



HEROIC

1-10

by David Noonan

RESCUE AT RIVENROAR

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THE WORLD HAS NEVER been a safe place. Bastions of civilization populate a dark, menacing world—islands of order and reason exist in a land otherwise overrun by dark cults, vile monsters, creatures from the dark edges of the imagination, and worse. As deadly as the world is on a normal day, something has begun to stir on the fringes of the civilized Elsir Vale. Formerly the site of an attack by an army known as the Red Hand, the Vale has known several years of peace since brave adventurers stormed into the teeth of the approaching Hand and sent them scurrying back into the darkness.

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 point DMs to a supplemental *Side Trek* or short adventure to keep your PCs on pace.

Plus, roughly every other month, *DRAGON* will feature new support content for Scales of War. The first such article appears in *DRAGON* #366 in August 2008, and it details possible character backgrounds for your brand-new Scales of War characters.

Finally, this Adventure Path is intended to function as a complete D&D campaign. That means we make some assumptions about the history of the world as we move along, just as you would in any campaign you run. We borrow 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," by Robert J. Schwalb.

But the peace of Elsir Vale—and specifically, the town of Brindol, heart of the former conflict with the Red Hand—has been shattered. The vague shadow of unease the locals have been experiencing lately has crystallized in the form of an attack on the town itself. Now Brindol finds itself once more in need of brave heroes willing to come to the aid of their citizens.

In "Rescue at Rivenroar," the player characters must brave the depths of ancient catacombs in search of prisoners taken from the town of Brindol in a midnight raid. The hobgoblins, bandits that style themselves after an invading horde from long ago, have taken refuge in a dungeon under a ruined mountain fortress, and the PCs must clear them out to find the captive townsfolk and the treasures taken from Brindol.

"Rescue at Rivenroar" also marks the first step in a great journey—the Scales of War Adventure Path, which spans 30 levels and put the PCs at the crux of events that shapes the world for centuries to come. While the scope of this adventure isn't as grand, it represents the seed from which an epic tale will surely grow. "Rescue at Rivenroar" is an adventure for 1st-level PCs.

BACKGROUND

Sinruth is a hobgoblin with greater aspirations than a life spent preying on the fringes of civilization. He listened closely at the campfires when his fathers and uncles told tales of the Red Hand of Doom, a mighty army that ran across the land like a scythe. And when he became an adult and a leader of his own band of hobgoblins, he found a cache of tunics and weapons left behind by that army. Sinruth felt

his destiny calling. He declared himself the new Warlord of Sinruth's Hand (as he named the group), emblazoned every possible surface with a crudely painted, downward thrusting red hand insignia, and set about recruiting the massive army that he felt was his birthright.

But starting an army isn't as easy as those campfire tales led Sinruth to believe. Years passed with Sinruth's band eking out a meager existence in the wilderness. But slowly, he started to gain allies. A temporary bargain with some sinister, mischievous gnomes blossomed into a lasting friendship. The Red Hand's exploration of the mountains unearthed some undisturbed catacombs beneath the long-ruined Castle Rivenroar. Sinruth struck another bargain, and the undead guardians let the Red Hand move in, in exchange for periodic payment of kidnapped prisoners.

Sinruth and the reconstituted Red Hand had a base and a growing reputation, but they were far from a mighty army. An emissary from another remnant of the Red Hand offered to join forces under Sinruth's banner and more than double Sinruth's fifty soldiers under arms. All Sinruth had to do was attack Brindol, steal some relics from the original Red Hand invasion, and take enough prisoners to keep the undead guardians of Rivenroar satisfied.

The new Red Hand did recently, with Sinruth personally leading the assault on Brindol. The Red Hand sacked Brindol's Hall of Great Valor, stealing back many of the museum pieces on display there. Sinruth brought back seven prisoners, despite the fact that the new Red Hand lost half its number in the attack. So now Sinruth waits in the Rivenroar catacombs for the emissary to return with reinforcements, and he bides

his time by contemplating the stolen treasures of a grander age and dreaming of conquests yet to come.

Meanwhile in Brindol, the dead have been buried and the damage to the town repaired. But seven of the townsfolk are missing—taken by Sinruth and the Red Hand. The town council is willing to pay handsomely for brave adventurers to rescue the prisoners and recover the antique treasures taken from the Hall of Great Valor . . . adventurers like those at your table.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

In “Rescue at Rivenroar,” the PCs must rescue seven kidnapped citizens of Brindol. Part of Sinruth’s rise to power is due to his evangelizing to his fellow goblins and other vile creatures that he will overthrow local bastions of civilization. He reserves special loathing, however, for Brindol, scene of the Red Hand’s defeat.

The recent attack has the locals unnerved, and early in the adventure, the PCs witness firsthand that the kidnappings are not an isolated incident. To sow more fear and uncertainty, more of Sinruth’s Hand continues raids on the town. After foiling a pair of such attacks, the PCs are approached by Councilmember Troyas, a member of Brindol’s ruling town council, to recover the missing citizens.

The PCs travel to Sinruth’s lair—a sprawling underground complex called Rivenroar. There they face Sinruth’s Hand, free the lost citizens of Brindol, face Sinruth himself . . . and discover some uncomfortable information about the nature of Sinruth in Elsir Vale.

THE PRISONERS

“Rescue at Rivenroar” includes a puzzle in the form of the seven prisoners the PCs are trying to rescue. The hobgoblins have been moving their captives around the Rivenroar catacombs, so each prisoner knows something about the Rivenroar layout. When the PCs reach their first prisoner, that prisoner gives them clues about where one or two of the other prisoners are. And while none of the prisoners are effective combatants, some have useful knowledge or skills.

Rescuing the prisoners amounts to a major quest, but it’s likely the PCs rescue some captives, return them to civilization, then come back for the rest. The PCs don’t earn the 500 XP until all the captives return to Brindol or die trying. (One prisoner, Kartenix, has died in captivity.)

Below you’ll find brief descriptions of each of the prisoners. Each one knows something—but by no means everything—about the location of the other prisoners. All the prisoners are scared out of their wits to greater or lesser degree. Some have been tormented—though not yet tortured—by their captors. And while the hobgoblins have been moving the prisoners around the Rivenroar catacombs, the prisoners often have bags over their heads. And when you’ve been dragged, kicking and screaming, down hallway after darkened hallway, they all start to look alike. Any maps that captives draw for PCs are inaccurate and out of proportion. And if you



emphasize that these six people have been held prisoner by hobgoblins for four days, marched into the mountains, then moved around seemingly at random within ancient catacombs, the PCs likely understand why a particular captive can’t remember whether the hallway is 40 feet or 50 feet long. Adronsius is an exception; as a dwarf, he has an instinctive grasp of



underground space that make his recollections of the places he has been more accurate.

None of the captives are effective combatants. They can wield captured weapons, but they attack only in extremis and prefer to stay well behind the PCs. It's easiest to just give them a turn at initiative point 0, moving them away from potential threats. If you need combat statistics for them, give them 15 hit points, 12 in all defenses, a speed of 6, and a melee basic attack at +0 for 1d4 damage if unarmed and 1d8 damage if armed.

Jalissa: Jalissa is an acolyte of Ioun who is held in room 16. She hysterically clings to whichever PC comes through the door from room 15 first. She does anything that PC says without question, and she looks for approval from that PC if someone else tries to give her even an innocuous order.

Jalissa isn't a spellcaster per se, but she is trained in the arcane arts (Arcana +10) and knows the following rituals: *comprehend language*, *silence*, and *eye of alarm*. She doesn't have the alchemical reagents or residuum, but the PCs might have some reagents, and they can find some residuum in room 7—just down the stairs from where the hobgoblins are holding Jalissa.

Jalissa also knows that Thurann, the 8-year-old boy, is being held somewhere nearby—she heard him shouting only a few hours ago. They were held together in room 16 until yesterday, and Thurann proved adept at stealing extra food for himself and Jalissa.

Sertanian: Sertanian, the castellan of the Hall of Great Valor, is held in room 6. Sertanian tries to weather his captivity with dignity, and when rescued, he brushes off questions about his captivity as “Just a few hard days, nothing more. Let's get on with the rescue, shall we?” But Sertanian has a past—he served

THE QUESTS

“Rescue at Rivenroar” 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—Rescue

Rescuing the prisoners from Rivenroar amounts to a major quest. The PCs don't earn the quest XP until the prisoners' fate has been determined, and those still living returned to Brindol.

Reward: 500 XP (and 200 gp if the prisoners are returned).

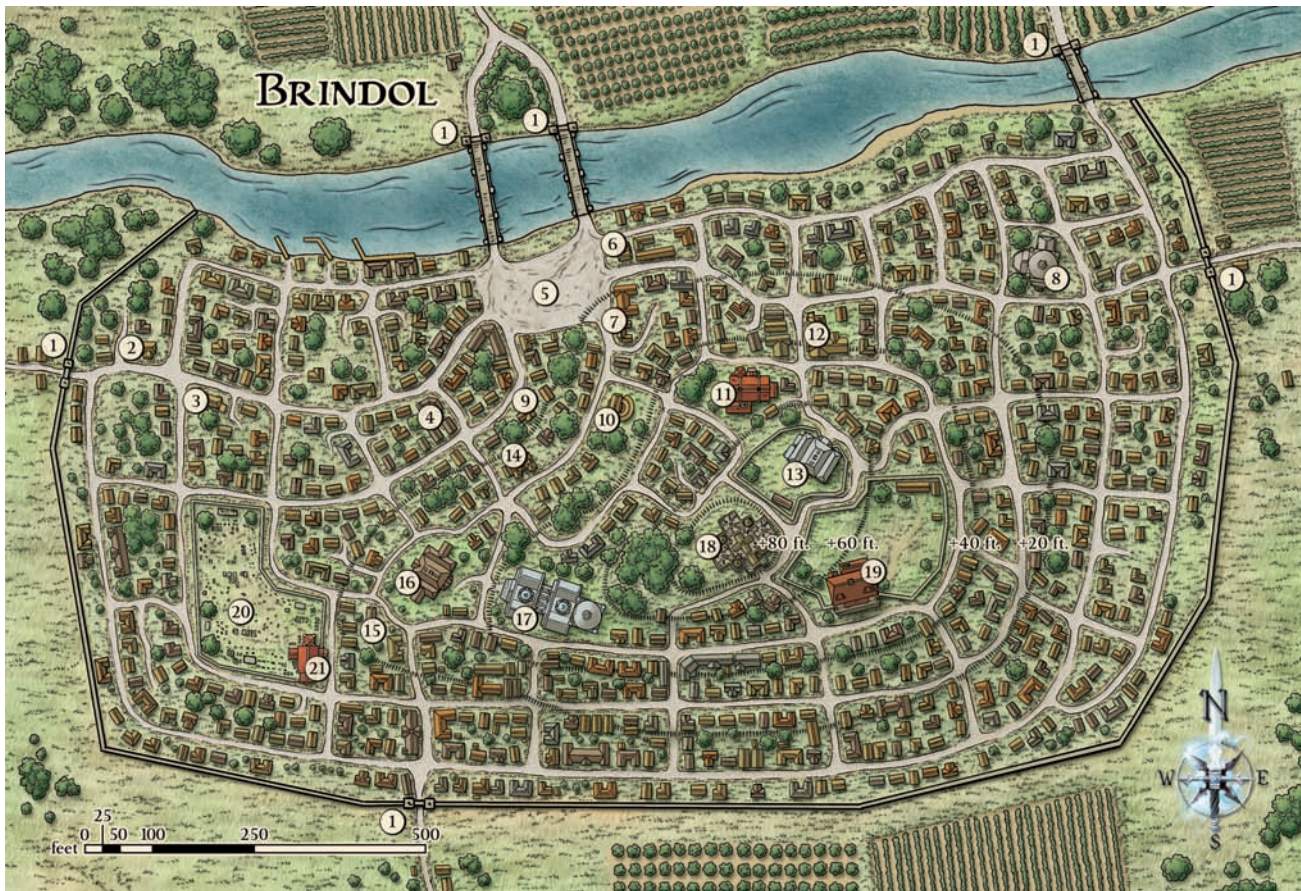
Minor Quest—Treasure

Returning the stolen items described in *The Treasure* to Brindol results in the PCs fulfilling the quest conditions and earning the XP.

Reward: 100 XP (and the 200 gp promised in *The Treasure*).

as a soldier during the great “Red Hand” invasion years ago. So he has an utter hatred of hobgoblins that comes out the first time he's present when the PCs battle goblins or hobgoblins. Sertanian hurls invective, taunts the hobgoblins, and recommends that any unconscious ones be “put to the sword” immediately.

Sertanian is the only captive who can identify the treasures from the Hall of Great Valor on sight (they've been his responsibility for years). He also knows that Mirtala the cook is being held downstairs in a chamber near a spiral staircase with frescos on the walls. The hobgoblins sent Sertanian away (perhaps a day ago—Sertanian has lost track of time), saying that the plump Mirtala will make a better meal. And he suspects that Kartenix is dead; Kartenix told Sertanian a couple of days ago that he was going to try to overpower the



ettercap guarding him the following morning by pretending to be asleep. But then they moved Kartenix, so Sertanian doesn't know where he is.

Thurann: The 8-year-old son of Kartenix the guard captain, Thurann is held in room 17. Thurann is a brave, observant boy. Outwardly, he's handling his ordeal better than many of the adults. He even stole food for Jalissa and himself. Since he reached Rivenroar, Thurann spent most of his time with Jalissa while keeping an eye out for his father. Yesterday they moved him from room 16 to room 17, but they took a

roundabout path so Thurann doesn't know how close he is. Thurann also knows that "the old witch" Zerriksa is being held in a "magic circle just beyond the big room with all the mushrooms downstairs"—the hobgoblins brought Thurann down there to threaten him in front of Zerriksa.

Thurann has some skills you wouldn't expect the son of a watch captain to have. Despite his small size, he has Athletics +7 and Thievery +9. And while he can't really fight, he's brave when it comes to climbing or handling other hazards. The only thing that makes

Thurann upset is incontrovertible evidence that his father is dead, and he is distrustful of anyone who doubts that "my father said he'd figure out a way to escape and then come rescue me."

Mirtala: The cook Mirtala is held in room 10. Mirtala has been bitten repeatedly by the dire rats in room 10 and has filth fever. She's almost catatonic with fear and it takes careful diplomacy (described in the room 10 encounter) to persuade her to say anything.

Mirtala knows that Adronsius is being held upstairs in "a family crypt . . . the name started with J, but I don't remember it exactly." And she was held with Sertanian briefly, so she knows that he was held someplace that's "up a spiral staircase, then around a bunch of corners and down two separate flights of stairs" from room 10. That was several days ago, though. She also thought she heard Kartenix's voice during that blindfolded walk, so he might be somewhere on that path.

Zerriksa: The crone Zerriksa is held in room 12. She resists as passively as a woman in her seventies can manage. A naturally cranky woman, she has made her captors more than a little miserable. And she has played on the

rumors in Brindol and intimated she might have "dark powers," hoping that she'd scare the hobgoblins into treating her better.

Her plan worked—to a point. The hobgoblins put Zerriksa inside a magic trap in room 12, hoping she wouldn't be able to turn them into toads once she was inside. Now she's stuck there, but at least the hobgoblins are giving her a wide berth.

Everyone in Brindol thinks that Zerriksa is a witch, but she's really just an accomplished herbalist (Heal +9, Nature +9). While they can't attack her directly,

the gnomes and ettercaps have been trying to intimidate her and perhaps persuade her to switch sides. Two days ago the ettercaps showed her Kartenix's corpse, half-wrapped in webbing. And yesterday one of the gnomes brought the boy Thurann to the edge of the circle and threatened to slit his throat.

Zerriksa doesn't care for her fellow prisoners, but she knows that she wouldn't last long with the denizens of Rivenroar once they realized she has no magic powers. So she's just playing out her bluff and biding her time.

Adronsius: Adronsius the alchemist is held in room 14. For some reason, the hobgoblins are particularly keen on beating dwarves, and Adronsius has borne the brunt of their physical abuse. All the prisoners have been roughed up a little, but Adronsius has been beat bloody every day since the hobgoblins took him prisoner. When the PCs rescue Adronsius, he has only 5 hit points out of 15.

While Adronsius is an accomplished alchemist, he has none of the tools of his trade and so can't mix anything up until he gets back to Brindol. He knows Mirtala is alive, but he isn't sure where they're keeping her. And he was brought to the upper level for an interrogation session where he saw Jelissa.

Because he's a dwarf, Adronsius remembers the way pretty well—for a guy who was blindfolded. It was “down the stairs, straight across the entry chamber, turning left in the room that smelled of goblin, then left again in the room with the crackling sound, around two right corners, then through a room that smelled of the dead, then up the stairs to a room with a sticky floor, right and up another set of stairs, then through a dusty room and left through a door. That good enough directions for ya?”

Kartenix: Kartenix the guard captain is now deceased. His body is in room 7. He tried to over-

power the ettercaps, who've webbed him up. They intend to scare the other prisoners with the corpse for a while and then consume it. The PCs can bring his body back to Brindol for a decent burial if they wish.

THE TREASURE

The people of Brindol want their friends and neighbors back; that's their primary concern. But they also want some of the treasures back from their “Hall of Great Valor.” Most of the “treasures” have little or no intrinsic value. They're museum pieces from the “Red Hand” invasion many years ago. But the sentimental value to the town is immense. PCs can earn an addi-

tional 100 XP (plus the 200 gp reward) when the following items are brought back to Brindol.

- Ornate, gilded dragoncrest helm (room 21).
- Ceremonial platinum longsword; too heavy and blunt to be useful as a weapon (room 23).
- Set of three shields with the Red Hand insignia, each with a charred hole near the center (room 23).
- Set of iron gauntlets with extensive filigree (room 21).
- Heraldic battle standard depicting two hands clasped in a handshake (room 23).

BRINDOL

First visited in the 3rd edition adventure *Red Hand of Doom*, Brindol has a smaller population than it did before the events of that adventure. But the last decade has brought mild prosperity to the region, with only bandits (such as Sinruth and his ilk) disturbing the peace.

Population: 6,700; another 1,000 live within a five-mile radius of the town itself. The people of Brindol are mostly humans, half-elves, and dwarves. The town's population swells by several hundred whenever some connected halfling clans known as “the river people” are in town.

Government: A town has a council, two-thirds of whom are hereditary landlords and the remainder of whom are guildmasters from the city's important trade guilds. Lord Warden Harrik Orenna is the public face of the council and commander of the city militia.

Defense: The city has 200 soldiers under arms

at all times, with about one-quarter on duty at any given time. In times of crisis, the Lord Warden has access to another 200 well-equipped but poorly trained soldiers by calling up the militia.

Inns: Chatrenn and Sons; The Red Door; Avandrian Hostel; The Silk and Spoon; Pantashi Inn.

Taverns: Ilya's Cardhouse; The Marooned Schooner; Cleftie's; Brindol Gentleman's Club; the Blue Parrot; the Antler and Thistle.

Major Guilds: Prospectors; Blacksmiths and Smelters; Teamsters and Farriers; Weavers; River Bargemen (halfling controlled).

Supplies: Alchemy by Adronsius (currently closed); Gavriel Arms and Smithy; Staghunter Outfitters; Alpenglow Trading House.

Temples: Temple of Erathis; College of Ioun; Shrine of the Sun (Pelor); Moondust Temple (Sehanine); Shrine of Bahamut (no permanent clergy); Shrine of the Open Door (Avandra).

