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Any Level



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THE OGRE CITY OF DRAHK'SUHL

by Travis Heermann

In my experience, ogres are stupid, lazy creatures possessing little more than a rudimentary intelligence. They are nothing more than brutal killers, scavengers, and raiders, with a dim-witted hatred of anything resembling civilization. However, I once overheard two of them speaking among themselves of a legendary city, a place where ogres and their kin could meet and trade without fear of harassment from the more "civilized" races. They named this place Drahk'Suhl — a city hidden beneath the ancient shoulders of a dormant volcano, at a gateway to the Lower Earth. At that moment I vowed that I would find the legendary Drahk'Suhl, or die trying.

I found Drahk'Suhl infamous among giant races, a place where traders swap weapons and booty, where food and drink are plenty, where underlings do one's every bidding, and where gladiator pits slake the most bloodthirsty appetite.

One might say the opportunity for adventure in such a place is great. But this is true only for those with a brave heart, a keen wit, and cunning wiles... a person such as myself.

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by Travis Heermann



Requires the use of the
Dungeons & Dragons® Player's Handbook,
Third Edition, published by
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GAME MASTER BACKGROUND

The city of Drahk'Suhl is a mini-campaign or city setting designed for characters of all races, levels, and classes. Secreted within the bowels of a dormant volcano, Drahk'Suhl's roads are honeycombed with miles of lava tunnels, many of which connect to the deeper, darker underworld beneath the surface. These endless tunnels connect with underground lairs and forgotten dungeons. Drahk'Suhl works as a starting point for many adventures, and resupply point for forays into the Lower Earth.

The *italicized* text is taken from the travelogue of Jofram the Wanderer and GMs may read it aloud to the PCs or weave into the game narrative, as desired. GMs alone should read non-italicized text.

The city of Drahk'Suhl remains unique among the ogre race. No other ogre settlement has grown so large or so successful, thanks almost completely to the leadership and foresight of Jin'Zil, an old and cunning Ogre Mage. It boasts a thriving economy based on the trade of goods (legitimate and otherwise) between the surface world and the races of the underground.

The city divides into three areas: the worker class inhabits the lower levels; the middle levels contain all commerce and nearly all the non-worker denizens and guests; the upper level is where Jin'Zil and his cohorts live, enjoying the luxury purchased with the labor of those below.

Nearly every race calls Drahk'Suhl home, but the majority dwelling underground are kobolds, orcs, hobgoblins, and the like. They come to trade with the surface world and each other. As a result, the traders here are generally rougher than the city-bred merchant is. The middle level swarms with those seeking wealth, the bodyguards they bring with them, and the promise of adventure.

The sole underlying purpose of Drahk'Suhl is the accumulation of wealth in Jin'Zil's coffers. He created the city for that cause alone. Even normal ogres act with cooperation and design here. Those individuals who do not or cannot work together find themselves exiled.

Oddly, the locals expect a surprising degree of order. Some attribute this to the presence of the Black Nails — elite ogre fighters, who enforce the order and laws of the Mahk-Turan. The Nails imposing presence deters those with outright criminal intent. Any violent disputes are resolved in the arena; fighting openly elsewhere garners the Black Nails' involvement.

ECONOMY

The denizens of Drahk'Suhl use small rectangular bars as currency instead of coins. Silver, gold, and copper bars are exchanged. Many bars are quite worn after years of use, but the merchants and the Mahk-Turan still accept their value. Anyone caught with forgeries or shaving a bar, faces severe reprimand and punishment from the Black Nails.

For ease of nomenclature, gp, sp, and cp are used universally in this gazetteer.

LAWS

The Mahk-Turan are a body of ogre magi who govern Drahk'Suhl. The Mahk-Turan pass all laws and the Black Nails, their enforcers, exact penalties and punishments according to the council's will. Though the list of crimes and offenses catches many unawares, those with power and influence find loopholes or utilize bribes to circumvent the rules. No amount of money can save a spellcaster, however. Only the priests of Zohl'nahk and the ogre magi council itself may cast spells. Feel free to elaborate for your campaign the small details or crimes and punishments, but for serious crimes the penalty is the Pit (area #3), an ancient lava tube two miles deep, into which all city "refuse," living and otherwise, is thrown.

Similarly, the Mahk-Turan forbids the killing or maiming of a worker. Anyone who does so must immediately pay the worker's contract (200 gp). If they cannot pay, the Black Nails confiscate their belongings before throwing the killer into the Pit. Maimed workers encounter a similar fate.

