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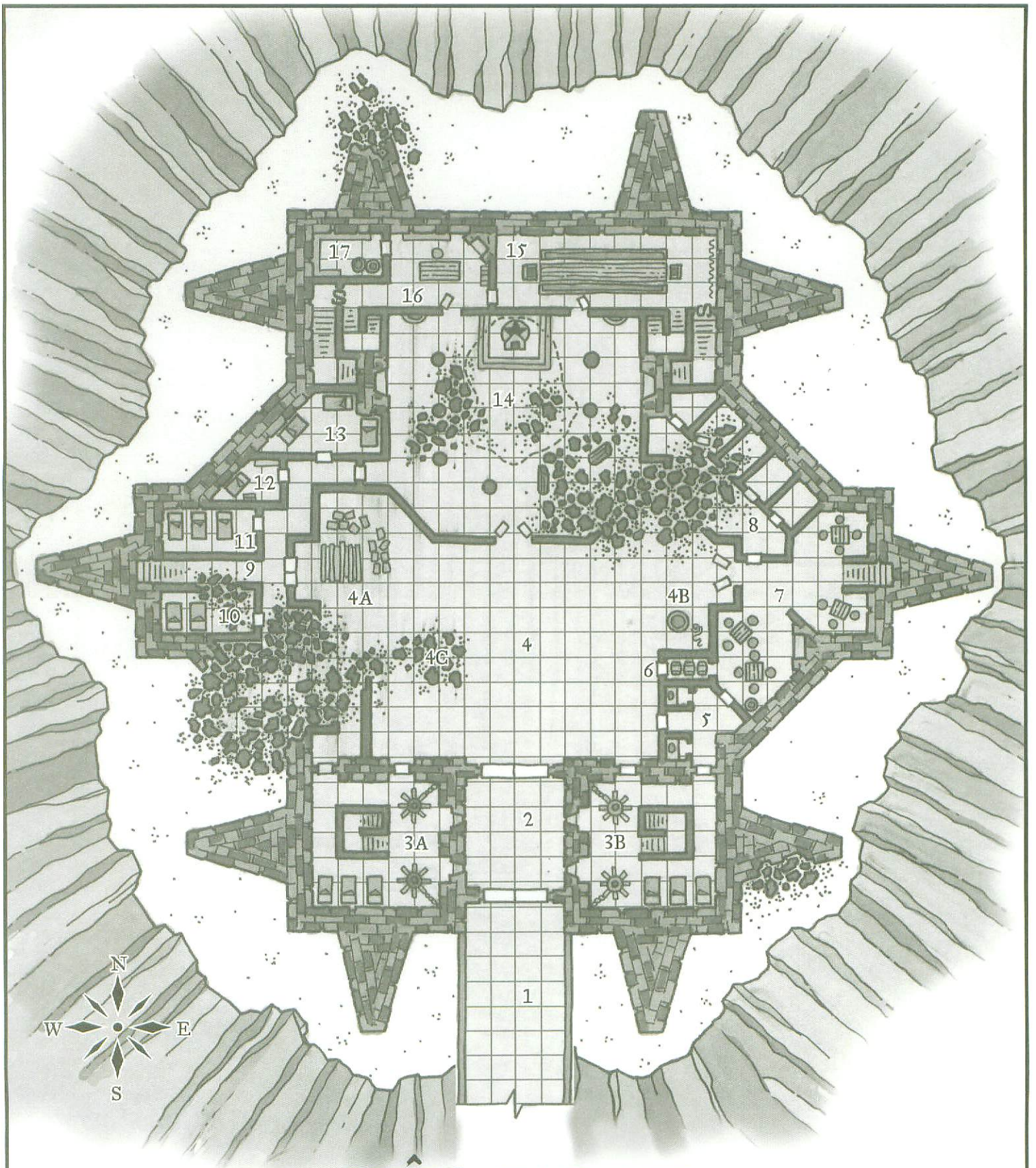
FORGOTTEN REALMS®

Sons of Gruumsh™

A 4th-Level Adventure



Christopher Perkins



XÛL-JARAK

Ground Level

One Square = 5 Feet

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INTRODUCTION

This adventure takes place in the Moonsea region of Faerûn, an inhospitable land marked by seafaring city-states. The Moonsea offers much to anyone wanting to earn a reputation or a fortune. Nearly every type of creature, monstrous and humanoid, lives in this region. The machinations of Zhentil Keep and the other cities are numerous and deadly. What no one in the city-states realizes is that an orc horde is massing in the land of Thar north of the city of Melvaunt. Properly led and organized, this army could put the entire area to the torch.

Meanwhile, the city of Melvaunt has a crisis of its own. Several scions of the great families have disappeared, and the player characters have been recruited to find and rescue them. Their investigation leads deep into the rugged wilderness of Thar where, of course, they discover the dire orc threat.

Sons of Gruumsh is a DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® adventure designed for four 4th-level characters. Player characters should advance at least one level in the course of the adventure and perhaps two by its conclusion.

preparation

As Dungeon Master, you need four books to run this adventure: the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, the *Monster Manual*, and the *FORGOTTEN REALMS® Campaign Setting, Monster Manual III, Monsters of Faerûn*, and *Races of Faerûn* might also be useful.

If you are planning to run this adventure in the Moonsea region, review the information presented on pages 159–165 of the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting*. Otherwise, feel free to modify the adventure to suit a different location.

The encounters in *Sons of Gruumsh* are designed for use with DUNGEONS & DRAGONS miniatures. In some cases, a miniature represents a character or creature perfectly; in others, the adventure suggests an appropriate miniature when a perfect match isn't possible. This information is presented as part of the creature's statistics block.

Paragraphs in *italic* type should be read aloud to the players or paraphrased at the appropriate times. Sidebars contain additional information for the DM.

Adventure Background

Deep in the wastes of Thar, an orc adept named Jurg received a dream from her deity, the great one-eyed Gruumsh: A leader would soon emerge from the Underdark and lead her people into glorious battle against the humans, sweeping their cities into the sea. Her dream told her to wait at the ruins of the once mighty orc bastion of Xûl-Jarak, the Gray Citadel. Jurg and her brother Rûlgar made their home in the ruins, and after months of waiting, heard something other than moaning Tharan winds. Three massive orogs emerged from deep below the citadel and approached them.

Jurg prostrated herself before the orogs. To her, these enormous orcs, with their luminescent eyes, elongated ears, and massive bodies, represented the epitome of orckind. She asked Thrull, the leader of these "sons of Gruumsh," to command her. He sent the siblings back into the wilderness to gather other worthy followers. Five years have passed since that fateful encounter, and many orcs have gathered at Xûl-Jarak. They have begun to rebuild the citadel and, more important, the large dungeon complex the citadel is designed to protect.

Compounding the orc threat, a few months ago Rûlgar found the fabled *Hammer of Gruumsh*, great maul of the Tharan orc kings, in

the foothills of the Galena Mountains. Jurg and the orogs view its discovery as a sign of Gruumsh's favor, and continue their efforts to unite the various orc tribes of Thar and expand their army in preparation for a march against the human cities.

The people living in Melvaunt, distracted by the affairs of Zhentil Keep and other evils, pay little heed to the orcs of Thar. Oreal Nanther, the scion of an influential noble family in Melvaunt and a relatively inexperienced adventurer, filled his head with childhood stories about the great battles fought in Thar and the even greater artifacts said to lie there, waiting to be discovered in the tombs of fallen kings. He shared these dreams with several companions, including other noble youths. For months, the companions have secretly embarked on adventures in Thar. Tragically, none returned from their most recent outing. Few in Melvaunt know what has happened to the scions, and their disappearance threatens a bloody civil war.

Adventure synopsis

The adventure begins as the PCs arrive in the city of Melvaunt (they are assumed to be visitors; if natives, the text must be adjusted in places). Believing the PCs are eager for gold and politically impartial, Woarsten Nanther, patriarch of House Nanther and father of Oreal, has called them to the city to locate his errant son and bring him home. It is up to the PCs to discover and follow Oreal's trail, while avoiding as much of the intrigue-laden politics of the city as possible.

The search for the noble heirs eventually leads the characters into the wilds of Thar. There they confront treacherous terrain and savage denizens. They discover an ambush site and one of the companions dead. The orc signs are clear, and the trail leads to the citadel of Xûl-Jarak.

The orog leader Thrull has declared himself warlord of Thar. To mark this mighty event, Jurg has contrived a ritual to give Thrull the blessing of Gruumsh himself. Representatives from various tribes that have not pledged fealty to the orogs have come to witness the occasion and determine whether Thrull is worthy to command them. More important to the PCs, the ritual execution of the captured scions is an integral part of Jurg's ceremony. The PCs must negotiate the citadel of Xûl-Jarak and the dungeon complex beneath it to reach the scions, and then pry the captives from Thrull's clutches. If they succeed, they stave off civil war in Melvaunt and undermine, if not destroy, Thrull's plans of conquest.

Even after returning to Melvaunt, the PCs are not safe. A band of orc cutthroats have successfully infiltrated Melvaunt! Gruumsh hungers for the heroes' blood, and the orcs want to please their god.

About orogs

Orogs (also known as deep orcs) are the best and brightest among orckind. They are descendants of a large orc tribe that fled into the Underdark thousands of years ago. Though slightly shorter than their mountain orc cousins, orogs are much stronger, more intelligent, and show greater initiative.

Orog weapons are on par with those of dwarven make. No orog fighter wears armor or wields weapons of anything less than masterwork quality.

Orogs, with individual exceptions, worship Gruumsh alone, ignoring the remaining deities of the orc pantheon.

part I

THE LOST SCIONS

The first part of *Sons of Gruumsh* sees the PCs navigate the ruthless politics of Melvaunt to find the trail of the lost scion of House Nanther and his adventuring companions.

Arrival in Melvaunt

Read or paraphrase the following text to the players:

You have arrived in the city of Melvaunt, which sits on the northwestern shore of the Moonsea. Melvaunt has a reputation for being a place rife with danger and intrigue, and ripe with potential for adventure, wealth, and fame. You carry with you the seal of Woarsten Nanther, patriarch of a powerful and influential noble Melvaunt family. The seal has gained you free passage into the city, though not without a thorough inspection by the town watch (they seem particularly suspicious). Once inside, you observe that Melvaunt is a dirty city with labyrinthine streets, smoke-clogged air, and grumpy locals. Best be on your guard!

The PCs can make Gather Information, Knowledge (local), or bardic knowledge checks to learn more about Melvaunt, either as they're making their way through the city streets or once they reach a tavern. Natives to the city gain a +10 circumstance bonus to this check.

DC 5: Melvaunt is often referred to as the merchant capital of the Moonsea. Bitter rivalries plague the city's merchant families, the most powerful of which are the houses of Bruil, Nanther, and Leiyraghon.

DC 10: Although the city itself is dirty and inhospitable, the inns and taverns are usually clean and relatively safe—no surprise, really, since much of the city's business is handled within their comfortable walls. The Crow's Nest tavern has the best food and coziest cots in the city.

DC 12: The city is usually raucous and dangerous to lone or unarmed travelers. At present, it seems subdued and guarded. The people eye each other warily, and hurry about their business.

DC 15: The scions of the great houses of Melvaunt are missing. Paid toughs wander the streets looking for them, but mostly just cause trouble.

DC 18: Orcs have been attacking outlying farms and trade roads, occasionally kidnapping folk before withdrawing into the foggy depths of Thar.

DC 20: Two Melvauntian diplomats died recently in the city of Mulmaster, both under mysterious circumstances. This could be a sign that Mulmaster is preparing a fleet to attack Melvaunt.

The Crow's Nest

The biggest and most prominent tavern in Melvaunt is the Crow's Nest. The PCs may travel there first or stop in at any other inn. With small adjustments, the details presented here can describe any tavern they choose.

The Nest is popular with merchants and sailors, and is always a hotbed of rumor and speculation. The building appears very old; a few local scholars debate whether this round tower of stone and wood actually predates the founding of Melvaunt.

The first two stories are seamless stone, 5 feet thick. The next three stories are made of newer wood and house meeting rooms and bedrooms of various sizes and luxuriousness. They are all available for rent (2 sp per night for a cheap bedroom, 5 sp per night for a modest bedroom, and 1 gp per night for a luxurious bedroom). The first floor holds a main dining room and taproom separated by the entryway "reception" room, where the bouncer, Ongom (NG male human warrior 6), welcomes guests. Behind him, down a hallway, is a flight of stairs to the upper stories and beyond that, an enormous kitchen. The second story houses longtime residents and special guests as well as a separate common room. Access to this floor is gained via a locked door (Open Lock DC 30) on the second floor landing.

Pluarty Crow (NG male human bard 6) is the latest in a long line of Crows to run the place. He has a mixed heritage and knows people in all social circles. He treats everyone equally, from the saltiest sailor to the best-dressed merchant-noble, and he tries not to embroil himself in Melvaunt's cutthroat politics. He is willing to make introductions to nearly anyone in town if the PCs ask, but remains strictly neutral. His favorite pastime is telling scary pirate tales to children around bonfires behind The Nest.

Meeting Lord Nanther

Whether they stop at an inn or make their way directly, the PCs should visit Lord Nanther's estate as soon as possible. When they arrive, their seal is inspected carefully, but then they enjoy all of the hospitality the staff can muster. In short order, Woarsten Nanther himself appears.

Woarsten Nanther enters the room, leaning heavily on a gold-tipped ivory cane with a handle shaped like an ibis head. He has the slightly disheveled appearance of a man who hasn't slept in days, although he is well dressed and capable of feigning a smile. After dispensing with introductions, he collapses into a large padded chair and fixes his steely gaze upon each of you.

"I wish to pay you 1,000 platinum pieces to find my son, Oreal. While he's a grown man and I don't follow his activities on a daily basis, he hasn't been seen for five days—far too long. Worse, rumors abound that other noble scions are missing. I've exhausted all prudent avenues of investigation, but with the increased orc raiding of late and the heightened tension caused by the missing sons, I'm afraid I have little to show. I am certain you, as neutral operatives, will have better fortune. I must warn you, as the lord of this great house, I have many enemies, both within the city and without. Some no doubt seek to take advantage of this distraction to undermine my authority. House Nanther's utter destruction is not beyond the pale. Such is the politics of this wretched city.

"Please bring my son back to me, forcibly if need be, safely and soundly. If you find the other scions, please return them as well—surely the other great houses will blame House Nanther for any death or harm inflicted upon their kin. Just to be clear, however, the platinum I am paying you is for Oreal's safe return alone."

If the PCs haggle, he agrees to cover their basic expenses in Melvaunt without too much fuss. However, it takes a successful DC 30 Diplomacy check to persuade him to increase the reward, and he will not pay them any more than 1,500 pp regardless.

Woarsten can provide a picture sketch of his son, Oreal. He knows the following additional information:

—The other missing youths are Argens Bruil, Kalman Leiyraghon, Elaint Marsk, and Kara Calaudra.

—Oreal has some ranger training but is carefree, spoiled, and reckless. He also is far too trusting. He has even gone so far as to argue that peace between the great houses is possible, perhaps among the younger generation. Woarsten forbade him from pursuing any liaisons that would undermine House Nanther's security or position.

—The greatest enemies of House Nanther are Lord Dornig Leiyraghon, a "rotten man with a vicious temper," and the Lord of Keys, Halmuth Bruil. Not surprisingly, Lord Leiyraghon has refused to meet with Woarsten or respond to his missives. Lord Bruil is purportedly conducting an investigation but has sent no report to House Nanther.

—The Bruils and lesser houses of Melvaunt wouldn't dare raise a finger against House Nanther. It's very unlikely they had any hand in Oreal's disappearance.

—Assassins from Zhentil Keep or Mulmaster are always a concern, but they probably had no hand in the disappearances.

—Orc raids on the infrequent caravans to the northern settlement of Glistar and on outlying farms have become much more pronounced lately. Still, the city is safe from their depredations and no orc would dare attack a noble family.

The Melvaunt Investigation

After agreeing to help House Nanther, the PCs can spend time in Melvaunt unearthing information about the situation. The following information can be discovered through roleplaying, or with DC 20 Gather Information, Knowledge (local), Knowledge (nobility and royalty), or bardic knowledge checks.

COUNCIL OF IRON: Seven Council members rule Melvaunt: the lords of the three Great Houses (Woarsten Nanther, Dornig Leiyraghon, and Vanth Bruil), three rotating guild leaders (currently the Armors' Guild Master, the Weavers' Guild Master, and the Smiths' Guild Master), and the elected Despot, Peuter Marsk.

House Bruil: The fierce Vanth Bruil currently leads House Bruil, even though well into his sixth decade. He had a nasty falling-out with his son, Halmuth, now Lord of Keys, and the two are barely civil to each other. Desperate for a new heir and not above causing his son heartache, Vanth proclaimed his bastard grandson Argens as heir. Vanth will meet with the PCs, but other than blaming Halmuth for a lack of activity, he knows little more about the disappearances than Lord Nanther. Argens has quietly undergone paladin training at a small temple to Tyr, and spent the days before his disappearance helping to rebuild a local hostelry that had been destroyed by fire several months ago. He was last seen in his chambers. With a DC 15 Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check, Argens Bruil's elderly chambermaid reveals that at least once a month for the past several months, the scion would not return home for up to three days. More than once, upon his return, his clothes had odd stains and tears, and sometimes dried blood. The maid assumed these were simply the byproducts of youthful indiscretions.

House Leiyraghon: This great family has a dark reputation. Leiyraghon was a minor house that achieved greater status by bringing down the Marsk and Natali families and breaking the stalemate that had allowed civil unrest to torture the city. Immediately after securing the status of a great house and on the verge of dominating the city, Dornig Leiyraghon solidified his family's position by sponsoring the idea of an elected ruler, a Despot of Melvaunt. Each

despot would lead the city's Council of Iron for two years and then step down. This magnanimous gesture helped temper Dornig's and his family's otherwise unsavory reputation. Bremen Leiyraghon is the Leiyraghon heir and has been assuming greater responsibility over the house. He is a dashing, no-nonsense figure apparently destined for greatness. Kalman Leiyraghon, Bremen's younger brother, is a wastrel who spends more time in the city's taverns than home, much to the chagrin of his family. The Leiyraghons refuse to speak with the PCs, suspecting them of Nanther treachery.

House Marsk: House Marsk seems to be trying to gain support in the city by winning the hearts and minds of the populace. Ruled by Peuter Marsk, the house currently oversees many of the city's municipal improvements, including a troubled sewer project. The fact that the building contracts are almost all going to Marsk allies has not gone unnoticed and limits the good will generated. Peuter is the current Despot of Melvaunt, further adding to his family's prestige. Just before his disappearance, Elaint had been training vigorously at the local temple to Oghma and picked up a new suit of masterwork full plate armor. He has also been seen in the company of Kara Calaudra of late. Peuter warned him of the intrigues of House Calaudra, but Elaint would hear none of it. If things had continued, Peuter would have been forced to act to "ensure his House's security."

