perception Check

DC 21: You smell the faint odor of sulfur in this room.

DC 26: The stone around the base of the steel column is dark, as if damp.

TACTICS

Tusk's objective here is obvious: Stop the PCs from sealing the Nexus. Once he arrives, he heads straight for the top, smashing through allies and enemies to block the PCs' efforts. The drudges and bolt throwers harass the PCs and support their leader. Myrissa, finally, hits the characters with ranged attacks, hoping to slow their ascent or disrupt their efforts to activate the control panel. All the creatures here fight to the death.



FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: This room is dark.

Ceiling: From the bottom of this room, the ceiling is 100 feet overhead.

Tunnels: Six passages, marked 1-6, lead into the chamber. The passages are 5-foot wide and lead off,

eventually coming out on the western side of the mountains.

Ladders: Two ladders are in this room. One leads to tunnel 1 and the other leads up to the escape hatch. Climbing a ladder requires a DC 5 Athletics check (DC 10 when in boiling water; see below). The ladders are 10 feet tall.

Stairs: Around the outer edge of the room, stairs climb up to higher levels. Stairs count as difficult terrain.

Platforms: The platforms are fashioned out of steel grating, which allows a character standing on them to see, but it blocks ranged and melee attacks.



Pipes: Two massive pipes run across the floor. When the valves in V3 are opened, any character touching them takes 5 fire damage.

Control Panel: The control panel stands at the top of the room. Activating the control panel requires a skill challenge. DC 18 Dungeoneering or Thievery. Complexity 1 (4 successes before 3 failures). Success activates the control panel. Failure results in two more orc drudges entering the room from a random tunnel (roll 1d6), and the character must start the skill challenge all over again. If Kalad is present, the character gains a +5 bonus to all checks related to the skill challenge.

Boiling Water: Once the control panel is activated, boiling water floods the chamber. At the start of each round, a steel door drops down over the lowest tunnel and the water level rises to cover that tunnel. After 6 rounds, the room is flooded enough that no more enemies join the fight. Creatures that fall into the water or start their turn in the water take 2d8 + 4 scalding (fire) damage.

Steam: Steam rises from the boiling water. Any characters above the water level, but below the next higher tunnel entrance, gain concealment.

Escape Hatch: A ladder near the control panel leads up 10 feet to a trapdoor set in the ceiling. The door opens easily. It can be sealed shut from the other side by depressing a button. Once sealed, the door can be opened by only pressing the button a second time, or by succeeding on a DC 37 Strength check.

Tusk, Orog Chieftain (T)	Level 5 Elite Soldier
Large natural humanoid	XP 400
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +3; low-light vision
HP 138; Bloodied 69	
AC 23; Fortitude 22, Reflex 17, Will 16	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 5	
Action Points 1	
⬇ Falchion (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	Reach 2; +12 vs. AC; 2d4 + 7 damage.
⬇ Brutal Offensive (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	Requires falchion; +12 vs. AC; 2d4 + 7 damage, and Tusk can shift 1 and make a secondary attack. <i>Secondary Attack:</i> +12 vs. AC; 4d4 + 7 damage.
⬅ Skull Harvest (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	Requires falchion; close burst 2; +12 vs. Reflex; 2d4 + 7 damage.
⬅ Champion's Scorn (minor; at-will) ♦ Fear, Healing	Close blast 5; one creature; the target becomes the object of the orog's scorn. Tusk's melee attacks deal an extra 2d4 damage to the target, and if he reduces the target to 0 hit points, he heals 34 hit points. Tusk can designate only one target as the object of its scorn at a time.
⌘ Fearsome Leader (minor; at-will)	Targets one orc or orog; the target gains a +2 bonus to its next attack roll before the end of Tusk's next turn.
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common, Giant
Skills Endurance +12, Intimidate +8	
Str 24 (+9)	Dex 15 (+4) Wis 13 (+3)
Con 21 (+7)	Int 11 (+2) Cha 12 (+3)
Equipment plate armor, falchion	

Myrissa, Shadar-Kai Dark Warlock (S) Level 2 Elite Skirmisher
Medium shadow humanoid XP 250

Initiative +3 **Senses** Perception +1; low-light vision
HP 74; **Bloodied** 37
AC 17; **Fortitude** 14, **Reflex** 16, **Will** 16
Saving Throws +2
Speed 6
Action Points 1

⊕ **Dagger** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+6 vs. AC; 1d4 + 2 damage.