Population: 1,000 workers of many different races, 150 ogres, 100 misc. other individuals

Government: Despotic Mageocracy

Imports: Food, spirits, trade goods, black market goods

Exports: Precious metals and ores, exotic items

Important NPCs: Jin'Zil, Ogre Maguhl, and Chaal'Mahk, Captain of the Black Nails

HISTORY

A hundred years ago, the only things that called the caverns of Drahk'Suhl home were ogres living in primitive squalor. When Jin'Zil, a powerful ogre mage, discovered it, he recognized its potential — highly defensible and at the midpoint between the surface world and the Lower Earth. Jin'Zil seized control of the ogres and used them to send slaving forays into the territory of the Svirfneblin. The ogres captured many of the deep gnomes and forced them to enlarge the existing cavern. The others grew enraged by the raids and launched a failed attack on the ogre settlement. For over a decade, the deep gnomes fought a bloody war against the ogres, but neither side gained the upper hand. Jin'Zil, realizing the war was bad for business, offered the deep gnomes a truce. He would release the slaves if the deep gnomes' attacks ceased. Thanks largely to the magical charm of the ogre mages, the gnomes agreed, and the truce has lasted to the present day.

Ogres are ultimately quite lazy creatures, so another source of menial labor was necessary. Jin'Zil offered gold to any who brought him criminals or prisoners of other races. However, to avoid angering the tribes or clans of the prisoners that he purchased, he did not keep them as slaves. He kept them only for a short period of indentured servitude. The prisoners were free to own property, and ostensibly live, as they liked. However, they had to obey the ogres and could not leave until they had paid the price of their contract. So now a large underclass of indentured workers, consisting of many races both good and evil, performs the day-to-day functions of Drahk'Suhl.

SOCIETY

The city's day-to-day functions, such as distribution of water, mining, refuse removal, etc., fall to the workers, numbering about one thousand. Races of all alignments living in uneasy proximity to each other have created a society that is as unique as Drahk'Suhl itself. The ratio of good to evil workers is about half-and-half, varying in either direction with startling regularity.

Since the city of Drahk'Suhl is underground, its denizens do not recognize any nights or days. The city as a whole never sleeps. The servants work in twelve-hour shifts, with half of the workers either working or sleeping.

The workers live on the lower level of the great cavern in a warren of hollowed-out caves and crude shantytowns. Leaders and sub-leaders take charge among each group, individuals of particularly stalwart or brutal character who have earned or taken their comrades' respect, who resolve disputes within their groups, and who lead the occasional reprisals against the workers of opposite alignment when necessary.

To mark the workers' social status, smiths fit each with a steel collar. Each worker receives approximately one silver piece per day (but this can fluctuate). They may pay off their contract at any time, so they scrimp and hoard their precious coin, eating the poorest of food, dreaming of the day that they finally accumulate the 200 gp required to buy their contract and leave Drahk'Suhl. That equates to over five years at one silver piece per day — without food or clothes. Every mouthful of food they buy pushes back the day of their release. The larger, stronger, and meaner workers often prey upon their neighbors, seeking to steal whatever meager savings they can find. This is all according to Jin'Zil's design. As long as the worker class preoccupies their time with infighting, they cannot focus their attention on the ogre overlords.

The city has no internal food supply. If the imported food ran out, the denizens of the city would quickly resort to eating meat on the foot and the softer races like humans and gnomes would be the first to go.

The middle level of the city is where nearly all commerce takes place. Everyone who is not a worker lives on this level, except for the highest-ranking leaders of the city, who live on the upper level.

SHOW ME THE WAY

Finding the city was difficult, even for me. Many ogres do not know its location, believing it only a legend. Those who do know are unwilling to speak to outsiders. I happened to cross paths with a half-orc merchant who had been there, and for a hefty sum he provided me with a map. I searched for weeks around the skirts of a sleeping volcano, among dozens of ancient tunnels, to find one that the map described. I recognized the entrance by the pile of boulders, carefully arranged to conceal the opening while appearing to be a natural landslide. Heartened after weeks of disappointment, I ventured into the darkness below.

The difficulty of actually finding Drahk'Suhl is left to the GM's discretion, with any number of encounters devised in the search for the entrance to the caverns or once the lava tunnels are found.

The maze of lava tunnels would have been a nightmare to any not reared in the depths. But, after hours of searching, I spotted an inscription chiseled into the wall near an intersection, written in the giant tongue, pointing to Drahk'Suhl. Several more hours and inscriptions later, I met a human trader with a train of pack mules, laden with goods, making his way to the surface. His bodyguards regarded my small size with amusement as I passed.

When I grew weary and sat down to rest, I heard the distant echoes of a familiar din, a murmuring chorus of voices. With fresh strength, I hurried toward the sounds, and as they grew louder, a light drove back the darkness. I rounded a corner and froze in my tracks. A burst of light and noise struck me mute.

The first thing I saw was the mammoth cavern, with three tiers reaching high into the magic-lit vaults above, each teeming with activity. The second thing I saw was the guardpost, with the two largest, nastiest looking ogres I had ever seen. They were nearly three times my height and encased in armor and leaning on tremendous greataxes. Before I realized it, my habits of self-preservation had pressed me against the rough wall of the tunnel when I saw the trio of hard-bitten orcs passing between the guards. They passed another human trader and his bodyguards with little more than glances of contempt. At that moment, I knew that Drahk'Suhl was different.

The main entrance to the city is on the west end of the first level. The PC's can find any entrance the GM wishes, but two Black Nails and two gougers (see new monster) guard each one.