House Calaudra: Presided over by Andros Calaudra, this moon half-elf house has grown steadily but kept its ambitions carefully in check. Its long-term strategies have served the Calaudras well, but they understand that theirs will never be more than a minor house. The prejudice engendered by their mixed heritage ensures that. Andros is aware of his daughter's infatuation with Elaint Marsk, and he would not object to an alliance by marriage to House Marsk. Still, he warned Kara that humans usually cannot be trusted, and that she should be prepared for disappointment. Kara had been sponsoring an adventuring party of late, and had withdrawn relatively small sums of money from the family coffers for horses, supplies, and other expenses. So far, she had little to show for her investments, but as long as the sums were minor, House Calaudra could be patient. All Calaudra family members train as wizards, and Kara is no exception. She has a raven familiar named Esselios.

House Natali: Vagr Natali presides over the largest of the minor houses. Although his holdings are much reduced since the Leiyraghon coup, he continues to seek revenge against his enemies. Having recently inherited the leadership of his family, Vagr publicly competes with the great houses and has loudly blamed Dornig Leiyraghon for the death of his father. The noble agrees to see the PCs but only to make it clear that he had nothing to do with the missing scions. His own son Brin is safely at home, but is of weak intellect and has a withered leg. Vagr offers the PCs 500 gp to secure proof that he is not responsible. With slight adjustments, the PCs find a similar reception (though without the offer of a reward) at any of the other minor houses in Melvaunt.

Lord of Keys: Halmuth Bruil was the true heir of House Bruil, but he couldn't stand his father and gave up his birthright. He has since secured the position of Lord of Keys, commanding Melvaunt's army and city watch. His ruthless brutality leads many to underestimate his cunning and skill at strategy as well as tactics. Halmuth couldn't care less about the noble "brats," particularly Nanther's and his own. Still, he is concerned about the distraction the disappearances have caused, particularly given the increased orc raids going on outside the city walls. He meets with the PCs but offers little at first, gauging their mettle. In the end, he informs them that the guard captain of the northern gate reported a party of six heavily cloaked adventurers leaving that gate late at night five days ago. Judging by their supplies,

they planned a lengthy trip. The officer spoke only with a relatively well-known dwarf adventurer named Dorn Crownshield and saw no reason to impede their passage (he has since learned not to be so... flexible). If the PCs do decide to head north, Halmuth suggests they report back about orc activities there, though he offers no reward for doing so.

Northern Gate: The road through this gate leads to the town of Glistler, five days away. The guard captain is newly appointed (the previous one hasn't been seen for several days). Fearing the Lord of Keys, the guards say little. A DC 20 Bluff or Diplomacy check (and a bribe of at least 50 gp) gets one of them to say that a party of cloaked adventures, led by Dorn Crownshield, has been leaving by this gate late at night roughly once a month for several months.

Temple of Oghma: This place has security tighter than any thieves' guild. For a price (information being more desirable than money), the clerics inform the characters that Elaint Marisk had been ordained as a cleric and that he had contributed several relatively worthless orc artifacts to the archives in recent months. At his last visit to the temple, Marisk indicated that he knew about a hidden chamber in the orc ruins two days north of the city and would soon have items of true value to share.

Temple of Tyr: This very small temple has been around for only a year. The cleric Jens Galt is a bear of a man, loud and somewhat reckless (setting up such a temple in a place like Melvaunt is a risky endeavor at best). He's happy to talk about Argens, the "boy's" periodic adventures in Thar, and the combat wounds Jens has tended for him and all his companions. Argens recently asked for some divinations about the orc ruins two days north of the city, but Jens was unable to provide much useful information.

Taverns: Some legwork in the city taverns reveals that Kalman Leiyraghon visited most of them at one time or another. His current favorite is The Rusty Bucket, in a less-than-savory area. The Bucket bartender confirms that Kalman had a suite of rooms in the back and kept several horses in the nearby stables. Kalman would often entertain

Dorn Crownshield, a well-regarded dwarf mercenary. Others joined the festivities but always wore heavy cloaks as they passed through the public areas. With a bribe of at least 50 gp, the bartender says that the last time he saw Kalman (roughly five days ago), the scion boasted of purchasing a map to a secret chamber buried beneath the orc ruins two days north of the city. No doubt Old Tom (see below) has been selling fake treasure maps again.

Stables: Only a few horses are lodged at this slightly seedy but functional place near The Rusty Bucket. The stable master is a greasy human who is easily bought for 50 gp. He quickly tells the PCs that a half-elf woman with a pet raven paid for five horses and a pony several months ago, led them in and out roughly once a month but otherwise stabled them there, and kept ready stocks of adventuring supplies on hand. The lady took the mounts out roughly five days ago and hasn't been seen since.

Old Tom: This fairly disreputable shop has been abandoned for several days. Neighbors indicate that Old Tom made a killing selling a treasure map recently and has left town.

Dorn Crownshield: Inquiries about Dorn quickly lead to The Frothy Beard, a neutral gathering place for dwarf mercenaries in the employ of the various feuding Melvaunt families. Dorn was seen roughly five days ago and boasted that he was taking "his younglings" on their first "real" Thar adventure. Dorn is a renowned orc slayer; he's the fellow you want with you in the wilds of Thar.

About Thar

Information about the land of Thar can be had from Lord Nanther or other Melvauntians. A successful Gather Information check, Knowledge (geography) check, or bardic knowledge check reveals one or more things about the Great Gray Land:

DC 5: Thar is a rugged, desolate land of bogs, moors, swamps, and hills, inhabitable only by orcs, goblinoids, and ogres.

DC 10: A lone road traverses this dangerous land leading to the trade town of Glistler, the only human settlement in Thar. The Glistler



From left to right: Dorn Crownshield, Kalman Leiyraghon, Oreal Nanther, Argens Bruil, Elaint Marisk, Kara Calaudra

Road isn't very well traveled, and is essentially unguarded. Melvaunt patrols travel at most a few miles outside the city.

DC 12: The evil humanoid races of Thar are splintered into small tribes and quite disorganized. Increased raiding of late, some by orc tribes not normally seen in this area, indicates that something has them riled up.

DC 15: Various ruins hidden in the moors, swamps, and hills of Thar are rumored to hold the remnants and relics of some ancient orc kingdom, civilization, or power. The closest set of ruins is a mere two-day ride to the north.

DC 20: The greatest of Thar's strongholds was Xul-Jarak, the Gray Citadel. Many orc kings ruled and died there.

street fight (EL 6)

As befits his family's dark reputation, Bremen Leiyraghon recently formed an alliance with Daazlag, one of the orogs at Xul-Jarak. Bremen discovered the scions' secret meetings and adventures, and arranged for them to find a "treasure map." The orogs got the sacrifices they needed for their ceremony; Bremen received a promise of lordship over Melvaunt once the orcs conquered the city. Bremen is not overly concerned about the PCs, but he's not taking any chances. Once they have gathered the information about the scions' adventures and the trip to the orc ruins, he decides they have learned too much and sends some bravos to take care of the problem.

This encounter likely occurs in a dingy city street, as the Leiyraghon bravos avoid picking fights in enclosed public buildings. Read or paraphrase the following text to the players:

As you make your way through the grimy city streets, a sinister figure clad in studded leather armor and carrying a light wooden shield steps out of the smoky haze. The unshaven man glowers at you, club in hand. "So you're the ones Lord Nanther hired, eh? The old man must be running low on funds."

It quickly becomes apparent that the man isn't alone. The few pedestrians clear the street quickly, revealing four more ruffians with clenched teeth emerging from the haze.

The Leiyraghon bravos wear no distinguishing marks, and happily strip the PCs of valuable items if they are victorious and get the chance. The bravos need not kill the characters; Bremen is also satisfied with public humiliation. Fortunately, the PCs have someone watching their back.

Tactics: The bravos represent some of the toughest rogues in Bremen's employ. They are equipped with *potions of bull's strength, cat's grace, and bear's endurance*. They use flanking tactics to gain sneak attacks, relying on Dodge and Mobility and their evasion ability to avoid undue harm. The bravos are named Rowthar (nominally the leader), Aleg, Halagor (Aleg's younger brother), Nethan, and Tayne (who wears an eyepatch).

Leiyraghon Bravos (5): Male human warrior 2/rogue 2; CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 2d8+4* plus 2d6+4*; hp 24 each; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17*, touch 13*, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +3; Grp +7; Atk or Full Atk +8 melee (1d6+4, club); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ evasion, trapfinding; AL NE; SV Fort +5*, Ref +6*, Will -1; Str 18*, Dex 16*, Con 15*, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8. Suggested Miniature: Human Thug (*Harbinger* 47/80).

Skills and Feats: Handle Animal +3, Hide +5*, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (local) +3, Listen +2, Move Silently +5*, Open Lock +6*, Ride +9*, Spot +2; Dodge, Mobility, Weapon Focus (club).

Language: Common.

Possessions: Studded leather armor, light wooden shield, club, 2d6 gp in pouch, three empty potion vials.

*Includes bonuses from *potions of bull's strength, cat's grace, and bear's endurance*.

If the heroes get into serious trouble, a pair of gold dwarf mercenaries loyal to House Natali comes to their aid. The dwarves recognize the Leiyraghon bravos and know their sponsor will pay handsomely for interfering with whatever plans are afoot. The timely arrival of the dwarves takes the fight out of the Leiyraghon ruffians, who quickly flee. The mercenaries, named Glynt Axefist and Gwendar Dolmenward, also keep the bravos from robbing unconscious PCs and guard them until the city watch arrives or the PCs travel to a safe resting place.

Natali Mercenaries (2): Male dwarf fighter 3; CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 3d10+9; hp 30 each; Init -1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17, touch 9, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +3; Grp +5; Atk or Full Atk +7 melee (1d10+2/×3, masterwork dwarven waraxe); SQ darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits; AL LN; SV Fort +6* (+8 vs. poison), Ref +0*, Will +3*; Str 14, Dex 8, Con 17, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 10. Suggested Miniature: Dwarf Axefighter (*Harbinger* 03/80).

*Dwarves gain a +2 racial bonus on saves against spells and spell-like abilities.

Skills and Feats: Craft (stonemasonry) +7, Craft (weaponsmithing) +7, Intimidate +6; Cleave, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (dwarven waraxe).

Languages: Common, Dwarven, Orc.

Dwarf Traits: +2 bonus on Search checks to notice unusual stonework; +4 bonus on ability checks to resist being bull rushed or tripped when standing on the ground; +1 racial bonus on attacks rolls against orcs and goblinoids; +4 dodge bonus to AC against giants; +2 racial bonus on Appraise and Craft checks related to stone or metal items.

Possessions: Banded mail, heavy steel shield, masterwork dwarven waraxe, *potion of cure light wounds*, 5d6 gp in pouch.

Development: Glynt and Gwendar identify the bravos as employees of House Leiyraghon and suggest that the PCs leave town sooner rather than later. They aren't looking to bond with the PCs, but they don't turn down an offer of a free drink or meal. They are typically taciturn dwarves, and they have no interest in accompanying the PCs on their quest. They think highly of Dorn Crownshield and knows he's a regular at The Frothy Beard.

If the bravos are defeated, word eventually gets back to Bremen Leiyraghon. He flatly denies any involvement in the attack and no one in the city is interested in helping the characters make accusations against House Leiyraghon. Bremen is happy enough to leave the PCs to the orcs of Thar. He begins plotting an "accident" for the Natali mercenaries.

part 2

CROSSING THAR

Thar is a rugged, perilous, inhospitable wilderness. The harsh terrain makes it slow to cross, and all manner of monstrous creatures dwell here.

Random Encounters in Thar

Check for random wilderness encounters every 6 hours (morning, afternoon, evening, and late night). There is a 1-in-6 chance of an encounter.

The following table can be used during the PCs' initial foray into Thar and their expeditious withdrawal from the orc citadel of Xül-Jarak. Feel free to modify and adapt these encounters to suit your own campaign.

| d% | Encounter | Source | Suggested Miniature |
|--------|---------------------------|----------|---|
| 01-20 | Dire wolf (EL 3) | MM 65 | Dire Wolf (<i>Giants of Legend</i> 25/72) |
| 21-30 | Ogre zombie (EL 3) | MM 267 | Ogre Zombie (<i>Aberrations</i> 56/60) |
| 31-60 | 2 mountain orcs (EL 4) | Appendix | Mountain Orc (<i>Aberrations</i> 55/60) |
| 61-80 | 4 orc brutes (EL 4) | Appendix | Orc Brute (<i>Giants of Legend</i> 56/72) |
| 81-90 | Troll (EL 5) | MM 247 | Troll (<i>Harbinger</i> 77/80) or Troll Slasher (<i>Angelfire</i> 59/60) |
| 91-100 | 2 werewolves (EL 5) | MM 175 | Wolf (<i>Harbinger</i> 37/80), Werewolf (<i>Giants of Legend</i> 60/72), or Timber Wolf (<i>Deathknell</i> 27/60) |

Terrain and weather

The Great Gray Land is a dismal region of cold, fog-cloaked moors and sweltering, insect-infested bogs separated by barren, broken hills. Adverse weather and the terrain of Thar hinder and oppose the PCs.

Getting Lost: Characters who leave the Glister Road to explore the moors, swamps, or hills of Thar must succeed on a Survival check or become lost in the fog or difficult terrain. See *Getting Lost* (pages 86-87 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*) for details.

Difficult Terrain: Thar has marsh terrain and hills terrain. Marshes include both dry moors and watery swamps. Hills include both gentle hills and rugged hills. See *Marsh Terrain and Hills Terrain*, pages 88-89 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, for details.

Weather: Thar is quite cold this time of year. The temperature falls between 0° and 40° Fahrenheit during the day and is 10 to 20 degrees colder at night. Once every 12 hours, roll on the following chart to determine the weather conditions for that time period.

| d% | Weather | Conditions |
|--------|-------------------|--|
| 01-70 | Normal weather | Fog (20% chance) |
| 71-80 | Abnormal weather | Heat wave (01-30) or cold snap (31-100) |
| 81-90 | Inclement weather | Rain, fog (50% chance) |
| 91-100 | Dismal weather | Downpour |

Fog: Fog obscures all sight, including darkvision, beyond 5 feet; creatures 5 feet away have concealment (attacks by or against them have a 20% miss chance).

Heat Wave: Raises temperature by 10° Fahrenheit. Annoying clouds of normal insects beset unprotected characters, but the abnormally warm weather holds no adverse game effects.

Cold Snap: Lowers temperature by 10° Fahrenheit. See *Cold Dangers*, page 302 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for possible effects.

Rain: Rain reduces visibility ranges by half and imposes a -4 penalty on Listen, Search, and Spot checks. It imposes a -4 penalty on ranged attacks, douses unprotected flames, and has a 50% chance of extinguishing protected flames (such as those of lanterns).

Downpour: A heavy downpour has the same effect as rain and fog combined (see above) and lasts for 2d4 hours. It also washes away tracks left during the previous 12 hours.

Timeline

The following timeline provides a rough guide for the PCs' journey across Thar. It assumes that the heroes are riding horseback and moving at a steady pace. If they tarry or take short cuts, you will need to adjust the timeline accordingly.

DAY 1: following the glister road

The beaten road from Melvaunt to Glister just barely qualifies as a caravan route, and appears completely unguarded. Nevertheless, the first day's travel along the Glister Road is uneventful, even tedious. At nightfall, have the PCs set up camp and decide the watch.

DAY 2: Leaving the glister road

Two days into the journey along the Glister Road, the roughest of trails leads off the road directly north. While little more than a series of dry patches leading into the moor, it is the only clear way off the road the PCs have seen thus far. If the PCs learned in Melvaunt of the orc ruins, they recognize this as the path to them.

Unless a heavy downpour has erased all evidence of the scions' passage, PCs with the Track feat can make a DC 15 Survival check to determine that all six horses left the road and headed due north on this path.

As the characters move from the road and into the moor, occasional outcroppings of rock become more common. Some of them are natural pillars of solid rock that thrust up from ground, while others are piles of massive boulders surrounded by hard, pebbly ground. Some of these formations rise to a height of 30 feet. All of them are covered with marsh lichen and stunted trees. The stench of rotting vegetation and a slight sulfurous odor fill the air.

SIDE TREK TO GLISTER

If the PCs continue on the road, they reach the large town of Glister in three days with only random encounters. The scions of Melvaunt did not travel to Glister, so no one in the town has any useful information about them. However, PCs are free to visit the local inn, converse with locals, and make Gather Information checks to learn the following information:

DC 15: The orcs of Thar are marauders that usually travel in small bands. A typical band might even include a lone ogre. These bands have been unusually quiet of late.

DC 18: The largest and most powerful orc tribes include the Broken Fang tribe and the Roving Eye tribe.

DC 21: A powerful warlord is purportedly uniting the fractious orc tribes of Thar. The half-orc ranger Haravak visited recently warning about activity at the old orc ruins at Xûl-Jarak.

DAY 3: The Ambush site (EL 4)

Very early on the third day out of town, PCs following the rough trail reach the orc ruins.

The mist parts to reveal a battleground among a gathering of stone rubble, barely recognizable as an ancient hamlet. While completely ruined, the place is a perfect ambush spot. All that remains of the battle are corpses and a murder of hungry crows. The bodies appear to be mostly orcs. A dead horse, half-shrouded in mist, lies amid the dead orcs, and something large and furry is rooting around near it.

The scions were ambushed here by orcs loyal to the orog warlord Thrull. The crows pecking at the bodies are mostly harmless and warily watch the PCs as they approach, taking to the air if a character comes within 20 feet.

Creature: An owlbear has smelled the stench of death on the wind and is busily consuming the remains of a horse. The beast's keen nose detects the presence of the PCs if they approach within 30 feet. Not willing to share its meal with others, the owlbear rushes to attack.

Owlbear: hp 52; MM 206.

If the PCs search the area, they find six orcs slain by swords, arrows, and spells. The corpses have been stripped of any useful gear. Lying partially underneath one of the orc corpses is the body of a dwarf. Dorn Crownshield lived and died an orcslayer.

The other five companions were eventually overcome and taken to the citadel of Xûl-Jarak by the remaining orcs. Following the trail left by the orcs and their captives requires only a DC 10 Survival check (again, barring a downpour). The occasional horse corpse litters the trail, as the orcs turned to fresh meat on their long march back to the citadel.

