

The Dragon's Wish

Instant Adventure for 4-6 characters levels 9-12



As your party comes over the rise of the hill, the dragon comes into view beneath you: A massive golden body, lying in sharp contrast amidst the tall emerald grass beneath a small grove of trees. Although its blood flows from a plethora of wounds and the mighty muscles that line its sides heave slowly with labored breathing, you see that there is a majesty about this creature that remains even as it struggles with the slow spiral of death.

At your cautious approach the dragon's flickering lids fly open, and you find yourself suddenly staring into eyes whose unfathomable depths betray the great age of history that lies behind them. A voice that was once melodious and deep rasps forth with sounds that will soon become a death rattle:

"You must help me..."

"I know you to be heroes. Know me to be Al'theirean'il'hariad'el'theron. In this, my final hour, I must beg your aid. I ask you to take your sword and pierce me here." His jagged claw points to his breast. "Take my heart. Carry it to the Hall of Dragons, wherein lie the hearts of all my kin. Do this and you shall be rewarded by the Keepers of the Hall."

A keening wail of mortal pain echoes through the grove, and then the dragon speaks his final words: "Please. Grant my dying wish."

And then the light is gone from those noble, gold-streaked orbs... And all is silent within the grove.

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INSTANT ADVENTURE



The Dragon's Wish

by Justin Bacon

Requires the use of the Dungeons & Dragons® Player's Handbook, Third Edition, published by Wizards of the Coast®



Series I

Number 8

How to Use This Product

This adventure takes place in the world of Menarra, the setting of Fantasy Flight's bestselling *Diskwars* fantasy battle game. This provides a convenient frame of reference, but the adventure is specifically designed to be easily incorporated into any existing D&D campaign. Feel free to alter the names of places and characters and customize the details of the adventure to fit your own world.

You should be able to run this adventure in a single game session. You should read it through at least once and study those sections you will need to know well. In particular, you should familiarize yourself with the features and capabilities of new monsters and magic items introduced in the adventure. You may also wish to photocopy the map on pages 8 and 9, both for your own reference and to show to the players, if appropriate.

Dungeons & Dragons®

This adventure requires the use of the *Dungeons & Dragons® Player's Handbook*, Third Edition, published by Wizards of the Coast.® You won't be able to run the adventure without it.

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THE DRAGON'S WISH

By Justin Bacon

DM BACKGROUND

The plot of *The Dragon's Wish* consists of three sections. First, the PCs encounter a dying dragon, who asks that they carry his heart to the Hall of Dragons (see back cover). Next, the PCs must travel to the Valley of the Dragons—where the Hall is located - and gain entrance. Finally, they must negotiate with the Vyssok Sentries who stand guard there in order to gain permission to enter the Hall.

This basic structure, however, has been made as adaptable as possible in an attempt to make the adventure as useful to the DM as possible.

THE DRAGON'S WISH

The essential event that serves as an adventure hook for *The Dragon's Wish* is the encounter with a dying dragon. This can be handled in a number of different ways, the simplest of which is to simply have the PCs meet the dragon in a chance encounter (perhaps with the dragon swooping dramatically overhead before crashing just beyond the hill in front of them). Perhaps the dragon, knowing that he is dying, seeks the PCs out.

If the dragon is dying as a result of inflicted injuries, some consideration of how these wounds were inflicted may be warranted: For example, the PCs may rescue the dragon from its attackers. Or the dragon may have escaped his attackers before running into the PCs, introducing the possibility that the PCs might be pursued.

The adventure also assumes that the dragon encountered is gold. By changing this, and/or the dragon's personality, you can create a variety of different scenes. For example, a crippled, dying red dragon might attempt to blackmail the PCs into delivering his heart to the Hall. You may also want to change the details of the *Dragon's Heart* (see page 15) to match a new dragon type.

A substantially different take on the scene might involve the PCs being the ones to mortally injure the dragon in question (although if the dragon remains gold it may be difficult to justify the PCs doing this).

TO THE HALL OF DRAGONS

The journey that takes the characters to the Hall of Dragons can be made as simple or as complicated as you like. The easiest method, of course, is to have the dragon tell the PCs exactly where the Hall is located, perhaps somewhere nearby: The characters can simply pick up the Heart and go.