GUARDPOSTS

Every Guardpost maintains two Black Nails and two gougers. The Black Nails respond with immediate force to any disturbance or infraction of the laws. The gougers' training forces them to remain at their posts. They instantly attack anyone wearing a Worker's Collar (see below). Each gouger wears a thick iron band around its neck, which allows Jin'Zil to Dominate them completely (see the *New Magic Item, rod of control*). Because of the power of the rod of control, Jin'Zil is always in telepathic contact with every collared gouger in Drahk'Suhl. He occasionally speaks through the gougers, leading many to believe the creatures are more intelligent than they really are.

I noticed another large inscription carved into the wall behind one of the guards. Written in Common, Draconian, Dwarven, Giant, Orcish, and Goblin was this warning:

"Death in the Pit to any who break the laws of Drahk'Suhl."

"There shall be no fighting. Disputes are resolved in the arena."

"There shall be no unapproved use of magic."

"Workers shall not be harmed."

"All business must be carried out in bars."

The gigantic guards hardly gave a second glance as I passed. Then a boulder beside the path growled and shifted with the sound like grinding stone. I jumped back, and the guards loosed a loud guffaw. I watched in terrified fascination as the large boulder rose up on four legs, revealing its huge claws and hindquarters bristling with coarse black hair. What I thought had been the rather pointed end of the boulder opened up into a ghastly yawn, revealing rows of dagger-like teeth. Its stone-gray tongue lolled out, and fresh spittle began to drip from its jaws. I knew that it "saw" me as clearly as I saw it, because its blank, rocky face followed my movements with perfect precision, but I could discern no eyes. As I backed slowly away, I heard movement behind me, and spun to face another of these terrible creatures easing from its hollow in the naked stone. It took a step toward me, and I spun and dashed away, prompting a fresh roar of laughter from the two guards.

CITY LOCATIONS

I. MAIN CAVERN

The immense cavern glowed from magical light, up to about a hundred feet above, where I could see catwalks for the uppermost level. The ceiling of the great cavern disappeared in the darkness above; how high I could not say. At the entrance, two stone ramps led up to the second level, tiered about forty feet above the floor of the cavern. I searched the cavern for any obvious means of reaching the uppermost level, but found none. Clusters of crudely built shanties spotted the sprawling floor of the cavern, with a distinct divide separating each half of the cavern, like a wide thoroughfare. Hundreds, perhaps thousands of individuals of every race bustled about, all hard at work. The air was dense with the scent of smoke, refuse, and close-packed bodies. At the far end of the cavern, nearly three hundred yards away, I could see a shimmering silvery ribbon falling from the blackness above. A waterfall! Falling into a large, crystal-clear pool, where it appeared the city drew its water.

The workers on the lower level are too concerned with their own business to bother themselves with outsiders. Most all of the workers have a lean and hungry look, with hints of desperation in their eyes. They are free to roam the lower and middle levels at will, but the gougers at each guardpost immediately attack anyone wearing a steel collar who comes too near.

The workers of good alignment have gathered in the caves and shanties on the north side of the main cavern. Their leader is a grisly old dwarf named Tharus. The workers come to him to help them resolve disputes among themselves. These workers try to have as little as possible to do with the ogres or the evil workers. While they hate and distrust the workers "across the road" there is no outright conflict, because the penalty for hurting another worker, any worker, is harsh indeed. Most of the workers of good alignment are very vigilant in protection of one another's savings. Any attempt at thievery earns at the very least a severe beating.

The workers of evil alignment live on the south side of the cavern. Their current leader is a battle-hardened bugbear named Bokk. Only the injunction against harming other workers has kept him from wiping out the "weak ones over there," stealing their silver, and buying his freedom.

The large pool at the eastern end of the cavern is crystal clear, about twenty feet deep, and fed by a waterfall from darkness above, itself fed by some underground river. Since this is the city's only water source, bathing and washing in the pool are forbidden and signs are posted to that effect. Excess water runs away to unknown depths under the rock face on the eastern edge of the pool. Rumor has it that the Ogre Magi brought the river here through months of intense magic, but this is unconfirmed.

2. WORKERS' BAZAAR

The tents and stands line this area, where vendors and merchants who deal with the workers ply their trades. Weapons and magic are not available here, only food and goods. Everything here is of poor quality.

3. THE PIT

The air in this chamber is oppressively hot because of the natural lava tube almost fifty feet across. Two miles below is the hot molten glow of a subterranean magma lake, into which the city's refuse and criminals are thrown. Anyone looking down can see a pinprick orange glow at the bottom of the tube. The tube reaches straight upward all the way to the surface, a mile or more, but sunlight does not pass due to the slight curvature of the passage. Anyone standing too close to the lava floe for too long passes out from the gas and heat. This pass can remain a useful tool for further adventures in any fantasy campaign.