DAY 4: orc scout camp (EL 6)

Whether the PCs have a trail to follow, rest at the ruins, or wander aimlessly into the swamp, the fourth day brings an encounter with an orc patrol. Tharan orc warriors usually patrol in pairs, eventually returning to a designated rally point every other day to report their findings. The PCs might track an orc patrol back to their camp, or they might see smoke from orc bonfires rising in the distance and decide to investigate.

The orc camp consists of a three crude lean-tos built around a central courtyard. A wooden cage holds a dire boar.

Creatures: At any given time, eight orc warriors and one orc sergeant occupy the camp. Since they do not expect a sudden attack, the orcs stationed as lookouts are lackadaisical, allowing the PCs to sneak up behind the lean-tos with relative ease.

A character who understands Orc can sneak up to the camp and overhear snippets of the conversation (Listen DC 15). The orcs talk of little except the reconstruction at Xûl-Jarak and the coming conquests of Warlord Thrull. If interrogated, they also reveal that a group of humans (accompanied by a half-elf and a dwarf) was ambushed several days ago and the survivors taken to the citadel.

Orc Sergeant: hp 30; See Appendix.

Orc Warriors (8): hp 5 each; See Appendix.

Dire Boar: hp 52; MM 63.

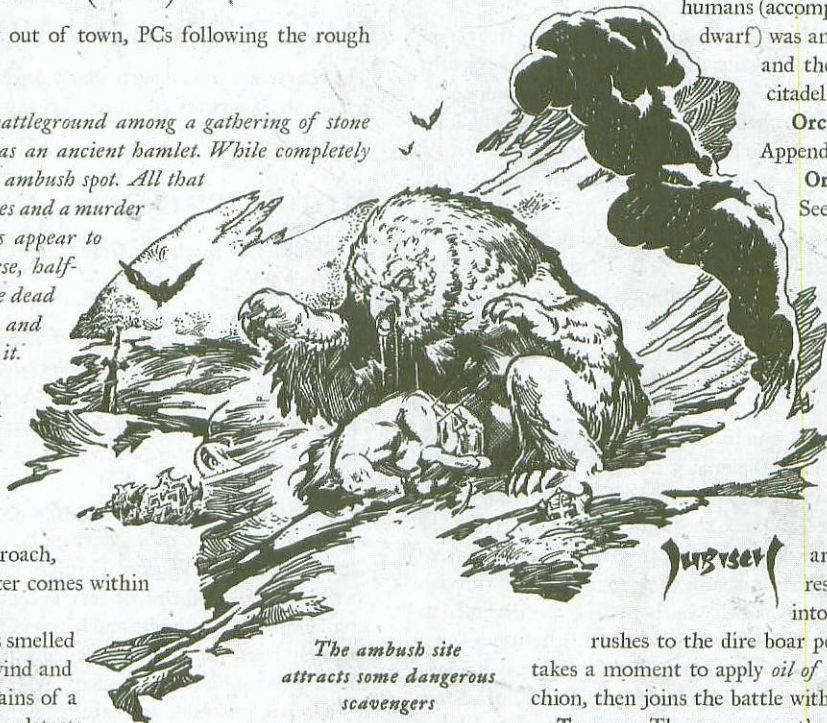
Tactics: If the PCs are detected by the orcs or if they attack the camp, the orcs respond with force. Half of the orcs in the camp grab crossbows and try to circle around the PCs while the rest draw falchions and rush into combat. The orc sergeant

rushes to the dire boar pen to release the animal, takes a moment to apply *oil of magic weapon* to his falchion, then joins the battle with a battle cry.

Treasure: The orc sergeant's *amulet of natural armor +1* is carved from ivory to resemble a boar's head. He also carries 18 gp. Each orc warrior carries 1d8 gp and 1d10 sp.

DAY 5: Haravak and Grûnhawr (EL 4)

Haravak, an intrepid half-orc ranger, roams the moors of Thar with his wolf companion Grûnhawr. Of late, he's witnessed the orc tribes' restlessness and the greater activity around Xûl-Jarak. Such information could be quite valuable, and he hopes to sell his findings to whoever might pay, be it the lords of Melvaunt, the Zhentarim, or even both. This encounter can be moved to an earlier time if the PCs have lost the scions' trail. Haravak could also be used as a replacement PC should one of the company perish during this adventure.



The ambush site attracts some dangerous scavengers

Creatures: Haravak wishes to know the PCs' business. While he isn't inclined to face the PCs head-on in a fair fight, he does want to speak with them to gain insight into their motives. He follows the PCs, waits for them to camp, locates a sufficient stand of short trees and undergrowth nearby, and hides within earshot.

Haravak: Male half-orc ranger 4; CR 4; Medium humanoid (orc); HD 4d8; hp 21; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +4; Grp +7; Atk or Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+3/×3, masterwork handaxe) and +7 melee (1d6+1/×3, masterwork handaxe) or +6 ranged (1d8+3/×3, composite longbow); SA favored enemy (orcs +2); SQ darkvision 60 ft., link, wild empathy (+2, -2 magical beasts); AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +2; Str 17, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 6. Suggested Miniature: Half-Orc Fighter (*Harbinger* 43/80).

Skills and Feats: Handle Animal +2, Hide +6, Knowledge (geography) +5, Knowledge (nature) +7, Listen +6, Move Silently +6, Search +6, Spot +6, Survival +6 (+8 when tracking, +8 to avoid hazards or avoid getting lost, +8 in aboveground natural environments); Endurance^B, Improved Initiative, Track^B, Two-Weapon Fighting^B, Weapon Focus (handaxe).

Languages: Common, Orc.

Link (Ex): Haravak can handle his animal companion as a free action, or push it as a move action. He gains a +4 bonus on all wild empathy and Handle Animal checks made regarding his animal companion.

Possessions: Masterwork chain shirt, 2 masterwork handaxes ("Snick" and "Snack"), composite longbow (+3 Str bonus), 20 arrows, *cloak of elvenkind*, 37 gp in pouch, map of Thar (with notes).

Grünhavr: Wolf animal companion; CR —; hp 13; *MM* 283. Suggested Miniature: Wolf (*Harbinger* 37/80). Grünhavr knows the following tricks: attack, come, down, fetch, heel, seek, and stay.

Tactics: If the PCs detect Haravak and approach his position, he hails them and asks their names and reasons for journeying so far into Thar.

Haravak's initial attitude is indifferent. If the PCs are able to improve his attitude to friendly (Diplomacy DC 15), he becomes more talkative. He thinks it odd that orcs would capture humans but opines that they would be taken to Xül-Jarak, the site of recent orc activity. The citadel is roughly four days' journey by horse (if Haravak is encountered on day 5). He also reports that it is vulnerable to infiltration through a hole in the west wall. Haravak believes that characters disguised as orcs could gain access to the citadel, as he has heard that representatives of various orc tribes are converging on Xül-Jarak to pay homage to a new warlord. If he turns helpful (Diplomacy DC 30 or *charm person*), he can be persuaded to guide the PCs to the Gray Citadel, but refuses to approach within arrow shot. The PCs gain a +1 bonus on their Diplomacy checks for every 10 gp they offer in bribes.

If the characters attack Haravak, he defends himself as best he can, withdrawing into the undergrowth to block lines of sight from archers or spellcasters. His wolf doesn't know how to flank opponents, but it attempts to trip opponents that it bites. Haravak attempts to flee as soon as possible; there's nothing to be gained by fighting the PCs.

DAY 6: MANTICORE ATTACK (EL 4)

The increased orc activity in the region has drawn a certain predator—one that prefers two-legged meals.

Creature: A manticore soars lazily above the moors, watching for the telltale glint of metal that indicates a potential meal, or listening for the sounds of armored creatures marching through the fog. The manticore feasted on a pair of orcs a few hours ago, and it still sports three arrow wounds from that encounter.

Manticore: hp 48 (57 at full); *MM* 179.

Tactics: The manticore strafes the PCs as they emerge from a fog bank or hedgerow, letting loose a spike volley or two from the air before closing in for the kill with a devastating diving charge. (A dive attack deals double damage if it hits; see Movement Modes on page 311 of the *Monster Manual*.) It isn't ready to die for a fresh meal, retreating into the fog if it reduced to 20 or fewer hit points.

DAY 7: THE STILL MOORS

The characters cross a particularly desolate stretch of moors, encountering no dangerous creatures. Do not roll for random encounters on this day.

DAY 8: THE GRAY CITADEL

The characters reach the Gray Citadel around early evening on the eighth day.

Rain falls, and a thick blanket of low-lying fog covers the land. Up ahead, beyond the gray veil, a bleak citadel looms atop a great mound of black rock. No light issues from the forlorn edifice. Somewhere to the north and east of the citadel, several hundred yards away, you hear orcs—lots of them.

Orc bands from the Broken Fang tribe and the Roving Eye tribe, as well as from many other tribes, have gathered north and east of the Gray Citadel, waiting for Warlord Thrull to lead them. Each tribe maintains its own camp, consisting of several tents and lean-tos surrounding a small bonfire that flickers and hisses in the rain. PCs would be wise to shy away from the orc encampments, for the orcs vastly outnumber them. (Several hundred orcs have gathered near Xül-Jarak, and most of them are miserable and eager to fight.) Fortunately for the adventurers, the orc camps are far enough from the citadel that the PCs can approach Xül-Jarak without being seen or heard by them.

part 3

XUL-JARAK

The heroes arrive at Xul-Jarak, the Gray Citadel, hoping to rescue the surviving scions of Melvaunt. Meanwhile, the orog warlord Thrull prepares to sacrifice the scions to Gruumsh and win the orc god's favor, thereby giving him the power to unite the orc tribes of Thar under his black banner. Emissaries of some of the orc tribes have arrived to witness the event and report back to their chieftains.

An orc champion named Vhazror leads the citadel's defense. Thrull himself remains deep in the dungeons, preparing for the ritual.

features of xul-jarak

Xul-Jarak consists of the two-story citadel proper and the four-level dungeon underneath. It sits atop a 20-foot-high crag of barren, jagged rock that rises up out of the moors. The ashen gray walls climb an additional 20 feet, are supported by great stone buttresses, and are lined with a 3-foot-high stone battlement. A stone ramp leads out of the foggy moors to the gatehouse, which stands watch over two sets of heavy doors.

The citadel has weathered numerous attacks and suffered with the passage of time; parts of the outer wall and citadel lie in ruins. Although repairs have begun, much work remains.

walls

The outer walls are made of 5-foot-thick mortared stone. Inner walls are 1-foot-thick mortared stone.

Outer Wall (10-foot-by-10-foot section): 5 ft. thick; hardness 8; hp 450; break DC 35; Climb DC 20 (25 in rainy conditions).

Inner Wall (10-foot-by-10-foot section): 1 ft. thick; hardness 8; hp 90; break DC 35; Climb DC 15 (20 in rainy conditions).

DOORS

Ancient battles left the citadel's outer doors in ruins until Thrull finally ordered them repaired. The new outer doors (of which there are two sets) are made of iron-reinforced oak. They are unlocked and opened by turning the winch mechanisms in areas 3A and 3B. The citadel's smaller interior doors are made of strong wood with iron hinges and fittings.

Secret doors are designed to blend with the surrounding stonework. They push open easily.

Outer Door (6 ft. wide, 15 ft. tall, iron-reinforced wood): 1 ft. thick; hardness 5; hp 120; break DC 25 (locked).

Inner Door (3 ft. wide, 7 ft. tall, strong wood): 2 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 20; break DC 25 (locked).

Secret Door (3-foot-wide, 6-foot-tall, stone): 1 ft. thick; hardness 8; hp 180; break DC 28; Search DC 20.

rubble

Certain sections of the citadel have collapsed into heaps of rubble, some as high as 10 feet. Moving through rubble costs double normal (each square counts as 2 squares of movement), and any character doing so for all or any portion of a move action must succeed on a DC 15 Balance check. If the Balance check fails, the character must make a DC 15 Reflex save or fall prone, taking 1d4 points of damage. In

addition, nearby creatures can make a Listen check (DC 10, +1 per 10 feet of distance) to hear the sounds of the falling character and the shifting rubble. Rubble can also be negotiated by climbing (DC 0), but a Listen check is automatically triggered.

illumination

The orcs rely on darkvision to see and don't usually carry or use torches or lanterns. However, they do use fires for cooking, heating, and forging. Lit areas are specifically noted in the text.

weather

The weather is continually foggy and rainy for this part of the adventure (see Terrain and Weather, page 9). The conditions should make it easier for the characters to approach the citadel—and possibly enter it—unnoticed.

The fog rises to a height of 20 feet (just below the base of the citadel's outer wall); there is no fog within the citadel proper, however. Although orc sentries stand watch atop the outer wall (see area 18), they cannot see anything on the moors and must rely on Listen checks (as modified by the rain) to detect approaching intruders.

entering xul-jarak

Characters can enter the citadel in any one of several ways:

Breach the Front Doors: This is the most direct and dangerous means of entering. Orcs on the walls begin firing arrows at the characters as they attempt to bash the doors. If the characters haven't breached the outermost doors after 5 rounds, the orcs in the barbican (area 19) pour boiling water onto them, dealing 2d6 points of fire damage to any characters in the four squares immediately in front of the doors.

The frontal assault alerts the entire citadel. The orcs in the gatehouse (area 3) shoot arrows at characters through the arrow slits peering into area 2. Meanwhile, the orcs in areas 7 and 14 gather in the courtyard. Lastly, the orcs watching the courtyard (area 22) and on the outer wall (area 18) take aim at intruders with their bows.

Each of the four outer doors measures 90 square feet. A *knock* spell can open one of the doors, provided the caster is at least 9th level.

Negotiate the Collapsed Wall: Characters can scale the 20-foot-high rain-slicked rocky crag (Climb DC 20) and enter the citadel through the collapsed section of the outer wall. Rules for climbing over rubble are described above. The two orc archers on the wall nearby gain Listen checks in case noise is made. Other than the -4 penalty due to the rain, remember that creatures take a -1 penalty on Listen checks for every 10 feet of distance between them and the source of the noise.

Adopt Disguises: Characters can use guile and trickery to enter the citadel. For example, they could disguise themselves as orcs, either by ambushing an orc patrol and donning their armor and clothing, or by casting spells such as *disguise self* (remember that the orcs take a -4 penalty on their Spot checks due to the inclement weather). Thrull is expecting emissaries from various orc tribes, and the citadel guards assume that any orcs they don't recognize have arrived at Xul-Jarak to pay homage to their warlord. Suitably disguised PCs can worm their way inside with a good lie or obsequious gesture (Bluff or Diplomacy DC 15), assuming they speak Orc. However, their arrival is announced to Vhazror (see area 14), who meets them in the courtyard (area 4). Only the best disguises fool Vhazror, but if the characters manage to maintain their cover in the face of the orc champion, he allows them to wander anywhere they please inside the citadel (areas 3-27). When

the time of Thrull's ritual is at hand, Vhazror personally escorts the characters and the other visiting delegates (currently holed up in areas 11, 12, and 13) to the ritual chamber (area 47).

Create a Distraction: If the PCs can devise a sufficiently noticeable and sustained distraction outside the walls, the orc champion Vhazror sends the orcs in the tavern (area 7) to investigate. Three other gangs of six orc warriors each accompany them out of sheer boredom. Everyone is spoiling for a fight. If the squad does not return, Vhazror alerts the orogs below, gathers those around him (see area 14), mounts his pet wyvern (see area 4), and heads out to see on the matter personally. Any of these events places the citadel on a heightened state of alertness.

Use Stealth and Magic: Characters can rely on Climb, Hide, and Move Silently checks to stealthily make their way inside the citadel. A few well-chosen spells will also improve the heroes' chances of entering the citadel undetected. Useful spells include *ghost sound* (for distracting orc sentries), *sleep* and *deep slumber* (for quietly taking out orc sentries), *invisibility* (for slipping past orcs unseen), *silence* (for quieting footfalls and armored characters), *obscuring mist* and *fog cloud* (given the conditions on the moors, a sudden rolling mist is not likely to raise instant suspicion), *hold person* (to quell orcs that threaten to raise the alarm), *expeditious retreat* and *longstrider* (enables faster climbing), *spider climb* (facilitates climbing), *darkvision* (obviates the need for light sources), *message* and *whispering wind* (allows characters to communicate quietly over a distance), *fly* (allows swift travel past the outer defenses), and *gaseous form* (allows subtle entry into the citadel).

quoth the raven!

The characters have one ally at Xül-Jarak: Kara Calaudra's raven familiar, Esselios. After the orcs attacked the scions and knocked Kara unconscious, Esselios took to the air and followed the victors back to Xül-Jarak. It flits about the citadel, landing on rooftops, hiding under eaves, and staying out of sight of the orcs and other denizens. When the heroes arrive, Esselios observes them for a time from the battlements. Once convinced that they are working against the orcs, it lands on the shoulder of the character with the highest Charisma score at

the first opportunity. If the PCs are disguised as orcs, Esselios avoids them unless it pierces their deception.

Esselios speaks broken Common and can impart the following information when prompted:

—"Kara captured! Taken here! Trapped below!"

—"Kara in a dark cave! All chained! Hungry! Danger close!"

—"Dorn died! Five alive!" (Esselios is referring to the five ambush survivors.)

—"Sacrifice! Orcs need a sacrifice!"

—"Dragon in the courtyard!" (Esselios is referring to the wyvern in area 4.)

The raven accompanies the PCs indoors only if they succeed on a DC 20 Diplomacy check. The raven's statistics appear in the Appendix.

ground level (Areas 1-17)

The map for this level appears on the inside front cover of the module.

Ceilings on this level are a uniform 15 feet high. The floors consist of ill-fitting flagstone tiles, many of them rainworn and edged in black mold.

1. RAMP

A 20-foot-wide, 100-foot-long stone ramp rises from the fogswept moors of Thar to the gates of Xül-Jarak. A 2-foot-high stone ledge runs along each side of the ramp. The thick fog obscures the ramp, and characters making their way up the incline don't emerge from the fog until they reach the very top.

Development: The orc sentries atop the citadel wall (area 18) try to watch the ramp but can't see more than 5 feet into the fog, so they must rely on their ears more than their eyes. If the orcs perceive something other than welcomed visitors, they cry out in alarm and begin shooting arrows from behind the cover of the battlements (+4 cover bonus to AC). Their cries of alarm wake the wyvern in area 4 and alert the remaining garrison.

2. THE GATES OF GRUUMSH

Read or paraphrase the following as the characters approach within sight of the first set of doors:

Two great, 15-foot-high oak doors loom before you. Reinforced with bands of black iron, they defy anyone eager to sunder them. Carved into their dark surface is an enormous and angry All-Seeing Eye.