↗ **Spiteful Glamour** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Psychic**
Ranged 10; +7 vs. Will; 1d8 + 3 psychic damage, or 1d12 + 3 psychic damage against targets at full hit points.

↖ **Cursebite** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Necrotic**
Close burst 20; +7 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 3 necrotic damage; affects all creatures suffering from *warlock's curse*.

Warlock's Curse (minor; at-will, 1/round)
Closest enemy; Myrissa designates target as cursed. Her attacks deal an extra 1d6 damage. A target can have only one curse at a time.

Darkspiral Aura (free; at-will) ♦ **Necrotic, Psychic**
Whenever an enemy Myrissa has cursed is reduced to 0 hit points, she adds 1 point to her *darkspiral aura*. Once per round as a free action, when an enemy makes a melee or ranged attack against her, she can use her *darkspiral aura* to deal 1d6 necrotic and psychic damage per point in the aura and reset the aura to 0. If her aura deals at least 12 damage, she can reset the aura to 1 instead, but the attack deals half damage.

Shadow Jaunt (move; encounter) ♦ **Teleportation**
Myrissa teleports 3 squares and becomes insubstantial until the start of her next turn.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common
Skills Acrobatics +5, Bluff +9, Insight +6, Intimidate +9, Stealth +5
Str 10 (+1) **Dex** 14 (+3) **Wis** 11 (+1)
Con 13 (+2) **Int** 16 (+4) **Cha** 16 (+4)
Equipment leather armor, dagger, rod

7 Orc Drudges (D) **Level 4 Minion**
Medium natural humanoid XP 44 each

Initiative +0 **Senses** Perception +0; low-light vision
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.
AC 16; **Fortitude** 15, **Reflex** 12, **Will** 12
Speed 6 (8 while charging)
⊕ **Club** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+9 vs. AC; 5 damage.

Alignment Chaotic evil **Languages** Common, Giant
Str 16 (+5) **Dex** 10 (+2) **Wis** 10 (+2)
Con 14 (+4) **Int** 8 (+1) **Cha** 9 (+1)
Equipment hide armor, club

2 Orog Militants (M) **Level 3 Soldier**
Medium natural humanoid XP 150 each

Initiative +3 **Senses** Perception +2; low-light vision
HP 48; **Bloodied** 24
AC 20; **Fortitude** 17, **Reflex** 13, **Will** 14; see also *discipline*
Speed 5
⊕ **Bastard Sword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the orog militant's next turn.

⊕ **Relentless** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
Requires bastard sword; +10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square. The target is marked until the orog's next turn. The orog militant can shift into the vacated square as a free action.

⊕ **Fierce Counterstrike** (immediate reaction, when adjacent ally is first bloodied; encounter) ♦ **Weapon**
Requires bastard sword; +10 vs. AC; 2d10 + 4 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square. The orog militant can shift into the vacated square as a free action.

Discipline
Orogs gain a +2 bonus to saving throws against any ongoing effects when adjacent to an ally.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common, Giant
Str 19 (+5) **Dex** 10 (+1) **Wis** 13 (+2)
Con 16 (+4) **Int** 9 (+0) **Cha** 11 (+1)
Equipment plate armor, heavy shield, bastard sword

2 Orc Bolt Throwers (B) **Level 1 Artillery**
Medium natural humanoid XP 100 each

Initiative +2 **Senses** Perception +4; low-light vision
HP 26; **Bloodied** 13; see also *warrior's surge*
AC 13; **Fortitude** 14, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 11
Speed 6 (8 while charging)
⊕ **Battleaxe** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+6 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage

⊕ **Bellybow** (standard; at-will; recharges when the creature uses a move action to reload it) ♦ **Weapon**
Ranged 20/40; +8 vs. AC; 1d12 + 2 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square.