4. THE GIANT'S HEAD INN

Quite possibly the roughest inn I have ever encountered, the Giant's Head was nevertheless the place where I spent the majority of my time. Outside the entrance is a large placard, covered with scrawled challenges. Some cruel joker had covered a separate board with the scrawled names of those branded as cowards; those who had fled the city after legitimately challenged. Easily the most popular place in the city, especially among the ogres, the arena housed fighters of every school and race during my stay, and many of them died at the hands of their enemies during ritual combat.

The ogre-sized tables and benches dominate the southern half of the tavern, and worn benches surround the twenty-foot-deep pit of the arena. During the fights, spectators of a dozen races drink and bet with reckless abandon.

Hanging sheets of canvas divide the northern portion of the chamber into dozens of small rooms, where nearly all visitors to the city stay. Because of the ease with which a determined and skilled thief could operate here, I kept a close eye on my belongings during my stay, but I saw no evidence of any such occurrences.

5. OGRE DENS

These caverns house the majority of the city's ogre population, nearly one hundred individuals of every age and gender. These dens are filthy, smelly, and totally inhospitable to anyone but another ogre.

6. TEMPLE OF ZOHL'NAHK

Carved into the rock wall above the entrance to this chamber is the symbol of a gigantic clawed fist, the symbol of Zohl'Nahk, a lawful evil deity worshipped by some of the giant races. Many ogres and other adventurers come here for healing or spiritual guidance, such as it may be.

7. MONEYCHANGER

The dark elf moneychanger, named Balezith, changes any money to gold and silver Bars, each approximately equal in value to standard gold and silver pieces, but shaped like rectangular bars and stamped with the name "Drahk'Suhl" written in Giant. Balezith charges a 15% fee to convert currency, half of which he gives as a kickback directly to Jin'Zil. If dealing with someone he immediately dislikes (like elves perhaps), he increases the fee to 25%.

8. BLACK NAIL BARRACKS

Here the Black Nails live and train, with 2-12 of them here at any time. A large open training area stands out, circled by racks of huge weapons. Dhoffu forges and maintains the Black Nails' weapons. His forge and sleeping skins are in the southwest corner of the chamber, but he keeps the area ventilated so not to disturb his bunkmates.

9. MEETING HALL

City gatherings of all types take place here. Along the east wall, a spiral staircase leads to the ogre-sized pulpit twenty feet above the floor, and then up into the high, domed ceiling. This is the only way to the Upper Level.