Two sets of double doors forbid entry to Xül-Jarak. When the doors are closed, wooden "teeth" sink deep into square holes carved into the stone ceiling overhead and floor beneath, granting further reinforcement. The heavy winches in area 3 open and close the doors.

A featureless stone hallway joins the two sets of doors. Four arrow slits are carved into the walls, two per side. The orcs manning the winches also carry bows and use them to shoot arrows at intruders who make it this far into the citadel. The arrow slits provide cover, granting the orcs a +8 cover bonus to AC and a +4 cover bonus on Reflex saves.

Development: Characters who pound on the outermost doors alert the orc sentries atop the nearby buttresses (see area 18), who in turn shout warnings to the guards in the gatehouse, alerting them to would-be visitors or invaders. Through a series of shouts, the orcs on the outer wall are able to alert the entire citadel garrison within 3

Ready-to-use orc names

Need an orc name right away? Here are some ready-to-use orc names (male/female).

| | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| Brullok/Brullix | Nask/Naska |
| Draxor/Draxorda | Nulth/Nulthora |
| Freg/Fregwa | Prük/Pril |
| Grakk/Grakka | Reklag/Reklagwa |
| Gryth/Grythora | Skangar/Skangarna |
| Irük/Irúka | Smeerdük/Smeerdil |
| Jaath/Jaathora | Svarklor/Svarklorda |
| Jarag/Jaragwa | Tharg/Thargwa |
| Kalürok/Kalürix | Ulthic/Ulthic |
| Karn/Karna | Urgwar/Urgwarna |
| Krimlar/Krimlarna | Vaath/Vaathora |
| Leerkar/Leerkarna | Veklar/Veklarna |
| Lurthkor/Lurthkorda | Vülok/Vülix |
| Mog/Mogwa | Yrathk/Yrathka |
| Myrrk/Myrrka | Zrag/Zragwa |

rounds, although it takes 1 minute for the orcs in areas 7 and 14 to get organized, gather equipment, and form up in the courtyard (area 4).

3. GATEHOUSE (EL 3 PER ROOM)

Areas 3A and 3B are basically identical. Each room contains a staircase leading up to area 19, a pair of large wooden winches connected by heavy iron chains to the gate doors (area 2), and three wooden cots with filthy mattresses. Turning a winch requires a DC 15 Strength check.

Heavy Wooden Winch: hardness 5; hp 75; break DC 30.

Creatures: Three orc archers guard each room. Their tasks include operating the winches and shooting arrows at intruders through the arrow slits.

Orc Archers (3 per room, 6 total): hp 11 each; see Appendix.

Development: The orcs in area 19 investigate sounds of combat here. Half of them arrive in 1 round, and the rest arrive the following round.

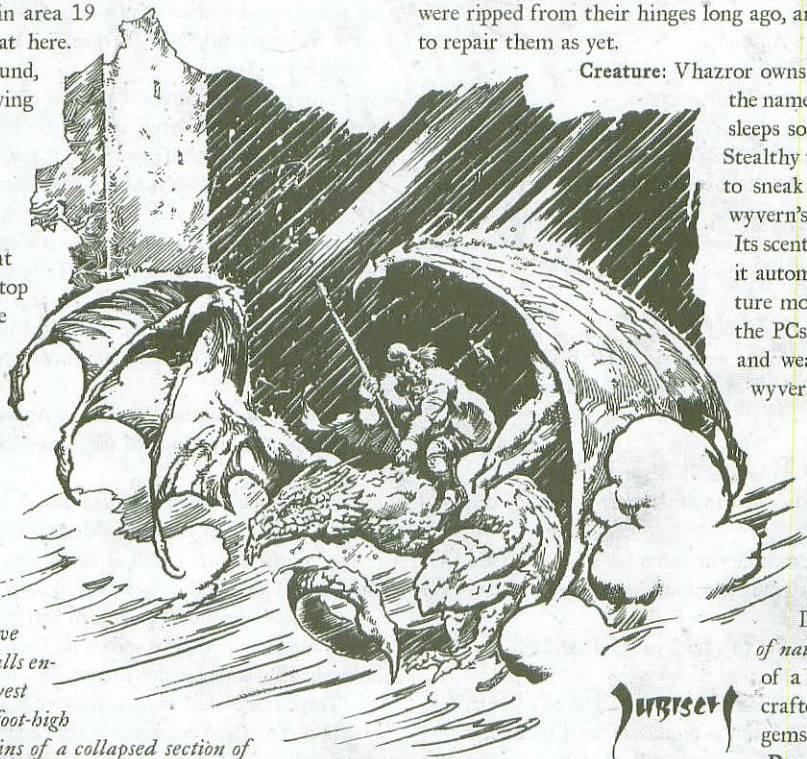
4. COURTYARD (EL 6)

Vhazror's wyvern mount sleeps in the courtyard atop a 10-foot-square rubble pile (area 4C). Do not read the last paragraph of the following read-aloud text if the wyvern is awakened or encountered elsewhere.

The citadel's courtyard has been mostly cleared of rubble. A steady rain falls, leaving shallow pools where the flagstones have sunken. Gray 20-foot-high walls enclose the courtyard, the northwest corner of which holds a 10-foot-high mound of rubble—the remains of a collapsed section of the citadel. Where the western wall has collapsed, you see an equally massive heap of stone rubble. A crude plank bridge spans the gap in the outer wall 10 feet above the rubble heap. Other features of the courtyard include a raised stone well and a wooden hauling platform suspended by heavy ropes from a large wooden crane that surmounts the outer wall.

Several doors lead from the courtyard. Double doors in the east wall have been torn completely from their hinges and lie in the courtyard nearby. The northern double doors, which lead into the citadel proper, hang agape on rusted hinges. Beyond both sets of broken doors you see flickering firelight.

A large reptilian creature sleeps atop a low mound of rubble in the middle of the courtyard, its batlike wings folded against its sleek body. The creature's long tail curls around the base of the rubble and ends in a wicked stinger. A saddle is strapped to the reptile's back. Occasionally it twitches, as if fighting some nightmare more terrible than itself.



Vhazror and Dregthaug

The steady drum of the rain drowns all but the loudest noises and shouts. Characters who succeed on a Listen check (DC 10; +1 per 10 feet of distance) hear raucous shouts and guttural laughter emanating from areas 7 and 14.

The wooden platform (area 4A) is 8 feet by 8 feet and is attached to the wooden crane on the upper level (area 21). Lying around the platform are several cut blocks of stone waiting to be hoisted to the top of the wall.

The well (area 4B) is 50 feet deep and covered most of the time with a half-rotten wooden lid; a battered wooden bucket attached to 100 feet of rope lies nearby.

The wyvern's "bed" is a 4-foot-high mound of rubble (area 4C). Buried in the rubble are some animal and humanoid bones, as well as wyvern dung. Characters that search the heap and succeed on a DC 20 Search check also find the **Treasure**.

The eastern doors to area 7 and the northern doors to area 14 were ripped from their hinges long ago, and the orcs haven't seen fit to repair them as yet.

Creature: Vhazror owns a domesticated wyvern by the name of Dregthaug. The wyvern sleeps soundly in the pouring rain. Stealthy characters can attempt to sneak past it; while asleep, the wyvern's Listen check result is 13. Its scent ability is good enough that it automatically awakens if a creature moves within 10 feet of it. If the PCs have disguised themselves and wear orc-smelling attire, the wyvern returns to sleeping.

Dregthaug (Wyvern): hp 59; MM 259. Suggested Miniature: Wyvern (*Aberrations* 25/60).

Treasure: Buried amid the rubble and refuse of Dregthaug's bed is an **amulet of natural armor** +1 in the shape of a green lizard and a dwarf-crafted helmet set with four gems (worth 100 gp each).

Development: If the orcs have been alerted to intruders, Dregthaug awakens and waits nervously as Vhazror marshals his troops and gathers them in the courtyard. After barking orders to the orcs, Vhazror mounts the wyvern and goes where he feels he is needed most.

5. BATHROOM STALLS

The orcs are crude, but not uncivilized. This room contains two stalls, each equipped with a wooden bench cut with a hole leading to a 10-foot-deep cistern carved beneath each stall. An understandably foul odor fills the chamber.

6. BARREL STORAGE

This 5-foot-wide, 10-foot-deep storage room contains three barrels, each one containing hard ale. The ale barrels are rolled in through the west door and stored in this dark area until they are taken to the tavern (area 7) and cracked open.

Characters who inspect the barrels notice that they are branded with a crest. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (local) check reveals that the crest—and thus the ale—belongs to House Leiyraghon of Melvaunt.

7. TAVERN (EL 6)

Firelight illuminates this chamber. A warm fire crackles in the fireplace, casting an orange glow about the room. Spare wood and kindling are piled atop the hearth. Several battered wooden tables and stools litter the room, and an opened barrel of hard ale (three-quarters empty) rests in the southernmost corner. A rain-soaked staircase set into the eastern wall climbs up to the roof (area 18).

Creatures: Ten orcs—a sergeant, three berserkers, and six warriors—are drinking, shouting, and arm wrestling here. They wear their armor and their weapons are nearby, in case a fight breaks out or an alarm is raised. All of the orcs are quite drunk and take a -1 penalty on their attack rolls.

Orc Sergeant: hp 30; see Appendix.

Orc Berserkers (3): hp 14 each; see Appendix.

Orc Warriors (6): hp 5 each; see Appendix.

8. RUINED STABLES

Part of the citadel collapsed into the stablehouse, destroying much of it. The orcs have not yet cleared the rubble. The large wooden stablehouse doors lie in splinters beneath the collapsed debris. The stablehouse contains nothing of value.

9. BROKEN WALL

A rain-soaked staircase set into the western end of this corridor leads up to area 18. The southern wall of this hall has partially collapsed, revealing area 10 beyond.

10. OLD BARRACKS (EL 1)

This room contains three wooden bunkbeds on the verge of collapse, but nothing of value.

Creatures: Characters searching the room for treasure anger four small monstrous centipedes hiding amid the debris. Combat here awakens the wyvern in area 4.

Small Monstrous Centipedes (4): hp 2 each; *MM* 286.

11. EMISSARIES OF THE BROKEN FANG (EL 4)

This chamber contains three wooden bunkbeds with rotting, straw-filled mattresses. Once used as a barracks by the citadel's defenders, this room now serves as quarters for two orc barbarians representing the Broken Fang tribe. Tzarkoth Wormeater, the chieftain of the Broken Fang tribe, is strongly considering an alliance with Thrull but has misgivings about putting aside his hatred for the Roving Eye tribe. He has given his emissaries strict orders to avoid conflict with the Roving Eye delegation, but that may be easier said than done.

Creatures: Two mountain orcs guard their chieftain's tribute. They are anxious to meet Thrull but have been instructed to wait here until the orog warlord is ready to receive them.

Mountain orcs stand over 7 feet tall and have bestial heads atop massive shoulders. Their eyes are deep red and bloodshot, and they feature porcine snouts and large tusks. They weave tiny bones into their shaggy hair, and wear crude leather armor dyed deep red and mustard yellow. They bear many scars.

Mountain Orcs (2): hp 22 each; see Appendix.

Tactics: If a general alarm sounds, the mountain orcs emerge from their quarters eager for battle. They side with the citadel's orc defend-

ers, but once enraged strike anyone nearby. If forced to fight alongside the emissaries of the Roving Eye tribe (see area 13), they have a 10% chance per round of turning on them instead. Both mountain orcs rage as soon as battle is joined and are smart enough to use flanking tactics whenever possible.

Treasure: Two large sacks containing tribute for Thrull are tucked under one of the bunkbeds, along with some smaller sacks of food. The first treasure sack contains a mixture of coins: 2,000 cp, 800 sp, and 400 gp. The second treasure sack contains an assortment of weapons and armor: two masterwork breastplates, a suit of masterwork half-plate, a masterwork orc double axe, a masterwork heavy flail, a masterwork falchion, a masterwork spiked gauntlet, and a +1 *bastard sword* with a permanent *Nystul's magic aura* spell cast on it.

12. ZHENTARIM EMISSARIES (EL 6 AND 4)

This room contains a wooden bunkbed with straw-filled mattresses, a locked wooden chest, and a bare wooden shelf that has seen better days. A successful DC 30 Open Lock check unlocks the chest but triggers the **Trap**.

This room accommodates a pair of low-ranking Zhentarim agents sent to investigate Thrull and pay tribute to the fledgling warlord. If Thrull becomes a true power in Thar, Zhentil Keep may have use for him in the future, particularly if he succeeds in uniting the fractious orc tribes.

Creatures: Livikus Arthantar is a cleric of Bane who, along with his bodyguard Xeldar Orsalyn, fully supports Zhentil Keep's goal to rule the North. Livikus comes bearing tribute to Thrull, but his real agenda is to determine whether this orog has it in him to unite the orc tribes of Thar and join forces with Zhentil Keep in crushing Melvaunt.

Livikus Arthantar: hp 31; see Appendix.

Xeldar Orsalyn: hp 19; see Appendix.

Tactics: Before entering combat, Livikus casts *divine favor* and *shield of faith* (on himself). Meanwhile, Xeldar coats his blade with *oil of magic weapon* and imbibes his *potion of blur*. Xeldar then guards Livikus as the cleric summons a hell hound (*MM* 151) using his *summon monster III* spell. In battle, Livikus hangs back and uses *bane* and *doom* spells to soften up foes. However, he is not afraid to cow enemies with his morningstar as needed.

Trap: The locked chest is trapped with a *glyph of warding* cast by Livikus. The *glyph* detonates if the chest is opened without the proper key, dealing 2d8 points of cold damage to affected creatures.

Glyph of Warding (Blast): CR 4; spell; spell trigger; no reset; spell effect (*glyph of warding [blast]*, 5th-level cleric, 2d8 cold, Reflex DC 16 half); multiple targets (all targets within 5 ft.); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 28.

Treasure: The locked chest contains six sacks. Four of the sacks contain 500 gp each (2,000 gp total). The fifth sack contains 12 pieces of miscellaneous jewelry (golden bracelets, necklaces, and rings) worth a total of 4,000 gp. The sixth sack contains 500 pp.

Development: If orcs raise the general alarm, Livikus and Xeldar emerge from their quarters to witness the orcs' defense of the citadel. They are not above intervening on either side to keep things "interesting," but do so very discreetly. If pressed by the defenders, they aid but only reluctantly. If they see some advantage personally or for Zhentil Keep, they might team up with the PCs for a short while, but they are far from trustworthy. If things go badly for the orcs and the PCs do not offer them a reward, the Keep agents retreat to this chamber, seize the chest, and try to slip away into the fog and rain.

13. EMISSARIES OF THE ROVING EYE (EL 5)

This room contains three wooden bunkbeds with rotting, straw-filled mattresses. Once used as a barracks by the citadel's defenders, this room now serves as quarters for two orc rogue/barbarians representing the Roving Eye tribe. Urlûn Dwarfsplitter, the chieftain of the Roving Eye tribe, respects Thrull's power but does not feel that the orog cares about rebuilding the great orc empire of old. Urlûn believes that the *Hammer of Gruumsh* can unite the orcs of Thar, but only in the hands of a true orc like himself. He has given his chosen emissaries a cursed magical gift for Thrull (see **Treasure**, below) as well as the task of stealing the *Hammer of Gruumsh* should an opportunity present itself.

Creatures: Knowing that the emissaries of the hated Broken-Fang tribe are close (see area 11), one of the orcs sleeps while the other stands guard.

Orc Raiders (2): hp 19 each; see Appendix.

Tactics: The orc raiders expect an audience with Thrull once the orog warlord has completed his ritual preparations. They seek only to deliver their chieftain's tribute and steal the magical hammer before, during, or after the ritual. They see any attack against Thrull as an opportunity to accomplish their mission. If a general alarm sounds, they investigate but do not join the battle. Instead, they hang back and observe. If the citadel's defenders are on the verge of defeat, the Roving Eye orcs attempt to hide, hoping to follow the heroes down into the citadel dungeons where the *Hammer of Gruumsh* awaits. They use flanking tactics whenever possible, relying on their tumbling skills to avoid attacks of opportunity. They save their rage for the inevitable battle in which they attempt to claim the hammer for their chief.

Treasure: One of the orc raiders carries a small golden box (worth 25 gp) containing a cursed *ring of evasion*. The ring, crafted by elves, is the Roving Eye's gift to Thrull. Any creature other than an elf or half-elf that dons the ring takes a -4 penalty on attack rolls, saves, ability checks, and skill checks for as long as the ring is worn. A *break enchantment* spell has no effect, but a *remove curse*, *limited wish*, *miracle*, or *wish* spell forever lifts the curse. The wearer of the ring does not become aware of the curse until its effects come into play, and even then the source of the curse is not immediately obvious. The curse halves the ring's market price.

14. HALL OF THE ORC KING (EL 9)

Firelight illuminates this chamber, spilling forth from the sundered doors in the south wall and the collapsed wall in the southeast corner. Unless a general alarm has sounded, this hall is filled with the sounds of orcs.

Two large fireplaces illuminate this once-great hall, filling the chamber with smoke and fighting off the damp cold of the outdoors. The southeast corner of the hall lies in ruin, where much of the courtyard wall has collapsed. Rain pours in through the gash. A large chunk of the ceiling overhead has also collapsed, leaving a hole and a limited view of the floor above. Much of the debris from the fallen ceiling has been pushed into large piles about the room. Eight pillars once supported the ceiling, but two have toppled and lie broken amid the rubble.

Against the north wall, atop a square dais, sits a massive stone throne built into the body of a great statue. The statue depicts a frightening 12-foot-tall orc warrior, its left eye socket hollow. Flanking the throne are two open doorways and a pair of ornate stone fountains.

The foul stench of body odor and damp decay fills the room.

The orc kings of old ruled from this grand hall. Now it has become a haven for the citadel's ragtag defenders. The orc champion Vhazror has pledged to serve Thrull unto death, and he slouches in the king's throne, grasping a half-filled tankard of black wine. Vhazror and the hall's other denizens are enjoying some "downtime" as they wait for Jurr and Thrull to complete their preparations for the ritual.

The throne is carved into the base of a statue depicting the one-eyed orc god Gruumsh. Runes carved into the wall behind the throne say, in Orc, "He Who Watches" and "He Who Never Sleeps." One of the statue's eyes is set with a large red gem (see **Treasure**, below), while the other is an empty socket.

The stone fountains in the northwest and northeast corners of the room radiate moderate conjuration magic under scrutiny of a *detect magic* spell. When full, each font contains 10 servings of black wine called "the Blood of Gruumsh" (currently each holds 1d4 servings). The black wine is poisonous to all creatures except orcs and half-orcs (Fortitude DC 14 negates; initial and secondary 1d4 Str). Any orc or half-orc that drinks from the font gains a +1 insight bonus on attack rolls for 1 hour. The wine can be transported but loses its potency 1d4+1 hours after it's removed from the font, transforming into swill. The fountains magically refill with wine at midnight every day.