PREPARING FOR ADVENTURE

“Rescue at Rivenroar” introduces the characters to one another and kicks off the new Scales of War Adventure Path. This Adventure Path takes the characters across the countryside of the Elsir Vale and into a deadly dungeon, where they face Sinruth’s Hand, a force of goblins, hobgoblins, and other monsters bent on the conquest of the Vale and its environs.

As a DM, the best way to spend your precious preparation time is by looking at the encounters ahead

of time so that you can give yourself a sneak preview of how each room will play out. No one knows your table better than you do, so you can foresee how the monstrous denizens of the Rivenroar catacombs interact with the specific players at your table. If you want to jump straight into the action, see the Kicking Off the Action Quickly sidebar for details.

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 PCs. 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.

TREASURE PARCELS

Parcel A: _____, room 5.
 Parcel B: _____, room 5.
 Parcel C: _____, room 7.
 Parcel D: _____, room 9.
 Parcel E: _____, room 9.
 Parcel F: _____, room 9.
 Parcel G: _____, room 15.
 Parcel H: _____, room 15.
 Parcel I: _____, room 17.
 Parcel J: _____, room 21.
 Parcel K: _____, room 21.
 Parcel L: _____, room 24.
 Parcel M: _____, room 24.
 Parcel N: _____, room 24.

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 5
 Parcel 2: Magic item, level 5
 Parcel 3: Magic item, level 4
 Parcel 4: Magic item, level 3

Parcel 5: Magic item, level 3
 Parcel 6: Magic item, level 2
 Parcel 7: Two **potions of healing**, 100 gp
 Parcel 8: One 100 gp gem, 80 gp
 Parcel 9: 260 gp
 Parcel 10: One **potion of healing**, 70 gp
 Parcel 11: 170 gp
 Parcel 12: 100 gp, 200 sp
 Parcel 13: One **potion of healing**, 10 gp
 Parcel 14: 30 gp, 100 sp

Large or Small Groups: As mentioned above, “Rescue at Rivenroar” is designed for five PCs. If you have more or fewer players at your table, you should adjust the monster and treasure mix according to the rules in the *Dungeon Master’s Guide*. Doing so rarely takes more than a few minutes—it’s just a matter of adding or subtracting monsters and treasure parcels here and there. Smaller groups can face fewer monsters and find fewer treasure parcels, while larger groups can face more numerous foes and earn greater rewards (which are split up more ways, naturally).

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

“Rescue at Rivenroar” employs the “parcel” technique of treasure distribution described in the *Dungeon Master’s Guide*. You need 14 treasure parcels in addition to the rewards from the people of Brindol, which are worth three parcels (return the captives) and two parcels (recover the treasures from the Great Hall of Valor). Consult your players’ wish lists, then apportion treasure parcels to the following list:

STARTING THE ADVENTURE

The default beginning of the adventure, and indeed the campaign, assumes the PCs want some time to explore the city. Feel free to extend events in Brindol during and after the hobgoblin attack. You can do the following, for example:

- Give the players plenty of time to talk to each other and to the other bar patrons before the hobgoblins attack. A more measured pace delays the action, but it also gives the players at your table time to “get into character” and learn more about their comrades before the bitumen torches start flying.
- Give the PCs some NPC rivals: Brindol locals who think they’re brave and capable enough to rescue the prisoners. The locals could be in over their heads (and maybe need rescuing themselves eventually), or they might indeed be capable . . . or at least capable of sabotaging the PCs’ efforts.

CONNECTING RIVENROAR TO RED HAND OF DOOM

Sinruth is, at the end of the day, something of a wannabe. He aspires to be part of a great horde like the one that menaced Brindol and the entire region in the *Red Hand of Doom* adventure. We’ve set the timeline forward by a decade, but the exact time doesn’t matter. If it works better for you, then by all means place the original Red Hand of Doom anywhere from a year to a century in the past, but adjust the story behind the adventure accordingly. As long as the (embellished) tale of hobgoblins on the march finds its way to young Sinruth’s ears, the villains’ motivation is intact.

But you don’t need to have played *Red Hand of Doom* to play “Rescue at Rivenroar.” There’s merely a common thread of history that connects the two adventures. The hobgoblins in this adventure hope to become something like the great goblin army that once threatened Brindol with utter destruction—destruction averted only by the timely efforts of the adventurers.

BAR FIGHT!

Encounter Level 1 (580 XP; monsters aren't solely focused on the PCs, however)

SETUP

This encounter is a simple affair that introduces the PCs to each other and gives the players a little practice with their new characters. It also shows how surprised Brindol is by the hobgoblin attack.

- 10 hobgoblin grunts (H)**
- 2 goblin blackblades (G)**
- 8 human rabble (R)**

Put three human rabble at the card table in the back, one human behind the bar, and the rest scattered around the tavern as you see fit. Have the players decide where their PCs are sitting. The monsters begin the fight outside the bar, and a few of them come in the front door every round.

Once the players have described to the rest of the table what their characters look like and what they're doing at the bar, read or paraphrase the following description:

The gentle hubbub of an evening at the Antler and Thistle tavern is shattered by the crack of the front door flying off its hinges to land amid the nearest tables. Four hobgoblins rush into the bar, swords outstretched to skewer the nearest bar patrons. "For Sinruth! For the Hand!" they cry.

TACTICS

The fight begins when four of the hobgoblin grunts burst through the door. They attack the bar patrons (probably wounding or killing a couple of them). Then roll initiative.

More goblins come through the door each round. Move the following creatures in the room at the hobgoblin's initiative point each round.

Round 2: 3 hobgoblins and 1 goblin blackblade enter. The blackblade throws a bitumen torch at the bottles of alcohol behind the bar.

Round 3: 2 hobgoblins enter.

Round 4: 1 hobgoblin and 1 goblin blackblade enter. The new blackblade throws a bitumen torch at the card table.

At first, the goblins attack the closest person. No more than two hobgoblins at a time fight each PC, with the rest menacing the bar patrons and serving wenches. But by the third round, the goblins realize that the PCs are the only ones providing resistance, so they start ignoring the other bar patrons.

The goblin blackblades have been given instructions to focus on property damage, so they throw their bitumen torches rather than engage in melee if given a chance.

10 Hobgoblin Grunts (H)	Level 3 Minion
Medium natural humanoid	XP 38
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +1; low-light vision
HP 1: a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 17 (19 with <i>phalanx soldier</i>); Fortitude 15, Reflex 13, Will 12	
Speed 6	
⬇ Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+6 vs. AC; 5 damage.	
Hobgoblin Resilience (immediate reaction, when the hobgoblin grunt suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter)	
The hobgoblin grunt rolls a saving throw against the effect.	
Phalanx Soldier	
The hobgoblin grunt gains a +2 bonus to AC while at least one hobgoblin ally is adjacent to it.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Goblin
Skills Athletics +6, History +2	
Str 18 (+4)	Dex 14 (+2) Wis 13 (+1)
Con 15 (+2)	Int 10 (+0) Cha 9 (-1)
Equipment leather armor, light shield, longsword	

2 Goblin Blackblades (G)	Level 1 Lurker
Small natural humanoid	XP 100
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +1; low-light vision
HP 25; Bloodied 12	
AC 16; Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 11	
Speed 6; see also <i>goblin tactics</i>	
⬇ Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+5 vs. AC; 1d6 + 2 damage.	
⚔ Bitumen Torch (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+6 vs. Reflex; 1d4 damage; starts a fire in that square whether it hits or misses (see "Spreading the Fire" sidebar above). Each blackblade has one lit torch when it enters the bar.	
Combat Advantage	
The goblin blackblade deals an extra 1d6 damage against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Goblin Tactics (immediate reaction, when missed by a melee attack; at-will)	
The goblin shifts 1 square.	
Sneaky	
When shifting, a goblin blackblade can move into a space occupied by an ally of its level or lower. The ally shifts into the blackblade's previous space as a free action.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Goblin
Skills Stealth +10, Thievery +10	
Str 14 (+2)	Dex 17 (+3) Wis 12 (+1)
Con 13 (+1)	Int 8 (-1) Cha 8 (-1)
Equipment leather armor, short sword, 3 bitumen torches	

8 Human Rabble (R)	Level 2 Minion
Medium natural humanoid	XP 31
Initiative +0	Senses Perception +0
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 15; Fortitude 13, Reflex 11, Will 11; see also <i>mob rule</i>	
Speed 6	
⬇ Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+6 vs. AC; 4 damage.	
Mob Rule	
The human rabble gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses while at least two other human rabble are within 5 squares of it.	
Alignment Any	Languages Common
Str 14 (+2)	Dex 10 (+0) Wis 10 (+0)
Con 12 (+1)	Int 9 (-1) Cha 11 (+0)
Equipment club	

The PCs are the only bar patrons who fight back effectively. The others flee, freeze, or fight poorly, only to die on the hobgoblins' swords.

The hobgoblins are flush with easy victory so far, and they don't flee even when the fight turns against them. But the blackblades might slink away if it looks like they'll die otherwise. Don't let them flee with unused torches, however.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Bright light. The area is illuminated by several lanterns.

Tables: The tables are all tall enough that a Small creature can move under them and gain cover from doing so. Hopping onto a table costs 1 extra square of movement. A character can use a standard action to tip over a table, which can then grant cover to a standing creature or superior cover to a prone creature.

The Bar: The bartender hunkers down behind the bar, which provides cover against ranged and melee attacks. It takes a DC 30 Athletics check to jump up on the bar with a standing high jump and a DC 15 check to do it with a 2-square running start. If any of squares behind the bar catch on fire, then they all catch fire at the end of the blackblade's next turn. That's high-proof stuff back there.

The Patrons: The bar patrons aren't all human (though most are), but it's easiest to use the human rabble stat block for them all. Assume that they act on initiative point 0. If an interesting course of action doesn't suggest itself, just roll 1d6 for each of them. A result of 1 or 2 means they freeze, cower, or move behind nearby cover. A 3 or 4 means they flee out the nearest door as long as they can do so without suffering an opportunity attack. A 5 or 6 means they grab

an improvised weapon such as a chair, bottle, or table cutlery (a +4 attack at 1d8 damage for them).

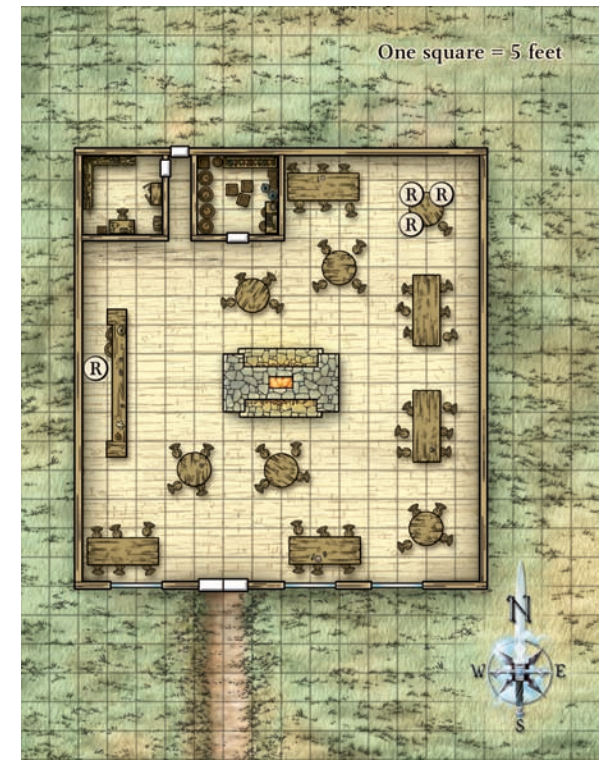
Improvised Weapons: The great thing about this tavern (other than the beer) is that it's full of improvised weapons such as chairs, bottles, table cutlery, kebob skewers, and bowls of hot stew. Behind your screen, all improvised weapons are treated the same: They're 1d8 weapons that confer no proficiency bonus. For the bar patrons, that means they can make +4 attacks dealing 4 damage. If a PC uses an improvised weapon, it deals 1d8 + Strength modifier damage.

Card Table: There's 30 gp stacked here. The three bar patrons sitting here won't flee—not while there's money on the table, at any rate.

HANDLING ALL THE NPCs

Almost all the NPCs in this battle go down in a single hit. And the whole point of the encounter is to introduce the PCs to each other and give the players at your table a little practice with new characters and new rules. So you needn't be a stickler for tracking the exact position and welfare of each NPC—especially the bar patrons.

As a DM, you have better ways to spend your time than figuring out the exact details of NPC-on-NPC violence (after all, how many NPCs are sitting at your table?). It's fine to just toss 1d20 when a hobgoblin attacks the bartender. A high roll means the bartender dies, a medium roll means he's wounded, and a low roll means he's unscathed. If you want a hobgoblin to put one of the serving wenches in a headlock and try to drag her out into the street, just do it—don't keep your players waiting while you work out the details of the grab attack.



Windows: If a creature is pushed through the windows at the front of the bar (such as from a bull rush), it takes an extra 1d6 damage from the glass.

AFTERMATH

When the hobgoblins have been defeated, the surviving bar patrons organize a bucket brigade from a nearby well to quell the fire. A clearly wounded city watch patrol arrives as the bucket brigade douses the last flames, and they quickly try to learn what's happening from anyone who speaks to them (probably the PCs). This conversation gives the PCs enough time to have a short rest before the next encounter.

THE OGRE BOMBARDIER

Encounter Level 1 (650 XP)

SETUP

The PCs do battle with more of the marauders menacing the town of Brindol.

1 ogre savage (O)

2 hobgoblin archers (H)

Have the ogre round the corner north of the main tavern entrance, pulling the pitch wagon behind him. The archers ride atop the wagon. One is lighting pitch casks and handing them to the ogre while the other one shoots arrows at any fleeing townsfolk. When the players place their PC miniatures near the tavern door, read:

As you've been talking to the guards, you've been hearing shouts in the distance. But now those shouts are a lot closer, and a throng of townsfolk comes running around the street corner to the north.

They're fleeing a curious sight: a full-grown ogre pulling a wagon by a yoke around its waist. The ogre holds a cask in one hand and a massive club in the other. Riding atop the wagon are two hobgoblins with bows.

TACTICS

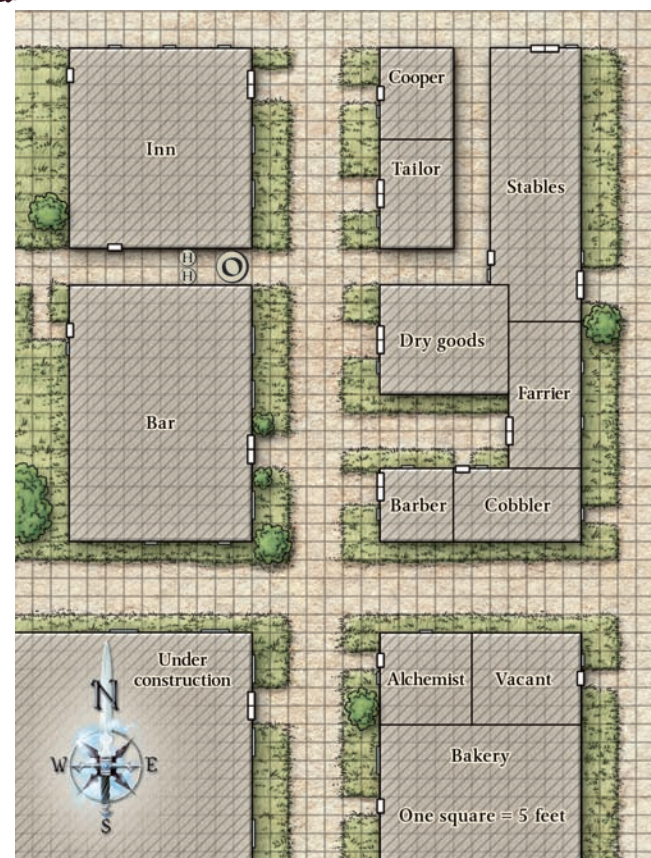
These monsters are focused on property destruction, and they haven't faced serious opposition yet, so they might be slow to take the PCs seriously.

If the hobgoblins beat the ogre's initiative, they delay until the ogre throws his cask.

2 Hobgoblin Archers (H)	Level 3 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +8; low-light vision
HP 39; Bloodied 19	
AC 17; Fortitude 13, Reflex 15, Will 13	
Speed 6	
⚔ Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+6 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage.	
🏹 Longbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 20/40; +9 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and the hobgoblin archer grants an ally within 5 squares of it a +2 bonus to its next ranged attack roll against the same target.	
Hobgoblin Resilience (immediate reaction, when the hobgoblin archer suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter)	
The hobgoblin archer rolls a saving throw against the effect.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Goblin
Skills Athletics +5, History +6	
Str 14 (+3)	Dex 19 (+5) Wis 14 (+3)
Con 15 (+3)	Int 11 (+1) Cha 10 (+1)
Equipment leather armor, longsword, longbow, quiver of 30 arrows	

Ogre Savage (O)	Level 8 Brute
Large natural humanoid	XP 350
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +4
HP 111; Bloodied 55	
AC 19; Fortitude 21, Reflex 16, Will 16	
Speed 8	
⚔ Greatclub (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Reach 2; +11 vs. AC; 2d10 + 5 damage.	
🏹 Pitch Cask (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 20; -1 vs. Reflex; 2d6 fire damage, then the pitch cask explodes as described in Pitch Cask section.	
⚔ Angry Smash (standard; recharge [1]) ♦ Weapon	
The ogre savage makes a greatclub attack, but gets two attack rolls and takes the better result.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Giant
Str 21 (+9)	Dex 11 (+4) Wis 11 (+4)
Con 21 (+9)	Int 4 (+1) Cha 6 (+2)
Equipment hide armor, greatclub	

In the first round, the ogre throws a cask in the PCs' direction; he's unlikely to hit, but it's a useful demonstration of the casks' potential. (See the Features of the Area for rules on hitting and missing with



the casks.) One hobgoblin shoots at the PCs, while the other one lights another pitch cask (a standard action) then picks it up and hands it to the ogre for next round (two minor actions).

After the first round, the hobgoblins take their cues from what the ogre is doing. The ogre moves forward and throws a cask if no one is within reach 2 at the end of its 4-square move. But once it starts making melee attacks, it stops throwing casks, and then both hobgoblins shoot their bows.

The hobgoblins flee if reduced to 5 hit points or fewer or if one of the PCs rushes the wagon with a lit

SPREADING FIRE

Whether the blackblades' bitumen torches hit or not, they light the square they're in on fire. A creature in a square that's on fire takes 1d6 damage at the start of the blackblade's turn. At the end of the blackblade's next turn, roll 1d8 for each square that's on fire to see where it spreads. The square to the north catches fire on a 1, to the northeast on 2, east on 3, southeast on 4, south on 5, southwest on 6, west on 7, and northwest on 8. Over successive rounds, the fire should spread at an increasingly rapid rate.

torch or other obvious source of fire in hand. The ogre doesn't flee outright—being yoked to the wagon makes a retreat difficult in any case—but he might try to leave the area if faced with fire. Additionally, if fewer than half of the monsters remain, they attempt to escape.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Wagon: The wagon is 2 squares by 3 squares, with the hobgoblins riding in the forward 2 squares. While yoked to the wagon, the ogre has a speed of only 4. The ogre and the hobgoblins collectively must spend 2 standard actions to free the ogre from the wagon yoke. If the casks on the back of the wagon take at least 5 fire damage, they start to explode. The casks in one of the 4 squares in the back of the wagon detonate each round. Each explosion is a +6 attack against Reflex defense in a burst 3 area, dealing 3d6 fire damage (half on miss). When the first casks explode, tell the players that it's clear that not all the casks have exploded yet, and that the wagon is afire. When the explosions are over, the wreckage of the wagon

becomes difficult terrain that deals 1d6 fire damage to any creature that starts its turn in a wagon square.