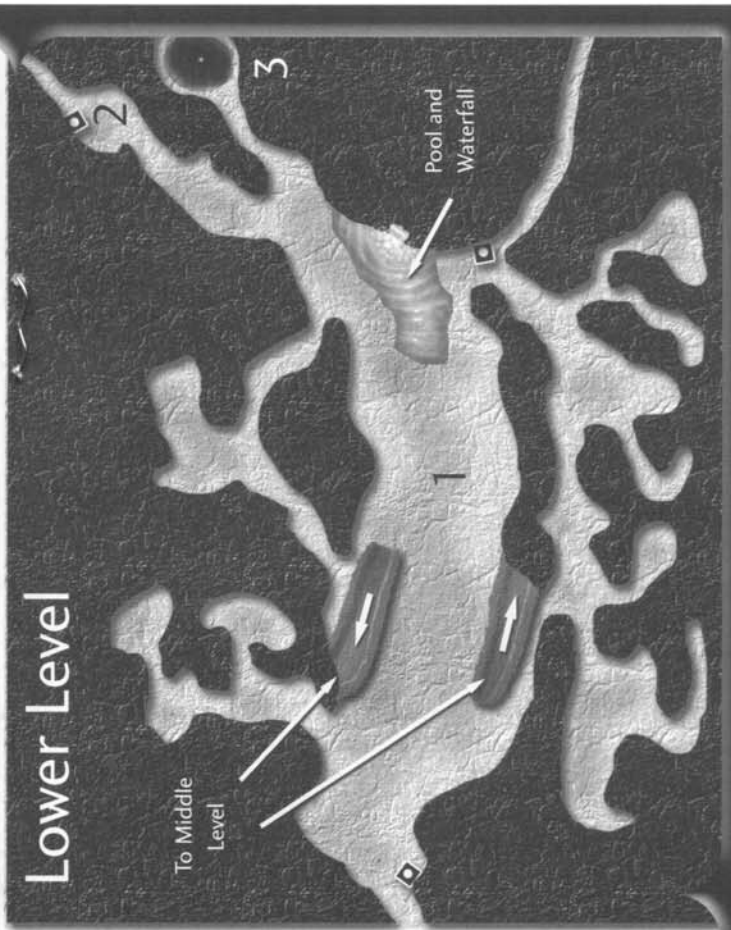
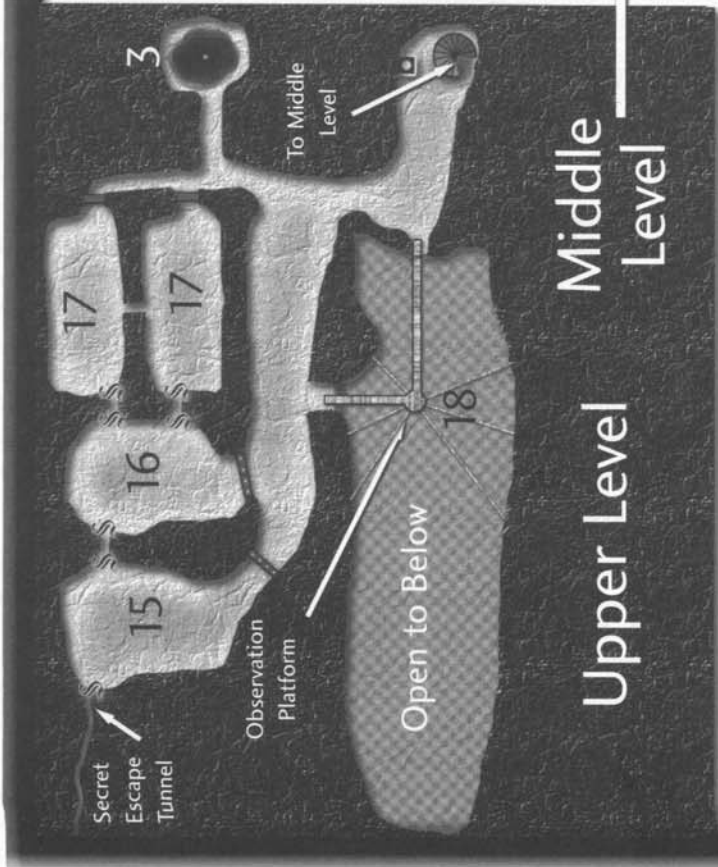
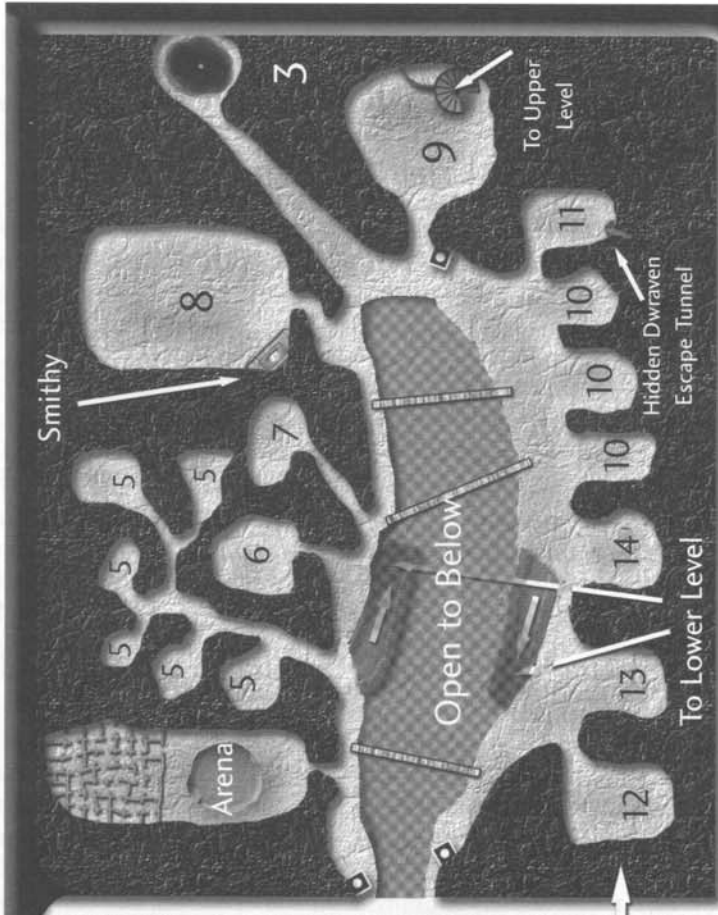
The Middle Level has a total of four ramps leading to the Lower Level, two near the main entrance, and two in the middle, used mostly by workers. The inhabitants of the Middle Level do not venture down unless absolutely necessary, sending their worker servants instead. Three rope catwalks cross the vast open space of the cavern, and each is ten feet wide. Only the Black Nails use these bridges, standing watch and overseeing the workers below.

10. NEW CONSTRUCTION

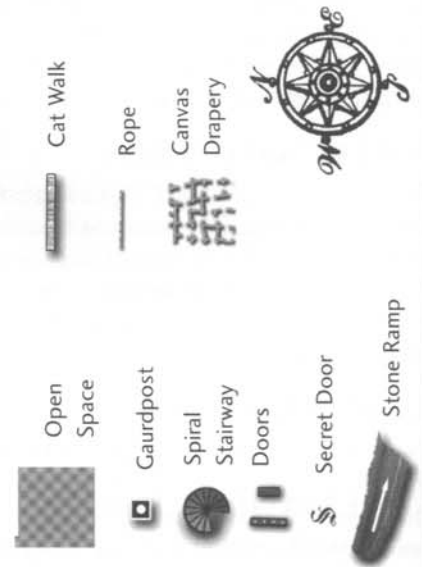
Workers are still hollowing out these caverns. Gnomes and Dwarves are the predominant race of workers, with Svifneblin and Deep Dwarf overseers here as well. Depending on the quality of the rock, the workers either carry it off for use in new buildings, or throw it into the Pit.