Creatures: Vhazror presides over a dim-witted ogre named Krog, four orc brutes, and six orc warriors. Their revels frequently border on violence, although Vhazror keeps the bloody fisticuffs to a minimum. In addition to the troops on the hall floor, orc warriors stationed in area 24 fire crossbows at invaders through the large hole in the ceiling.

Vhazror: hp 66; see Appendix.

Krog (Ogre): hp 29; *MM* 199. Suggested Miniature: Ogre (*Harbinger* 71/80).

Orc Brutes (4): hp 14 each; see Appendix.

Orc Warriors (6): hp 5 each; see Appendix.

Tactics: Vhazror and the other orcs in this area have imbibed the blood of Gruumsh, granting them a +1 insight bonus on attack rolls. The ogre has not.

Before entering combat, Vhazror drinks his *potion of barkskin* (which improves his base AC and flat-footed AC by 3 each). He assigns the two kitchen orcs (see area 16) the task of guarding the doors leading to areas 15 and 16. Meanwhile, two more orc warriors watch over the hall from above (see area 24). The orc champion then ushers his forces (including the orc spearfighters in area 24) into the courtyard (area 4). All this takes 1 minute.

Treasure: The red gem set into the statue's good eye is worth 5,000 gp. Casting *detect magic* on the gem reveals a strong aura of necromancy that fades once the gem is pruned free. Whoever removes the gem triggers a curse (as per the *bestow curse* spell), although a successful DC 16 Will save negates the effect. Creatures with orc blood (such as orcs, half-orcs, and tanarukks) gain a +4 circumstance bonus on attack rolls made against the cursed character.

Development: If Vhazror is effectively trapped in this hall, he yells out for aid. One round later, the wyvern in area 4 appears in the open doorway to the south. The wyvern has no trouble moving through the doorway.

15. DINING HALL

A long wooden table stretches the length of this dark hall. Two heavy wooden benches and two massive chairs surround the table. All of the furnishings are damaged and stained. Fragments of broken pottery and filthy tankards litter the tabletop and floor. A tapestry hanging on the south wall depicts a legion of orcs setting fire to an elven glade and

hauling elf prisoners bound in chains. The tapestry is torn in several places and has no value.

A staircase in the south wall leads up to area 23B. A secret door in the southeast corner conceals another staircase that descends to area 28.

16. KITCHEN (EL 1)

This kitchen contains a lit fireplace, a stack of wood, a battered wooden table and stool, and a shelf lined with clay dishes and jugs of seasonings. A heavy iron pot suspended over the fire holds up to 3 gallons of frothing gruel.

A staircase in the southwest corner leads up to area 23A. A secret door nearby conceals another staircase that descends to area 28.

Creatures: Two orc warriors have been punished with kitchen duty, preparing food for the other orcs. When the alarm is raised, they eagerly seize their weapons and move into the main hall (area 14), where Vhazror assigns them to guard the doors leading to this kitchen and the dining hall (area 15).

Orc Warriors (2): hp 5 each; see Appendix.

17. Larder/Pantry

The orcs store their food here. Stone shelves lining the walls hold loaves of bread, hunks of cheese, flayed strips of dried meat, and stolen kegs of common wine. Sacks of flour lie heaped on the floor next to two barrels of drinking water (one opened and half empty). Skinned animal carcasses dangle from hooks in the middle of the room.

Upper Level (Areas 18–27)

The map for this level appears on the inside back cover of the module.

Ceilings on this level are a uniform 15 feet high. The floors are made of smooth stone.

18. OUTER WALL PARAPETS (EL 8)

Three-foot-high battlements enclose the parapets of the outer wall, which rises 20 feet above the courtyard and 40 feet above the misty moors. In places the parapets and battlements have collapsed, but the outer wall remains largely intact. The pouring rain forms shallow puddles here and there, but the parapets are designed to channel water through holes along the base of the battlements and down the outside wall. The battlements provide cover (+4 cover bonus to AC, +2 cover bonus on Reflex saves).

A rain-drenched staircase on the western parapet leads down to area 9, while a similar staircase on the eastern parapet descends to area 7.

Creatures: Ten orc archers guard the outer wall, in the locations marked G on the map. They stand at the edge of each buttress, giving them a mostly unobstructed view of the surrounding landscape (although the inclement weather hampers their vision).

Orc Archers (10): hp 11 each; see Appendix.

Tactics: The archers are mainly concerned with watching for invaders approaching the citadel. If invaders manage to infiltrate the citadel, they turn their attention inward, shooting arrows at enemies in the courtyard (area 4). They are not afraid to move from their positions as needs dictate and, if necessary, can summon reinforcements from areas 7 and 19.

19. BARBICAN (EL 4)

This large area is unpleasantly warm and illuminated by two lit fireplaces. Between the hearths rest two 10-gallon iron vats. The vats sit directly beneath iron pipes that receive rainwater from the building's rooftop. The vats collect the water, which the orcs heat over the fires. A shallow depression carved into the floor holds the scalding hot water, and channels allow the hot water to pour through holes in the south wall, directly onto enemies standing between the main gates (see area 2).

The room contains four bunkbeds with straw mattresses and two unlocked chests. The chests contain food and drink supplies for the orcs stationed here. Two staircases on opposite sides of the room descend to areas 3A and 3B, respectively.

Creatures: Eight orc warriors stoke the fires and stand guard here, waiting to drop boiling hot water on attackers at the gate or respond to shouts of alarm in area 18.

Orc Warriors (8): hp 5 each; see Appendix.

20. PLANK BRIDGE

A 5-foot-wide plank bridge spans a 20-foot-wide fissure in the outer wall. The bridge weighs roughly 500 pounds and can support up to 500 pounds on any one 5-foot section. For every 5 points of damage dealt to the bridge, its load-bearing limit decreases by 50 pounds.

Crossing the bridge does not require a special check. However, a creature wounded while standing on the bridge must make a DC 10 Balance check; if the check fails, the creature must succeed on a DC 13 Reflex save or fall. The bridge is 10 feet higher than the mound of rubble below, but anyone who falls off the bridge takes 1d6+2 points of damage from landing on the jagged rocks.

Wooden Plank Bridge: hardness 5; hp 50; break DC 25.

21. WOODEN CRANE

The orcs built this crane to haul stone blocks from the ground to the top of the wall. Repairs were started, but have since halted until after Thrull completes his ritual. The crane has two built-in winches, one for raising and lowering the wooden hauling platform (area 4A), the other for rotating the crane's swing-arm clockwise and counterclockwise.

Ready-to-use Orc Battle Cries

Need a battle cry to give your orcs some personality? Here are some ready-to-use ones.

| d10 Battle Cry | In Orc |
|--|---|
| 1 "Taste orc steel, worms!" | <i>Draakk tuu, mauthaug!</i> |
| 2 "Feed them to the maggots!" | <i>Kraavak mauthaug-vah!</i> |
| 3 "Fall before the eye of Gruumsh!" | <i>Shaa tur-in bab-bak suu Gruumsh!</i> |
| 4 "I will have your blood!" | <i>Ill khar nuugash-bek!</i> |
| 5 "Split their skulls and rip out their hearts!" | <i>Rak tuu vaakarn beh vvak tuu gruuthor!</i> |
| 6 "Feel the punishing fist of Gruumsh!" | <i>Seb-vaak shyrnuuk suu Gruumsh!</i> |
| 7 "Plunge them into the Abyss!" | <i>Praagb othaar vah-muut ur!</i> |
| 8 "Kill the weaklings!" | <i>Bab-bakh krehl-baa!</i> |
| 9 "Death to the enemy!" | <i>Nurthaag vah-raak!</i> |
| 10 "For Thrull!" | <i>Thrull kreh!</i> |

The crane and its wooden platform can haul up to 1,200 pounds, although it takes 4 rounds to raise or lower the platform (a rate of 5 feet per round) using the winches.

Heavy Wooden Crane: hardness 5; hp 150; break DC 36.

22. CITADEL CURTAIN (EL 2)

When the citadel was built, this curtain wall was added so that archers could shoot arrows at intruders in the courtyard and on the outer wall parapets. The eastern section of the curtain wall collapsed along with part of the citadel during a previous siege, leaving a 20-foot drop at one end.

The windows of the curtain wall provide a +8 cover bonus to AC and a +4 cover bonus on Reflex saves while providing a slightly wider angle of vision than regular arrow slits.

Creatures: Two orc archers are stationed here, at the positions marked G on the map. They shoot arrows at enemies in the courtyard (area 4) and on the outer wall parapets (area 18).

Orc Archers (2): hp 11 each; see Appendix.

23. EMPTY ROOM

Both of these rooms (areas 23A and 23B) are empty and bereft of furnishings. The two doors leading to the parapet can be barred from the inside, although neither door is barred currently. A staircase winds down to the dining hall (area 15) or kitchen (area 16).

24. HALL OF WARRIORS (EL 4)

Areas 24–27 were once separate rooms, but a large section of the upper level collapsed, leaving an immense hole in the floor and creating a large open area between the four rooms. These rooms are also open to area 14 below. Thus far, the ceiling over these rooms has remained intact, keeping out the steady rain.

This hall has suffered extensive damage. Most of the southern wall has collapsed and fallen through a gaping hole in the floor. Through the gash in the wall and floor, you can see into other rooms on this level, as well as the large pillared hall below. The ceiling has miraculously remained intact, however, keeping the rain from washing in. Two dusty, tattered tapestries hang on the north wall. Each one depicts a roving pack of orcs marching on the gray moors of Tbar. Other furnishings include a decrepit wooden table littered with piles of coins and surrounded by four crude stools.

The tapestries have not been well maintained and are worthless. A quick search of the room reveals the **Treasure**.

Creatures: Four orcs—two spearfighters and two warriors—guard this hall. They sit around the table, playing a game of chance with bone-carved dice and winning each other's coins.

Orc Spearfighters (2): hp 17 each; see Appendix.

Orc Warriors (2): hp 5 each; see Appendix.

Tactics: When an alarm sounds, the two spearfighters head downstairs to area 14, where they join forces with Vhazror and the others in his company. The two warriors remain here and shoot their crossbows at intruders in area 14 below. If trouble reaches them here, the spearfighters hold enemies at bay with their longswords while the warriors pick off foes with their crossbows.

Treasure: The rickety table holds a pair of bone dice (worthless), four empty tankards, and several piles of coins (a total of 300 gp and 150 sp).

25. RUINED BEDROOM

This room contains two wooden bunkbeds (used by the orcs in area 24), a blackened fireplace that drips rainwater, and an unlocked wooden chest containing the orcs' food supplies (loaves of bread, hunks of cheese, and strips of dried meat).

26. VHAZROR'S BEDROOM

Vhazror has claimed this room as his own. It contains a wooden cot with a straw mattress, a locked wooden chest (Open Lock DC 20), a table with three stools, and a small stack of wood next to a blackened fireplace. Mounted on the south wall is a heavy steel shield bearing the symbol of Gruumsh and crossed with two blood-red spears.

Treasure: Vhazror carries the key to the locked chest, which contains 1,800 gp, a *potion of cure moderate wounds*, and a *potion of lesser restoration*.

27. RUINED GALLERY

This gallery once held trophies collected by the great orc kings, but it has been plundered. The room is currently empty, and holes in the ceiling have allowed rainwater to drain in, forming puddles on the floor.

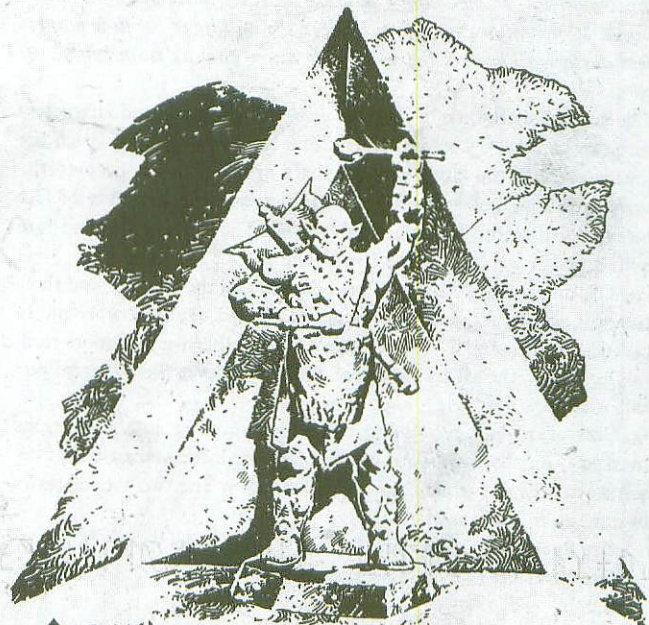
Trap: The 10-foot-by-5-foot area marked on the map is a weakened section of the floor that collapses under a weight of 200 pounds or more. Characters who trigger the floor's collapse fall 20 feet, landing prone on a jagged pile of rubble in area 14 and taking 2d6+4 points of damage. Characters searching the floor notice the weakened floor with a successful DC 20 Search check. Dwarves with stonemasonry who come within 5 feet of the weakened floor automatically gain a Search check to notice it.

DUNGEON LEVEL I (AREAS 28–29)

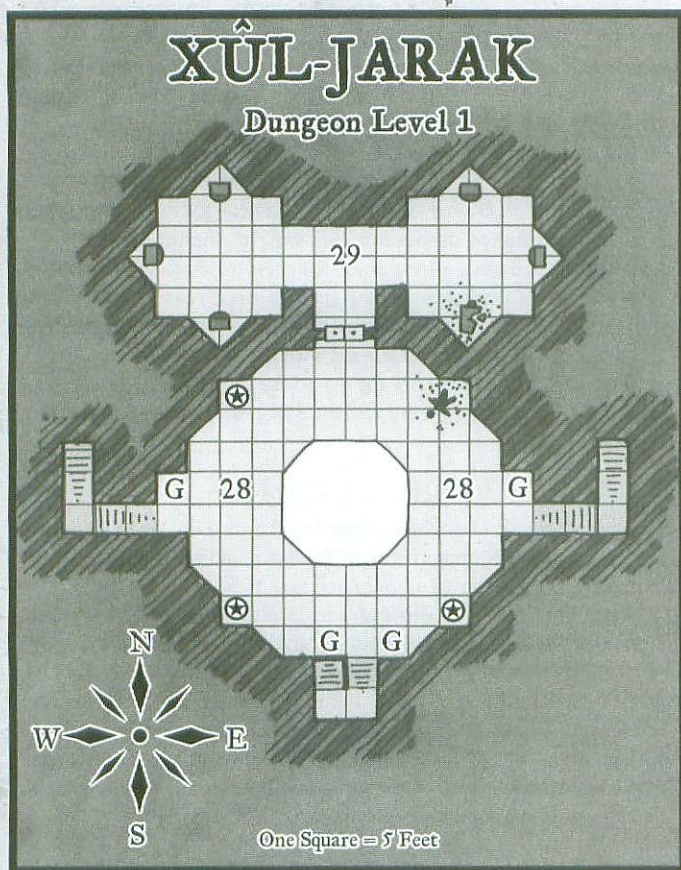
Ceilings on this level vary in height. The walls consist of crude masonry, and the floors are made of mortared flagstone.

28. THE HALL OF BEATING DRUMS (EL 4)

Unless characters take precautions to descend the staircases stealthily, the orc guards in this area will probably hear their approach or see their lights.



A silent sentinel in the Hall of Beating Drums



The stairs descend into a 50-foot-wide octagonal chamber with a domed ceiling 20 feet high. The walls are adorned with painted murals depicting hideous orc gods giving rise to the orc race, shaping them from the earth itself. The murals also show the orcs forging weapons. Four shallow alcoves contain life-sized statues of orc warriors beating drums, although the statue in the northeast corner has collapsed into rubble. To the north, you see a set of doors with Orc runes carved into the architrave. To the south, a narrow staircase descends.

A 20-foot-diameter octagonal pit in the middle of the floor plunges into darkness. The sound of cascading water rises up from below.

The central shaft links the entire dungeon complex, and characters who can levitate, fly, or use spider climb are able to quickly reach the lower levels of the dungeon. The shaft drops 130 feet deep to the surface of a pool of water 5 feet deep in area 38. It descends 20 feet before opening into the ceiling of area 30. The walls of the shaft are quite smooth and difficult to climb (Climb DC 25).

The murals depict the mythical creation of the orc race and show the orcs arming for war. The statues of the orc drummers are nicely carved yet ordinary. The runes above the northern set of doors read, in Orc, "May the all-seeing eye of He Who Never Sleeps guard our fallen kings."

Creatures: Four orcs guard this room, standing in the positions marked G on the map. Two spearfighters flank the staircase that descends to area 30, while the warriors stand by the two sets of stairs leading up to the citadel.

Orc Spearfighters (2): hp 17 each; see Appendix.

Orc Warriors (2): hp 5 each; see Appendix.

Tactics: The orcs feel honored to guard this hall for Thrull. They fight to the death and do not retreat. If an opportunity presents itself, an orc tries to bull rush an enemy into the shaft.

Development: The waterfalls in area 30 drown out sounds of combat, so characters can dispatch the orcs in this area without worrying about reinforcements. However, the orcs in areas 33 and 38 will notice any creature falling down the shaft and be on guard.

29. KINGS' SEPULCHER (EL 5)

The doors to this tomb have an *arcane lock* spell cast on them (caster level 5th), giving them a break DC of 35. Opening the doors releases a foul stench of dampness mixed with decay.

The tomb consists of two crypt chambers joined by a 20-foot-long, 10-foot-wide corridor. Each crypt chamber contains three alcoves, and a stone sarcophagus stands upright in five of the six alcoves. The sixth sarcophagus has toppled over and smashed open on the floor, and lying amid the rubble are the bones and possessions of an interred orc king named Tragwor (see **Treasure** below). Carved into the floor in front of each sarcophagus is a name (in Orc). Starting with the westernmost alcove and moving clockwise, the names read as follows: Krull the Wicked, Skorn Bladebreaker, Murgmar the Wretched, Broakus Dead-Eye, Tragwor the Brutal, and Skalagar Firetamer.

The five intact sarcophagi have lids carved to resemble the orc warlords contained within, although the representations are highly stylized, and their features are deliberately exaggerated to make them look even more fearsome. The sarcophagi are sealed shut; the PCs can either pry open their lids or topple the sarcophagi, causing them to smash open (either endeavor requires a Strength check against the break DC).

Stone Sarcophagus (8 ft. tall, 3-1/2 ft. wide, 3 ft. deep): 2 in. thick; hardness 8; hp 30; break DC 24.