To make matters more difficult, you may choose to have the dragon die before he can reveal the location of the Hall. Or you might choose to place the Hall in some distant locale, to which the PCs must travel (perhaps becoming mired in other adventures along the way). Of course, by combining both, you can truly complicate the characters' quest.

THE VALLEY OF THE DRAGONS

The Hall of Dragons is found in a hidden vale, deep within Mt. Arathon, known as the Valley of the Dragons.

The significance of both the Valley and the Hall is left in the hands of the DM. At the high end of the scale, they can serve as a central element of draconian society in your campaign: Dragons from all over the world may congregate upon these two locations. At the other end, they may be possessed of only local significance.

Another option is to limit the importance of the location to a specific draconian sub-culture: Perhaps only dragons of a specific color, or who serve a particular god, revere the Valley and the Hall.

MOUNT ARATHON

The sides of Mount Arathon rise straight out of the plains, a granite wall reaching up to the cottony clouds that cling to its peaks, and standing in stark contrast to the vibrant blues of the summer sky.

1. TUNNELS

Mount Arathon is riddled with subterranean passages. Most of these simply dead-end rather quickly, but these three tunnels come together in the natural cavern that contains the secret entrance to the Valley of the Dragons (see area #2).

2. CAVERN

The passageway you've been following angles downward sharply for nearly thirty yards before flattening out and suddenly opening into a natural grotto. There are two other passages leading away from this chamber.

This entrance is used by those who, unlike the dragonkin, cannot simply fly over the mountain. The secret door can be detected with a Search check (DC 20).

3. DRAGON'S ENTRY

Passing through the short hallway of finished stone you come into a large chamber. Directly before you are two doors of stone set into the wall and with no obvious mechanism for opening them. To either side of these doors is a statue, carved into the form of a dragon. With their heads nearly brushing the ceiling they are an awe-inspiring sight... but you barely have time to see them before they surge into a ponderous motion, swinging their heads toward you and speaking in a deep, booming voice: "Why have you come before us?"

The two dragons are actually stone golems, which have been magically enchanted to possess the breath weapon of a red dragon. They have been placed here to protect this entrance to the Valley and will attack if necessary. On the other hand, if the characters can convince them that they are here on legitimate business (showing them the dragon's heart would be the easiest way to do so), the dragon golems will open the doors for them.

If, for some reason, the characters end up slaying the golems they will need to find some other way to open the doors (which weigh several tons each).

Stone Dragon Golem (2): CR 13; Large Construct; HD 14d10; 110 hp each; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft. (can't run); AC 26 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +18 natural); Atk: 1 slam (tail) +18 melee (2d10+9), bite +18 melee (2d6); Face 5 ft. by 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SA Breath Weapon (cone of fire, 12d10, every 1d4 rounds, Reflex half (DC 25), can use and bite); SQ construct, magic immunity, damage reduction 30/+2; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 29, Dex 9, Con 21, Int 16, Wis 11, Cha 12; AL LN.

4. HALLWAY

This hallway is made of the same gray, cut stone as the rest of the Mt. Arathon complex. A red carpet runs down the middle of it, but it is faded with age and lack of care.

This area was once home to a brotherhood of Vyssok monks devoted to the draconic ideal. Three hundred years ago the members of the sect received a "holy calling," whose nature they refused to divulge, and disappeared to the north. They have not been heard from since. The Vyssok who remained in the Valley as sentries have left the monastery abandoned.

5. MONK'S CELL

Beyond the wooden door is a narrow room, furnished spartanly with nothing more than a bed and a small, utilitarian chest. A thick layer of dust covers everything.

These were once the quarters in which the monks lived. They are, indeed, abandoned with the following exceptions:

- 5A:** The chest in this room has a false bottom. Hidden inside are three potions of *cure light wounds* that were left behind by the monk who lived here.
- 5B:** Two kobolds (see area 7) have made their home in these rooms. As the PCs enter, they jump to their feet and attack.
- 5C:** Kobolds have also settled down in these rooms, but are currently with the others in area 7 or on patrol in area 8. The rooms are littered with scraps of food, rags, and refuse.