⊕ **Warrior's Surge** (standard, usable only while bloodied; encounter) ♦ **Healing**
The orc bolt thrower makes a melee basic attack and regains 6 hit points.

Alignment Chaotic evil **Languages** Common, Giant
Skills Stealth +7
Str 14 (+2) **Dex** 15 (+2) **Wis** 9 (-1)
Con 14 (+2) **Int** 9 (-1) **Cha** 8 (-1)
Equipment leather armor, battleaxe, bellybow with 10 bolts

APPENDIX: MONSTERS

ORC

ORCS ARE A RACE OF SAVAGE HUMANOIDS, hailing from some of the most desolate regions in the world. From the hardships of their lives as well as their ingrained love of slaughter, these vicious marauders boil out of the darkness to wage war against other races, plundering and killing until finally repulsed once more.

The *Monster Manual* includes a broad selection of orc monsters, representing a great many of the iconic orc adversaries player characters might face. The following entries expand on those by providing additional orcs, which are featured in this adventure.

Orc Bolt Thrower	Level 1 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid	XP 100
Initiative +2 Senses Perception +4; low-light vision HP 26; Bloodied 13; see also <i>warrior's surge</i> AC 13; Fortitude 14, Reflex 14, Will 11 Speed 6 (8 while charging)	
⊕ Battleaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon +6 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage.	
⌘ Bellybow (standard; at-will; recharges when the creature uses a move action to reload it) ♦ Weapon Ranged 20/40; +8 vs. AC; 1d12 + 2 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square.	
‡ Warrior's Surge (standard, usable only while bloodied; encounter) ♦ Healing The orc bolt thrower makes a melee basic attack and regains 6 hit points.	
Alignment Chaotic evil Languages Common, Giant Skills Stealth +7	
Str 14 (+2) Dex 15 (+2) Wis 9 (-1) Con 14 (+2) Int 9 (-1) Cha 8 (-1)	
Equipment leather armor, battleaxe, bellybow with 10 bolts	

ORC BOLT THROWER TACTICS

The orc bolt thrower hangs back, lobbing bolts into the thick of its enemies. It draws its battleaxe and throws itself into combat if its enemies draw near.

Orc Bombardier	Level 1 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid	XP 100
Initiative +3 Senses Perception -2; low-light vision HP 24; Bloodied 12; see also <i>warrior's surge</i> AC 13; Fortitude 13, Reflex 15, Will 11 Speed 6 (8 while charging)	
⊕ Battleaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon +5 vs. AC; 1d10 + 2 damage.	
‡ Warrior's Surge (standard, usable only while bloodied; encounter) ♦ Healing, Weapon The orc bombardier makes a melee basic attack and regains 6 hit points.	
⚡ Cinderbomb (standard; recharge ⓂⓂⓂ) ♦ Fire Area burst 2 within 10; +4 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 3 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends). On a crit, the orc bombardier knocks the target prone. <i>Miss</i> : Half damage, and no ongoing damage.	
⚡ Detonation (no action, when reduced to 0 hit points; encounter) ♦ Fire The orc bombardier must have at least one cinderbomb left; close burst 2; +4 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 3 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends) (crit knock prone). <i>Miss</i> : Half damage, and no ongoing damage.	
Alignment Chaotic evil Languages Common, Giant Str 13 (+1) Dex 17 (+3) Wis 7 (-2) Con 12 (+1) Int 8 (-1) Cha 9 (-1)	
Equipment battleaxe, 3 cinderbombs, everburning torch	

ORC BOMBARDIER TACTICS

The orc bombardier hurls cinderbombs at clumps of PCs, but it is not above catching a few drudges in the burst. Should enemies close to melee, it draws its battleaxe.