Pitch Casks: These casks are filled with roofing pitch, which is flammable enough to make a primitive bomb. The ogre can hurl a lit pitch cask as a standard action. It has lousy aim, however. After choosing a target square for the attack, roll 1d8 (for direction) and 1d4-1 (for distance) to see where the pitch cask actually lands. This becomes the origin square for a burst 1 attack. The pitch cask lands 1d4-1 squares to the north on a d8 result of 1, 1d4-1 squares to the northeast on 2, east on 3, southeast on 4, south on 5, southwest on 6, west on 7, and northwest on 8.

Pitch Cask

Filled with roofing pitch, this cask is flammable enough to make a primitive bomb.

Standard Action Area burst 1 within 10 squares

Target: Each creature in burst

Attack: Dexterity vs. Reflex

Special: The pitch cask rarely lands where the ogre wants it to. See the text above for details.

Hit: 3d6 fire damage.

Effect: The origin square of the burst burns for the rest of the encounter. Any character entering the square or starting his turn in the square takes 1d6 fire damage.

AFTERMATH

A crowd gathers after the PCs defeat the ogre, and more guards arrive a few minutes later. They immediately ask for the PCs' help defending the bridge. But by the time the PCs reach the bridge, Sinruth's band has already retreated. The residents of Brindol spend the rest of the night putting out the fires that the goblins set, tending to the wounded, and keeping a nervous watch from the ramparts.

FIGHTING THE OGRE AND THE FIRE!

Under ordinary circumstances, level 8 brutes aren't appropriate for level 1 PCs. But the PCs have a key advantage: the wagon attached to the ogre's waist. The presence of the wagon means the ogre can't effectively chase the PCs, so PCs can flee if they need to do so.

Depending on the PCs at your table, you might have another problem: the ogre's outrageous 111 hit points. Some PCs can deal a lot of damage even at 1st level, and others might blow up the wagon while the ogre is still attached (meaning the ogre takes the explosion damage for 4 consecutive rounds). If neither of those situations applies at your table, it's fine to have the ogre die early. There's no sense in sloggng through a long fight whose outcome is obvious to everyone at your table.

As for the fire, PCs can put out an adjacent square of fire as a standard action. A minor action keeps an adjacent square of fire from spreading during that round. Reward your PCs for other creative methods of putting out a fire (such as using a cold-based power to douse one or more squares simultaneously).

The next morning, the full extent of Sinruth's attack is known, including the captives taken and the treasures stolen from the Hall of Great Valor. At that point, the PCs receive the job offer from the Brindol town council. They can either try to track the goblins through the wilderness, or they can first try interrogating a captured hobgoblin currently held in the town stockades.

THE SUMMONS

Councilmember Eoffram Troyas is a new addition to the Brindol city council. As such, he is less prone to the traditional means of accomplishing important tasks. In a short time, he has established a reputation as an outspoken, and sometimes combative, public figure. A half-elf, he has shown little of his race's good-natured tendency toward patience.

One of Troyas's most recent controversial remarks was that he intended to use adventurers to aid in cutting down on recent bandit attacks in the Elsir Vale. Other members of the council—despite the city's recent history and survival thanks to the efforts of adventurers—were dubious, but willing to give Councilmember Troyas's policy a chance—to fail. Many of the more entrenched public figures secretly believe that the mercurial nature of adventurers makes them eminently unsuitable for the defense of the city. At least, that's their public stance. Privately, rumors on the street continue to circulate about graft and embezzlement among the council, causing many to wonder if such members of the council would rather see the funds that are used to hire adventurers end up in their pockets.

As soon as the PCs have defeated the ogre, word reaches Councilmember Troyas within the day. The assaults upon the city proper are a fresh outrage, especially to a man who lost his family to the Red Hand's assault ten years earlier. He doesn't have blind faith in the PCs, however, and wants to meet them himself.

The Councilmember has several goals in his meeting with the characters. Before he promises them any money, he wants to ascertain their motivations. He's not looking for absolute trust, but he doesn't want his faith to be misplaced. He already has a fair idea of their competence after the ogre battle, so this meeting is mostly a formality and a roleplaying opportunity. Councilmem-

ber Troyas is a somber man, who speaks carefully and methodically. He maintains eye contact, and attempts at levity are met with a long, cold stare, followed by a reminder about the nature of the threat to Brindol.

If you're interested in making the meeting with Councilmember Troyas more than just a roleplaying encounter, consider the following skill challenge. Refer to The Quests sidebar on page 7 for information about the quests and their rewards.

SKILL CHALLENGE

As Councilmember Eoffram Troyas greets you solemnly, he makes eye contact with each of you in turn. "I am considering something, and I wished to speak to you about it in person—and in private."

This skill challenge is a social challenge that allows Troyas to determine the character of the PCs and also allows the PCs to take the job for the rescue effort. This might be a good opportunity for each player to introduce himself or herself "in character" and describe the sorts of things the character can do in a dangerous situation.

Setup: For Troyas to provide full assistance, the PCs need to convince him of their trustworthiness and that they can handle the challenges he sets them.

Level: 1.

XP: 200

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

Primary Skills: Diplomacy, Insight, History.

Diplomacy (DC 15): You attempt to convince Troyas that your goals and his match up nicely, or that you are the right person for what he has in mind. The first success with this skill opens up the use of the History skill (Troyas mentions the Red Hand's attacks ten years ago).

Insight (DC 15): You empathize with Troyas and use that knowledge to encourage assistance. First success with this skill reveals that any use of the Intimidate skill earns a failure.

History (DC 13): You make an insightful remark about the attack 10 years ago. This is available only after one character has gained a success using the Diplomacy skill, and it can be used only once in this way during the challenge.

Intimidate: Troyas refuses to be intimidated by the PCs. Each use of this skill earns a failure.

Success: Troyas gives the PCs the deal outlined above, as well as the promise of "whatever aid the good people of Brindol can muster."

Failure: Troyas gives the PCs the deal outlined above, but more reluctantly. In addition, the PCs find the rest of the town council reluctant to deal with them (-2 penalty on later skill checks made to influence the council until the quest is successful), and they receive vague warnings that failure to achieve rapid results can cause them to be replaced. Finally, the council halves the monetary reward for bringing prisoners back.

INTERROGATING MORRIK

This is unlikely to end up as a combat encounter, although the statistics for the main players are provided, just in case.

SETUP

In this skill challenge, the PCs try to learn as much information as they can from Morrik, a hobgoblin captured in the raid on Brindol.

Exact positioning doesn't matter in this encounter, because it's not a battle. Assume the PCs are within earshot of Morrik throughout the skill challenge.

When the PCs arrive at the town green, read:

Just as the guards said, there's a lone hobgoblin in stocks and shackles here. His wounds from last night's battle have been bandaged, but a number of tomatoes on the ground near him and on the surface of the stocks indicate that his treatment hasn't been completely kind.

He takes one weary look at you and says, "I ain't saying nothin' unless you people let me go."

SKILL CHALLENGE

Level: 1.

XP: 200

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

Primary Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, History, Intimidate.

Bluff (DC 20): You try the threat of extensive violence or long imprisonment. If you convince the guards to play along, you receive a +5 bonus to the check.

Diplomacy (DC 15): You try to cut a deal. If the guards hear you directly offer Morrik his freedom, they'll tell Morrik, "You aren't getting away, hobgoblin." That closes off this approach.

History (DC 13): You ask about the crimson hand insignia on the hobgoblin's tunic in an effort to make the hobgoblin to open up about Sinruth's band and its plans.

Intimidate (DC 15): You use subtle or overt threats involving Morrik's safety. A failure means that Morrik doesn't respect you as a warrior; it closes off this approach and increases the DCs of other checks by 2 for the duration of the challenge.

Hobgoblin Soldier	Level 3 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +3; low-light vision
HP 47; Bloodied 23	
AC 20 (22 with <i>phalanx soldier</i>); Fortitude 18, Reflex 16, Will 16	
Speed 5	
⬇ Flail (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+7 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, the target is marked and slowed until the end of the hobgoblin soldier's next turn.	
⬇ Formation Strike (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Requires flail; +7 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and the hobgoblin soldier shifts 1 square provided it ends in a space adjacent to another hobgoblin.	
Hobgoblin Resilience (immediate reaction, when the hobgoblin soldier suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter)	
The hobgoblin soldier rolls a saving throw against the effect.	
Phalanx Soldier	
The hobgoblin soldier gains a +2 bonus to AC while at least one hobgoblin ally is adjacent to it.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Goblin
Skills Athletics +10, History +8	
Str 19 (+5)	Dex 14 (+3) Wis 14 (+3)
Con 15 (+3)	Int 11 (+1) Cha 10 (+1)
Equipment scale armor, heavy shield, flail	

Success: The PCs learn that Sinruth is the leader of the goblins, and he eventually wants to raise an army and carve out a fiefdom of his own. The goblins are using catacombs under the ruins of Castle Rivenroar as a base for now. Morrik and the other hobgoblins were ordered to take prisoners during the raid to give to the "undead horrors" that guard part

2 Human Guards	Level 3 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +5	Senses Perception +6
HP 47; Bloodied 23	
AC 18; Fortitude 16, Reflex 15, Will 14	
Speed 5	
⬇ Halberd (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the human guard's next turn.	
⬇ Powerful Strike (standard; recharge ⌘ ⌘) ♦ Weapon	
Requires halberd; reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 7 damage, and the target is knocked prone.	
⌘ Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 15/30; +9 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage.	
Alignment Any	Languages Common
Skills Streetwise +7	
Str 16 (+4)	Dex 14 (+3) Wis 11 (+1)
Con 15 (+3)	Int 10 (+1) Cha 12 (+2)
Equipment chainmail, halberd, crossbow with 20 bolts	

of the goblins' lair. Morrik draws a crude map of the mountain path that leads to Castle Rivenroar.

Morrik doesn't know anything about the treasures taken from the Hall of Great Valor. "Must have been Sinruth himself, I suppose, because he didn't say anything about it," he says.

In addition, if the PCs used History for at least two of the successes, they learn that Sinruth and the goblins see themselves as descendants of the Red Hand horde that menaced Brindol years ago. But it's also apparent to a student of history that they have no

NO ROUGH STUFF

The town guards don't mind the occasional slap or punch, and they aren't against threats of violence (as long as their own Insight checks reveal that they're indeed threats and not stated intent). With the whole town watching, however, they do not put up with persistent violence. "We need him to be healthy and well treated for trial," one says. "And the last thing this town needs is mob violence right now."

The other guard points out a different (and more pragmatic) reason for not getting physical with the prisoner. "Goblins are cowards at heart, and if you start breaking fingers or whatever, they'll say anything to make the pain stop. You'll just get a bunch of lies," he says to a PC, out of the hobgoblin's earshot.

actual connection with the historic Red Hand. They're flying the Red Hand insignia upside-down, for starters.

Failure: As success, except that Morrik's map leads the PCs on a circuitous route to Rivenroar—a path that takes them right into a kruthik nest.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The Town Guards: The two guards here have been given simple orders by the town council: Keep the prisoner alive . . . but *keep* the prisoner. They do not consent to letting him out of the stocks.

Stocks: The hobgoblin is shackled with his head and arms through the stocks. Breaking him free requires either the use of the guards' key or the PCs must somehow pick the lock without the guards noticing. Then it takes a standard action to let Morrik out of the stocks.

TRACKING THE GOBLINS

Hot on the trail of the hobgoblins and their captives, the PCs head into the mountains northeast of Brindol. In this skill challenge, they must track the goblins to their lair while staying safe from the other dangers of the wilderness.

During the challenge the PCs roll multiple sets of skill checks; each set equates to roughly an hour or two of travel. Typically one character makes a Nature check, another makes a Perception check, and everyone makes Endurance checks. In each set of checks, a character can assist only one other character's check.

SKILL CHALLENGE

Level: 1.

XP: 300

Complexity: 3 (requires 8 successes before 3 failures).

Primary Skills: Perception, Nature, Endurance.

Perception (DC 18): One or more PCs watch for signs that the hobgoblins have passed this way and otherwise keep the rest of the travelers on track. Only one character can attempt this check in each set of checks, but other characters can assist if they're not already assisting another check (see above). If the PCs got a map from Morrik (whether it's a good map or the map that leads to the kruthiks), they can worry less about following the tracks of the goblins and gain a +5 bonus on the check. A successful check counts as one success toward completing the skill challenge (maximum five successes). A failed check means that the PCs lose their way temporarily, extending the duration of the trek by 1 hour.

Nature (DC 15): One or more PCs use their talent to guide the group around dead ends and natural hazards such as unstable rock slopes. Only one character can attempt this check in each set of checks, but other characters can assist if they're not already assisting another check (see above). A successful check counts as one success toward completing the skill challenge (maximum five successes). A failed check indicates that the PCs had to take a treacherous detour that adds one hour to the trip and requires each PC to succeed on a DC 10 Athletics check or lose one healing surge from a nasty fall or other accident (these Athletics checks don't count as successes or failures toward the skill challenge).

Endurance (DC 10): In each set of checks, each character must roll an Endurance check to resist the effects of altitude and exposure to bad mountain

weather. If at least three characters in the group succeed, this counts as a success toward the skill challenge (maximum four successes; but keep rolling after this number is reached to check for failures). If two characters succeed, it is neither a success nor a failure. If one or no characters succeed, each member of the group loses one healing surge, in addition to counting as a failure for the challenge. For every two additional characters in the party above or below five, add +1 to the number of successful rolls required for a success. For every two characters less than five, decrease it by 1.

Success: The PCs reach the ruins of Rivenroar Castle without incident. The trip takes 8 hours, plus one hour per failed Perception or Nature check.

Failure: The trip leads the PCs right into a monster lair. Use the kruthik encounter if the PCs either received no map or a good map from Morrik. If the PCs ended up with a bad map, they're going to have the kruthik encounter anyway. In that case, let them stumble into the hunting grounds of a cave bear.

After dealing with the monster, the PCs still haven't reached Rivenroar Castle. They must repeat the task at complexity 1 (requiring four successes before three failures) to reach Rivenroar thereafter.

Cave Bear	Level 6 Elite Brute
Medium natural beast	XP 500
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +5; darkvision
HP 170; Bloodied 85	
AC 20; Fortitude 21, Reflex 17, Will 18	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 8	
Action Points 1	
⬇️ Claw (standard; at-will)	
+10 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage.	
⬅️ Cave Bear Frenzy (standard; recharge ⏏️ ⏏️)	
Close burst 1; targets enemies; +10 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages —
Str 20 (+8)	Dex 13 (+4) Wis 14 (+5)
Con 15 (+5)	Int 2 (-1) Cha 12 (+4)

KRUTHIK AMBUSH

Encounter Level 2 (600 XP)

SETUP

PCs encounter these hunting kruthiks in one of two ways: by failing the challenge to interrogate Morrik, or by failing the challenge to track the hobgoblins.

2 kruthik adults (A)

2 kruthik young (Y)

The kruthik adults and young emerge from a tunnel beneath the rock to the north when the PCs reach roughly the middle of the map. Midway through the battle, they might be joined by these creatures:

4 kruthik hatchlings (in the nest to the west)

When the PCs have placed themselves along the path, read:

This canyon winds between two ridges. Suddenly, chittering, armored buglike creatures emerge from the ground just north of you and quickly move in your direction.

TACTICS

The kruthik young charge into the fray immediately, while the adults hang back. Adults use their *toxic spikes* in the first round. The kruthiks don't flee, but might retreat to the west, hoping to reach the hatchlings there.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

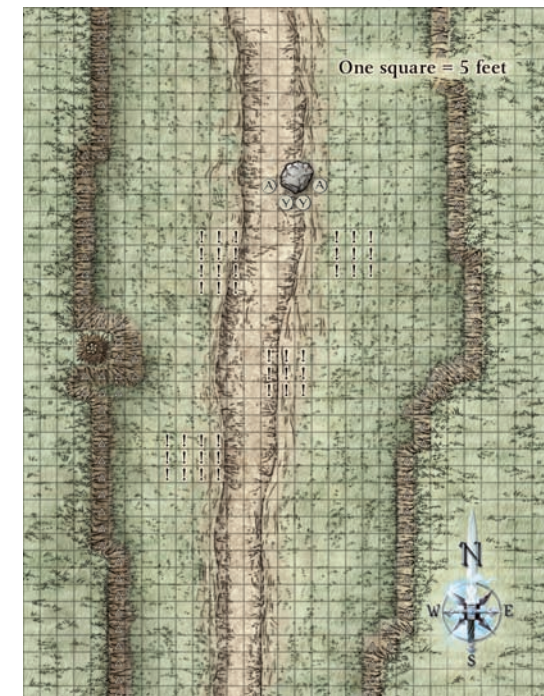
Weak Ground: The marked (!) positions on the map have just a thin layer of rock above abandoned kruthik warrens. It takes a successful DC 15 Perception check or Dungeoneering check to notice cracks in the round that indicate the presence of the warrens.

2 Kruthik Adults (A)	Level 4 Brute
Medium natural beast (reptile)	XP 175 each
Initiative +6	Senses Perception +4; low-light vision, tremorsense 10
Gnashing Horde aura 1; an enemy that ends its turn in the aura takes 2 damage.	
HP 67; Bloodied 33	
AC 17; Fortitude 14, Reflex 15, Will 13	
Speed 6, burrow 3 (tunneling), climb 6	
⚔ Claw (standard; at-will)	
+8 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage.	
☠ Toxic Spikes (standard; recharge ☐ ☐ ☐) ♦ Poison	
The kruthik makes 2 attacks against two different targets: ranged 5; +7 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 poison damage and is slowed (save ends both).	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages –
Str 17 (+5)	Dex 18 (+6) Wis 12 (+4)
Con 17 (+5)	Int 4 (-1) Cha 8 (+1)

2 Kruthik Young (Y)	Level 2 Brute
Small natural beast (reptile)	XP 125 each
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +1; low-light vision, tremorsense 10
Gnashing Horde aura 1; an enemy that ends its turn in the aura takes 2 damage.	
HP 43; Bloodied 21	
AC 15; Fortitude 13, Reflex 14, Will 11	
Speed 8, burrow 2, climb 8	
⚔ Claw (standard; at-will)	
+5 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages –
Str 15 (+3)	Dex 16 (+4) Wis 10 (+1)
Con 13 (+2)	Int 4 (-2) Cha 6 (-1)

If a PC steps into one of those squares, the area of weak ground gives way. The PC must immediately make a saving throw or fall 10 feet (taking 1d10 damage). PCs who fall find themselves in the bottom of a shallow pit. It takes a DC 15 Athletics check to climb back to the surface.

The kruthiks automatically sense the weak ground with tremorsense, so they don't fall in. An observant PC (DC 10 Insight) might notice that they sometimes take circuitous paths for no reason.