6. ABANDONED ALTAR

The double doors to this room swing open easily, revealing a large, barren chamber. It was apparently once a place of assem-

bly—you can still see the faded outlines where benches once sat on the floor. At the far end of the room is a raised dais, with what appears to be a stone altar upon it. Matching doors face each other on the walls to your left and right.

The top of the altar can be lifted with a successful Strength check (DC 30). Inside, lying on a bed of rich red velvet, are three golden disks about the size of a man's palm. Each of the disks represents a facet of draconic existence (as the monk's philosophy perceived it): Wisdom (dragon's eye), Strength (dragon's claw), and Freedom (dragon's wings). The disks are valued at 1000 gp each. A Knowledge (Arcana or Religion) check (DC 15) reveals that removing the disks would desecrate the altar.

The kobolds (see area 7) use this room as a gathering place, but they are careful to keep it scrupulously clean: If anyone ever comes this way, they want to be able to surprise them. If the characters make any loud noise (for example, by carelessly dropping the top of the altar) the kobolds will spend three rounds preparing, and then rush through the two doors and attack.

7. KOBOLD'S WARREN

As you open the door, your nostrils are immediately assaulted by a pungent, reptilian odor. A dozen or so lizard-like humanoids seem to have made their home amidst the squalor and filth of this room.

There are 14 kobolds in both of these rooms. Once combat breaks out, the kobolds in the other area will hear the sounds of fighting and appear within 1d4 rounds. If the battle is going badly for them (which it almost certainly will), one of the kobolds will attempt to escape. 1d6 rounds later he will return with the kobolds from area 5C and possibly (at your discretion) one of the hunting parties in area 8 (unless, of course, the characters have already taken care of these kobolds).

This band of kobolds found the secret entrance to the monastery several months ago. They were able to get past the dragon golems unchallenged because of their draconic heritage. When they discovered the security of the abandoned monastery they decided to stay, and have been surviving by harvesting the phosphorescent growth of the Maze (area 8) and by sending hunting parties out into the lands around Mt. Arathon.

Kobolds (14): CR 1/6; SZ S (reptilian humanoid); HD 1/2d8; hp 4; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +1 natural, +2 leather); Atk: halfspear -1 melee (1d6), light crossbow +2 ranged (1d8); Face 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ darkvision, light sensitivity; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 6, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10; AL LE. Skills: Craft (trapmaking) +2, Hide +8, Listen +2, Move Silently +4, Search +2, Spot +2. Feats: Alertness.

8. THE MAZE

These narrow passages are coated with magical, phosphorescent fungi that is capable of leaching nutrients directly from the rock. Two bands of eight kobolds patrol the maze, selectively harvesting this fungus.

The entire area is a final test of worthiness for those seeking to enter the Valley. When the monks still lived here they could bypass the test for those they knew to be worthy. But since they left, the Vyssok haven't felt the need to make matters any easier for the infrequent traveler who comes this way. Areas 9–11 each contain a key that opens the door in area 12. The clue in each room, however, actually belongs to another room's puzzle.

9. THE FIRST TEST

The narrow passage dead-ends in a small room that is brightly lit, in stark contrast to the dim phosphorescence through which you've been walking, by some form of magical illumination. On the far wall of the room, a brick has been removed from the wall, and you can see a golden key hovering in the resulting gap. On the wall above the key an inscription has been carved in an elegant script: "A key is a key."

The key is illusory. The actual key can be found behind another brick, which can be located with a Search check (DC 20) if the characters specifically look for a loose brick. The clue for this room is found in area 11; the clue in this room belongs to area 10.

10. THE SECOND TEST

A pedestal with a gold key lying on top of it stands in the middle of this plain stone room. On the floor in front of the pedestal are written the words: "Your answer lies beneath the waves."

The key on the pedestal does not belong to the locks on the door in area 12. Instead, this key is used to open a concealed panel in the bottom of the pedestal. The real key (made of silver) is found within. The clue for this room is found in area 9; the clue in this room belongs to area 11.

11. THE THIRD TEST

As you round the corner you see a brightly lit room just a few paces away, and you realize you can hear the faint sound of running water. Entering the room you find it completely empty. Despite this, the gurgling has grown louder. An inscription on the ceiling reads, "The false is real."