Creature: Characters who inspect the westernmost sarcophagus (belonging to Krull the Wicked) can make a DC 20 Search check. A successful check reveals a 1-inch crack near the top of the sarcophagus, at the back. An ochre jelly trapped in the tomb entered the sarcophagus through the crack and now waits inside, spilling forth and attacking if the sarcophagus is smashed or pried open. The ochre jelly has dissolved the organic matter within, but the king's burial trove remains (see **Treasure**, below).

Ochre Jelly: hp 69; MM 202. Suggested Miniature: Ochre Jelly (*Archfiends* 42/60).

Treasure: Each orc king was entombed with a modest burial trove. In addition to bones, five of the six warlords are adorned with a masterwork chain shirt, a masterwork orc double axe, and golden ceremonial jewelry (including a crown) worth a total of 500 gp. The king within the intact southern sarcophagus (Skalagar Firetamer) was a wizard, and his sarcophagus contains tattered robes, 500 gp worth of ceremonial jewelry, and a *lesser empower metamagic rod*.

DUNGEON LEVEL 2 (AREAS 30-32)

Ceilings on this level vary in height. The walls consist of crude masonry, and the floors are made of mortared flagstone.

30. THE HALL OF WAR UNFOLDING

Descending into another 50-foot-diameter octagonal room, you notice that the domed ceiling rises 20 feet and the walls are painted with murals depicting orc armies marching into battle. Shallow alcoves contain four statues of proud orc warriors blowing horns. Three 20-

foot-deep chambers branch to the west, north, and east, and they appear to contain standing sarcophagi in alcoves.

Water gushes from natural fissures in the back of the western annex and the northwest statue alcove. The water streams toward the 20-foot-diameter central shaft, then forms two steady waterfalls as it plunges into the dark abyss. The sound of crashing water rises up from below.

No guards are stationed here. Over the years, ground water has pushed its way into the dungeon, and the streams have carved shallow troughs in the stone floor. At this level, the shaft descends 90 feet to the pool in area 38, and 20 feet before breaking through the ceiling of area 33. The walls of the shaft are quite smooth and difficult to climb (Climb DC 25).

Each statue is nicely carved and attached to a square, 1-foot-high stone plinth. A secret door concealed behind the northeast statue refuses to open until the statue is somehow moved aside. A careful search of the statue (Search DC 20) reveals that the horn can be twisted in the orc's hands, and doing so causes the statue and its plinth to roll into the square 5 feet west of its normal position. The secret door at the back of the alcove can then be accessed easily. The statue remains in its rolled-out position until the secret door is closed, at which point it resets. Beyond the secret door is a descending staircase (area 32).

The streams are not very swift, and characters can cross them without fear of being swept into the central shaft. The rush of the waterfalls muffles all but the loudest noises in this room.

31. CRYPTS OF FALLEN CHAMPIONS

Each of these three rooms (areas 31A, 31B, and 31C) contains eight upright stone sarcophagi (with statistics similar to the sarcophagi in

area 29). The lids of the sarcophagi are carved to resemble stylized orc warriors, and within lie the bones of great orc champions who died in the service of their kings. Characters who smash or pry open the sarcophagi find rotted and rusted bits of armor, corroded halberds, and orc double axes, and tattered funereal wrappings, but no treasure.

32. SECRET STAIRCASE

This damp, mold-encrusted staircase connects areas 30 and 33. A stone lever at the top of the staircase causes the northeast statue in area 30 to roll aside and opens the secret door to that room. Similarly, a stone lever at the bottom of the staircase causes the northeast statue in area 33 to roll aside and opens the secret door leading to that room. The levers and rolling statues reset when the secret doors are closed manually.

DUNGEON LEVEL 3 (AREAS 33-37)

Ceilings on this level vary in height. The walls consist of crude masonry everywhere but in area 37, which is roughly hewn. The floors are made of mortared flagstone except in area 37, where the floor is unfinished stone.

33. THE HALL OF RAGING BATTLE (EL 5)

Characters can reach this chamber via the secret staircase (area 32) or the central shaft. Either way, they will have a hard time surprising the orcs guards stationed here.

Another 50-foot-diameter octagonal chamber greets you, its domed ceiling rising 20 feet overhead. Two waterfalls pour through the 20-foot-wide shaft in the ceiling and plunge through a similar shaft carved into the floor, crashing somewhere far below. The walls here are adorned with painted murals depicting orc legions slaughtering humans, elves, and dwarves on the field of battle and setting fire to various castles and settlements. Shallow alcoves contain four statues of screaming orc warriors grasping double axes.

Double doors are set into the middle of the west, north, and east walls, and to the south awaits a narrow descending staircase. Orc runes have been carved into the western doors.

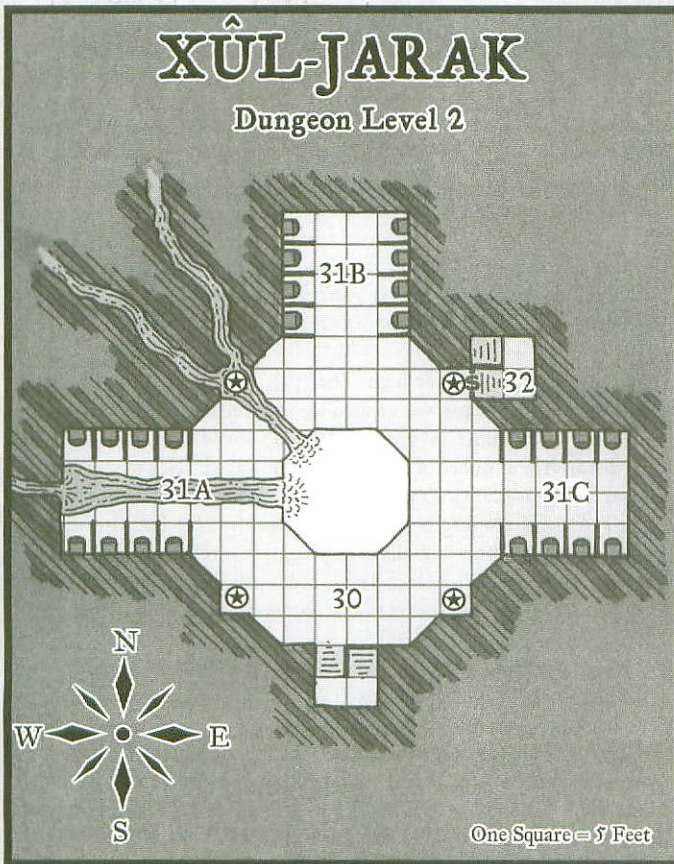
The central shaft plunges another 50 feet before reaching the floor of the lowest dungeon level and descends 30 feet before opening into the ceiling of area 38. The walls of the shaft are quite smooth and difficult to climb (Climb DC 20).

The murals depict various orc legions conquering their enemies in glorious battle. Each screaming orc statue is mounted to a square, 1-foot-high stone plinth. A secret door concealed behind the northeast statue refuses to open until the statue is somehow moved aside. Pulling a stone lever in area 32 does the trick. Otherwise, a careful search of the statue (Search DC 20) reveals that its double axe can be turned in the orc's grip, and doing so causes the statue and its plinth to roll into the square 5 feet west of its normal position, allowing access to the secret door at the back of the alcove. The statue remains in its rolled out position until the secret door is closed, at which point it resets.

The runes carved into the western set of doors read, in Orc, "Kursk One-Tusk the Merciless, our mighty king, loyal servant and vicious hand of He Who Watches."

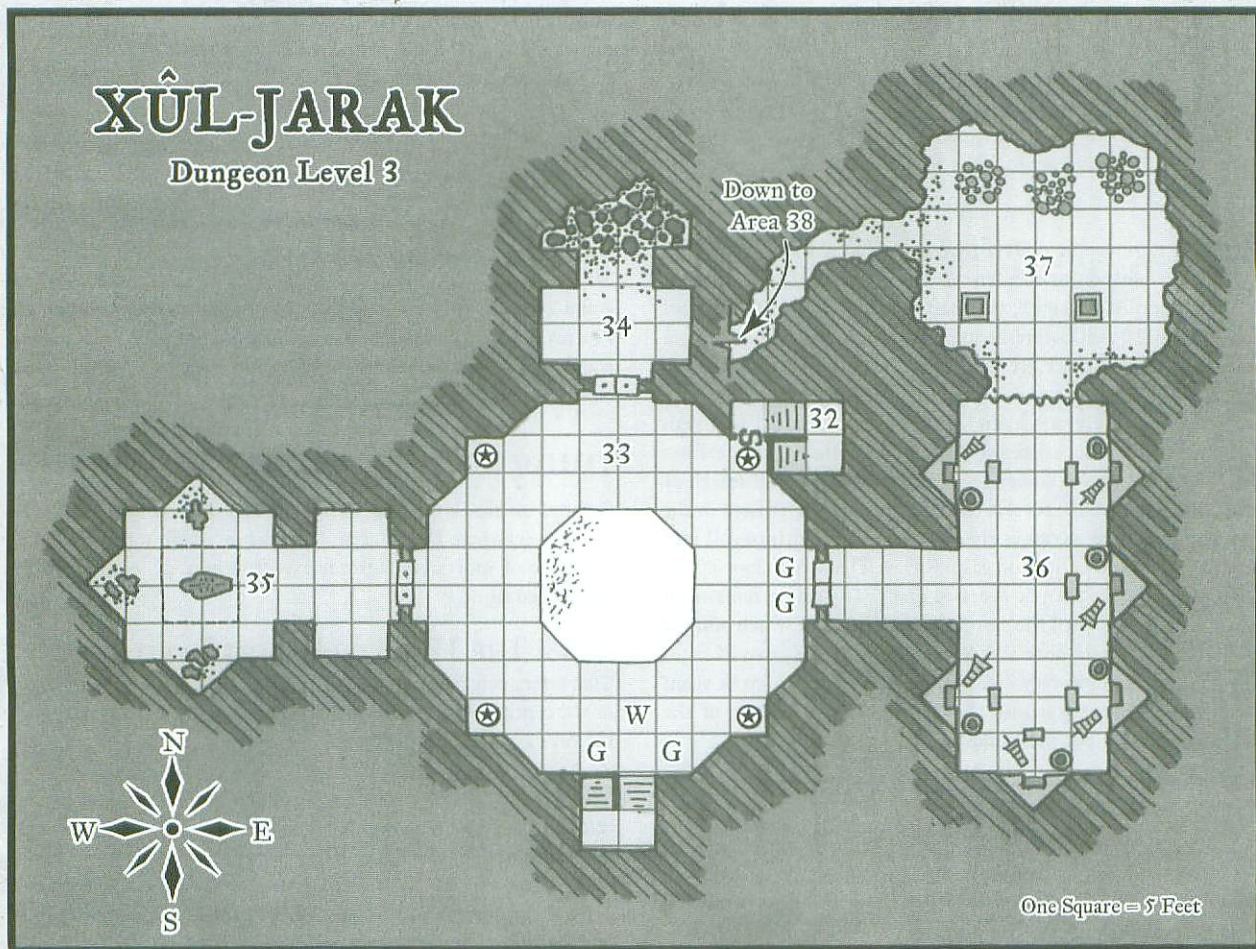
Characters who listen at the eastern doors can make a DC 15 Listen check; if the check succeeds, they hear clanging metal some distance beyond the door (see area 36 for details).

Creatures: Four orc brutes guard this hall. Two stand in front of the eastern doors, and two flank the southern staircase (at the posi-



XUL-JARAK

Dungeon Level 3



tions marked G on the map). In addition, one of the orcs has a worg pet (marked W on the map).

Orc Brutes (4): hp 14 each; see Appendix.

Worg: hp 30; *MM* 256. Suggested Miniature: Worg (*Harbinger* 80/80).

Tactics: The orc brutes rage at the sight of unescorted intruders, fight to the death, and do not retreat. The worg likewise fights until slain. If an opportunity presents itself, an orc tries to bull rush an enemy into the shaft.

Development: The waterfalls drown out sounds of combat, so characters can dispatch the orcs in this area without worrying about reinforcements. However, the orcs in areas 38 will notice a creature falling down the shaft and be on guard.

34. COLLAPSED SEPULCHER

The doors to this tomb have an *arcane lock* spell cast on them (caster level 5th), giving them a break DC of 35.

This sepulcher once housed the sarcophagi of three influential orc clerics, but an earthquake collapsed the chamber and destroyed its contents, leaving nothing to plunder. The ceiling here is 15 feet high.

35. TOMB OF KURSK ONE-TUSK (EL 5)

The doors to this tomb have an *arcane lock* spell cast on them (caster level 5th), giving them a break DC of 35. Opening the doors releases the dreadful stench of mildew.

Pale witchlight falls on a heavy stone sarcophagus resting in the middle of this tomb. The stone lid of the sarcophagus resembles a powerful, crowned orc clad in full plate armor. He grasps a stone double axe and shield, and Orc runes have been carved into the shield. Three alcoves once contained standing sarcophagi, but something must have caused them to topple, for all three now lie in shattered ruins. A few bones can be seen amid the rubble. Ground water leaks through cracks in the ceiling and forms murky pools around the base of the central sarcophagus. Black mildew encrusts the walls and floor tiles.

The ceiling here is 15 feet high. The “pale witchlight” illuminating the central sarcophagus was created using a variant of the *continual flame* spell. The runes carved into the lid’s shield read, in Orc, “All who disturb the slumber of the king will be flayed.” Not surprisingly, the sarcophagus bears a **Trap**. It also contains the **Treasure**. A careful search of the sarcophagus reveals not only the trap but also a tiny stone plug at the “foot” of the sarcophagus (Search DC 16). Removing the plug causes the black brine inside the sarcophagus to gush out (see **Development**, below). The sarcophagus drains completely in 10 rounds.

King’s Sarcophagus (8 ft. long, 3-1/2 ft. wide, 4 ft. deep): 4 in. thick; hardness 8; hp 60; break DC 28.

The three shattered sarcophagi once held King Kursk’s three wives. A search of the rubble reveals Orc runes carved into the floor. The runes read, “Skabra, First Wife of Kursk One-Tusk,” “Kreleb, Second Wife of Kursk One-Tusk,” and “Zarün, Third Wife of Kursk One-

Tusk." Each wife was entombed with personal valuables that can be scavenged amid the bones (see **Treasure**, below).

Trap: Opening the king's sarcophagus causes poisonous scythelike blades to spring from hidden compartments in the sides and lid, shredding all creatures standing in the 10-foot-square area indicated on the map.

Poisonous Scything Blades Trap: CR 5; mechanical; touch trigger; no reset; Atk +10 melee (2d4+2/×4 plus poison); multiple targets (1d4 blades per target in a 10-ft.-by-10-ft. area); poison (greenblood oil, Fortitude DC 13 resists [per blade], initial 1 Con, secondary 1d2 Con); Search DC 21; Disable Device DC 25.

Treasure: Characters searching the broken sarcophagi of Kursk One-Tusk's three wives find gold ceremonial jewelry (circlets, bracelets, necklaces, and earrings) worth a total of 1,800 gp. They also discover that Skabra was entombed with her pet constrictor snake; its bones lie among hers.

Development: The sarcophagus is filled to the brim with opaque black brine. Characters prodding around learn that the sarcophagus contains no bones or other remains; it seems King Kursk One-Tusk was never laid to rest here after all. The brine can be drained by pulling out a stone plug in the foot of the sarcophagus. Once the sarcophagus is drained, characters can see an ornate map carved into the bottom. The map shows part of Thar with two locations carefully marked with Orc runes: Xul-Jarak and the true Tomb of Kursk One-Tusk. Characters who trace the map can use it to find King Kursk One-Tusk's real tomb, which lies elsewhere in Thar. Use this adventure hook to drive further exploration of the region.

36. FORGE (EL 7)

Thick smoke and loud clanging noises fill this 15-foot-high chamber. Consequently, the orcs working here (see **Creatures**, below) take a -4 penalty on Listen and Spot checks to notice intruders.

Originally built as a tomb, this room was later modified by one of the ancient orc kings to serve as a forge for crafting armor and weapons. Thrull has instructed his fellow orog Naazlog to put the facility to similar use. Ore mined in the Underdark is stored in area 37 until it can be melted and refashioned here. Six stone hearths are set into alcoves along the walls, and a large black anvil rests in front of each hearth. Other accouterments include iron rods to stoke the flames, iron tongs for gripping metal, bellows made of wood and leather (for keeping the fires hot), and barrels of brackish water for cooling metal.

Creatures: One of the three orogs, Naazlog, supervises the construction of weapons and armor. He stands in the middle of the room, barking orders. Two orc warriors slave over each anvil, pounding metal into shape (twelve warriors total). They keep their weapons nearby.

Naazlog: hp 29; see Appendix.

Orc Warriors (12): hp 5 each; see Appendix.

Tactics: The orc warriors assist Naazlog's attacks if they're having trouble piercing their enemies' armor on their own. Naazlog flies into a rage at the first sight of intruders and fights until slain, ordering the orcs to move into flanking positions whenever possible. The orog attacks the strongest-looking character first, letting the orcs deal with weaker foes. If Naazlog falls, the surviving orcs retreat into area 37, and from there descend the tunnel to area 38.

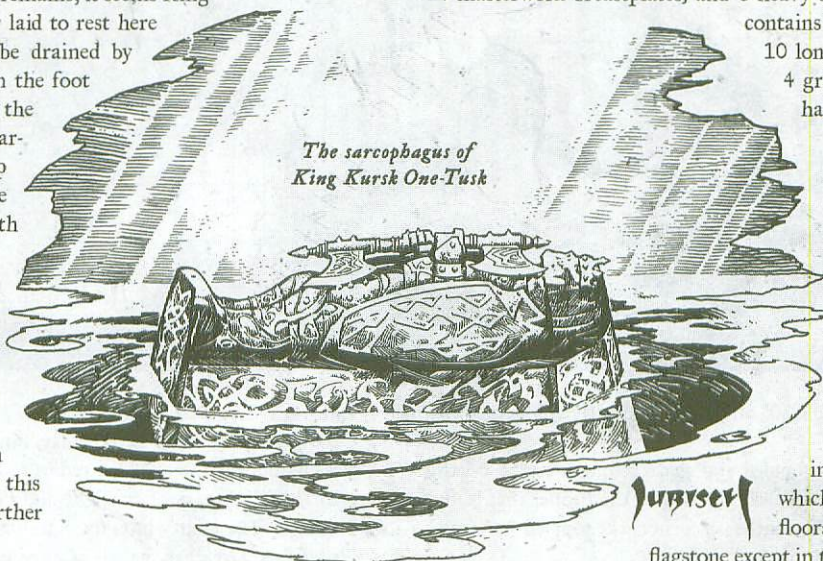
Development: Orcs within earshot of the forge (including those in areas 33 and 38) mistake the sounds of battle here for the usual forgecraft and do not investigate.