4 Kruthik Hatchlings	Level 2 Minion
Small natural beast (reptile)	XP 31 each
Initiative +3	Senses Perception +0; low-light vision, tremorsense 10
Gnashing Horde aura 1; an enemy that ends its turn in the aura takes 2 damage.	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 15; Fortitude 13, Reflex 15, Will 12	
Speed 8, burrow 2 (tunneling), climb 8	
m Claw (standard; at-will)	
+5 vs. AC; 4 damage.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages –
Str 13 (+1)	Dex 16 (+3) Wis 10 (+0)
Con 13 (+1)	Int 4 (-3) Cha 6 (-2)

Kruthik Nest: To the west is a pile of rocks that hides the nest where the kruthik hatchlings live. The hatchlings don't join the fight unless a PC takes cover in the rocks within 4 squares of their nest.

Steep Slopes: The slopes on either side of the path are considered difficult ground for creatures moving uphill, but not for moving downhill.

WANDERING IN THE WILDERNESS

It's a brisk walk of 8 hours between Brindol and Rivenroar, so many groups will choose to take extended rests near Rivenroar rather than making the trek back and forth.

If your group prefers to head back to Brindol, and you want to give them a little workout, consider using this optional skill challenge for any or all of the journeys between Brindol and Rivenroar.

Setup: The PCs must use their wilderness lore to avoid hazards and monsters traveling between Brindol and the Rivenroar catacombs.

Level: 1.

XP: 100

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

Primary Skills: *Perception, Nature, Endurance.*

Special: After the PCs have made the trip between Brindol and Rivenroar in both directions, they gain a +2 bonus to all checks every time they have to repeat this challenge.

Perception (DC 20): You notice a shortcut. This doesn't directly contribute to a success, but it gives each character in the party a +2 bonus to their next Endurance or Nature check made as part of the challenge. Each character may attempt this check (or assist with another's Perception check) only once, and unsuccessful checks don't count as a failure toward the skill challenge.

Nature (DC 12): You stay on course and avoid local hazards common to the mountain (maximum three successes). If this check is failed twice during the same challenge, the group gets sufficiently lost that

they each lose one healing surge trying to walk back to the trail and 1 hour is added to the duration of the trek. Up to two characters can assist this check.

Endurance (DC 10): Every character must roll one Endurance check to avoid the rigors of wilderness travel such as exposure to the elements and mundane woes such as twisted ankles and exhaustion. Each successful check counts as a success toward the skill challenge (maximum three successes). If no characters succeed, each member of the group loses one healing surge, in addition to counting as a failure for the challenge, and everyone must reroll the Endurance check. Each character may assist only one other character on an Endurance check made as part of this challenge.

Success: The PCs reach Brindol or Rivenroar without incident after 8 hours of travel.

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

WILDERNESS ENCOUNTERS

d%	Monsters
01-10	2 adult kruthiks, 2 young kruthiks
11-20	3 fey panthers
21-30	3 rage drakes
31-40	1 vine horror, 3 stirges
41-50	3 dire wolves
51-60	3 deathjump spiders
61-70	5 hyenas
71-80	1 cave bear
81-90	2 dire boars
91-100	3 hippogriffs

RIVENROAR

Sinruth wants to raise an army and carve out a fiefdom of his own, but to do so, he knew that he needed a place for his command center, so he went looking for one. When they found the catacombs of Castle Rivenroar, Sinruth decided that they could serve as a starting point—and perhaps expand as needed later. So, he set to work clearing it out and making alliances when he found a need for them.

The castle itself and its catacombs housed the Rivenroar family (living and deceased) long ago. Some other local families of note used the catacombs as a place of interment as well. These families and the Rivenroars had more than one thing in common, but now only those who know what they're looking at as they journey through the catacombs can figure it out: a reverence for Vecna. Now the castle and the catacombs house a much different set of inhabitants than those who built it long ago might have envisioned.

COMMON DUNGEON ELEMENTS

The Rivenroar catacombs were constructed over the course of only about a decade, so its architecture is remarkably consistent.

Doors: None of the doors lock, though all have simple sliding latches accessible on both sides. They exist merely for the privacy of those visiting their ancestors—the countermeasures against grave robbers (such as the magma claws, the evistro, and at least some of the undead) are more lethal. The doors swing in both directions, and they baffle sound better than most doors. All DCs for listening through a door (described on page 37 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*) are 5 higher than they'd otherwise be.



Floors: The floors are made of flagstone—slightly slippery because the catacombs are damp, but not dangerous.

Ceilings: Thick wooden beams hold up the ceilings. Most are 10 feet off the ground at the walls and 15 feet high at the center of the room.

Sarcophagi: Many of the rooms have stone sarcophagi. Most have a family name engraved on them and year of death that indicates they were buried about 300 years ago. Some have a likeness of the deceased carved into the lid, while others have abstract designs. The skeleton inside each sarcophagus is moldy due to the damp, and most burial garb has long since rotted away. It takes a successful DC 20

Strength check to pry the lid off a sarcophagus. Up to two PCs can usefully aid the PC making the attempt.

Alcoves: Niches in the walls are another common burial technique here in the catacombs. The skeletons are in the same bad condition as the ones in the sarcophagus. Each alcove goes 2 to 3 feet into the wall. Sometimes a section of wall has three alcoves (high, middle, and low).

Stairs: All stairs are difficult terrain. Other than the iron spiral staircase between rooms 8 and 9, all the stairs are made of flagstone.

RIVENROAR OVERVIEW

The catacombs now host Sinruth's crew, and they haven't taken much care with their treatment of things during their occupation. With the addition of the prisoners, some of the areas serve as a sort of jail.

1. CHAMBER OF FLAME UNBOUND

Room 1: Bound iron doors open into other areas of the catacombs here, and four defenders stand guard.

Tactical Encounter: "Chamber of Flame Unbound" (page 25).

2. GOBLIN WARREN

Rooms 2 and 3: The first room here serves as the hobgoblins' living quarters, and the hallway provides access to most of the level. Seven creatures are in this area.

Tactical Encounter: "Goblin Warren" (page 26).

3. PORTAL ROOM

Room 4: The portal in this room sometimes allows creatures to come through it—but it is only a one-way portal. An ochre jelly and two specters are in this room.

Tactical Encounter: "Portal Room" (page 28).

4. VON URSTADT CRYPT

Rooms 5 and 6: The crypt contains alcoves holding deceased members of the Von Urstadt clan, plus a few more surprises, which include two magma claws and two gnomes. *Prisoner:* Sertanian.

Tactical Encounter: "Von Urstadt Crypt" (page 29).



RIVENROAR DUNGEON
Start Level

5. SPIDERWEB LANDING

Room 7: Ettercaps lurk in this room. *Prisoner:* The body of Kartenis is here.

Tactical Encounter: “Spiderweb Landing” (page 30).

6. RIVENROAR FAMILY CRYPT

Rooms 8 and 9: While hobgoblins live in the first room (along with a guard drake), altars, sarcophagi, and inscriptions are among the features of the room below it.

Tactical Encounter: “Rivenroar Family Crypt” (page 31).

7. FRESCO CHAMBER

Room 10: This single room features some dire rats and gnomes. The statues are of displacer beasts. *Prisoner:* Mirtala. Mirtala is near catatonic, and requires special attention to bring around (see the sidebar).

Tactical Encounter: “Fresco Chamber” (page 33).

8. MUSHROOM CHAMBER

Rooms 11 and 12: Various mushrooms grow within the room, which is defended by two rage drakes.

Prisoner: Zerricksa.

Tactical Encounter: “Mushroom Chamber” (page 34).

9. VON JALLACH CRYPT

Rooms 13 and 14: A floor trap and some swarms are the more obvious features of the first room. Runes decorate the latter room. Two needlefang drakes and a gnome hold this room. *Prisoner:* Adronsus.

Tactical Encounter: “Von Jallach Crypt” (page 35).

10. VON ADREZ-KAUTHIN CRYPT

Rooms 15 and 16: Hobgoblins guard the first room, which ascends to the next one. Within it are one goblin and two spitting drakes. *Prisoner:* Jalissa.

Tactical Encounter: “Von Adrez-Kauthin Crypt” (page 37).

One square = 5 feet



RIVENROAR DUNGEON

Finish Level

GETTING MIRTALA TO TALK

It takes significant effort to convince Mirtala to tell the PCs what she knows—or anything, for that matter.

Level: 1.

XP: 100

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

Primary Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, Insight.

Bluff (DC 15): You trick Mirtala into believing that she knows you from back in Brindol. The PCs can earn only one success this way.

Diplomacy (DC 15): You coax Mirtala to come out of her shell, convincing her that she's now safe.

Insight (DC 10): You might realize that Mirtala has some had some sort of severe mental trauma. This grants a +2 bonus on Diplomacy checks made during the challenge. The PCs can earn only one success this way.

Intimidate (DC 15): You threaten Mirtala (directly or indirectly) with consequences for being uncooperative. A failure closes off this approach and applies a -2 penalty to other checks made for the duration of the challenge.

Success: Mirtala tells the PCs what she knows, as described on page 33.

Failure: Mirtala meekly follows the PCs around but doesn't say anything.

11. HONOR GUARD CRYPT

Rooms 17, 18, and 19: Alcoves fill one room, while a fountain that serves as a scrying pool is in the other—with the boy prisoner Thurann. The third room has a sunburst mosaic within it. Two ghouls and two zombies move throughout these rooms. *Prisoner:* Thurann.

Tactical Encounter: “Honor Guard Crypt”
(page 39).

12. SINRUTH'S ABODE

Rooms 20 and 21: Sinruth is in one of these two rooms, which also features menhirs in the first room and a sarcophagus in the second. The dragoncrest helm and the gauntlets are in this room along with Sinruth.

Tactical Encounter: “Sinruth's Abode” (page 41).

13. CRYPT GUARDIAN CHAMBER

Room 22: A square prison in this room holds an evistro, and some wererats are also within this room.

Tactical Encounter: “Crypt Guardian Chamber”
(page 42).

14. SHRINE OF THE OBELISK

Room 23: This shrine has lines of pews facing a rune-encrusted obelisk at the northern end of the room. A gnome and some wererats watch this room for intruders. The PCs can find the longsword, three shields, and the battle standard in this room.

Tactical Encounter: “Shrine of the Obelisk”
(page 43).

15. LORDS OF RIVENROAR AUDIENCE CHAMBER

Room 24: Two thrones stand along the north wall of the chamber, and one contains a fleshy corpse, while the other has a skeleton. Skeletons and a wight start battle with PCs here.

[illegible]

Tactical Encounter: “Lords of Rivenroar Audience Chamber” (page 44).

CONCLUSION

When the captives have been freed and the antiques recovered, the PCs can make a final trip back to Rivenroar and claim their reward. Unless most of the prisoners perished, the town is delighted with the PCs' success, and they throw a great feast in the repaired Hall of Great Valor to honor them. With great ceremony, each of the antiques is restored to its place on the mantles and walls of the great hall.

But Sinruth's letter should give the PCs pause. Clearly something beyond a single band of hobgoblins with delusions of grandeur is out there. And the pres-

ence of powerful necromantic magic indicates that Rivenroar Castle might have had a secret history of its own. Such matters are beyond the scope of this adventure, but they are fertile ground for future exploits of the heroes of “Rescue at Rivenroar.”

XP AND TREASURE TRACKER

Use the chart above to keep track of your progress through “Rescue at Rivenroar.” Doing so can help you keep track of milestones/action points and the rewards (XP and treasure) you’ve handed out. Shade in the XP box if the PCs took an extended rest afterward; that way you’ll know when to award action points.

CHAMBER OF FLAME UNBOUND

Encounter Level 1 (550 XP)

SETUP

This is a fairly straightforward battle.

2 hobgoblin soldiers (H)

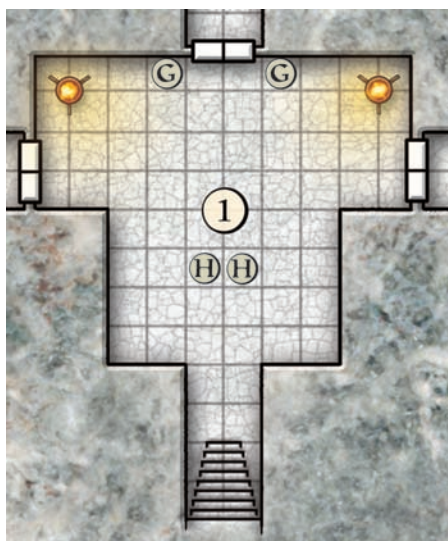
2 goblin sharpshooters (G)

When the PCs descend into the catacomb, read:

Two flail-wielding hobgoblins stand ready in the center of this dank chamber. Braziers flank double doors on the north wall. Two goblins with crossbows stand in front of that door.

If the characters have a passive Perception score of 15 or higher, read:

You can make out faint grooves in the floor that begin underneath the braziers and extend to the south wall.



TACTICS

The hobgoblins screen the sharpshooters. One of the sharpshooters spends a minor action to open one of the center doors to set the braziers in motion. All the monsters know how to avoid the gout of flame.

If reduced to 5 hit points or fewer, a goblinoid flees through the nearest exit, putting the next room on alert and joining its denizens for the rest of the day.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The braziers provide bright light for 10 squares.

Braziers: When any of the doors in this chamber are open, the braziers start to move north and south on grooves in the floor. They move at initiative point 10, and they shoot a gout of flame from one brazier to the other at initiative point 0. The fire is not a

trap, per se. It was intended more to be impressive to family members paying their respects.

At initiative 10, move each of the braziers south 1 square. If a creature is in the way, the brazier makes an attack at +5 vs. Fortitude. If the brazier hits, it pushes the creature 1 square. If it misses, neither brazier moves that turn. When the braziers reach the wall, start moving them 1 square north each turn.

At initiative point 0, the braziers send a gout of flame from one to the other, alternating between right and left. The brazier makes an attack (+5 vs. Reflex) against each creature in the path. If the brazier hits, it deals 1d6 fire damage.

Doors: These bound iron doors have latches, but no locks. The west doors have a plaque on it that says “To Von Urstadt.” The north doors say “To Rivenroar Family.” The east doors say “To Von Jallach.”

2 Goblin Sharpshooters (G)	Level 2 Artillery
Small natural humanoid (goblin)	XP 125 each
Initiative +5	Senses Perception +2; low-light vision
HP 31; Bloodied 15	
AC 16; Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 11	
Speed 6; see also goblin tactics	
⚔ Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+6 vs. AC; 1d6 + 2 damage.	
🏹 Hand Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 10/20; +9 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage.	
Sniper	
When a goblin sharpshooter makes a ranged attack from hiding and misses, it is still considered to be hiding.	
Combat Advantage	
The goblin sharpshooter deals an extra 1d6 damage against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Goblin Tactics (immediate reaction, when missed by a melee attack; at-will)	
The goblin shifts 1 square.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Goblin
Skills Stealth +12, Thievery +12	
Str 14 (+3)	Dex 18 (+5) Wis 13 (+2)
Con 13 (+2)	Int 8 (+0) Cha 8 (+0)
Equipment leather armor, short sword, hand crossbow with 20 bolts	

2 Hobgoblin Soldiers (H)	Level 3 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150 each
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +3; low-light vision
HP 47; Bloodied 23	
AC 20 (22 with phalanx soldier); Fortitude 18, Reflex 16, Will 16	
Speed 5	
⚔ Flail (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+7 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, the target is marked and slowed until the end of the hobgoblin soldier's next turn.	
⚔ Formation Strike (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Requires flail; +7 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and the hobgoblin soldier shifts 1 square provided it ends in a space adjacent to another hobgoblin.	
Hobgoblin Resilience (immediate reaction, when the hobgoblin soldier suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter)	
The hobgoblin soldier rolls a saving throw against the effect.	
Phalanx Soldier	
The hobgoblin soldier gains a +2 bonus to AC while at least one hobgoblin ally is adjacent to it.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Goblin
Skills Athletics +10, History +8	
Str 19 (+5)	Dex 14 (+3) Wis 14 (+3)
Con 15 (+3)	Int 11 (+1) Cha 10 (+1)
Equipment scale armor, heavy shield, flail	

GOBLIN WARREN

Encounter Level 1 (500 XP)

SETUP

Room 2 serves as basic living quarters for the hobgoblins, and room 3 is the central hallway that provides access to most of this level.

1 hobgoblin soldier (H)

2 goblin sharpshooters (G)

4 hobgoblin grunts (R)

The hobgoblins start in a cluster in room 2, and the goblins are in area 3.

When the PCs reach the southern doorway, read:

This L-shaped room has doors in the north and west walls. A group of angry hobgoblins is near the middle of the room. Around the periphery of the room are bedrolls, sacks, and a roasting rack near the brazier.

A narrow fissure in the ceiling carries the smoke from the brazier away.

When the PCs reach area 3, read:

A hallway stretches north into the darkness. A jagged hole in the floor runs the width of the passageway about 10 feet ahead. Two ropes hang from the ceiling and extend down into the pit.

TACTICS

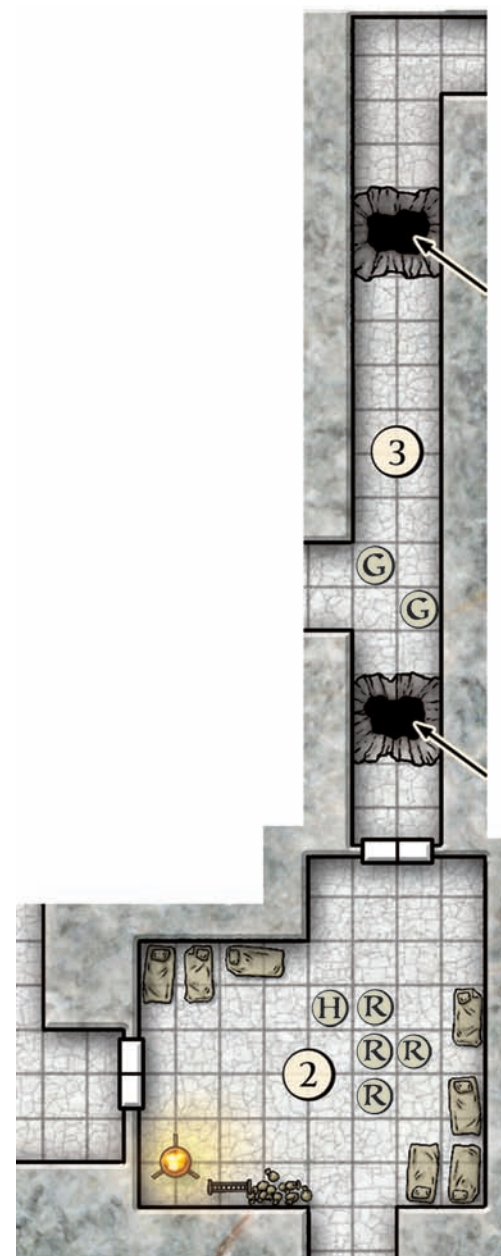
The hobgoblins try to use superior numbers to envelop the PCs. The goblins join the fray, rolling initiative prior to the start of the second round.

The hobgoblins fight until slain, but goblins reduced to 10 hit points or fewer flee north through room 3 and put rooms 8 and 9 on alert for 10 minutes. Goblin sharpshooters leap or use ropes to move across pits in room 3.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The brazier in room 2 provides bright light for 10 squares. Room 3 has only whatever light the PCs bring with them.