11. HIDDEN TUNNEL

This area is identical to New Construction (area #10), except that some desperate dwarves are digging an escape tunnel. The entrance to the tunnel is well hidden behind a pile of rubble. A Spot check (DC 25) reveals its presence.



THE OGRE CITY OF DRAHK'SUAL



12. ARMOR AND WEAPONS BAZAAR

Dozens of smiths and merchants have tents and stands here. The majority of weapons are crude, ogre-sized weapons, but adept shoppers can find weapons and armor for medium-sized and small creatures. Many items are strange and exotic. The maximum value is 1,500 gp.

13. FOOD MARKET

The air here is humid and heavy with the smell of cooking and livestock. Most non-workers come here to buy food. At the south end of the chamber are the livestock pens, where sheep, swine, and other, less palatable species are kept. Vendors of all races sell grain, bread, fruit, vegetables, cavern fungus, soups and stews, cheeses, and meat both raw and cooked.

14. TRADE GOODS AND EXOTIC ITEMS

Dozens of merchants from every race hock their goods here, selling practically anything that is not food or a weapon. Clothing, trade goods, equipment, and a few exotic magic items (maximum value 800 gp) are available.

15. JIN'ZIL'S DEN

Jin'zil ordered this large cavern specially hollowed out. The entrance is a double iron door over twelve feet tall. The interior is richly decorated, and Jin'Zil is extravagant in his accumulation of wealth. As richly furnished as the abode of the most successful upper-world merchant, Jin'Zil's den is practically overflowing with expensive rugs and finely crafted furniture, bolts of exquisite silks, beautifully dyed linens and cleverly crafted curios, exotic items from all over the world, both above and below. Due to the success of his efforts in Drahk'Suhl, his personal treasure is ten times the standard treasure for an ogre mage. If his life is seriously threatened, he grabs a sack-full of his most valuable gems, and flees through the secret escape tunnel in the northwest corner.

16. CHAAL'MAHK'S DEN

The Captain of the Black Nails has amassed a significant fortune of his own. His personal treasure is five times the standard treasure for an ogre. His cavern is very much like Jin'Zil's den, but it is decorated in more typical ogre fashion — furs, skins, weapons, and refuse. Chaal'Mahk keeps ten ogre females as concubines.

17. OGRE MAGE'S DEN

These areas are similar to Jin'Zil's den, but not as lavish.

18. OBSERVATION CATWALK

Two catwalks reach out to a large wooden circular platform suspended a hundred feet above the cavern floor, supported by the catwalks and ropes embedded in the rock faces. There is a 50% chance that Jin'Zil, Chaal'Mahk or one of the other ogre magi is here, surveying the domain.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Keep in mind the strict prohibition against open fighting and the unsanctioned use of magic, under penalty of death. Magic users must be careful not to be caught. The law against fighting within the city proper also makes many of these combat-oriented adventure hooks a bit trickier. The arena is the only place in the city where fighting is allowed. The Black Nails are very vigilant, but on the other hand, they cannot be everywhere.

SOLD INTO SERVITUDE

Someone the PCs know fell to slavers bound for Drahk'Suhl: a friend, an important NPC, or even one of the PCs if he has been captured. This adventure combines easily with Marauders' Hideaway below. The PCs must travel to Drahk'Suhl and help the prisoner escape or buy his contract. Perhaps an ogre magi recognizes the magical abilities of one of the PCs, and demands a powerful magic item before the new worker's release.

MARAUDERS' HIDEAWAY

A group of marauding ogres uses the city as a base of operations for attacks in the surface world. Here they rest and sell their stolen goods at leisure. Perhaps the ogres ambushed the PCs or someone they know. The leader might have a bounty on his head in the surface world.

BANDIT ATTACK

Bandits of an unknown race set ambushes on the way to the city. One of Drahk'Suhl's wealthiest merchants recently lost a significant shipment of food and trade goods on its way in, and offers a substantial reward for anyone who can return his trade goods. The bandits are troglodytes taking advantage of the vulnerability of goods traveling to the city. If this interception of the food supply continues, bigger problems will arise.

CHALLENGED!

A drunken ogre believes one of the PCs to have wronged him in the past, and loudly accuses the PC of some heinous but imaginary act. This could be either a case of mistaken identity or an ogre that bears a grudge against the PCs. In any case, this ogre challenges one of the PCs to a fight in the arena. This idea could be tailored to the PCs in whatever devious manner the GM desires.

THE GREAT ESCAPE

A group of dwarven miners, desperate for their freedom, have secretly dug an escape tunnel in the Hidden Tunnel (area #11). However, work has halted recently, as something in the burrow attacked a group of miners, leaving no survivors. The escape tunnel is dwarf-sized, and winds into the solid rock for about 120 feet before ending abruptly. There is a six-inch fissure in the rock wall that is home to an ochre jelly. Before the dwarves' tunneling can continue, someone must remove it.