Orc Witch Doctor	Level 2 Controller
Medium natural humanoid	XP 125
Initiative +2 Senses Perception +3; low-light vision HP 33; Bloodied 16 AC 15; Fortitude 13, Reflex 14, Will 17 Speed 6 (8 while charging)	
⊕ Disgusting Claws (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison +7 vs. AC; 1d6 + 1 damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).	
⌘ Curse of Gruumsh (standard; recharge ⓂⓂ) ♦ Acid Ranged 10; +6 vs. Fortitude; target is blinded (save ends), and the orc witch doctor makes a secondary attack. <i>Secondary Attack</i> : Close burst 1 centered on primary target; +6 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 4 acid damage, and ongoing 2 acid damage (save ends).	
⌘ Unspeakable Filth (standard; at-will) Ranged 5/10; +5 vs. Reflex; 1d4 + 4 damage, and the target takes -2 penalty to attack rolls until the end of the orc witch doctor's next turn.	
Alignment Chaotic evil Languages Common, Giant Skills Arcana +6, Intimidate +10	
Str 11 (+1) Dex 12 (+2) Wis 14 (+3) Con 9 (+0) Int 11 (+1) Cha 18 (+5)	
Equipment befouled rags, bone rod	

ORC WITCH DOCTOR TACTICS

An orc witch doctor spits a curse at a divine character and hurls insults and filth, falling back to its claws if cornered.

Orc Freak	Level 2 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid	XP 125
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +5; low-light vision	
HP 38; Bloodied 19; see also <i>warrior's surge</i>	
AC 15; Fortitude 15, Reflex 14, Will 11	
Speed 6 (8 while charging)	
⊕ Battleaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+6 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage.	
↓ Savage Strike (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon	
Make two attacks; +6 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage per attack. If both attacks hit the same target, the target also takes ongoing 5 damage (save ends).	
↓ Warrior's Surge (standard, usable only while bloodied; encounter) ♦ Healing, Weapon	
The orc freak makes a melee basic attack and regains 9 hit points.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common, Giant
Skills Athletics +9	
Str 17 (+4)	Dex 15 (+3) Wis 8 (+0)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 8 (+0) Cha 7 (-1)
Equipment hide armor, 2 battleaxes	

ORC FREAK TACTICS

The orc freak is a savage and uncontrollable warrior who rushes headlong into danger no matter the odds.

Orc Scout	Level 3 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +6; low-light vision	
HP 46; Bloodied 23; see also <i>warrior's surge</i>	
AC 17; Fortitude 16, Reflex 15, Will 13	
Speed 6 (8 while charging)	
⊕ Scimitar (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+8 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage (crit: +1d8)	
⊗ Longbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 20/40; +7 vs. AC; 1d10 + 2 damage.	
↓ Warrior's Surge (standard, usable only while bloodied; encounter) ♦ Healing, Weapon	
The orc scout makes a melee basic attack and regains 11 hit points.	
Overeager (immediate reaction, when the orc scout drops an enemy with a ranged attack; encounter)	
The orc scout draws its scimitar and charges the closest enemy.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common, Giant
Skills Athletics +9, Endurance +8, Intimidate +5, Stealth +8	
Str 16 (+4)	Dex 15 (+3) Wis 10 (+1)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 8 (+0) Cha 9 (+0)
Equipment leather armor, scimitar, longbow with quiver of 20 arrows	

ORC SCOUT TACTICS

An orc scout shoots arrows at its foes, but once it drops an enemy, its bloodlust gets the better of it, driving it to draw its scimitar and charge.

Orc Sergeant	Level 3 Soldier (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +2 Senses Perception +5; low-light vision	
Lead by Fear aura 1; orcs inside the aura gain a +1 power bonus to attack rolls.	
HP 46; Bloodied 23; see also <i>warrior's surge</i>	
AC 19; Fortitude 17, Reflex 13, Will 14	
Speed 6 (8 while charging)	
⊕ Glaive (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 2d4 + 4 damage.	
↓ Warrior's Surge (standard, usable only while bloodied; encounter) ♦ Healing	
The orc sergeant makes a melee basic attack and regains 11 hit points.	
Back to the Front! (immediate reaction, when orc ally within 5 squares is forcibly moved; at-will)	
Slide triggering ally 1 square.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common, Giant
Skills Endurance +5, Intimidate +5	
Str 19 (+5)	Dex 9 (+0) Wis 13 (+2)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 11 (+1) Cha 11 (+1)
Equipment chainmail, glaive, tattered cloak	

ORC SERGEANT TACTICS

The orc sergeant commands other orcs, directing the combat from the second rank. It follows its soldiers into battle, taking advantage of its superior reach and the bodies between himself and his enemies. Should any ally think about retreating, the orc sergeant can command him back to the frontlines.