There is an underground river located just beneath the floor in this room. One of the stones in the floor can be pried up, revealing the river—and the key (this one made of copper). The clue for this room is found in area 10; the clue in this room belongs to area 9.

12. DOOR TO THE VALLEY

After the narrow confines and dimly lit corridors through which you've been moving, this room is a welcome change. A flight of stone stairs runs down into a broad chamber lined with six torches that burn brightly. A door that is apparently made entirely of platinum dominates the far end of the chamber.

The torches are, in fact, everburning torches. When the PCs take a closer look at the door, read this to them:

The solid platinum of the door has been engraved into a startlingly beautiful array of bas-relief sculptures, depicting the ancient dragons of legend. Near the center of the door are what appear to be three key holes, each of which has been worked into the artwork as the eye of a different dragon: One gold, one silver, and one copper.

The metal of each key, of course, matches the color of the dragon in which its keyhole is disguised. Once all three keys have been turned in their respective locks, the door will slowly swing open. Read the boxed text from area 13.

The door is sealed by the three locks, as well as an *arcane lock* and *hold portal* (cast at 20th level). The DC for any attempts to break it down or force it open is 40.

Successfully solving the key puzzles should be considered a CR 8 challenge for the purposes of rewarding experience. Simply using magic to get past the door should probably not result in an XP reward.

THE CITADEL

13. THE VALLEY STAIR

As the last key is turned in the lock, the door slowly swings back upon its concealed hinges and the welcome scent of fresh air brushes past your faces. Stepping forward, you see the door is, in fact, set into the side of the mountain, and passing through it brings you out upon a broad expanse of grass under a sparkling blue sky. It takes you a moment to realize that you are standing at one end of a vale that must be hidden away in the very heart of the mountains.

Broad marble stairs, paralleled by two rows of free-standing doric columns, have been cut into the turf, and follow the floor of the valley as it sweeps slowly down and away from you. Following it with your eyes you can see, in the distance, what looks like a small village. Far off to your left is what appears to be a forest nestled against the gray stone that towers above this place.

The stairs proceed in a straight line to area 14 in front of the Citadel. The village is a half-mile away, and the Valley as a whole is nearly a mile long. The details of much of the Valley are left to the DM's discretion. For more information on the Vyssok, see the appendix at the end of the module.

14. ENTRANCE TO THE CITADEL

As you draw nearer to the village you can see that most of the buildings are constructed of a rose-colored stone. The stairs are taking you straight towards the nearest structure—a circular building with a domed roof.

Two Vyssok Sentries stand guard outside this entrance. Make an opposed Spot check between the PCs and the sentries to determine which group sees the other first. Since the sentries have been known to stand at these posts for years without seeing anyone, you may want to give them a -5 penalty to their check. Remember that the characters are standing in the middle of an empty field.

If the PCs are seen first, or if they approach the Vyssok after spotting them, they will be challenged—first in Draconic and then in Common. If they explain their business—or if the dragon's heart is visible—one of the sentries will immediately take them to see General Koriathar in area 19 (taking them through area 15, 16, 17, and 18 in turn). The rest of the boxed text in this section will assume that this course of action is followed. You should modify the text appropriately if the characters manage to get past the sentries.

If the PCs attack the Vyssok, they'll call for help from their two comrades in area 15. One of these additional Vyssok will immediately appear, while the other will enter the Citadel to get help. There are roughly 50 sentries in the Citadel, and these will begin showing up in 1d8 rounds—appearing through the door, around the sides of the building, and from the upper windows of the Citadel. If the characters overcome them they will be placed in the dungeons in the lower level of the Citadel, where General Koriathar will shortly appear to question them.

15. ATRIUM

The outer door leads to a small atrium and another door. Chests line the walls to your left and right. Two more of the sentries stand guard here.

If the PCs are being escorted by one of the sentries from area 14, they will be asked to leave their weapons in the chests, which will then be locked.