A TEARFUL PLEA

The PCs meet a dwarven girl named Durassa, who has just arrived in the city in search of her father. Her father was captured months before, and she believes he may be here, sold into servitude. She is a 1st-level dwarf. The fact that she made it this far is a bit of a miracle. She is alone, exhausted from her journey, terrified of everything around her, with very little money, in a city where dwarves are regarded as property. If the PCs do not help her, she disappears before long, never to be seen again.

THIEVES UNITE

The city of Drahk'Suhl has no Thieves Guild. Very little "footpaddin'" takes place here because of the brutality to which ogres are prone. Nevertheless, there are a very brave few attempting to form a Thieves Guild here. Jin'Zil and the other ogre magi would never approve of such an organization, so the three fledgling members operate in complete secrecy. Their leader considers any petition for membership, even from non-rogue characters. Most of the good-aligned workers know how to get a message to him.

The 'guild' has only two rules: first, steal only from the ogres and those that pander to them; second, 50% of all stolen property is given to the guild, all of which is distributed among the workers, so they can buy their contracts. His ultimate goal is to steal the treasure of the ogre magi and buy all the contracts.

BLOOD FEUD

A feud is building between the good workers and evil workers, one that even the Black Nails will be hard-pressed to stop once bloodshed begins. The continued disappearances of so many good-aligned workers has angered them to the point of action. Tharus, their dwarven leader, believes that the evil workers are responsible for the disappearances, but he does not know the reason and hesitates to speculate.

NPCS

CHAAL'MAHK AND THE BLACK NAILS

In the early days, Jin'Zil knew he needed a strong arm to enforce his will. He sought out the nastiest ogre he could find, one who was smart enough to think for himself, but greedy enough to recognize the benefits Jin'Zil offered.

Chaal'Mahk, Captain of the Black Nails

Chaal'Mahk is a tremendous specimen of the ogre race. Bigger, smarter, and meaner than most others, he hand-picked an elite group of fighters to be the strong arm that enforces the will of the ogre magi.

He stands almost twelve feet tall, encased in battered armor, and weighs over 600 pounds. He has a nasty scar across his nose and one of his cheeks that makes his cheek look sunken and draws the corner of his mouth into a grotesque sneer, baring his huge yellow teeth. His eyes are

quick and canny, and he wears an eight-foot greatsword over his shoulder within easy reach.

He is well accustomed to getting his way, and has become arrogant in his power. He enjoys the plentiful food and drink available to him, and the opportunity to smash a few skulls occasionally. He also frequents the arena, and on rare occasion accepts a challenge to fight. He has never lost. He sometimes dreams of the destruction he could wreak upon the soft, weak races of the upper world. Only the superior power of Jin'Zil keeps him in check; he knows that the other ogre magi fear him. But he also recognizes that it is Jin'Zil's brains that have made Drahk'Suhl a success. As long as the ogre magi do not mistreat him, he serves. He is loyal of the city of Drahk'Suhl, and defends it to the death.

He speaks Giant and Common.

Chaal'Mahk, Captain of the Black Nails, Ogre Ftr7: CR 9; SZ L (Giant); HD 4d8+16 + 7d10+28; hp 102; Init +4 (Imp Init); Spd 30 ft.; AC 22 (-1 Size, +3 Dex, +5 natural, +5 Breastplate); Atks Huge Greatsword +19/+14 melee (2d8+11), or huge long spear +3 ranged (2d6+9); Face/Reach: 5ft x 5ft/ 10ft (15-20ft w/ long spear); SV Fort +12, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 28, Dex 17, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 7; AL LE. Skills: Climb +17, Jump +17, Listen +3, Spot +3, Sense Motive +2. Feats: Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (huge greatsword), Weapon Specialization (huge greatsword)

The Black Nails

The Black Nails are bigger, stronger, smarter, and better equipped than their brethren are and they strike fear into the hearts of all but the most hardened adventurers. Even more dangerous, they have trained to fight together. They both fear and revere Chaal'Mahk. They are suspicious of the ogre magi, but as long as they have plenty to eat, females to breed with, and the occasional melee, they are quite content.

When facing a serious threat, they form a massive wall of flesh, standing side by side, and attack first with a volley of huge long spears, then charging with their huge greataxes. If they are somehow losing the upper hand, they attempt a fighting withdrawal until they can regroup with their comrades. Their massive breastplates are gouged and worn from battle, but surprisingly nicely maintained for ogres. Each of their breastplates bears their symbol, a crude painting of a nail through a skull.

They speak Giant and very broken Common.

Black Nails, Ogre Ftr4: CR5; SZ L (Giant); HD 4d8+16 + 4d10+16; hp 72; Init +4 (Imp Init); Spd 30 ft.; AC 22 (-1 Size, +3 Dex, +5 natural, +5 Breastplate); Atks Huge Greataxe +15 melee (2d8+10), or huge long spear +3 ranged (2d6+8); Face/Reach: 5ft x 5ft/ 10ft (15-20ft w/ long spear); SV Fort +12, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 26, Dex 17, Con 18, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 4; AL LE. Skills: Climb +17, Jump +14, Listen +3, Spot +3. Feats: Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (huge greataxe), Weapon Specialization (huge greataxe).