Pits: It's a 20-foot fall (and 2d10 damage) into room 11. Creatures can clear the pit with a successful DC 10 Athletics check (DC 20 if they don't have a running start) or a DC 12 Acrobatics check (to swing across on the rope). The goblins try the DC 10 Athletics check (at +3) if they have a running start and the DC 12 Acrobatics check (at +5) if they don't.



4 Hobgoblin Grunts (R)	Level 3 Minion
Medium natural humanoid	XP 38 each
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +1; low-light vision
HP 1: a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 17 (19 with <i>phalanx soldier</i>); Fortitude 15, Reflex 13, Will 12	
Speed 6	
⬇ Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+6 vs. AC; 5 damage.	
Hobgoblin Resilience (immediate reaction, when the hobgoblin grunt suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter)	
The hobgoblin grunt rolls a saving throw against the effect.	
Phalanx Soldier	
The hobgoblin grunt gains a +2 bonus to AC while at least one hobgoblin ally is adjacent to it.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Goblin
Skills Athletics +6, History +2	
Str 18 (+4)	Dex 14 (+2) Wis 13 (+1)
Con 15 (+2)	Int 10 (+0) Cha 9 (-1)
Equipment leather armor, light shield, longsword	

2 Goblin Sharpshooter (G)	Level 2 Artillery
Small natural humanoid (goblin)	XP 125 each
Initiative +5	Senses Perception +2; low-light vision
HP 31; Bloodied 15	
AC 16; Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 11	
Speed 6; see also <i>goblin tactics</i>	
⬇ Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+6 vs. AC; 1d6 + 2 damage.	
⌘ Hand Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 15/30; +9 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage.	
Sniper	
When a goblin sharpshooter makes a ranged attack from hiding and misses, it is still considered to be hiding.	
Combat Advantage	
The goblin sharpshooter deals an extra 1d6 damage against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Goblin Tactics (immediate reaction, when missed by a melee attack; at-will)	
The goblin shifts 1 square.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Goblin
Skills Stealth +12, Thievery +12	
Str 14 (+3)	Dex 18 (+5) Wis 13 (+2)
Con 13 (+2)	Int 8 (+0) Cha 8 (+0)
Equipment leather armor, short sword, hand crossbow with 20 bolts	

Hobgoblin Soldier (H)	Level 3 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +3; low-light vision
HP 47; Bloodied 23	
AC 20 (22 with <i>phalanx soldier</i>); Fortitude 18, Reflex 16, Will 16	
Speed 5	
⬇ Flail (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+7 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, the target is marked and slowed until the end of the hobgoblin soldier's next turn.	
⬇ Formation Strike (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Requires flail; +7 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and the hobgoblin soldier shifts 1 square provided it ends in a space adjacent to another hobgoblin.	
Hobgoblin Resilience (immediate reaction, when the hobgoblin soldier suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter)	
The hobgoblin soldier rolls a saving throw against the effect.	
Phalanx Soldier	
The hobgoblin soldier gains a +2 bonus to AC while at least one hobgoblin ally is adjacent to it.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Goblin
Skills Athletics +10, History +8	
Str 19 (+5)	Dex 14 (+3) Wis 14 (+3)
Con 15 (+3)	Int 11 (+1) Cha 10 (+1)
Equipment scale armor, heavy shield, flail	



PORTAL ROOM

Encounter Level 2 (650 XP)

SETUP

This room is the destination of a one-way portal from another castle from a bygone age—and monsters sometimes come through the portal.

1 ochre jelly (O)

2 specters

The encounter doesn't start until the PCs pause for more than a few seconds to examine the image of the castle.

When the PCs enter the chamber, read:

A picture in the middle of this room shows flickering images of a sinister castle in the middle of a swamp.

If the PCs examine the picture for more than 1 round, read:

A slimy creature slithers through the image and roils toward you.

TACTICS

The ochre jelly comes through the portal if it detects someone studying the image (the hobgoblins have learned the hard way to rush through this room). The specters, mere opportunists who aren't affiliated with the ochre jelly, roll for initiative before the start of the third round. They attack from the rear.

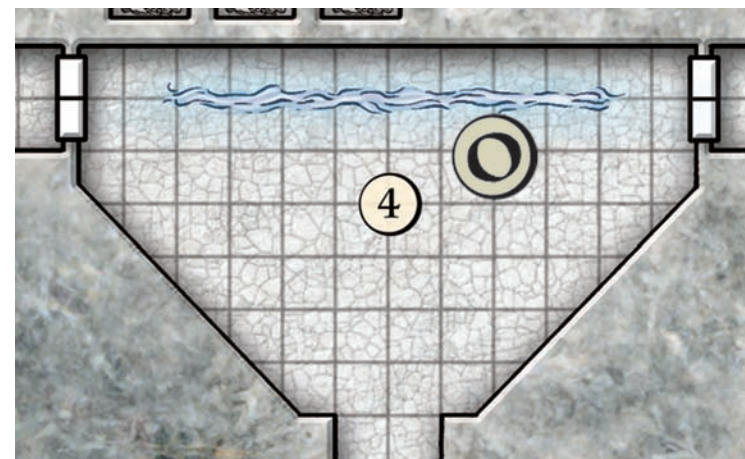
All these creatures fight until slain, but they don't pursue PCs beyond this room. Another ochre jelly spawns from the picture portal provided at least an

hour has passed and provided the last ochre jelly to come through is dead.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The portal itself glows, providing bright light within 5 squares.

Portal: The portal, once a connection to another faraway castle allied with Rivenroar, crackles whenever the image flickers away. It's a phantasm and can be walked through as if it wasn't there. But it's a one-way portal from somewhere, as the PCs learn when an ochre jelly slithers through.



Ochre Jelly (O)	Level 3 Elite Brute
Large natural beast (blind, ooze)	XP 300
Initiative +0	Senses Perception +2; blindsight 10, tremorsense 10
HP 102; Bloodied 51	see also <i>split</i> below
AC 18; Fortitude 16, Reflex 14, Will 14	
Immune gaze; Resist 5 acid	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 4; see also <i>flowing form</i>	
Action Points 1	
⊕ Slam (standard; at-will) ♦ Acid	
+8 vs. AC; 2d6 + 1 damage, and ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends).	
Flowing Form (move; at-will)	
The ochre jelly shifts 4 squares.	
Split (when first bloodied; encounter)	
The ochre jelly splits into two, each with hit points equal one-half its current hit points. Effects applied to the original ochre jelly do not apply to the second one. An ochre jelly can't split if it is reduced to 0 hit points by the attack that bloodied it. Left alone, the two halves of the ochre jelly recombine into a single creature at the end of the encounter.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages —
Str 13 (+2)	Dex 8 (+0) Wis 12 (+2)
Con 11 (+1)	Int 1 (-4) Cha 1 (-4)

2 Specters	Level 4 Lurker
Medium shadow humanoid (undead)	XP 175 each
Initiative +8	Senses Perception +6; darkvision
Spectral Chill (Cold) aura 1; enemies in the aura take a -2 penalty to all defenses.	
HP 30; Bloodied 15	
AC 16; Fortitude 16, Reflex 16, Will 17	
Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic, insubstantial;	
Vulnerable 5 radiant	
Speed fly 6 (hover); phasing	
⊕ Spectral Touch (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic	
+7 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 2 necrotic damage.	
⚡ Spectral Barrage (standard; recharge ⚡⚡⚡) ♦ Illusion, Psychic	
Close burst 2; targets enemies; +7 vs. Will; 2d6 + 2 psychic damage, and the target is knocked prone.	
Invisibility (standard; at-will) ♦ Illusion	
The specter becomes invisible until it attacks or until it is hit by an attack.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common
Skills Stealth +9	
Str 10 (+2)	Dex 15 (+4) Wis 8 (+1)
Con 13 (+3)	Int 6 (+0) Cha 15 (+4)

VON URSTADT CRYPT

Encounter Level 2 (600 XP)

SETUP

The gnomes working for Sinruth have figured out that leaving the doors between rooms 5 and 6 open for more than a few seconds summons two magma claws, presumably to destroy tomb robbers.

2 magma claws

2 gnome skulks (G)

The encounter starts when one of the gnomes summons the magma claws.

When the PCs reach the middle of the room, read:

One of the north doors swings open. Nothing comes through the doors, but after a few tense seconds, two fiery creatures appear, making the room uncomfortably hot—and dangerous.

TACTICS

One gnome hides near the north doors and waits for intruders to approach before summoning the magma claws. Then, once the PCs are engaged, the gnomes sneak behind them to strike at a vulnerable PC.

The magma claws fight until slain, but they don't leave room 5. If the gnomes fall below 10 hit points, they try to make it to their allies, the ettercaps in room 7.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The only illumination is from the magma claws, which emit bright light for 10 squares.

Jail Cells: A DC 15 Thievery check can pick the lock, or the PCs can take the key from one of the skulks.

Alcoves: Alcoves on the north and south walls hold the skeletons of the Von Urstadt clan, once prominent

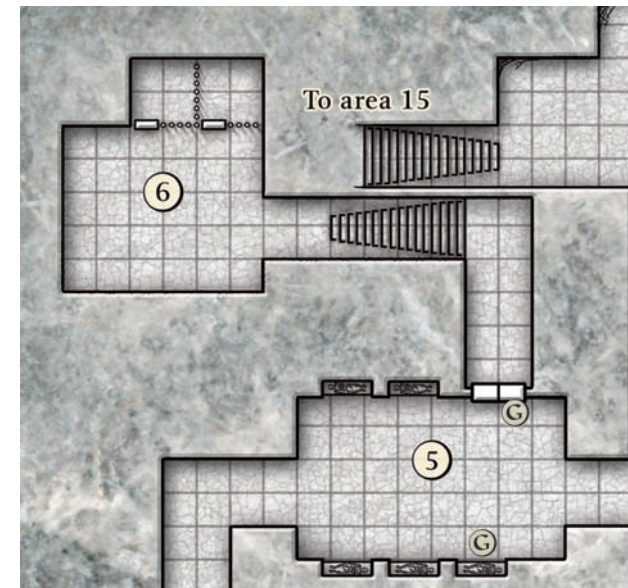
in the region (DC 15 History). An inscription along the east wall says "Hail Von Urstadts! Ascend with Glory!" and a dust-covered fresco on the west wall depicts human knights riding pegasi into the clouds.

Some of the bodies in the alcoves were buried with treasure. It takes 20 minutes (divided by the number of searchers) to find treasure parcels A and B.

Prisoner: Sertanian, the castellan of the Great Hall of Valor, is kept in one of the jail cells. Sertanian is described on page 7. He knows what all the treasures from the Great Hall look like, and he knows that Mirtala is held downstairs near a spiral staircase.

2 Gnome Skulks (G)	Level 2 Lurker
Small fey humanoid	XP 125 each
Initiative +8	Senses Perception +2; low-light vision
HP 34; Bloodied 17	
AC 16; Fortitude 14, Reflex 14, Will 12	
Speed 5	
⚔ War Pick (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+7 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage (crit 1d8 + 11).	
🏹 Hand Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 10/20; +7 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage.	
Combat Advantage	
The gnome skulk deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Fade Away (immediate reaction, when the gnome skulk takes damage; encounter) ♦ Illusion	
The gnome skulk turns invisible until it attacks or until the end of its next turn.	
Reactive Stealth	
If a gnome has cover or concealment when it makes an initiative check at the start of an encounter, it can make a Stealth check to escape notice.	
Shadow Skulk	
When a gnome skulk makes a melee or a ranged attack from hiding and misses, it is still considered to be hiding.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common, Elven
Skills Arcana +10, Stealth +11, Thievery +9	
Str 8 (+0)	Dex 17 (+4) Wis 12 (+2)
Con 16 (+4)	Int 14 (+3) Cha 13 (+2)
Equipment leather armor, war pick, hand crossbow with 20 bolts	

North Doors in Room 5: These doors summon the magma claws if left open for more than a few seconds. Once magma claws have been summoned, they remain for 1 day. The doors don't summon magma claws more frequently than that in any case.



2 Magma Claws	Level 4 Brute
Medium elemental magical beast (earth, fire)	XP 175 each
Initiative +3	Senses Perception +7
HP 64; Bloodied 32	
AC 16; Fortitude 16, Reflex 14, Will 13	
Immune petrification; Resist 10 fire; Vulnerable cold (slowed until the end of the magma claw's next turn)	
Speed 4 (8 while charging)	
⚔ Claw (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire	
+7 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage plus 1d6 fire damage.	
🔥 Spew Lava (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire	
+5 vs. Reflex; the target takes ongoing 5 fire damage and is immobilized (save ends both).	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Primordial
Skills Endurance +9, Stealth +8	
Str 18 (+6)	Dex 12 (+3) Wis 11 (+2)
Con 14 (+4)	Int 2 (-2) Cha 6 (+0)

SPIDERWEB LANDING

Encounter Level 1 (550 XP)

SETUP

This room features some difficult terrain—and a potentially tragic situation if the PCs have prisoners with them when they discover the body of Kartenix the guard captain.

2 ettercap fang guards (G)

1 ettercap webspinner (W)

The webspinner is in the northwest corner of the room and the fang guards are near the middle.

When the PCs reach a point where they can see into the room, read:

This landing is covered with spiderwebs, and the floor under your feet is sticky. A trio of ettercaps shuffles around the room ahead of you, which has passages heading up and to the west, down and to the south, and north turning east.

TACTICS

The webspinner tries to immobilize or restrain as many PCs as it can with its webs, and then the fang guards concentrate on that target.

The ettercaps fight bravely until two are dead. The sole survivor flees as best it can, unless it thinks it can revenge itself against an adjacent bloodied PC.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: None beyond what the PCs bring with them.

Spiderwebs: About half the squares in the room are covered with spiderwebs (difficult terrain for crea-

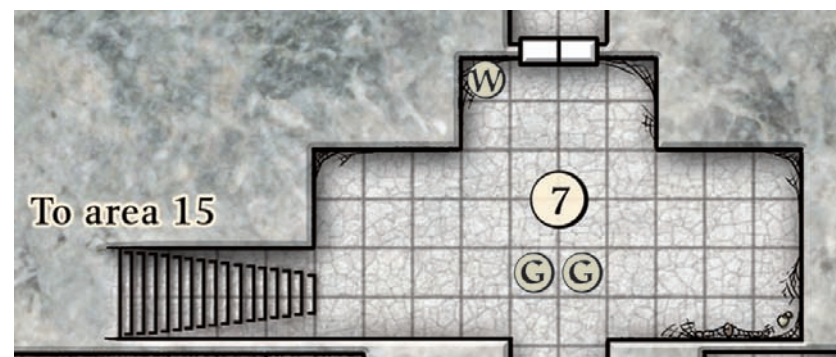
2 Ettercap Fang Guards (G)	Level 4 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid (spider)	XP 175 each
Initiative +6	Senses Perception +3
HP 56; Bloodied 28	
AC 20; Fortitude 17, Reflex 16, Will 15	
Resist 10 poison	
Speed 5, climb 5 (spider climb); see also <i>web walker</i>	
⚔ Greataxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+9 vs. AC; 1d12 + 5 damage (crit 1d12 + 17).	
⚔ Spider Bite (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison	
Requires combat advantage; +9 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage. If the attack hits, the ettercap makes a secondary attack against the same target. <i>Secondary Attack:</i> +7 vs. Fortitude; the target is stunned until the end of the ettercap's next turn and takes ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).	
⚔ Web Tangle (standard; at-will)	
+7 vs. Reflex; the target is immobilized (save ends).	
Web Reaper	
The ettercap fang guard gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls and deals an extra 2 damage against restrained and immobilized creatures.	
Web Walker	
An ettercap ignores movement effects of spider webs and difficult terrain related to spider swarms.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages —
Skills Stealth +9	
Str 16 (+5)	Dex 14 (+4) Wis 13 (+3)
Con 16 (+5)	Int 5 (-1) Cha 11 (+2)
Equipment leather armor, greataxe	

tures that aren't ettercaps). A character who enters a spiderweb square must make a successful DC 10 Athletics or Acrobatics check or become immobilized until the creature succeeds on the escape action. Spiderweb squares also provide concealment.

Corpse: Kartenix's corpse is webbed to the wall in the southeast corner, his face a rictus of pain and his eyes bulging.

Ettercap Webspinner (W)	Level 5 Controller
Medium natural humanoid (spider)	XP 200
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +9
HP 64; Bloodied 32	
AC 18; Fortitude 17, Reflex 16, Will 16	
Resist 10 poison	
Speed 5, climb 5 (spider climb); see also <i>web walker</i>	
⚔ Longspear (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Reach 2, +10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage.	
⚔ Spider Bite (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison	
Requires combat advantage; +10 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage, and the ettercap makes a secondary attack against the same target. <i>Secondary Attack:</i> +8 vs. Fortitude; ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).	
✂ Web Net (minor 1/round; at-will)	
Ranged 5; +9 vs. Reflex; the target is restrained (save ends).	
✂ Webbed Terrain (standard; recharge 2) ♦ Zone	
Area burst 2 within 10; +9 vs. Reflex; the target is immobilized (save ends). The zone is filled with spider webs and is considered difficult terrain until the end of the encounter.	
Web Walker	
An ettercap ignores movement effects of spider webs and difficult terrain related to spider swarms.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages —
Skills Stealth +9	
Str 16 (+5)	Dex 14 (+4) Wis 15 (+4)
Con 16 (+5)	Int 5 (-1) Cha 13 (+3)
Equipment leather armor, longspear	

Silk Bag: A bag in the southeast corner contains treasure parcel C and 100 gp in residuum.



RIVENROAR FAMILY CRYPT

Encounter Level 1 (525 XP)

SETUP

Some of the hobgoblins live in room 8, and room 9 below it is a major crypt. Either way, the PCs face a two-stage fight when the two rooms reinforce each other.

- 1 hobgoblin archer (A)
- 4 hobgoblin grunts (R)
- 1 hobgoblin soldier (H)
- 1 guard drake (D)

The hobgoblin soldier and guard drake start in room 8, and the grunts and archers start in room 9.

If the PCs enter room 8, read:

Furs and bedrolls cover the floor, with sacks and rucksacks leaned against the walls. A hobgoblin stands with a guard drake at his side. A spiral staircase of wrought iron descends from an alcove in the north.

If the PCs enter room 9, read:

Five hobgoblins stand amid four stone sarcophagi in this chamber. A side chamber to the east has two marble altars. A spiral staircase made of wrought iron ascends from an alcove to the north. And there's a hole in the floor in the northeast corner.

TACTICS

It takes two turns for any of the hobgoblins or the drake to make it all the way up or down the staircase, so no matter which room the PCs enter first, they have to contend with reinforcements in the third round.

The drake fights until slain, but the hobgoblins flee if they're reduced to 10 hit points or fewer and are outnumbered by PCs. They flee toward the entrance through room 3 if they can reach it or through rooms 7, 5, 4, and 2 if the PCs have cut off that escape route.

The hobgoblins have lived with that garbage pit for so long that they've almost forgotten it's there. They aren't smart enough to stay away from the edge during a fight.