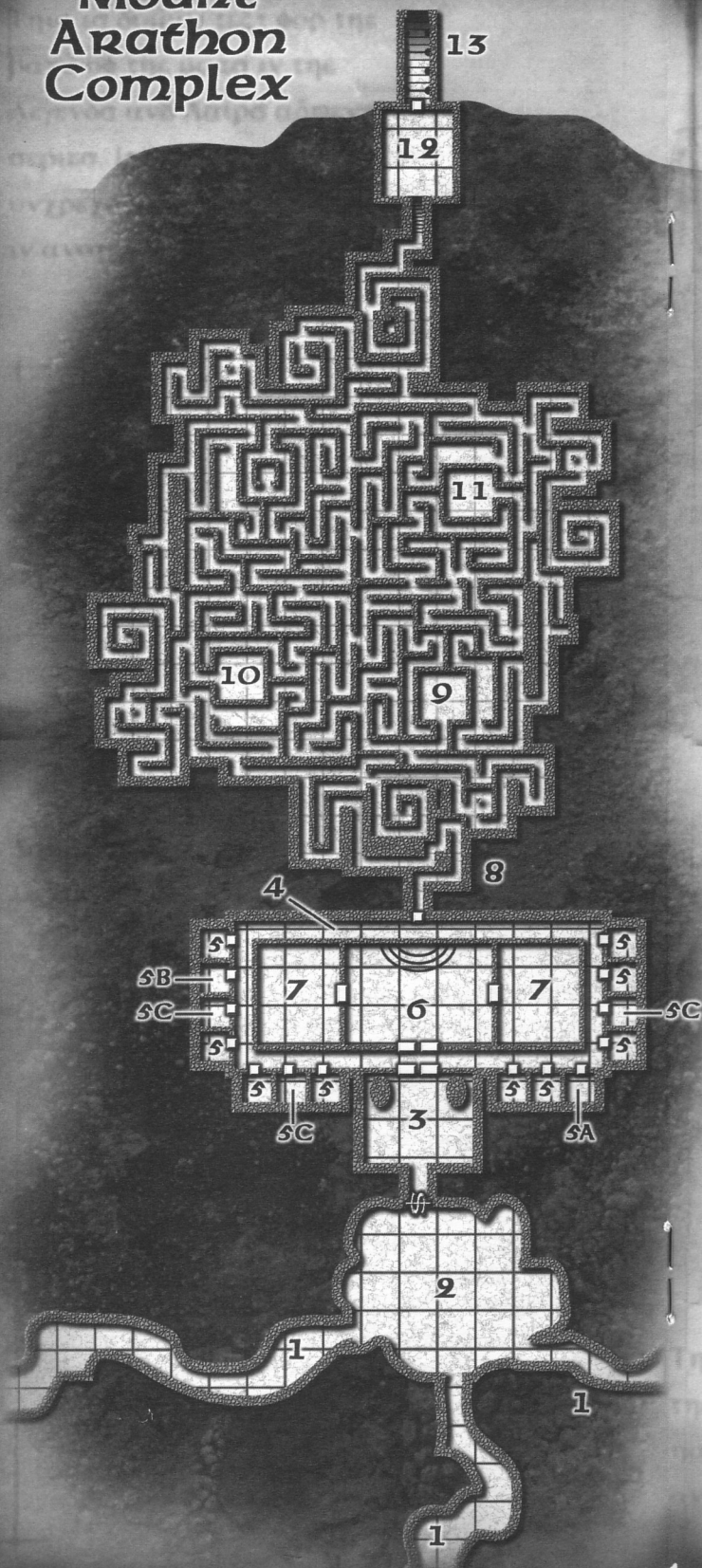
16. HALL

This hall curves around half the Citadel. As one enters the building, the stairs to the left lead to the upper levels of the Citadel. The stairs to the right lead down to a dungeon where prisoners are kept (it currently houses Uthaer—a Vyssok from the village who got overly aggressive while drunk the previous night). The door leading to the Shrine (area 17) is guarded by two more sentries.