OROG

HULKING WARRIORS WITH UNCOMMON DISCIPLINE and fighting expertise, orogs are the filthy offspring of orcs and ogres. Like half-elves, orogs breed true and are a separate race from orcs. Sometimes called greater orcs or ogrillons, orogs are a vastly superior breed, rising far above their lesser kin in terms of their mastery over weaponry and also their mastery of warfare. Where common orcs rely on superior numbers to overcome their enemies, orogs use clever



tactics and teamwork, ranking up in orderly lines of heavily armored soldiers.

Rumors tell of orog cities in the far-flung places in the world, though no one is certain where they are or what they might look like. Instead, orogs crop up wherever ogres and orcs congregate in large numbers. Orog swiftly rise to the top and take over tribes, crushing their rivals until the rest of the horde surrenders to the orog's will.

Orog Militant	Level 3 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +3	Senses Perception +2; low-light vision
HP 48; Bloodied 24	
AC 20; Fortitude 17, Reflex 13, Will 14; see also <i>discipline</i>	
Speed 5	
⚔ Bastard Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the orog militant's next turn.	
⚔ Relentless (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Requires bastard sword; +10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square. The target is marked until the orog's next turn. The orog militant can shift into the vacated square as a free action.	
⚔ Fierce Counterstrike (immediate reaction, when adjacent ally is first bloodied; encounter) ♦ Weapon	
Requires bastard sword; +10 vs. AC; 2d10 + 4 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square. The orog militant can shift into the vacated square as a free action.	
Discipline	
Orog gain a +2 bonus to saving throws against any ongoing effects when adjacent to an ally.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Giant
Str 19 (+5)	Dex 10 (+1) Wis 13 (+2)
Con 16 (+4)	Int 9 (+0) Cha 11 (+1)
Equipment plate armor, heavy shield, bastard sword	

OROG MILITANT TACTICS

Orog militants fight best in close ranks to take advantage of their discipline and also the added protection

afforded by their fellows. The orogs engage the closest enemy and drive it before them.

Orog Scarred Champion	Level 4 Brute
Medium natural humanoid, orc	XP 175
Initiative +2	Senses Perception +8; low-light vision
HP 66; Bloodied 33; see also <i>champion's scorn</i>	
AC 17; Fortitude 19, Reflex 14, Will 15	
Speed 5	
⚔ Greatsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 5 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the orog scarred champion's next turn.	
⚔ Winnowing Slash (standard; recharge when first bloodied) ♦ Weapon	
Requires greatsword; close burst 1; +7 vs. AC; 2d10 + 5 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square.	
⚔ Champion's Scorn (minor; at-will) ♦ Fear	
Close blast 5; one creature; the target becomes the object of the orog's scorn. The orog scarred champion's melee attacks deal an extra 1d10 damage to the target, and if the scarred champion reduces the target to 0 hit points, it regains 16 hit points.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common, Giant
Skills Intimidate +6	
Str 20 (+7)	Dex 10 (+2) Wis 12 (+3)
Con 16 (+5)	Int 9 (+1) Cha 8 (+1)
Equipment plate armor, greataxe	

OROG SCARRED CHAMPION TACTICS

The orog scarred champion is a devolved form of orog—a brutish warrior driven mad by Gruumsh's dark will. The champion wades into the thick of battle, calling out challenges to its enemies and focusing its attacks against these foes until he slaughters them.

OROG LORE

A character knows the following information about orogs with a successful Nature check.