4 Hobgoblin Grunts (R)		Level 3 Minion
Medium natural humanoid		XP 38 each
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +1; low-light vision	
HP 1: a missed attack never damages a minion.		
AC 17 (19 with <i>phalanx soldier</i>); Fortitude 15, Reflex 13, Will 12		
Speed 6		
⚔ Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+6 vs. AC; 5 damage.		
Hobgoblin Resilience (immediate reaction, when the hobgoblin grunt suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter)		
The hobgoblin grunt rolls a saving throw against the effect.		
Phalanx Soldier		
The hobgoblin grunt gains a +2 bonus to AC while at least one hobgoblin ally is adjacent to it.		
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Goblin	
Skills Athletics +6, History +2		
Str 18 (+4)	Dex 14 (+2)	Wis 13 (+1)
Con 15 (+2)	Int 10 (+0)	Cha 9 (-1)
Equipment leather armor, light shield, longsword		

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: There's a lantern (10 squares bright light) at the northwest corner of room 9. That's enough to illuminate the squares adjacent to the staircase in room 8; that room is otherwise dark. The altars have candles (2 squares dim light) on them.

Altars: The altars are devoted to Bane (Religion DC 10). But astute observers (Religion DC 15) notice that they weren't always so—they're originally altars to Vecna that the hobgoblins have "rededicated."

Sarcophagi: The northernmost two sarcophagi hold treasure parcels D, E, and F. They aren't locked or trapped, but it takes a DC 20 Strength check to move the heavy stone lids off the sarcophagi.

Spiral Staircase: The staircase connects rooms 8 and 9 and takes 12 squares to ascend or descend 20 feet. It's difficult terrain.

Hobgoblin Archer (A)		Level 3 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid		XP 150
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +8; low-light vision	
HP 39; Bloodied 19		
AC 17; Fortitude 13, Reflex 15, Will 13		
Speed 6		
⚔ Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+6 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage.		
🏹 Longbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
Ranged 20/40; +9 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and the hobgoblin archer grants an ally within 5 squares of it a +2 bonus to its next ranged attack roll against the same target.		
Hobgoblin Resilience (immediate reaction, when the hobgoblin archer suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter)		
The hobgoblin archer rolls a saving throw against the effect.		
Alignment Evil Languages Common, Goblin		
Skills Athletics +5, History +6		
Str 14 (+3) Dex 19 (+5) Wis 14 (+3)		
Con 15 (+3) Int 11 (+1) Cha 10 (+1)		
Equipment leather armor, longsword, longbow, quiver of 30 arrows		

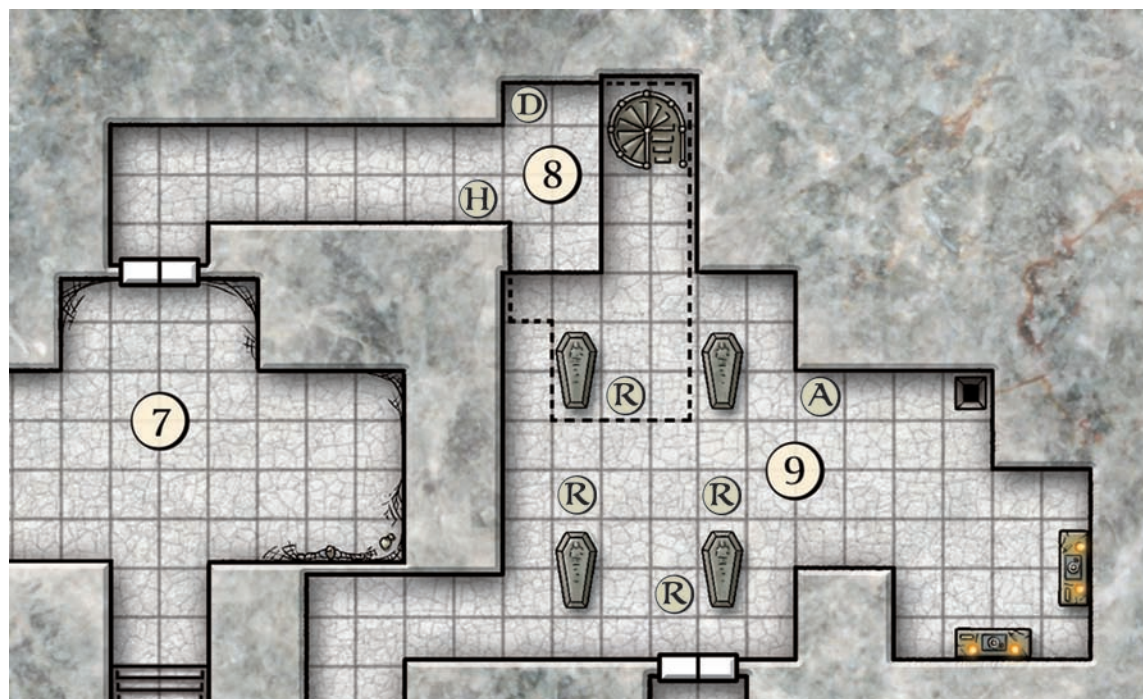
Hobgoblin Soldier (H)	Level 3 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +3; low-light vision
HP 47; Bloodied 23	
AC 20 (22 with <i>phalanx soldier</i>); Fortitude 18,	
Reflex 16, Will 16	
Speed 5	
⬇ Flail (standard; at-will) ⬆ Weapon	
+7 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, the target is marked and slowed until the end of the hobgoblin soldier's next turn.	
⬇ Formation Strike (standard; at-will) ⬆ Weapon	
Requires flail; +7 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and the hobgoblin soldier shifts 1 square provided it ends in a space adjacent to another hobgoblin.	
Hobgoblin Resilience (immediate reaction, when the hobgoblin soldier suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter)	
The hobgoblin soldier rolls a saving throw against the effect.	
Phalanx Soldier	
The hobgoblin soldier gains a +2 bonus to AC while at least one hobgoblin ally is adjacent to it.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Goblin
Skills Athletics +10, History +8	
Str 19 (+5)	Dex 14 (+3) Wis 14 (+3)
Con 15 (+3)	Int 11 (+1) Cha 10 (+1)
Equipment scale armor, heavy shield, flail	

Living Quarters: It takes one person about 20 minutes to look through the sacks in room 9—and it's just ragged goblin clothing and primitive tools, worthless back in civilization.

Pit: The goblins throw all their garbage down this 40-foot-deep pit. The stench that wafts out of the pit makes that obvious.

Wall Inscription: Running around the walls near the ceiling is the following message, repeated every 10 feet or so: "Here lie the Rivenroars until the Day of the Black Sun. If you seek their monument, look at the lands around you."

Guard Drake (D)	Level 2 Brute
Small natural beast (reptile)	XP 125
Initiative +3	Senses Perception +7
HP 48; Bloodied 24	
AC 15; Fortitude 15, Reflex 13, Will 12	
Immune fear (while within 2 squares of an ally)	
Speed 6	
⬇ Bite (standard; at-will)	
+6 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage, or 1d10 + 9 damage while within 2 squares of an ally.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages —
Str 16 (+4)	Dex 15 (+3) Wis 12 (+2)
Con 18 (+5)	Int 3 (-3) Cha 12 (+2)



FRESCO CHAMBER

Encounter Level 1 (550 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes a straightforward fight with rats and gnomes, then a roleplaying opportunity as the PCs must contend with a shell-shocked prisoner.

3 dire rats (R)

2 gnome skulks (G)

When the PCs round the corner and can see into this room, read:

Four statues of displacer beasts, their eyes glowing amber, stare at you. Beyond them is a candlelit altar. Tied to the front of it is a human female, her eyes wild with terror.

TACTICS

The gnome skulks stay hidden in the shadows until the battle falls into a stable position, then they sidle around to the party's rear and attack vulnerable PCs. The rats bite whatever's nearest.

The rats fight until slain, but then gnomes try to hide and flee if reduced below 10 hit points.

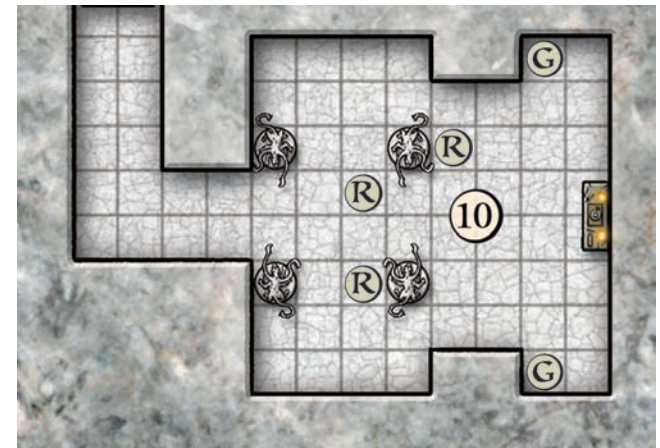
FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The candles on the altar emit dim light for 2 squares, and the eyes of each displacer

2 Gnome Skulks (G)	Level 2 Lurker
Small fey humanoid	XP 125 each
Initiative +8	Senses Perception +2; low-light vision
HP 34; Bloodied 17	
AC 16; Fortitude 14, Reflex 14, Will 12	
Speed 5	
⚔ War Pick (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+7 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage (crit 1d8 + 11).	
🏹 Hand Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 10/20; +7 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage.	
Combat Advantage	
The gnome skulk deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Fade Away (immediate reaction, when the gnome skulk takes damage; encounter) ♦ Illusion	
The gnome skulk turns invisible until it attacks or until the end of its next turn.	
Reactive Stealth	
If a gnome has cover or concealment when it makes an initiative check at the start of an encounter, it can make a Stealth check to escape notice.	
Shadow Skulk	
When a gnome skulk makes a melee or a ranged attack from hiding and misses, it is still considered to be hiding.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common, Elven
Skills Arcana +10, Stealth +11, Thievery +9	
Str 8 (+0)	Dex 17 (+4) Wis 12 (+2)
Con 16 (+4)	Int 14 (+3) Cha 13 (+2)
Equipment leather armor, war pick, hand crossbow with 20 bolts	

beast statue likewise provide dim light in squares adjacent to a statue.

Displacer Beast Statues: Each displacer beast statue has glowing eyes but are otherwise ordinary statues.



3 Dire Rats (R)	Level 1 Brute
Medium natural beast	XP 100 each
Initiative +2	Senses Perception +5;
low-light vision	
HP 38; Bloodied 19	
AC 15; Fortitude 15, Reflex 13, Will 11	
Immune filth fever (see below)	
Speed 6, climb 3	
⚔ Bite (standard; at-will) ♦ Disease	
+4 vs. AC; 1d6 + 2 damage, and the target contracts filth fever (see below).	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages –
Skills Stealth +7	
Str 14 (+2)	Dex 15 (+2) Wis 10 (+0)
Con 18 (+4)	Int 3 (-4) Cha 6 (-2)

Altar: With a large marble raven atop it, it doesn't take a Religion check to figure out that this altar is devoted to the Raven Queen.

Prisoner: Mirtala the cook has been tied to the altar and menaced by the rats for days. She's caught filth fever from them, and she's frightened to the point of catatonia. See the sidebar on page 23 for information on dealing with Mirtala. She follows obvious rescuers around, but she doesn't talk unless PCs succeed at breaking through her mental trauma. She has a clue where Adronsius and Sertanian are being held.

Filth Fever

The target is cured. ◀ **Initial Effect** The target loses 1 healing surge.

◀◀ The target takes a -2 penalty to AC, Fortitude defense, and Reflex defense.

◀ **Final Effect:** The target takes a -2 penalty to AC, Fortitude defense, and Reflex defense. The target loses all healing surges and cannot regain hit points.

Level 3 Disease

MUSHROOM CHAMBER

Encounter Level 1 (500 XP)

SETUP

The PCs must contend not only with rage drakes, but a number of toxic mushrooms.

2 rage drakes (D)

The rage drakes have a passive Perception of 13.

When the PCs can see into room 11, read:

This room, filled with all sorts of architectural debris, has a wet, musty smell. Amid the ruins are all sorts of mushrooms, mostly with brown or gray caps.

When the PCs round the corner into room 12, read:

You see an old woman within a glowing magic circle. You can hear her muffled voice: "Get me out of here!"

TACTICS

The rage drakes lurk out of sight behind chunks of rubble until the PCs run afoul of the mushrooms, when they rush in. The rage drakes are affected by the spores, but they're cunning enough to know that certain mushrooms are to be avoided. The drakes fight until slain, but they won't leave room 11.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Phosphorescent fungi cover the walls and ceiling, bathing the chamber in dim light.

Magic Circle: Zerriksa is trapped in this circle in room 12. Anyone pressing against the invisible barrier along the perimeter of the circle takes 1d10 damage per round, and deals half as much damage to a creature

2 Rage Drakes (D)		Level 5 Brute
Large natural beast (mount, reptile)		XP 200 each
Initiative +3	Senses Perception +3	
HP 77; Bloodied 38; see also <i>bloodied rage</i>		
AC 17; Fortitude 17, Reflex 15, Will 15		
Immune fear (while bloodied only)		
Speed 8		
⚔ Bite (standard; at-will)		
+9 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage; see also <i>bloodied rage</i> .		
⚔ Claw (standard; at-will)		
+8 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage; see also <i>bloodied rage</i> .		
⚔ Raking Charge (standard; at-will)		
When the rage drake charges, it makes two claw attacks against a single target.		
Bloodied Rage (while bloodied)		
The rage drake gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls and deals an extra 5 damage per attack.		
Raging Mount (while bloodied and mounted by a friendly rider of 5th level or higher; at-will) ♦ Mount		
The rage drake grants its rider a +2 bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls with melee attacks.		
Alignment Unaligned		Languages –
Str 19 (+6)	Dex 13 (+3)	Wis 13 (+3)
Con 17 (+5)	Int 3 (-2)	Cha 12 (+3)

inside. Disrupting the circle requires a successful DC 20 Thievery, Arcana, and/or Perception (no retries) to notice that the circle sometimes flickers out of existence for a split-second. If the circle is vacant, then there's no barrier and anyone can walk (or be pushed) in. At that point the barrier reappears and the trap resets.

Shafts: It's a 20-foot climb (Athletics DC 20 up the wall or DC 5 up the slippery rope) to reach room 3.

Mushrooms: Some squares have toxic mushrooms in them, in one of the varieties below. Roll 1d4 when a PC enters one of these patches to determine the variety. All mushroom squares are difficult terrain. PCs can figure out what the mushrooms do with a DC 15 Dungeoneering check ahead of time or after the fact by observing what color of mushroom had what effect. Once identified, a DC 15 Acrobatics or Dungeoneering

check allows a PC to enter a square of mushrooms without disturbing it.

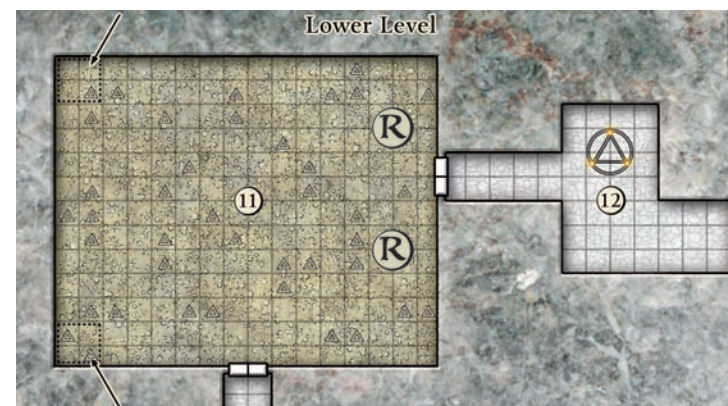
Cloudspores: Described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (page 67), cloudspores are brown. If a PC disturbs a cloudspore, it emits a cloud of spores that provides concealment in that square for 5 minutes.

Shrieker Mushrooms: The white mushrooms shriek when someone steps adjacent to or in their square.

Doomspores: These gray mushrooms, described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (page 88), make a +6 attack against Fortitude if a PC steps into their square, dealing 1d10 poison damage and ongoing 5 poison (save ends).

Slumberspores: These red-capped mushrooms, when disturbed, make a +6 attack against the Will of whoever disturbed them and all adjacent creatures. On a hit, a creature is slowed (save ends). If that creature fails its first saving throw, it becomes unconscious (save ends).

Prisoner: Zerriksa the crone is within a magic circle in room 12. She's described on page 8. To rescue her, the PCs must somehow deal with the magic circle. She's the only one who knows for sure that Kartenix is dead and in the clutches of the ettercaps. If rescued, the PCs have to put up with her criticism and complaints until they return her to Brindol. She's too grumpy to be grateful.



VON JALLACH CRYPT

Encounter Level 1 (525 XP)

SETUP

This room features some swarms, an obvious floor trap, and a gnome that reveals himself at an inconvenient time for the PCs.

2 needlefang drake swarms (D)

1 gnome skulk (G)

The needlefangs coalesce into two swarms once the PCs cross the threshold into room 13, coming out from the alcoves around the perimeter of the room.

When the PCs ascend to room 13, read:

A square bounded by glowing runes dominates the floor in this room. The east wall has two doors. The walls are covered with empty alcoves designed to hold dead bodies.

TACTICS

The needlefangs overwhelm the first PC or PCs into the room. The needlefangs have learned through painful experience not to touch the runes on the floor. The gnome skulk waits until the needlefang drakes are fighting and the runes glowing to attack.

The gnome flees if reduced to below 10 hit points and if he thinks it can make it to the stairs.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The floor runes in room 13 glow like candles—dim light within 2 squares. Room 14 has only the illumination that the PCs bring with them.



Lintel Inscription: At the top of the stairs leading to room 13, “Von Jallach Family Tomb” is carved above the doorway.

Alcoves: The Von Jallachs never got to use this family crypt—Rivenroar Castle fell before they had a chance. But in the back corners of the alcoves in room 13 are the debris and detritus that the needlefang drakes have gathered into their nests.

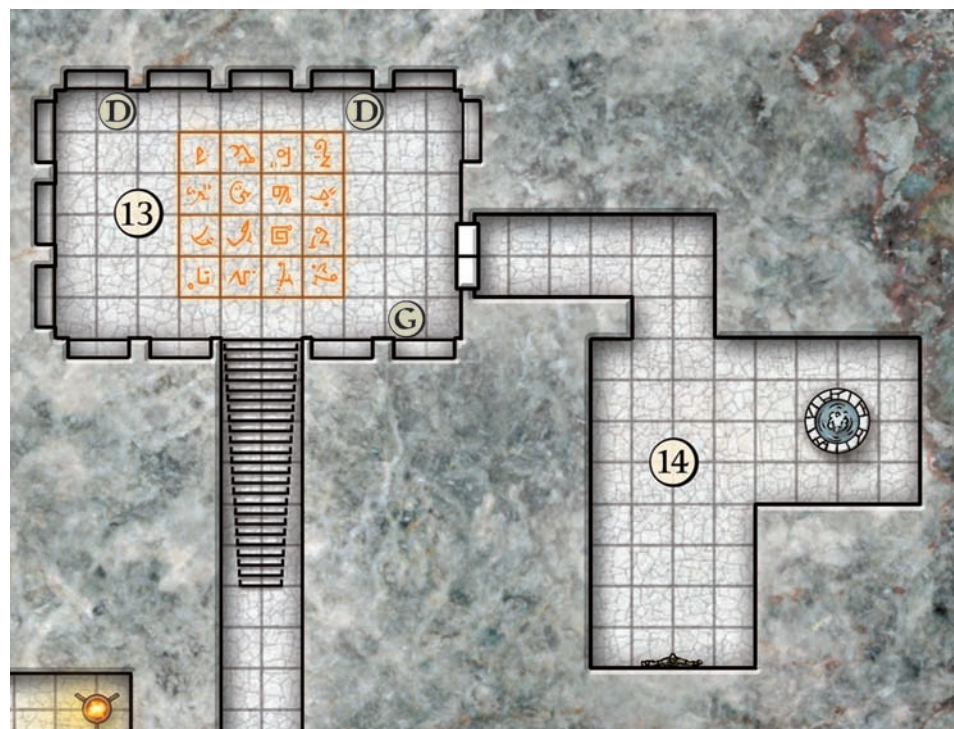
Floor Runes: The runes in room 13 pulse with light every few seconds. They deal 2d6 damage to any creature that steps on them, and 1d4 damage to any creature that leaps or flies over them. A DC 10 Arcana check reveals that the runes spell out “Von Jallach” in a phonetic alphabet that wizards sometimes use.