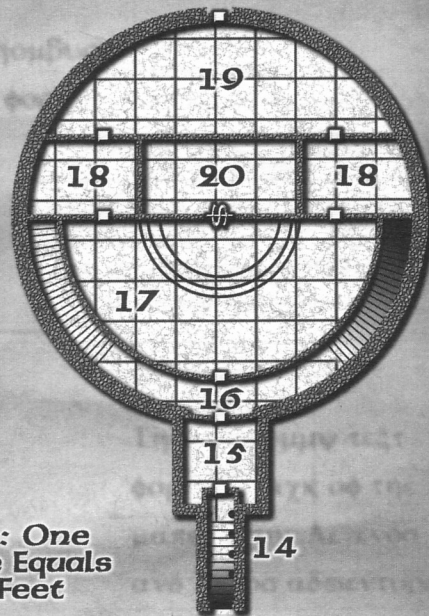
17. SHRINE OF THE SENTRIES

This semicircular room is clearly a holy place. Along the wall is an altar upon a raised dais, and the room is filled with stone benches clearly designed to suit the large physiques of your rep-

Mount Arathon Complex

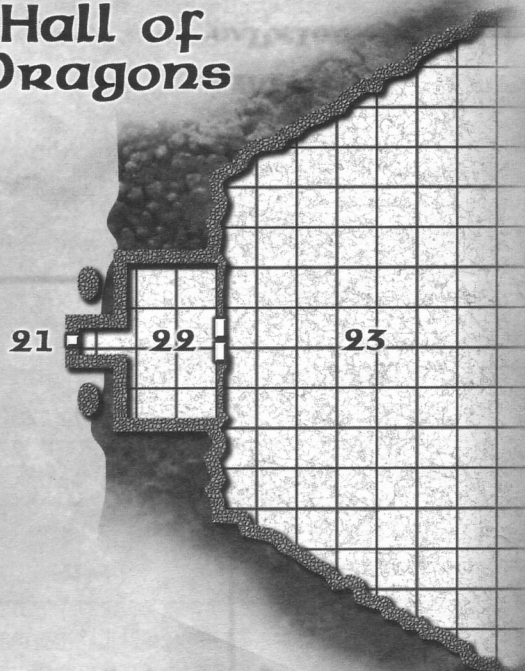


The Citadel

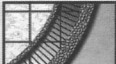





Scale: One Square Equals 15 Feet

Hall of Dragons



Key

-  Stairs
-  Secret Door
-  Door
-  Mountain

tilian hosts. The walls of the room are inscribed with some sort of alien script, which pulses with a blue light.

Each evening this room is filled by the Vyssok Sentries who make their home in the Citadel (the other Vyssok attend a church in the village). The text is Draconic—selections from *Athor il Draken* (*Way of the Dragon*, one of the three holy texts of the Vyssok)—and has been enchanted with a variant of the *continual flame* spell. The secret entrance to area 20 is a panel concealed behind the altar.

18. MEDITATION CHAMBERS

Two doors lead into this small room, which is seemingly kept austere by intention. The wall farthest from the door is inscribed with more of the pulsing blue letters. In front of this wall kneels a sentry, his head bowed in contemplation.

These meditation chambers are used as a place for the Vyssok to focus his thoughts. They are intentionally built along a major traffic lane in order to provide a challenge to the meditation, but it is still considered rude to deliberately interrupt.

19. COMMON ROOM

General Koriathar is off-duty when the PCs arrive at the

Rose-tinted windows line the curved walls of what is clearly a common room. Seemingly jovial sentries sit at the tables that fill it, and a bar is set against the wall nearest the doors. As you enter, however, the bustling activity comes to an abrupt stop as all the eyes in the room turn towards you.

Citadel, but can be found here. If the PCs (or their guide) do not approach him, then he will approach them. He is still wearing the formal armor and decorations of his position, and cuts an impressive figure. Assuming the PCs tell him why they have come to the Valley, he will answer any questions they may have, and then order their guide to take them to the Hall of Dragons (area 21), which lies beyond the village.

20. SECRET ARMORY

As you slip through the hidden panel you find yourself surrounded by a wide variety of arms and armor displayed upon the walls. Your carefully trained eyes identify the pieces as being of the highest masterwork quality.

Several of the pieces here are magical. How many, and whether or not, having been designed for the draconic sentries, they are usable by the PCs, is left to your discretion.

THE HALL OF DRAGONS

21. THE MOUNTAIN DOOR

A platinum door like the one that led you into the valley is set into the side of the mountain here. To either side of the door, facing you, are two small statues of sinuous dragons.