JIN'ZIL, THE OGRE MAGI

Jin'Zil is unique among his race in that he recognizes the value of cooperation. In an even more unusual occurrence among ogres, two other ogre magi have joined him in his quest for fantastic wealth. All three ogre magi are in a fierce competition among themselves to accumulate the most wealth, with Jin'Zil far in the lead. Jin'Zil knows that Chahl'Mahk is his loyal ally, and does not hesitate to use him and the rest of the Black Nails against his rivals if they grow too ambitious.

He is quite proud of his accomplishments and of what Drahk'Suhl has become. If he perceives a threat, he will stop at nothing, destroy anything, to see that its success continues.

Jin'Zil, Ogre Maguhl, Sor5: CR 13; SZ L (Giant); HD 7d8+21; hp 55; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Imp Init); Spd 30 ft., fly 40 (good); AC 21 (-1 size, +5 natural, +5 breastplate, +2 Dex); Atks Huge Greatsword +7 melee (2d8+7), huge longbow +4 (2d6+2); SA *Darkness, invisibility* — at will; *charm person, cone of cold, gaseous form, polymorph self, sleep* — 1/day (9th level sorcerer, save DC 13 + spell level); SQ Regeneration 2, SR 18; SV Fort +7, Ref +1 Will +3; Str 21, Dex 14, Con 17, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 17; AL LE. Skills: Concentration +6, Listen +5, Spellcraft +4, Spot +5. Feats: Improved Initiative. Spells (6/6/4) 0: *resistance, daze, flare, mage hand, detect magic, read magic*; 1st: *magic missile, obscuring mist, hypnotism, ray of enfeeblement, identify, comprehend languages*; 2nd: *summon swarm, protection from arrows, detect thoughts, web*.

NEW MONSTER TYPE

GOUGER

A gouger is a rare, rock-dwelling predator shaped somewhat like a badger, but of tremendous size, over ten feet long when full grown. It has huge front claws that it uses for digging and attack. Its forebody, head, and legs are covered with hard, bony plates, and it has no eyes. Its hindquarters are covered with coarse black fur. Its pointed snout is filled with rows of dagger-like teeth. If a gouger is not moving, it may be mistaken for a boulder if seen from the front.

It sees by means of the bony plates on its head. Aside from acting as protection, the bony plates are honey-combed with heat and vibration sensors that allow it to perceive nearby prey more efficiently than any set of eyes.

Gougers are usually solitary creatures, occasionally forming a mated pair until offspring have been born and reared, after which they go their separate ways. Their tunnels take them to unknown depths of primordial rock in their search for prey and solitude.

Gougers eat practically kind of living creature, but they seem to find the flavor of dwarves most delectable, so they tend to be slightly more common around dwarven settlements.

COMBAT

Gougers attack anything without fear, and are known for their ill temper and ferocity. They attack first with their tremendous claws, and follow with their ferocious bite.

A gouger uses its sharp tremorsense and blindsight to perceive its prey.

Tremorsense (Ex): Gougers automatically sense the location of anything in contact with the ground anywhere within 60 ft.

Rage (Ex): A gouger that takes damage flies into a rage at the beginning of its next turn, ripping and tearing until either it or its prey is dead. It gains +4 Strength, +4 Constitution, and -2 AC. The creature cannot end its rage voluntarily.

Fire Resistance (Ex): Fire attack damage to a gouger is reduced by 12 hp due to the toughness of its bony plates and coarse fur, as well as the gouger being accustomed to the great heat of the deepest depths.

NEW MAGIC ITEM

ROD OF CONTROL

Wondrous Item

The *rod of control* is made of black steel, about three feet long, one inch thick, with a blood-red, smooth-faced stone wrapped in steel mesh on one end.

Use of the rod of control requires the fabrication of a simple iron collar placed around the neck of the intended target. The collar has no special qualities, other than its composition (it requires 100 gp in materials to create). Once the collar is in place, the user touches the rod's gem to the collar, and then the rod of control may affect the target. Only Large or smaller creatures are affected by the rod.

As long as the target wears the collar, the bearer of the rod is able to *dominate* the target at will (as the spells *dominate person/animal/monster*, as appropriate). The target may attempt a Will Save (DC 25) one per hour to resist.

The wielder is in full mental contact with the subject at all times. He is able to perceive everything the subject perceives, using all senses, can hear the subject's thoughts if desired, and can give commands telepathically. Once per day, the wielder can exert such control over the subject that he can speak through the target for one turn.

Furthermore, the wielder can control a number of other Large or smaller creatures equal to his level. These effects have a range of approximately half a mile, and do not require line of sight or concentration by the rod's bearer.

Caster Level: 17th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Rod, *clairvoyance/clairaudience, dominate animal, dominate monster, dominate person*; **Market Price:** 30,000 gp.

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THE LAST DEFENDER

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