Fountain: The water in room 14 is cool and pure—fed by an intact cistern in the ruins above.

Prisoner: Adronsius the alchemist is chained to the wall in room 14. He’s described on page 9. It takes a DC 20 Strength check to pull his shackles out of the wall, a DC 15 Thievery check to pick the lock, or use of the key (in possession of the gnome at the start of the encounter). Adronsius can provide directions to where Jelissa is being held.

Gnome Skulk (G)	Level 2 Lurker
Small fey humanoid	XP 125
Initiative +8	Senses Perception +2; low-light vision
HP 34; Bloodied 17	
AC 16; Fortitude 14, Reflex 14, Will 12	
Speed 5	
⬇ War Pick (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+7 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage (crit 1d8 + 11).	
✈ Hand Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 10/20 +7 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage.	
Combat Advantage	
The gnome skulk deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Fade Away (immediate reaction, when the gnome skulk takes damage; encounter) Illusion	
The gnome skulk turns invisible until it attacks or until the end of its next turn.	
Reactive Stealth	
If a gnome has cover or concealment when it makes an initiative check at the start of an encounter, it can make a Stealth check to escape notice.	
Shadow Skulk	
When a gnome skulk makes a melee or a ranged attack from hiding and misses, it is still considered to be hiding.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common, Elven
Skills Arcana +10, Stealth +11, Thievery +9	
Str 8 (+0)	Dex 17 (+4)
Con 16 (+4)	Int 14 (+3)
	Wis 12 (+2)
	Cha 13 (+2)
Equipment leather armor, war pick, hand crossbow with 20 bolts	

2 Needlefang Drake Swarms (D)	Level 2 Soldier
Medium natural beast (reptile, swarm)	XP 125 each
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +7
Swarm Attack aura 1; the needlefang drake swarm makes a basic attack as a free action against each enemy that begins its turn in the aura.	
HP 38; Bloodied 19	
AC 18; Fortitude 15, Reflex 17, Will 14	
Immune fear; Resist half damage from melee and ranged attacks;	
Vulnerable +5 damage from close and area attacks.	
Speed 7	
⬇ Swarm of Teeth (standard; at-will)	
+8 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, or 2d10 + 4 damage against a prone target.	
⬇ Pull Down (minor; at-will)	
+ 7 vs. Fortitude; the target is knocked prone.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages –
Str 15 (+3)	Dex 18 (+5)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 2 (-3)
	Wis 12 (+2)
	Cha 10 (+1)



VON ADREZ-KAUTHIN CRYPT

Encounter Level 1 (550 XP)

SETUP

This room, the gateway to the upper level, has a fight with a mix of drake artillery and hobgoblin soldiers.

- 1 goblin hexer (G)
- 2 spitting drakes (S)
- 4 hobgoblin grunts (H)

The hobgoblin grunts are in the middle of the room 15, and the spitting drakes are along the western edge of the room. The goblin hexer comes out of room 16 to join the battle at the start of the second round.

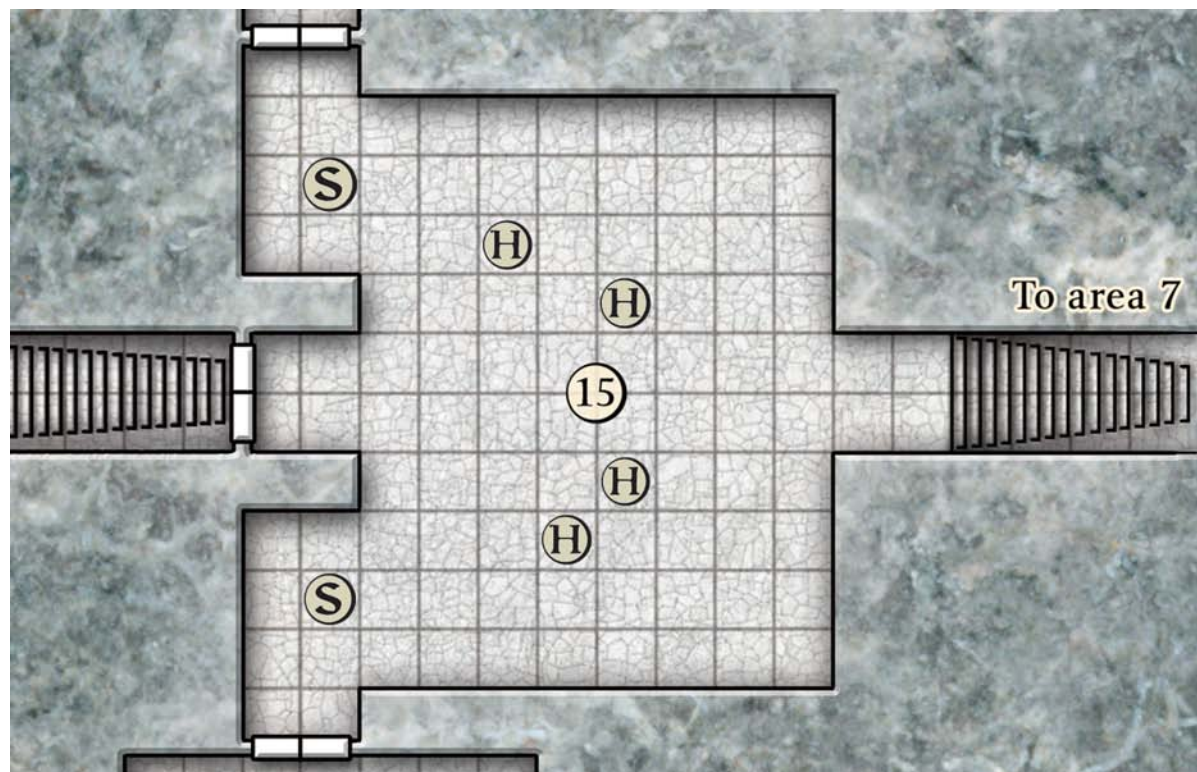
When the PCs ascend the stairs, read:

Carved into the last three steps of the staircase are the words “Von Adrez,” “Kauthin,” and “Crypt.” And once you climb high enough to see into the chamber at the top of the stairs, you see bas-relief images of humans laden with baskets, bags, and boxes—all depicted walking clockwise around the room.

Four hobgoblin guards stand in the middle of the room, and behind them are two spitting drakes.

TACTICS

The hobgoblin strategy is straightforward: Move into melee and stay together. Likewise, the spitting drakes try to spit every round. The goblin uses its vexing cloud if the PCs are clustered together. Then it hexes PCs that are maneuvering away from the hobgoblins and uses incite bravery if it thinks the hobgoblins are going to die.



The drakes fight until slain. The hobgoblins don't flee unless the hexer flees or falls, at which point they flee for room 21. The hexer flees toward room 21 if it's below 10 hit points.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Braziers in the northeast and southeast corners of room 15 cast bright light for 10 squares. Room 16 has only the lights that PCs bring with them.

Bas-Reliefs: The carvings depict the merchant operations of the Von Adrez-Kauthin family (DC 20 History), once quite prominent in the region.

Low Sarcophagi: Each sarcophagus is set into the floor so that it protrudes only 6 inches or so (not enough to affect movement). It takes a DC 20 Strength check to pull each lid off the sarcophagus. The southwest one has treasure parcels G and H in it.

Prisoner: Shackled to the wall in room 16 is Jalissa, an acolyte of Ioun and one of the Brindol residents the PCs are trying to save. See page 7 for a full description. Jalissa knows that the boy Thurann is somewhere nearby. A DC 20 Strength check is sufficient to yank the shackles from the wall, and a DC 15 Thievery check can pick the lock. Or PCs can do the obvious thing and use the key that the goblin hexer has.

Goblin Hexer (G)	Level 3 Controller (Leader)
Small natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +3	Senses Perception +2; low-light vision
HP 46; Bloodied 23	
AC 17; Fortitude 14, Reflex 15, Will 16; see also <i>lead from the rear</i>	
Speed 6; see also <i>goblin tactics</i>	
⬇ Hexer Rod (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+7 vs. AC; 1d6 + 1 damage.	
✂ Blinding Hex (standard; at-will)	
Ranged 10; +7 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 1 damage, and the target is blinded (save ends).	
✂ Stinging Hex (standard; recharge ☞☞☞)	
Ranged 10; +7 vs. Will; the target takes 3d6 + 1 damage if it moves during its turn (save ends).	
✂ Vexing Cloud (standard; sustain minor; encounter) ♦ Zone	
Area burst 3 within 10; automatic hit; all enemies within the zone take a -2 penalty to attack rolls. The zone grants concealment to the goblin hexer and its allies. The goblin hexer can sustain the zone as a minor action, moving it up to 5 squares.	
✂ Incite Bravery (immediate reaction, when an ally uses <i>goblin tactics</i> ; at-will)	
Range 10; the targeted ally can shift 2 squares and make an attack.	
Goblin Tactics (immediate reaction, when missed by a melee attack; at-will)	
The goblin shifts 1 square.	
Lead from the Rear (immediate interrupt, when targeted by a ranged attack; at-will)	
The goblin hexer can change the attack's target to an adjacent ally of its level or lower.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Goblin
Skills Stealth +10, Thievery +10	
Str 10 (+1)	Dex 15 (+3) Wis 13 (+2)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 9 (+0) Cha 18 (+5)
Equipment leather robes, hexer rod	

4 Hobgoblin Grunts (H)	Level 1 Minion
Medium natural humanoid	XP 25 each
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +1; low-light vision
HP 1: a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 17 (19 with <i>phalanx soldier</i>); Fortitude 15, Reflex 13, Will 12	
Speed 5	
⬇ Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+6 vs. AC; 3 damage.	
Phalanx Soldier	
The hobgoblin grunt gains a +2 bonus to AC while at least one hobgoblin ally is adjacent to it.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Goblin
Skills Athletics +6, Stealth +9	
Str 18 (+4)	Dex 14 (+2) Wis 13 (+1)
Con 15 (+2)	Int 10 (+0) Cha 9 (-1)
Equipment leather armor, light shield, longsword	

Spitting Drake (S)	Level 3 Artillery
Medium natural beast (reptile)	XP 150
Initiative +5	Senses Perception +3
HP 38; Bloodied 19	
AC 17; Fortitude 14, Reflex 16, Will 14	
Resist 10 acid	
Speed 7	
⬇ Bite (standard; at-will)	
+6 vs. AC; 1d6 + 2 damage.	
✂ Caustic Spit (standard; at-will) ♦ Acid	
Ranged 10; +8 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 4 acid damage.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages –
Str 14 (+3)	Dex 18 (+5) Wis 14 (+3)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 3 (-3) Cha 12 (+2)



HONOR GUARD CRYPT

Encounter Level 2 (650 XP)

SETUP

This encounter could take place in any of the three rooms; the ghouls and zombies walk an endless patrol in the center of the level, and the PCs are bound to run into them eventually.

2 ghouls

2 zombies

Place the monsters at whichever doorway they normally walk through as they follow their patrol (see below).

When the PCs reach the doorway to room 17, read:

This room has alcoves full of skeletal remains along the south wall, plus an annex with a fountain and a tied-up boy to the east.

When the PCs reach the doorway to room 18, read:

A still pool of water dominates this room, which is noticeably more humid than others inside the catacombs. A sheen of water droplets covers the walls.

When the PCs reach the doorway to room 19, read:

The middle of this room has a sunburst mosaic in it. Passageways head west then north, north then east, and due east.

TACTICS

The zombies and ghouls travel together. They start in room 19, walk down to room 17 where they check

on Thurann, then they go down the stairs to room 18 and the ghouls disturb the water. After the ghouls spend a minute or so watching the ripples, they head up the western stairs back to room 19, where they spend about 5 minutes basking in the power of the black sun before repeating their circuit. It takes them about 10 minutes altogether.

The zombies attack the nearest enemy, but the ghouls try to paralyze whichever PCs look like clerics or look fast. If a ghoul paralyzes a PC, then both ghouls attack the paralyzed PC. The ghouls shout at the zombies to do likewise, but the zombies won't listen.

The zombies and ghouls fight until slain. They give chase throughout rooms 17, 18, and 19, but not beyond.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Room 17 has only the illumination that the PCs bring with them. The decorative spire in the center of the fountain in room 18 glows like a torch, casting bright light for 5 squares. The sunburst in the floor in room 19 actively absorbs light—it never gets brighter than dim light, no matter how powerful the light source.

Scrying Pool Room: If disturbed, the pool of water in the center of room 18 shows faint images of many of the rooms in the catacombs. Rather than ordinary ripples, the waves and ripples form crude but recognizable images. DMs might need to alter some of these images to reflect rooms the PCs have already cleared out and prisoners they've already rescued.

Room 9: A chamber with four sarcophagi and hobgoblin guards milling around.

Room 10: A room with a displacer beast statue and an altar with a raven atop it. A woman (Mirtala) is trussed up atop the altar.

Room 15: A room with hobgoblins and two drakes.

Room 21: A room with a single sarcophagus. A ridged helmet sits atop the sarcophagus, and a massive hobgoblin in spiked armor is regarding it. If present, Adronsius recognizes the dragoncrest helm.

Room 22: An empty room with four heavy square columns near the corners.

Room 23: A shrine with pews and an obelisk. At the base of the obelisks are shattered shields with the Red Hand insignia on them. You don't have to be Adronsius to figure that one out.

Room 24: A room with two thrones next to each other. One has a skeleton, and the other has a biped of uncertain race.

Room 5: An empty room with funerary alcoves in the walls.

Room 6: A room with two jail cells, one of which holds an older man (Sertanian).

The pool shows each room for only 3 seconds, and the ripples don't show a lot of detail. Splashing or dipping a hand in the water provides sufficient ripples to work through the above list once, with more or less vigorous ripples lasting longer or shorter correspondingly.

Sunburst: When any creature crosses the threshold to enter room 19, the sunburst design set into the floor turns black and the lights dim. Undead creatures that start their turn on a square that's part of the black sunburst regain 5 hit points.

Faultline: The hallway heading west from room 19 has a large faultline running along its length. A DC 15 Dungeoneering check is sufficient to reveal that the floor will collapse if the PCs walk too close together (and anyone can plainly see that the hallway is hazardous). PCs at least two squares away from other PCs are safe, but any two creatures closer

2 Ghouls		Level 5 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid (undead)		XP 200 each
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +2; darkvision		
HP 63; Bloodied 31		
AC 21; Fortitude 18, Reflex 20, Will 17		
Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic;		
Vulnerable 5 radiant		
Speed 8, climb 4		
⬇ Claws (standard; at-will)		
+12 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).		
⬇ Ghoulish Bite (standard; at-will)		
Target must be immobilized, stunned, or unconscious; +10 vs. AC; 3d6 + 4 damage and the target is stunned (save ends).		
Alignment Chaotic evil		Languages Common
Skills Stealth +11		
Str 14 (+4)	Dex 19 (+6)	Wis 11 (+2)
Con 15 (+4)	Int 10 (+2)	Cha 12 (+3)

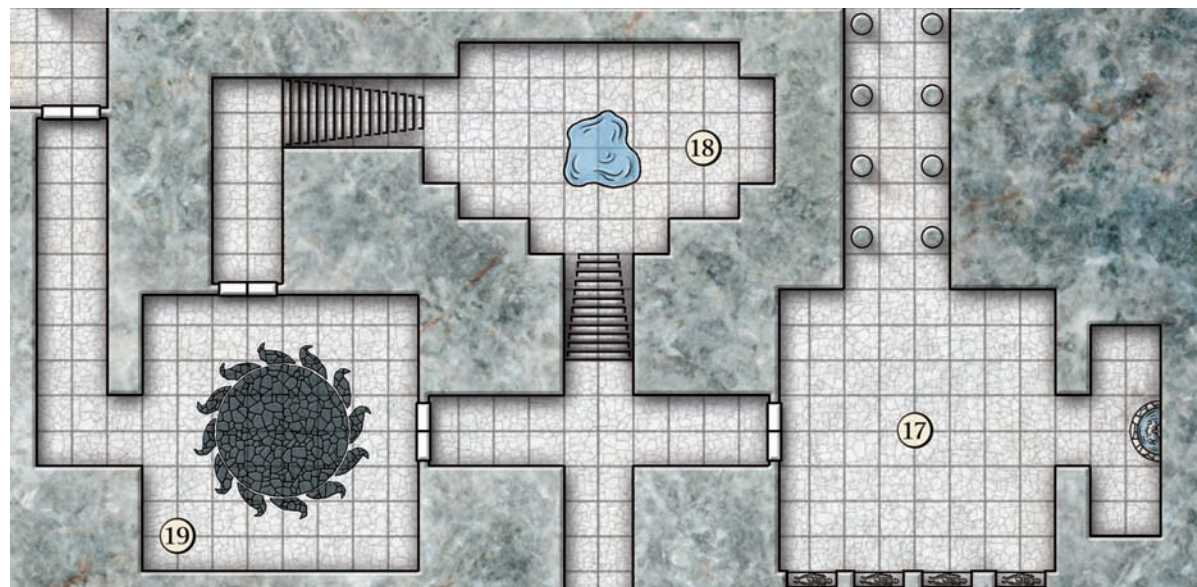
together than that triggers a collapse that deals 1d10 damage to everyone in the hallway as the entire length collapses 10 feet. After the collapse, the hallway is difficult terrain and must be climbed 10 feet at each end (Athletics DC 10).

Wall Inscriptions: Carved into the walls is this repeating message: “Honor the Heroic Guardians of Rivenroar.”

Alcoves: Skeletal human remains are in alcoves along the south wall of room 17. PCs who spend the 20 minutes necessary to search them (dividing the work if necessary) find treasure parcel I.

Prisoner: Thurann, the 8-year-old son of the guard captain, is tied up at the base of the still fountain in the room 17 annex. Thurann is described on page 8. He doesn't know that his father is dead, but he does know that Zerriksa is being held in a magic circle beyond the mushroom chamber downstairs.