If the characters have been taken here by a Vyssok guide:

Your guide turns to you: "I can go no farther with you. It is forbidden."

The sentry will wait here until the characters return.

22. ENTRANCE TO THE HALL

By now you are familiar with the austere, yet elegantly simple, stonework of these chambers beneath the mountains, but here the passage is large enough for a dragon to walk above you. Before you are two glorious, golden doors. A slight depression in the floor in front of the doors is the only other feature of this massive chamber.

When the PCs place the dragon's heart in the depression before the double doors, read the following:

A flash of blinding light fills the room and a deep rumbling echoes in the chamber. As your eyes clear, you can see that the doors are opening—and beyond them is utter darkness.

23. THE HALL OF DRAGONS

A vast, natural cavern, its ceiling towering far above you and its depths lost among the murky shadows, stretches out before you. The unfinished stone glows faintly with a dark purple light, barely more luminous than the darkness itself. And in the midst of this, each resting in its own recess within the wall, are the Hearts of Dragons, their countless faceted depths filled with the bright light of life. As you watch, you can see each heart pulsing, flashing streams of light rushing from one corner of the chamber to another. The Hall of Dragons is a place of unspeakable beauty. You know that, here, the spirits of dragons rest and whisper to each other for all eternity.

After a few moments you become aware of a small, golden light that is making its way toward you. This tiny mote cheerfully comes to rest, hovering just a few feet in front of you. It twinkles faintly, and then begins to return the way it came.

The characters should follow the light. If they don't, the little mote will become increasingly insistent until they comply. You might consider having it flash an angry red if they demonstrate particular obstinacy.

The bobbing, darting light leads you deeper into the Hall. The gloom slowly enshrouds the door through which you came, and still the chamber seems without end. Finally, the light stops abruptly, and turns toward the wall. As you follow it, you see that it is taking you to one of the small niches in the wall. It floats gently into the empty recess, and then abruptly winks out of existence.

When the PCs place the dragon's heart into the recess, read the following:

"Heroes..."

A deep, melodious voice seems to fill the air all around you - the voice of Al'theiran'il'hariad'el'theron, full and rich once more.

"You have done me—and my people—a great service, and we shall not forget. I shall not forget. Although it is now far beyond my ken to repay the debt I owe you, my eternal thanks shall always go with you."

When the characters are done talking to Al'theiran'il'hariad'el'theron, the golden mote will appear once more to lead them out of the Hall. As they leave, the doors will swing shut behind them—an impassable barrier sadly awaiting the passing of another dragon.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

There should be some sort of major reward coming to the characters for fulfilling The Dragon's Wish. A few possibilities are outlined below.

1. The dragon may choose to reveal the secret location of his hoard to the PCs by way of compensation—the PCs only have to retrieve it in order to gain a mighty reward. This idea can be complicated in any number of ways: The PCs may still need to overcome the defenses in the lair (whether or not the dragon tells them of these - and how much he may forget—is left to your discretion). Perhaps another adventuring group has already pillaged the hoard, forcing the PCs to track down their property.

2. You might have the Vyssok, expressing their gratitude for the service the PCs have performed for their draconic masters, take them to their armory (see area 20) and allow them each a choice of a magic item.

3. A simple monetary reward, of course, is always an option.

4. The Dragons of the Hall might choose to grant each PC (or the group as a whole) a wish.

5. The Vyssok might give the PCs a token for a favor, which will be honored by dragons they encounter. This token might only be useful once, or perhaps they will be able to use it more often. And, of course, it remains an open question whether or not any particular dragon, especially an evil one, would honor the token.

FURTHER ADVENTURES

In addition to complications arising from their reward, there

are a number of other adventures for which the events in The Dragon's Wish might be used as a springboard.

1. If the dragon they have helped had an enemy, the PCs may have earned her enmity through their efforts.

2. The Order of the Dragon disappeared to the north and has not been heard from since... what happened to them?

3. Several months after the adventure has concluded, the PCs are suddenly visited by a battered and bloody Vyssok. One of the hearts has been stolen (by a sect of evil dragons? By an evil mage bent on warping its powers to his own foul ends? By a misguided thief?). The PCs helped in the past... will they help again?