37. ARMORY

This rough-hewn cave has a 12-foot-high ceiling. Three piles of metal ore lie in the northern half of the room. The cave also contains two stone bins, one filled with armor and the other filled with weapons (see **Treasure** below).

A tattered curtain separates this cave from area 36 to the south. A rough-hewn tunnel slopes down to area 38.

Treasure: One of the stone bins contains 9 masterwork chain shirts, 4 masterwork breastplates, and 8 heavy steel shields. The other bin contains 15 falchions, 12 handaxes, 10 longspears, 8 orc double axes, 4 greataxes, and 3 masterwork halberds.



The sarcophagus of King Kursk One-Tusk

DUNGEON Level 4

(Areas
38-48)

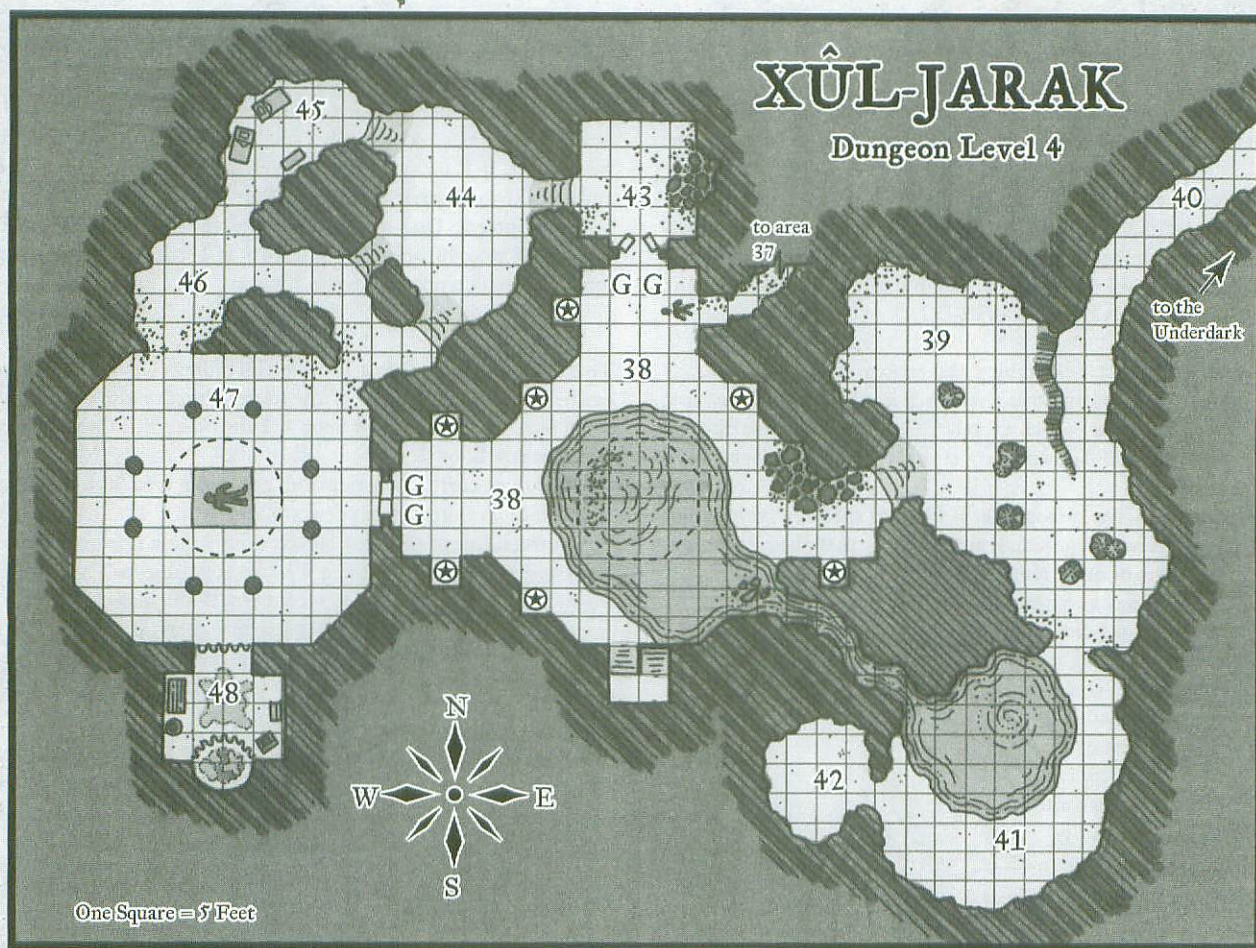
Ceilings on this level vary in height. The walls consist of crude masonry everywhere but in areas 39-42 and 44-46, which are roughly hewn. The floors are made of mortared flagstone except in the rough-hewn areas, where the floor is unfinished stone.

38. THE HALL OF TRIUMPH (EL 6)

Characters can reach this chamber via the central shaft, the staircase from area 33, or the rough-hewn tunnel leading to area 37.

Water pours down the central shaft onto the floor of this spacious, 20-foot-high domed chamber, forming a large pool that exits the room through a crack in the southeast wall. The eastern end of the room has partially collapsed, although beyond the collapse you see a rough-hewn staircase leading down into darkness. The walls of the chamber are painted with murals showing orcs presenting the spoils of war, including slaves, before their king. They also depict powerful orc gods and their demon allies scouring the conquered battlefields and kingdoms of humans, dwarves, and elves. Numerous alcoves contain statues of leering orc warpriests. A set of doors to the north hang open on rusted hinges. Another set of doors to the west stand closed.

The central shaft breaks through the domed roof 20 feet above. The waterfalls crash into the pool, which is 5 feet deep at its center. Creatures move at half speed through the water. The tunnel through which



the water flows descends at a 20° angle and is mostly submerged; it opens into area 41.

Two of the statues have toppled and shattered; one to the north was deliberately pushed over to clear the way to the tunnel that leads up to area 37, and one in the southeast corner was toppled by water erosion. Seven statues remain intact.

The murals depict the conquering orc hordes and various orc deities. With a successful DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check, characters can match the depictions to the orc deities Bahgtru (the Son of Gruumsh), Gruumsh (the One-Eyed God), Ilneval (the War Maker), Luthic (the Cave Mother), Shargaas (the Stalker Below), and Yurtrus (the Rotting One). Orcs and half-orcs gain a +2 circumstance bonus on the check.

Creatures: Four tanarukks guard this chamber (at the positions marked G on the map). Two stand before the open doors leading to area 43, and two stand before the closed doors to area 47. The tanarukks came to Xul-Jarak with the orogs, drawn to Thrull's banner by promises of wealth and glory.

Tanarukks (4): CR 2; Medium outsider (native); HD 5d8; hp 22; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +5; Grp +7; Atk +8 melee (1d13+3/×3, greataxe) or +7 melee (1d6+3, bite); Full Atk +8 melee (1d12+3/×3, greataxe) and +2 melee (1d6+1, bite); SQ control flame 1/day, darkvision 60 ft., fire resistance 10, SR 14; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +3; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 11, Wis 8, Cha 6. Suggested Miniature: Tanarukk (*Giants of Legend* 59/72)

Skills and Feats: Climb +10, Hide +9, Intimidate +6, Jump +4, Listen +9, Move Silently +9, Search +8, Spot +9, Tumble +3; Alertness, Weapon Focus (greataxe).

Languages: Abyssal, Orc.

Control Flame (Su): Once per day, tanarukks can cause any nonmagical flame within a 10-foot radius to either diminish to coals or flare to the brightness of daylight and double its normal radius of illumination. The ability lasts for 5 minutes.

Possessions: Greataxe, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of jump*.

Tactics: The fiendish tanarukks lack subtlety, hacking and chewing their enemies to pieces. If two tanarukks are defeated, one of the remaining tanarukks attempts to flee to area 44 and alert the orcs there.

Development: The sound of the crashing waterfalls prevents the orcs on this level from hearing sounds of combat in this chamber. However, the ambush drakes in area 39 have been hearing and can become aware of a noisy combat encounter (if one occurs) by making a DC 25 Listen check. They join the fray 2 rounds later, entering the chamber stealthily and using their Hide and Move Silently skills to catch interlopers flat-footed.

39. AMBUSH CAVERN (EL 6)

Rough-hewn steps descend 10 feet into this 20-foot-high cavern. The floor is uneven and treacherous, and movement throughout the cave is halved. Stalactites hang from the ceiling like stone fangs, and a few stalagmites rise from the floor, which is also littered with gnawed bones.

A 5-foot-high ledge clings to the northeast wall, where the mouth of a tunnel (area 40) can be seen. Another tunnel to the south leads to area 41.

Creatures: Two immature ambush drakes prowl this cave, using their stony coloration to blend in with the surrounding rock. They have formed a tenuous alliance with the orcs, who provide food for them occasionally. The ambush drakes use their wings to help navigate the cave and do not incur any movement penalties. They have hidden their treasure in area 42.

Immature Ambush Drakes (2): CR 4; Medium dragon; HD 5d12+20; hp 53 each; Init +6; Spd 40 ft., fly 30 ft. (poor); AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +5; Grp +8; Atk +8 melee (1d8+3 plus poison, bite); Full Atk +8 melee (1d8+3 plus poison, bite) and +3 melee (1d6+1, 2 claws); SA breath weapon, poison; SQ darkvision 60 ft., immunity to magic sleep effects and paralysis, low-light vision, scent, SR 16, telepathic link 30 ft.; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +4; Str 16, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 9. Suggested Miniature: Ambush Drake (*Deathknel* 30/60).

Skills and Feats: Hide +14, Listen +10, Move Silently +10, Spot +10; Alertness, Improved Initiative.

Languages: Common, Draconic.

Breath Weapon (Su): 30-foot cone, once every 1d4 rounds, *slow* (duration 5 rounds), Will DC 16 negates. Ambush drakes are immune to the breath weapon of other ambush drakes. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Poison (Ex): Bite—injury, Fortitude DC 16 resists, initial and secondary 1d6 Dex. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Telepathic Link (Ex): Ambush drakes within 30 feet of each other are in constant telepathic contact. If one is aware of a particular danger, they all are. If one of them is not flat-footed, none of them are. No ambush drake in the group is considered flanked unless they all are.

Tactics: The ambush drakes work as a team. After breathing cones of *slow* gas at enemies, they focus their attacks on a single target, flanking it if possible. If one of the drakes is reduced to 20 or fewer hit points and their enemies show little sign of backing down, both attempt to withdraw, fleeing into the Underdark if necessary.

40. TUNNEL TO THE UNDERDARK

This tunnel rises at a 10-degree angle for about 30 feet, giving the false impression that it leads to the surface. However, after 30 feet it begins to descend and continues on its meandering downward course for miles, eventually breaking to a vast network of caverns. It should become obvious to the tunnel's explorers that the passage leads to the Underdark.

41. CAVE OF THE SWIRLING POOL

Water spills into this 12-foot-high cave through a narrow fissure in the northwest wall. The resulting pool is about 8 feet deep in the middle. The water seeps out through a crack in the bottom of the pool, creating a slight whirlpool. The bottom of the pool contains refuse discarded by the orcs, but nothing of value. The pool is easily avoided, and the rough-hewn floor is relatively smooth.

42. DRAKE LAIR

This small, 10-foot-high cave is worn smooth. A mound of debris (bones, rocks, strips of leather, broken bits of armor, and droppings) serves as a bed for the ambush drakes in area 39. The drakes have hidden their **Treasure** beneath this mound.

Treasure: Characters that search the drakes' "bed" find six gems (worth 100 gp each), a *ring of jumping*, two scrolls in carved bone scroll tubes (*deep slumber* and *greater magic weapon*), a *wand of lightning bolt* (CL 5th; 15 charges; command word "vaestar"), and 100 gp in loose coins.

43. RUBBLE-FILLED ROOM

The eastern wall of this 20-foot-square, 10-foot-high room has partially collapsed, and rubble lies strewn across the floor. To the south, double doors hang open on rusted hinges; they were forced open years ago and no longer close properly. To the west, a rough-hewn staircase descends 10 feet to area 44.

44. SUNKEN CAVE (EL 6)

This damp, 20-foot-high cave is 10 feet lower than the surrounding chambers, connected to them by rough-hewn stairs. Lice-infested blankets, maggot-eaten scraps of food, and discarded clay jugs litter the cave floor.

Creatures: Unless they have been drawn elsewhere, eight orcs (an orc sergeant, two orc berserkers, and five orc warriors) congregate here. They engage in typically rambunctious orc behavior as they wait for the ritual to begin.

Orc Sergeant: hp 30; see Appendix.

Orc Berserkers (2): hp 14 each; see Appendix.

Orc Warriors (5): hp 5 each; see Appendix.

Tactics: If encountered in this cave, the orcs fight fiercely until half of them have been defeated. At that point, the survivors attempt to retreat, hoping to join forces with the occupants of area 38 or 47. The orc sergeant always uses his Power Attack feat, subtracting 3 from his attack rolls to add 3 to his damage rolls.

Development: Sounds of battle here can be heard in areas 45–47. Jurrq and her familiar remain in area 45; meanwhile, in area 47, Thrull sends Rûlgar to investigate while he dons his armor.

45. JURRG'S CAVE (EL 5)

This cave belongs to the orc adept Jurrq and her brother, Rûlgar. Jurrq is present most of the time and takes notice of intruders in area 44, 46, or 47. Once intruders are detected, she begins casting defensive spells and quaffing potions (see **Tactics** below).

The cave has a 15-foot-high ceiling and contains a pair of wooden cots. Across from the cots, against one wall, stands a small stone shelf of clay jars containing various potions and poultices that Jurrq herself created. On the top shelf rests a mortar and pestle and some basic ingredients (molds, fungi, herbs, roots, and other organic matter). See **Treasure**, below, for details on Jurrq's collection of potions and poultices.

Creatures: Jurrq is preparing special warpaint for Thrull to wear during the Bloodspear Ritual. Her rat familiar, Snyrr, perches on her shoulder.

Jurrq: hp 23; see Appendix.

Snyrr: hp 9; see Appendix.

Tactics: Forewarned of danger, Jurrq casts *protection from good* on herself and her familiar. She then drinks the *potion of cat's grace* and *potion of bear's endurance* on the shelf (see **Treasure**). In the early rounds of combat, she casts *burning hands* and *scorching ray*. After that, she fights with her quarterstaff. If she feels ganged up on, Jurrq calls to her brother (see area 47), who comes to her aid immediately. Should the situation become truly dire, she casts *invisibility* on herself and her familiar, then escapes to warn the other defenders.

Treasure: The stone shelf contains a vial of antitoxin as well as a *potion of cat's grace*, a *potion of cure moderate wounds*, a *potion of bear's endurance*, and a *potion of remove paralysis*.

46. CAVE OF CAPTURED SCIONS

Huddled on the floor of this 10-foot-high cave are five gaunt figures bound in manacles and attached to heavy iron chains bolted to the floor. Characters must break or unlock the manacles to free the captives. Rûlgar (see area 47) carries the keys to the manacles.

Manacles: hardness 10; hp 10; break DC 26; Escape Artist DC 30; Open Lock DC 30.

Creatures: The five figures are Argens Bruil, Elaint Marsk, Kalman Leiyraghon, Kara Calaudra, and Oreal Nanther—the surviving scions of Melvaunt. They have been stripped of everything except their undergarments, beaten, and bound. The orcs would have killed them already had Jurrig not decided to include them as sacrifices in the Bloodspear Ritual.

Argens Bruil: hp 24 (currently 8); see Appendix.

Elaint Marsk: hp 17 (currently 2); see Appendix.

Kalman Leiyraghon: hp 22 (currently 6); see Appendix.

Kara Calaudra: hp 13 (currently 3); see Appendix.

Oreal Nanther: hp 21 (currently 9); see Appendix.

Tactics: The scions help the PCs any way they can. Only Kalman Leiyraghon seems more interested in his personal well-being than the status of the group as a whole, but he's smart enough to stay close to the others. Elaint and Kalman have all of their spells (and are just waiting for the right opportunity to cast them). Elaint casts spontaneous *cure* spells to heal himself and his colleagues. Kara Calaudra has no spells prepared, nor can she prepare any until she peruses her spellbook (currently in area 48).

Development: The scions know the following information, which they impart to their rescuers.

—They have been kept alive as sacrifices for a ritual that will ascertain whether Thrull has been chosen by Gruumsh to unite the orc tribes of Thar and lead them on a crusade against the cities of the Moonsea.

—Over two thousand orcs prowl Thar and the nearby mountains, waiting to heed Thrull's call.

—Emissaries from several tribes have come to witness the ritual and judge for themselves whether Thrull is worthy.

—Thrull's weapon is called the *Hammer of Gruumsh*. Last wielded by the legendary orc warlord Kursk One-Tusk, this maul has long been a symbol of power among the orcs. Many orc chieftains would kill to possess it.

The scions' gear can be found in Thrull's den (area 48), although they don't know that.

47. TEMPLE OF GRUUMSH (EL 10)

Eight pillars support the ceiling of this grisly chamber, and iron chains and manacles dangle ominously from each one. The walls contain hundreds of small niches holding piles of humanoid skulls and bones. A 10-foot-square, 1-foot-high stone platform rises up from the middle of the floor, and carved into its smooth surface is a 7-foot-long humanoid-shaped concavity. The ceiling over the platform consists of a 25-foot-high dome painted to resemble a great lidless eye.

Two rough-hewn tunnels break the north wall, while a tattered gray curtain conceals a 10-foot-wide exit in the middle of the south wall.

The diameter of the domed ceiling is indicated as a dotted circle on the map. The rest of the ceiling is 15 feet high. The skulls and bones lodged in the various wall niches belong to humans, elves, dwarves, and other humanoids sacrificed in this temple over the centuries.

The Bloodspear Ritual

The Bloodspear Ritual requires eight days of preparation and unfolds over a period of 8 hours. As the DM, you can decide how far along the ritual has progressed, allowing the PCs time to rest and recover between encounters. The adventure works best if the heroes reach Thrull before or during Jurrig's ritual chanting, so that they have ample time to save the scions of Melvaunt. However, if they tarry, they might arrive too late to thwart the ritual and save the prisoners.