DC 15: Orog are the spawn of orcs and ogres, and they somehow gain the better qualities of each

without any of the drawbacks. A discipline and militant people, they raise up fortified encampments, where they form up their warriors into tight ranks and demand a level of cleanliness any commander could respect.

TROLL

Trolls are one of the most diverse and unpredictable races in the world. Something about their nature causes them to adapt to their environments in unexpected ways, developing new abilities and losing ones less useful for feeding the bottomless pit that serves as their gullets. The following troll expands on those described in the *Monster Manual*.

Cave Troll	Level 7 Brute
Large natural humanoid	XP 300
Initiative +6	Senses Perception +9; low-light vision
HP 99; Bloodied 49; see also <i>troll healing</i>	
Regeneration 10 (if the cave troll takes acid or fire damage, regeneration does not function until the end of its next turn)	
AC 19; Fortitude 21, Reflex 19, Will 17	
Speed 8	
⚔ Claw (standard; at-will)	
Reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 2d4 + 5 damage, and the target is grabbed (until escape). A cave troll can grab up to two targets at once.	
⚔ Improvised Weapon (standard; at-will)	
Requires grabbed creature; reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage, and the grabbed creature takes half this damage and is dazed (save ends). When grabbing a creature wearing heavy armor, the cave troll deals +5 damage with this attack, but the grabbed creature is not dazed.	
Troll Healing ♦ Healing	
If the cave troll is reduced to 0 hit points by an attack that does not deal acid or fire damage, it rises on its next turn (as a move action) with 10 hit points.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Giant
Skills Athletics +13, Endurance +12	
Str 21 (+8)	Dex 16 (+6) Wis 12 (+4)
Con 19 (+7)	Int 5 (+0) Cha 8 (+2)

CAVE TROLL TACTICS

A cave troll is an unsubtle enemy. When it detects possible food, it leaps into battle, grabbing its foes with its long claws, and snatching them off their feet. The cave troll then tenderizes its meal, using its captured victim as a weapon, pounding the hapless victim into its allies until everyone and everything around the troll is dead.

CAVE TROLL LORE

A character knows the following information about cave trolls with a successful Nature check.

DC 15: Cave trolls are a nasty, spiteful breed of trolls, every bit as ravenous as their kin, but they take special pleasure in the destruction they wreak. Like their kin, cave trolls regenerate at an astonishing rate, which allows them to recoup from the nastiest of injuries. Their only weakness in this regard is when they are confronted with acid or fire—substances the cave troll rightly fears—for both can retard the troll's regenerative abilities and render it more vulnerable to its prey's attacks.

DC 20: Cave trolls collect in small tribal groups, and they prefer caves that open onto verdant forests or hills. The rarely venture too deep into the Underdark, for in the depths, food becomes far scarcer, and the cave trolls have a healthy respect for drow, mind flayers, and other peoples of the depths. Some races, particularly drow, orcs, and ologs, enslave cave trolls to use them as frontline soldiers. Cave trolls are not as powerful as ordinary trolls, and they are more tractable and are easier to train.

ENCOUNTER GROUPS

Cave trolls prefer the company of other cave trolls, but they might sometimes work with other trolls, ologs, and other monstrous races. Ologs, more than any other race, see the value of a tough cave troll, and when an olog dominates an orc tribe, there's bound to be a handful of cave trolls supporting the chieftain.

Level 7 Encounter (XP 1,500)

- ◆ 1 orc eye of Gruumsh (level 5 controller [leader])
- ◆ 2 cave trolls (level 7 brute)
- ◆ 4 orc berserkers (level 4 brute) ✕

About the Author

Robert J. Schwalb works as a freelance designer for Wizards of the Coast and has contributed design to such books as *Tyrants of the Nine Hells* and *Elder Evils*, and the forthcoming *FORGOTTEN REALMS Player's Guide*, *Draconomicon: Chromatic Dragons*, *Manual of the Planes*, and *Demon Queen's Enclave*, as well as numerous articles for *D&D Insider*. Robert lives in Tennessee with his incredibly patient wife Stacey and his pride of chaotic evil werewolves.