2 Zombies		Level 2 Brute
Medium natural animate (undead)		XP 125 each
Initiative -1 Senses Perception +0; darkvision		
HP 40; Bloodied 20 see also <i>zombie weakness</i>		
AC 13; Fortitude 13, Reflex 9, Will 10		
Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic;		
Vulnerable 5 radiant		
Speed 4		
⬇ Slam (standard; at-will)		
+6 vs. AC; 2d6 + 2 damage.		
⬇ Zombie Grab (standard; at-will)		
+4 vs. Fortitude; the target is grabbed (until escape). Checks made to escape the zombie's grab take a -5 penalty.		
Zombie Weakness		
Any critical hit to the zombie reduces it to 0 hit points instantly.		
Alignment Unaligned		Languages –
Str 14 (+3)	Dex 6 (-1)	Wis 8 (+0)
Con 10 (+1)	Int 1 (-4)	Cha 3 (-3)



SINRUTH'S ABODE

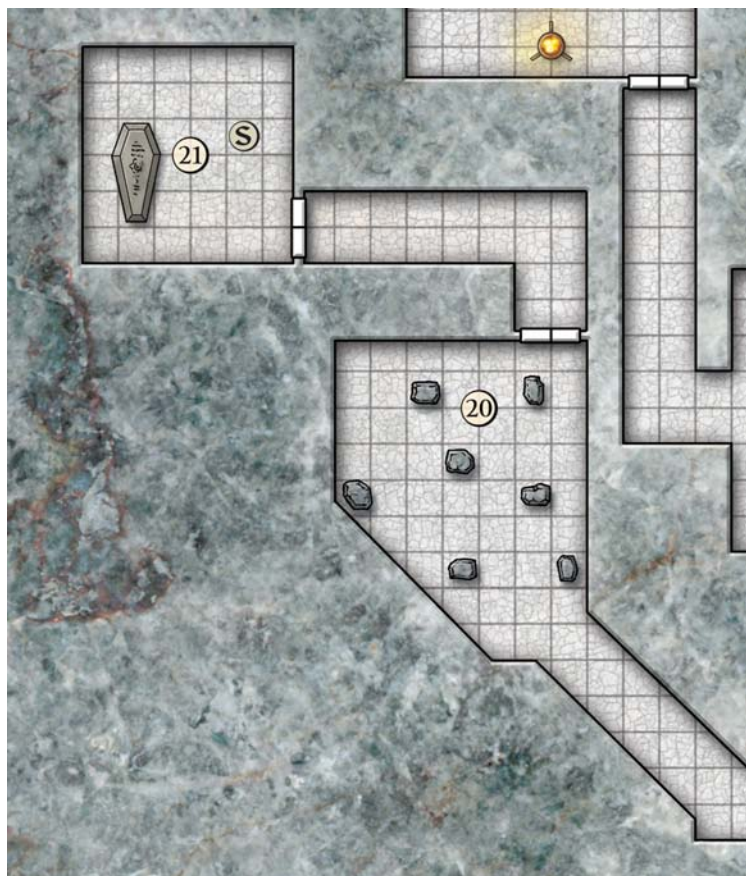
Encounter Level 2 (625 XP)

SETUP

This room has a solo knock-down, drag-out fight with Sinruth, the leader of the hobgoblins.

Sinruth (S)

Sinruth starts in room 21 but he moves to room 20 if he hears the PCs in there.



When the PCs reach room 20, read:

Thin menhirs are scattered across the floor of this triangular room. A passageway leads north, then turns west—and something beyond that turn is casting light.

TACTICS

Sinruth fights with reckless abandon—he wants to be surrounded by the PCs so his chain can do its work. He pulls people close if possible, and then uses *chain whirlwind* as soon as two or three PCs are adjacent.

If there are adjacent enemies but no one 2 squares away, Sinruth alternates between pulling people into his armor spikes and knocking them prone, then stomping on them. If he's fighting in room 20, he tries to position himself so that he pulls his enemies into a square with a menhir on it.

Sinruth fights until slain unless you want to save him as a future adversary, in which case he runs through any rooms he believes to be inhabited, figuring that slows down pursuers.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Room 20 has no illumination beyond what the PCs bring with them. Room 21 has a lantern that emits bright light for 10 squares.

Menhirs: The menhirs in room 20 are 8 feet tall and narrow—they don't take up the whole square. They're noticeably cold to the touch. Any creature that starts its turn in a square with a menhir takes 1d6 cold damage.

Sarcophagus: Treasure parcels J and K can be found inside, and it takes only a DC 15 Strength check to open it—this lid is loose.

Sinruth, Hobgoblin Chieftain (S)		Level 2 Soldier Solo
Medium natural humanoid, goblin		XP 150
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +3; low-light vision		
HP 185; Bloodied 92		
AC 22 (24 with phalanx soldier); Fortitude 16, Reflex 16, Will 12		
Saving Throws +5		
Speed 5		
Action Points 2		
† Chain Yank (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
Requires spiked chain; reach 2; +8 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and the target is pulled 1. If creature is adjacent, chain yank instead briefly bashes the creature against Sinruth's armor spikes for an extra 1d6 damage.		
† Chain Trip (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
Requires spiked chain; reach 2; +6 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 4 damage, and the target is knocked prone.		
◀ Chain Whirlwind (standard; recharge ⏏ ⏏) ♦ Weapon		
Requires spiked chain; close burst 1; +8 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage.		
† Jackboot Stomp (minor; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
Requires adjacent prone target; +6 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage.		
Hobgoblin Resilience (immediate reaction, when the hobgoblin soldier suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter)		
Sinruth rolls a saving throw against the effect.		
Phalanx Soldier		
Sinruth gains a +2 bonus to AC while at least one hobgoblin ally is adjacent to it.		
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Goblin	
Skills Athletics +9, Intimidate +8		
Str 17 (+4)	Dex 14 (+3)	Wis 10 (+1)
Con 13 (+2)	Int 10 (+1)	Cha 14 (+3)
Equipment plate armor, spiked chain		

Brindol Treasure: Sinruth is wearing the gauntlets from the Hall of Great Valor, and the dragoncrest helm is sitting on the sarcophagus in room 21.

Sinruth's Papers: In his breast pocket, Sinruth keeps a region map (similar to the one on page 6, but with several paths and good ambush spots marked), a map of Brindol (similar to the one on page 8, but with the Hall of Great Valor), and the letter from the Emisary (see page 45).

CRYPT GUARDIAN CHAMBER

Encounter Level 1 (550 XP)

SETUP

The wererats trigger a rampaging evistro, then join in the mayhem themselves.

- 1 evistro (E)
- 2 wererats (W)

When the PCs move close to either the southern or the eastern doorway, read:

A foul creature stalks the space bounded by the square columns, but it stops short of crossing that boundary.



2 Wererats (W)	Level 3 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid (shapechanger)	XP 150 each
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +7; low-light vision
HP 48; Bloodied 24	
Regeneration 5 (if the wererat takes damage from a silver weapon, its regeneration doesn't function on its next turn)	
AC 17; Fortitude 15, Reflex 16, Will 13	
Immune filth fever (see below)	
Speed 6, climb 4 (not in human form)	
⬇ Short Sword (standard; at-will) ⬆ Weapon	
+8 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage.	
⬇ Bite (standard; at-will) ⬆ Disease	
+8 vs. AC; 1d4 + 2 damage, and the target takes ongoing 2 damage (save ends) and contracts filth fever (see below).	
Change Shape (minor; at-will) ⬆ Polymorph	
A wererat can alter its physical form to appear as a dire rat or a unique human (see Change Shape on page 280 in the <i>Monster Manual</i>). It loses its bite attack in human form.	
Combat Advantage	
The wererat deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common
Skills Bluff +6, Stealth +10, Streetwise +6, Thievery +10	
Str 10 (+1)	Dex 18 (+5) Wis 12 (+2)
Con 16 (+4)	Int 10 (+1) Cha 11 (+1)
Equipment cloak, short sword	

When the PCs attract the evistro's attention, read:

The evistro throws itself against an invisible barrier, unable to get to you. But then a wererat appears at the northern doorway and yells, "I release you, crypt guardian!"

TACTICS

The evistro fights until slain. The wererats flee when reduced to below 10 hit points, heading to room 23.

Filth Fever

The target is cured.

◀ Initial Effect The target loses 1 healing surge.

◀▶ The target takes a -2 penalty to AC, Fortitude defense, and Reflex defense.

◀ Final Effect: The target takes a -2 penalty to AC, Fortitude defense, and Reflex defense. The target loses all healing surges and cannot regain hit points.

Level 3 Disease

Evistro (Carnage Demon) (E)	Level 6 Brute
Medium elemental magical beast (demon)	XP 250
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +4
HP 90; Bloodied 45	
AC 16; Fortitude 18, Reflex 14, Will 14	
Resist 10 variable (1/encounter; see glossary)	
Speed 6	
⬇ Claws (standard; at-will)	
+9 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage.	
⬇ Destructive Bite (minor; at-will)	
Bloodied target only; +8 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage.	
Carnage	
The carnage demon gains a +1 bonus to melee attacks if it has one or more allies adjacent to its target (+3 if one of these allies is another carnage demon). This bonus stacks with combat advantage.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Abyssal
Str 21 (+8)	Dex 12 (+4) Wis 12 (+4)
Con 20 (+8)	Int 5 (+0) Cha 7 (+1)

Unlike other guardians that were bound to specific chambers, the evistro pursues fleeing PCs all the way to the entry room.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The brazier in the corner provides bright light within 10 squares.

Square Prison: The evistro is bound to remain within the square in the middle of the chamber until someone gives it permission to leave. Then it gets an hour to find and kill as many intruders as it can find. It considered the goblins, hobgoblins, and other creatures that live here as "residents."

SHRINE OF THE OBELISK

Encounter Level 1 (450 XP)

SETUP

The rest of the wererats are here, along with the arcanist that leads the gnomes.

1 gnome arcanist (A)

2 wererats (W)

When the PCs reach the southwest doorway, read:

Lines of pews make it clear that this was once a shrine dedicated to the rune-encrusted obelisk at the north end of the room. A gnome stands next to the obelisk, and sidling toward the doorway are two more wererats, their teeth glinting in the torchlight.



Gnome Arcanist (A)	Level 3 Controller (Leader)
Small fey humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +1	Senses Perception +1; low-light vision
Aura of Illusion (Illusion) aura 5; the gnome arcanist and all allies in the aura gain concealment and can hide in the aura.	
HP 46; Bloodied 23	
AC 16; Fortitude 13, Reflex 15, Will 13	
Speed 5; see also <i>fey step</i>	
⚔ Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	+6 vs. AC; 1d4 damage.
⚡ Scintillating Bolt (standard; at-will) ♦ Radiant	Ranged 10; +6 vs. Fortitude; 1d6 + 4 radiant damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).
⚡ Startling Glamor (minor; at-will) ♦ Fear, Illusion	Ranged 10; +7 vs. Will; the target shifts 1 square
◀ Illusory Terrain (standard; recharge ⏏ ⏏ ⏏) ♦ Illusion	Close burst 5; targets enemies; +7 vs. Will; the target is slowed (save ends).
Fade Away (immediate reaction, when the gnome arcanist takes damage; encounter) ♦ Illusion	
The gnome arcanist turns invisible until it attacks or until the end of its next turn.	
Fey Step (move; encounter) ♦ Teleportation	
The gnome arcanist teleports 5 squares.	
Reactive Stealth	
If a gnome has cover or concealment when it makes an initiative check at the start of an encounter, it can make a Stealth check to escape notice.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common, Elven
Skills Arcana +12, Bluff +8, Insight +6, Stealth +8	
Str 10 (+1)	Dex 10 (+1) Wis 11 (+1)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 18 (+5) Cha 15 (+3)
Equipment robes, dagger	

TACTICS

The wererats try to keep the PCs occupied in melee so that the gnome can make ranged attacks safely. The wererats try to flank a PC, but not if it means risking an enemy running over to engage the gnome.

The wererats know they're cornered. They fight to the death. But the gnome saves *fey step* and *reactive stealth* to try to escape if reduced below 15 hit points.

2 Wererats (W)	Level 3 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid (shapechanger)	XP 150 each
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +7; low-light vision
HP 48; Bloodied 24	
Regeneration 5 (if the wererat takes damage from a silver weapon, its regeneration doesn't function on its next turn)	
AC 17; Fortitude 15, Reflex 16, Will 13	
Immune filth fever (see below)	
Speed 6, climb 4 (not in human form)	
⚔ Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	+8 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage.
⚔ Bite (standard; at-will) ♦ Disease	+8 vs. AC; 1d4 + 2 damage, and the target takes ongoing 2 damage (save ends) and contracts filth fever (see below).
Change Shape (minor; at-will) ♦ Polymorph	
A wererat can alter its physical form to appear as a dire rat or a unique human (see Change Shape, page 280 in the <i>Monster Manual</i>). It loses its bite attack in human form.	
Combat Advantage	
The wererat deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common
Skills Bluff +6, Stealth +10, Streetwise +6, Thievery +10	
Str 10 (+1)	Dex 18 (+5) Wis 12 (+2)
Con 16 (+4)	Int 10 (+1) Cha 11 (+1)
Equipment cloak, short sword	

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Torches to the left and right of the obelisks would ordinarily emit bright light for 5 squares, but the obelisk appears to have the same light-absorbing property as the sunburst in room 19, so the illumination in this room never exceeds dim.

Pews: Squares with pews count as difficult terrain.

Obelisk: A DC 15 Religion check reveals iconography common to worshipers of Vecna. Other than the weird effect on lighting, the obelisk is not magical.

Rivenroar Treasure: The ceremonial sword, the broken shields, and the battle standard are here.

LORDS OF RIVENROAR AUDIENCE CHAMBER

Encounter Level 1 (500 XP)

SETUP

The deathlock commands the other undead in the Rivenroar catacombs. Unlike Sinruth, the wight loves intruders—they have the life energy that he craves.

- 1 deathlock wight (D)
- 1 boneshard skeleton (B)
- 5 decrepit skeletons

The decrepit skeletons arise in the middle of the first round (roll initiative for them, but don't place them yet).

When the PCs reach either doorway, read:

Two thrones sit along the north wall of this immense chamber. One has a rotting but still fleshy corpse on it, and the other has a bleached skeleton. Other piles of bone litter the ground.

The eyes of the fleshy corpse begin to glow.
"Intrudersssss!" it lisps. "Consssssssume them!"

TACTICS

The first thing the deathlock wight does is shout "Arise, my warriors!" At that point, five of the bone piles coalesce into decrepit skeletons—place them on the map at this point. Then the wight takes its turn, and the decrepit skeletons take their normal place in the initiative order.

The wight tries to paralyze as many enemies with *grave bolt* as possible, especially any PC that looks like a cleric or paladin. When PCs move too close,

the wight uses *horrific visage* to make some breathing room. It saves its *reanimate* power for when the boneshard skeleton dies, because it knows that the decrepit skeletons keep coming back indefinitely.

The boneshard skeleton picks whatever appears to be the most competent melee combatant and attacks, first with the *boneshard* and then with the scimitar. It uses its *boneshard blast* if it can hit three or more PCs with it.

The decrepit skeletons are bolstered by the necromantic energies coursing through the catacombs. Each round at the beginning of the decrepit skeletons' turn, one slain decrepit skeleton returns to life. The only way to stop this perpetual reanimation is for all living creatures to leave the chamber or for all five decrepit skeletons to be dead at the start of the decrepit skeletons' turn.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: None beyond what the PCs bring with them.

Thrones: They appear golden, but it's just gilt.

Bone Piles: Five of these—you choose which ones—animate and become decrepit skeletons at the start of the deathlock wight's first turn. The others are merely difficult terrain—not that the PCs are likely to step in those squares anyway.

Frescoes: Paintings on the walls depict a series of older, robed humans, standing on clouds or riding chariots through the sky. The faces are more realistic than the other elements, suggesting that the art is intended as portraiture. A History check (DC 20) indicates that at least some match historical descriptions of the lords of Rivenroar. Three of the portraits along the south wall have been defaced.

Treasure: Parcels L, M, and N are in this room, preferably mounted on the walls or attached to the throne somehow.



Deathlock Wight (D) Level 4 Controller	
Medium natural humanoid (undead) XP 175	
Initiative +4 Senses Perception +1; darkvision	
HP 54; Bloodied 27	
AC 18; Fortitude 15, Reflex 16, Will 17	
Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant	
Speed 6	
⬇ Claw (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic	
+9 vs. AC; 1d6 necrotic damage, and the target loses 1 healing surge.	
➤ Grave Bolt (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic	
Ranged 20; +6 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 4 necrotic damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).	
➤ Reanimate (minor; encounter) ♦ Healing, Necrotic	
Ranged 10; affects a destroyed undead creature of a level no higher than the deathlock wight's level + 2; the target stands as a free action with a number of hit points equal to one-half its bloodied value. This power does not affect minions.	
⬅ Horrific Visage (standard; recharge ⏏⏏⏏) ♦ Fear	
Close blast 5; +7 vs. Will; 1d6 damage, and the target is pushed 3 squares.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common
Skills Arcana +10, Religion +10	
Str 10 (+2)	Dex 14 (+4) Wis 9 (+1)
Con 14 (+4)	Int 16 (+5) Cha 18 (+6)

5 decrepit skeletons Level 1 Minion	
Medium natural animate (undead) XP 25 each	
Initiative +3 Senses Perception +2; darkvision	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 16; Fortitude 13, Reflex 14, Will 13	
Immune disease, poison	
Speed 6	
⬇ Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+6 vs. AC; 4 damage.	
➤ Shortbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 15/30; +6 vs. AC; 3 damage.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages –
Str 15 (+2)	Dex 17 (+3) Wis 14 (+2)
Con 13 (+1)	Int 3 (-4) Cha 3 (-4)
Equipment heavy shield, longsword, shortbow, quiver of 10 arrows	

Boneshard Skeleton (B) Level 5 Brute	
Medium natural animate (undead) XP 200	
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +4; darkvision	
HP 77; Bloodied 38 see also boneshard burst	
AC 17; Fortitude 16, Reflex 16, Will 15	
Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant	
Speed 6	
⬇ Scimitar (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic, Weapon	
+9 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage (crit 1d8 + 11) plus 5 necrotic damage.	
⬇ Boneshard (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic	
+9 vs. AC; 1d4 + 3 damage, and ongoing 5 necrotic damage (save ends).	
⬅ Boneshard Burst (when first bloodied and again when the boneshard skeleton is reduced to 0 hit points) ♦ Necrotic	
Close burst 3; +8 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 3 necrotic damage.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages –
Str 16 (+5)	Dex 16 (+5) Wis 14 (+4)
Con 17 (+5)	Int 3 (-2) Cha 3 (-2)
Equipment scimitar	

About the Author

David Noonan is a designer/developer for Wizards of the Coast. His credits include co-designing *Dungeon Master's Guide II*, *Heroes of Battle*, and numerous products for the *EBERRON* campaign setting. He lives in Washington state with his wife, son, and daughter.

Brave Sinruth,

The Red Hand will rise again! The other remnants take great cheer in your recent attacks on commerce coming into The Blight That is Brindol.

We're particularly pleased with your ability to inspire a fighting spirit in others, whether they have true goblin blood or merely wish they did. To be blunt, we think you should have many more soldiers under your command.

Many, many more.

And recent events have rendered some remnants leaderless. With a bold stroke on your part, the remnants would rally to the Red Hand you so proudly display.

As your bold stroke, do this: Attack the The Blight That is Brindol by night. Focus your efforts on their Hall of Great Valor, for it mocks the many hard-won victories by the first Red Hand of Doom. Take from them the spoils of war they shamelessly hang on their walls and bring those antiques back to Rivenroar.

Do this before the moon is next full. And with regard to your previous question, turning over captives to your unliving allies at Rivenroar is perfectly acceptable. War sometimes makes strange bedfellows, and we appreciate how you've united such disparate forces under your banner. Whatever prisoners you take from Rivenroar you can give to the wight.

Fight with the valor of your ancestors, Sinruth. And keep your hands stained red with the blood of the weak! I will visit you again next month, at a time of my choosing.

The Emissary