4. The Forest of the Valley (see the description of area 13) has been infested since before the Vyssok can remember with a foul evil. If the PCs investigate they must overcome the horrors of the forest, only to discover a dark shrine dedicated to a forgotten draconic god. And beneath the shrine are catacombs leading deep into bowels of Mt. Arathon...

5. There is a legend that when the last niche of the Hall is filled, it will mark the beginning of X'ru, the prophesied apocalypse that will bring about the extinction of the dragonkin.

NEW MONSTER

VYSSOK DRAGON



Large Dragon

Hit Dice: 5d12+3 (48 hp)

Initiative: +7 (Dex, Improved Initiative)

Speed: 30 ft., fly 100 ft. (average)

AC: 21 (-1 size, +3 Dex, +9 natural)

Attacks: 2 claws +8 melee

Damage: Claw 1d8+4

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Breath weapon (cone of fire) 6d10 (DC 19)

Special Qualities: Immunities (sleep, paralysis, fire), darkvision, low-light vision

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +3

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 14

Skills: Listen +4, Sense Motive +4, Spot +6

Feats: Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Cleave, Blind-fight, Endurance

Climate/Terrain: Any Mountains

Organization: Clan (100-1000), Solitary

Challenge Rating: 5

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually lawful neutral

Advancement: By character class

The Vyssok are the chosen people of the dragons. When the world was still young, their ancestors were selected from among the sentient races and transformed with arcane magics into what they are today: The realization of draconic perfection in humanoid form.

Vyssok dragons stand eight feet tall, with thick scales covering their heavily muscled forms. Their faces match their draconic ancestors, giving them a proud, almost regal countenance. A pair of sweeping wings makes them a majestic sight for all who see them at peace... and a terrifying one for those who arouse their anger.

The Vyssok typically live for the better part of two hundred years, although some have been known to reach their fifth century.

COMBAT

Vyssok dragons generally prefer halberds and axes, which they wield not only with immense strength, but surprising speed. Swords are also weapons of choice. The Vyssok will also take advantage of their ability to fly, often by taking to the air and peppering their foes with crossbow bolts.

Breath Weapon (Su): Vyssok have a cone of fire breath weapon.

THE VYSSOK OF THE VALLEY

The Vyssok have been charged with protecting the holy and mystic sites of the dragon races—and, most importantly, the Hall of Dragons and the Valley in which it resides. This is a duty the Vyssok have held since the time their race first came into being.

The Valley was once home to two important groups of Vyssok: The Order of the Sentries and the Order of the Dragon. The Order of the Dragon (see above) left the Valley, and has not been heard from since. But the Sentries remain, carrying out the duties that have been passed down from one generation to the next for a thousand years.

THE VILLAGE

Approximately 500 Vyssok, including the 50 sentries of the Citadel, live in the buildings of the village. Built of a rose-colored stone whose remarkable endurance has guarded it against the ages, it is believed that these buildings have stood here since before the Vyssok came to guard the Hall (although what may have lived here before is a mystery whose answer may never be known).

THE DRAGON'S HEART

A gold dragon's heart cannot be created—it must be taken from the body of a gold dragon within 1d4 minutes of death. Physically, it takes the form of a multifaceted and incredibly beautiful gemstone—a deep gold in color, spherical in shape, and six inches or more in diameter. Philosophers have been known to lose their souls studying the inscrutable depths of a gold dragon's heart.

A dragon's heart also houses the soul of the dragon from which it was taken, and this powerful spirit is capable of granting powers to a user it finds worthy (and denying them to those it does not). Once per day the power of the heart can be used like a *heal* spell cast by a 15th level cleric. It can also be used once per day to invoke a *foresight* spell to warn the character of danger for a duration of one hour. Three times per day the heart can lend the strength the dragon had in life: The user's skin will toughen and appear to become composed of leathery scales, granting a +4 bonus to AC as per a *mage armor* spell.

Two continuous effects also benefit anyone who carries a dragon's heart. First, they are permanently under the effects of a *protection from fire* spell. Finally, a gold dragon's luck is carried with it past its grave. A person who carries the heart receives a +1 luck bonus to all saving throws and similar dice rolls, as per a *stone of good luck*.

Market Price: 200,000 gp