The Bloodspear Ritual is a long and involved process:

First, Jurrig must spend eight days chronicling the deeds of the mighty Thrull. During that time, she must also prepare a special warpaint. Once finished, it must be applied to Thrull's body as a series of runic invocations, a process taking 1 hour. Once the warpaint has been applied, worthy sacrifices must be brought forth and shackled to the pillars in the temple (area 47). At the same time, Thrull must lie in the concavity atop the temple platform. Jurrig must then chant for 8 hours, carefully recounting the brutal deeds of Thrull and calling upon He Who Never Sleeps to anoint the orog with some special sign of his favor. Once the chant is complete, the sacrifices must be killed one by one with a longspear (the favored weapon of Gruumsh). The blood-drenched spear is then passed to Thrull, who must offer it to the One-Eyed God as proof of his devotion.

Before Jurrig begins her chant, she sends Rûlgar upstairs to inform Vhazror that the ritual has begun. Vhazror gathers the

various visiting emissaries (see areas 11–13) and leads them to the temple, so that they might witness the unfolding ritual. Naazlog (see area 36) also attends the ritual.

If Jurrig is killed before her work is done, the ritual cannot be completed, for only she knows how to perform the ritual chants. However, if the ritual unfolds as described above, the bloody spear disappears from Thrull's hands, and Gruumsh rewards Thrull with the Mark of Nishrek. The symbol manifests physically as a burned scar on Thrull's forehead and resembles an eye (a broad diamond-shaped "pupil" with a slender diamond-shaped "iris" inside it).

The Mark of Nishrek imbues Thrull with the granted powers of the Hatred and Orc domains, namely:

Hate (Su): Once per day, against one opponent of his choosing, Thrull gains a +2 profane bonus on attack rolls, saving throws, and AC for 1 minute. Activating this ability is a free action.

Smite (Su): Once per day, Jurrig can smite a foe with a normal melee attack. If he hits, he gains a bonus on the damage roll equal to his level (+9). Thrull must declare the smite before making the attack. If he uses this ability against a dwarf or elf, he also gains a +4 bonus on the smite attack roll.

The Mark of Nishrek and its powers can be recognized and ascertained with a successful DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check. Creatures with orc blood (including half-orcs) and worshippers of Gruumsh gain a +2 circumstance bonus on the check.

The manacles dangling from the pillars have the same statistics as the ones in area 46.

The humanoid-shaped indentation in the platform is vaguely orc-shaped, and the entire platform radiates strong divination and necromancy auras under scrutiny of a *detect magic* spell. In fact, the platform has been used for various orc rites. Any creature with orc blood (including a half-orc) that lies in the indentation can bare itself before the great Eye of Gruumsh painted on the domed ceiling. At that moment, one of several things might happen, depending on the unfolding ritual. In the past, the platform has granted the equivalent of a *commune* or *raise dead* spell. Sometimes Gruumsh deems the creature on the platform unworthy and devours its body and soul instead.

The rituals that must be performed to invoke the platform's magic have been lost over time. Jurrq hopes to craft a ritual that will mark Thrull as a favored son of Gruumsh. For this, as with all of the rituals, sacrifices must be offered to He Who Never Sleeps. These sacrifices are usually shackled to the pillars and forced to watch the ritual unfold. See the Bloodspear Ritual sidebar for more information on Jurrq's ritual.

Creatures: In preparation for the Bloodspear Ritual, Thrull has removed his magic full plate armor (it can be found in area 48). This makes him much easier to hit, but he remains a daunting foe nonetheless. He is a massive creature with green-black skin, pointed ears, and large, pale eyes. Joining him is Rûlgar, the loyal orc ranger/rogue who found the *Hammer of Gruumsh*, and four orc warriors.

Thrull: hp 81; see Appendix.

Rûlgar: hp 27; see Appendix.

Orc Warriors (4): hp 5 each; see Appendix.

Tactics: It normally takes Thrull 4 minutes to don his full plate armor; however, once intruders are detected, he instructs the orc warriors to fetch his armor and help him put it on, reducing the time to don it hastily to 2 minutes (20 rounds). In combat, Thrull likes to assert

his dominance using the *Hammer of Gruumsh*, and the first time he engages a new enemy, he tries to sunder his foe's weapon (except when cleaving). Thrull also likes to use his Power Attack feat, taking a -5 penalty on attack rolls to deal 5 extra points of damage; however, he is wise enough not to use Power Attack against well-armored foes.

Rûlgar prefers making ranged attacks with his bow, particularly against humans (his favored enemy). A coward at heart, he attempts to flee when reduced to 10 or fewer hit points.

Development: If the heroes succeed in defeating Thrull, the surviving orcs flee. Word of Thrull's defeat spreads quickly throughout the citadel. If Naazlog lives (see area 36), he leads the hunt for Thrull's killers or captors. Otherwise, that duty falls to Vhazror (see area 14). If both Naazlog and Vhazror are dead, the orcs lack strong leadership and begin bickering and fighting with each other. Meanwhile, the orc raiders of the Roving Eye tribe make a move to claim the *Hammer of Gruumsh* for their chieftain (see area 13 for details).

48. THRULL'S DEN (EL 4)

Beyond the tattered gray curtain lies a room with a 10-foot-high ceiling. A dire bear pelt lies sprawled in the middle of the floor, its head sneering at all who enter. A black curtain conceals a semicircular alcove in the middle of the south wall. The area behind the black curtain contains Thrull's "bed," which consists of a heap of animal furs, and Thrull's "pet" (see **Creature** below). The chamber's other furnishings include a heavy wooden table, a barrel (containing common ale) with a clay tankard resting atop it, an unlocked wooden chest, and a large wooden framed chair covered in stitched lizard hide and adorned with animal bones. Thrull uses the chair as a throne, of sorts:

Creature: Thrull's pet basilisk sleeps on the fur bed behind the black curtain, and anyone who peers behind the curtain wakes it and must resist its gaze. The basilisk is very old and blind in one eye. It can no longer petrify creatures with its gaze; those who look into its good eye and fail the save are *slowed* for 1 minute instead. If the characters avoid the black curtain, the basilisk does not emerge to attack them, even if it hears them.

Very Old Basilisk: CR 4; Medium magical beast; HD 6d10+6; hp 39; Init -2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15, touch 8, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +6; Grp +7; Atk or Full Atk +7 melee (1d8+1, bite); SA slow gaze; SQ darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 13, Dex 6, Con 13, Int 4, Wis 14, Cha 13. Suggested Miniature: Basilisk (*Giants of Legend* 13/72).

Skills and Feats: Hide -1 (+3 in natural settings), Listen +8, Spot +4*, Alertness, Blind-Fight, Great Fortitude.

*Includes a -4 penalty for partial blindness.

Slow Gaze (Su): *Slow* for 1 minute, range 30 feet, Fortitude DC 14 negates. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Treasure: Unless he has time to don it, Thrull's suit of +2 *full plate* rests atop a table in the northwest corner of the room, along with a masterwork greatsword and a longspear. The greatsword is Thrull's secondary weapon, and the longspear is intended for use in the Bloodspear Ritual (see sidebar). The table also bears the gear taken from the prisoners in area 46, including Dorn's equipment (see the Appendix for details).

The wooden chest contains a worn cloak made of displacer beast fur (worth 30 gp), a xorn claw, an amber hulk mandible, various other monstrous trophies, a *potion of cure light wounds*, a gourd containing *oil of keen edge*, and a sack containing 150 pp.

One of the furs on Thrull's bed is a well-treated winter wolf pelt worth 200 gp. The dire bear pelt on the floor is one of Thrull's most prized trophies, but it has not been treated well and is worth only 50 gp.



Thrull, the mighty orog warlord

part 4

FLIGHT OR FIGHT

This part of the adventure chronicles the heroes' flight from Xûl-Jarak and their return to Melvaunt, with or without the rescued scions.

Once the PCs leave the vicinity of the citadel, they are mostly free of any danger posed by the orcs. Surviving orcs might organize war parties to find them, but they are unlikely to move any faster than the heroes. The PCs must still watch for wandering monsters on their return trek through Thar (see Random Encounters in Thar, page xx), and if they rest too often, the pursuing orcs might indeed catch up to them.

One force, however, is all too aware of the adventurers' success and has set in motion a plan to capture even more sacrifices for Gruumsh—and avenge the defeat suffered at Xûl-Jarak. Daazlag, the third of the three orogs that emerged from the Underdark, is more manipulative and cunning than either his witless brother Naazlog or Thrull. Through careful positioning, he has gained the services of House Leiyraghon.

Return to Melvaunt

If the PCs return to Melvaunt with Oreal Nanther, they can collect their reward from Lord Nanther at his estate. The Houses of Bruil, Marsk, and Calaudra are also grateful for the safe return of Argens, Elaint, and Kara, respectively. Within a day of the scions' return, agents from the three houses deliver a message of thanks coupled with tokens of appreciation.

House Bruil: Vanth Bruil gives each character a letter granting them free passage and accommodation aboard one of House Bruil's ships. Such a letter can be sold for 100 gp.

House Marsk: Peuter Marsk gives each character a small golden key (worth 5 gp). As long as Peuter rules as Despot of Melvaunt, the key has a cash-equivalent value of 500 gp in the city, or it can be given back to House Marsk for some special favor or consideration (DM's discretion).

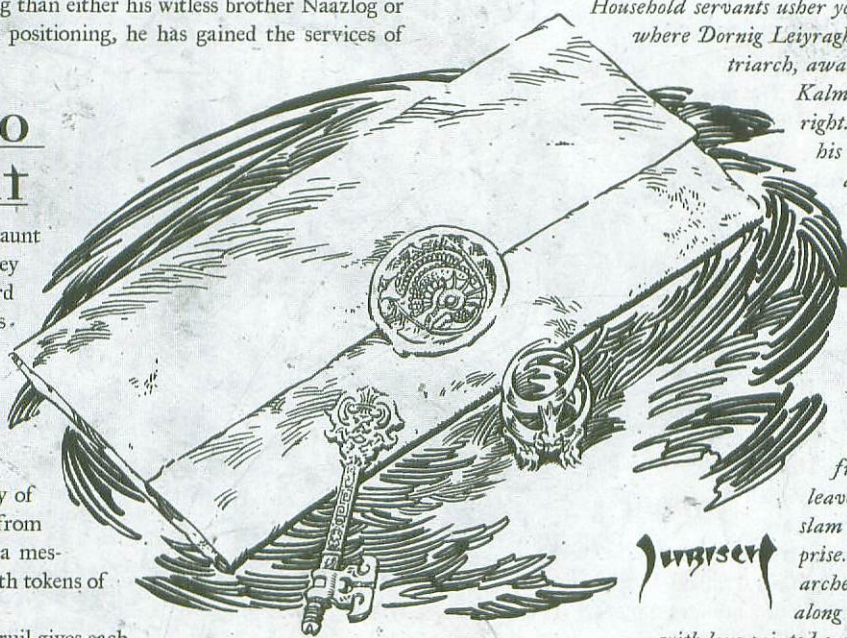
House Calaudra: Andros Calaudra gives each character a silver ring shaped like a stylized griffon. A *griffon ring* allows its wearer to fly once (as the *fly* spell cast by a 9th-level wizard) before it becomes non-magical. It has a value of 750 gp (10 gp once the magic is spent).

A feast of heroes (EL 10)

At some point after the heroes return to Melvaunt, Dornig Leiyraghon invites them to a feast at his estate—their reward for rescuing

his second son, the youngest of the Leiyraghon line. (If Kalman Leiyraghon did not survive the ordeal, the invitation stands, as Bremen is anxious to learn the details of the assault on Xûl-Jarak and the events that led to his younger brother's demise.) The dinner takes place in the grand dining hall of the estate, with a massive table set in the middle of the room and a second-floor balcony encircling the room at a height of 15 feet.

The PCs may refuse the invitation or attend with some trepidation (particularly if they learned the sponsor of the bravos in the street fight, or found the House Leiyraghon ale stashed in area 6 of Xûl-Jarak). If they attend, Bremen (Dornig's eldest son and heir) does his best to conceal his sinister motives (Bluff +13) and seems eager to let bygones be bygones. If they refuse the dinner invitation, Dornig condemns the "ungrateful adventurers" but takes no overtly hostile actions—nor does his disgruntled eldest son, Bremen. Meanwhile, Daazlag conspires to attack the heroes at some later opportunity.



Each hero's reward: House Bruil letter, House Marsk golden key, House Calaudra griffon ring

Household servants usher you into a vast dining room where Dornig Leiyraghon, the somber family patriarch, awaits. His sons, Bremen and Kalman, stand to his left and right. Dornig welcomes you to his home and invites you to sit at his table, where a great feast awaits. In the midst of the dinner, Bremen Leiyraghon stands and offers a toast. "To the audacious heroes of Melvaunt! Our thanks for saving dear brother Kal." Shortly thereafter, Bremen excuses himself from the table. Once he leaves, the doors to the room slam shut, much to Dornig's surprise. At the same time, hooded archers spill out of open doors along the balcony. A massive orc with long pointed ears and large white eyes follows them and stands at the balcony's edge.

The great orc's booming voice resonates in the dining hall. "You are mighty warriors. Great will be the strength of the Bloodspear when it tastes your blood." The orc then fixes his haunting gaze on Lord Dornig Leiyraghon. "Your days are done, old man."

With a wave from Daazlag, the archers fire their arrows. The first volley strikes Dornig Leiyraghon, who falls to the ground, unconscious and dying at -5 hp. The orcs then turn their attention to the PCs.

All of the lower level doors have been closed and barred from the outside. The only other way out is through the doors on the balcony level, behind the orog and his minions. Characters can use the dining room table as cover against the rain of arrows, or they can use the *griffon rings* from Lord Calaudra to fly up to the balcony.

Barred Door (3 ft. wide, 7 ft. tall, strong wood): 2 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 20; break DC 25.

Creatures: Daazlag, two orc raiders, and eight orc archers line the balcony. The architect of this ambush, Bremen Leiyraghon, has withdrawn to his private chambers, protected by a garrison of ten House Leiyraghon guards (human warrior 2). However, his brother Kalman remains trapped in the dining room with the PCs.

The balcony railing provides the orcs with a +4 cover bonus to AC and a +2 cover bonus on Reflex saves.

Daazlag: hp 41; see Appendix.

Orc Raiders (2): hp 19 each; see Appendix.

Orc Archers (8): hp 11 each; see Appendix.

Kalman Leiyraghon: hp 22; see Appendix.

Tactics: Kalman has no idea what's going on. He spends the first round or two attempting to stabilize his dying father. He then joins the PCs in fighting off the orc "hit squad." The orcs have no qualms about attacking Kalman.

Daazlag has consumed his *potion of shield of faith* prior to the encounter. He taunts the PCs from the balcony as the archers let loose volley after volley. If the PCs use ranged attacks at him or the orcs, he and the orc raiders jump down (attempting a Jump check to negate the falling damage). They engage the strongest-looking PC, flanking when possible. Daazlag also uses Spring Attack to keep opponents out of reach, if needed. Meanwhile, the archers target enemy archers or spellcasters. If severely injured, Daazlag drinks his *potion of cure serious wounds* or uses his *potion of invisibility* to escape.

Development: If Dornig Leiyraghon dies, Bremen inherits everything, and nothing would make Bremen happier except to pin his father's untimely demise on the PCs (after disposing of any dead orcs, one would assume). With Bremen in charge, Kalman (if alive) no longer feels safe at House Leiyraghon and finds refuge at Oreal Nanther's house. Bremen, for his part, has no interest in what happens to his brother.

If the PCs manage to save the life of Dornig Leiyraghon, he is in their debt and offers each PC a favor from his house (a service worth up to 1,000 gp). Dornig doesn't need proof to see Bremen's hand in this dark affair. He sends his eldest son to manage the family holdings in Mulmaster, where Bremen can live in fear of the local assassins' guilds for the rest of his life.

If the PCs escape without defeating the orcs, they have few options for safe refuge. House Nanther can protect them for a few days, and House Marsk can pay for the spells needed to clear the PCs implicated in Lord Leiyraghon's murder (in exchange for the golden keys Lord Marsk gave them, of course). Conversely, the PCs could simply leave Melvaunt, arranging free passage on the next House Bruil ship to leave port.

If Daazlag and the orcs defeat the heroes, the adventure still might not be over. With Bremen's help, Daazlag smuggles the surviving heroes out of Melvaunt and carts them back to Xül-Jarak as sacrifices in the Bloodspear Ritual. If Thrull was killed, Daazlag takes his place during the ritual. If the ritual cannot be performed because Jurrig was slain, the characters still must face death before the orcs of Xül-Jarak, but maybe—just maybe—they'll find a way to escape.

APPENDIX

The following characters and monsters figure prominently in this adventure.

HEROES

Statistics for the missing Melvauntians are presented here, in alphabetical order. Dorn Crownshield should not be encountered alive, but if his specifics are needed for some reason, he was a 3rd-level ranger whose favored enemy was orcs. His equipment was gathered by the orcs and is stored with that of the other scions in area 48: masterwork studied leather armor, masterwork light steel shield, masterwork dwarven waraxe, composite shortbow (+2 Str bonus), 10 arrows, *potion of invisibility*, thieves' tools, traveler's outfit, explorer's kit (see sidebar).

Argens Bruil: Male human paladin 3; Medium humanoid; HD 3d10+3; hp 24 (8 while imprisoned); Init -1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18, touch 9, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +3; Grp +5; Atk or Full Atk +7 melee (1d8+3/19-20, +1 *longsword*) or +2 ranged (1d6+2/×3, composite shortbow); SA smite evil 1/day (+2 atk, +3 dmg); SQ aura of courage, *detect evil*, divine health, lay on hands (6 points); AL LG; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +4; Str 14, Dex 8, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 15. Suggested Miniature: Stalwart Paladin (*Dragoneye* 8/60).

Skills and Feats: Craft (carpentry) +3, Diplomacy +5, Heal +4, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +3, Ride +5, Sense Motive +4; Mounted Combat, Skill Focus (Ride), Weapon Focus (longsword).

Languages: Common, Damaran.

Possessions: Masterwork half-plate, masterwork heavy steel shield, +1 *longsword*, composite shortbow (+2 Str bonus) with 10 arrows, traveler's outfit, explorer's kit (see sidebar).

Elaint Marsk: Male human aristocrat 2/cleric 2 (Oghma); CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 4d8 (4d8-4 without *amulet of health* +2); hp 21 (17 without *amulet of health* +2, 2 while imprisoned); Init -1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 9, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +2; Grp +2; Atk or Full Atk +4 melee (1d8/19-20, masterwork longsword) or +1 ranged; SA turn undead 4/day (+1, 2d6+3, 2nd); SQ freedom of movement (2 rounds), good fortune 1/day; AL LN; SV Fort +3 (+2 without *amulet of health* +2), Ref +1, Will +7; Str 11, Dex 8, Con 11 (9 without *amulet of health* +2), Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 13. Suggested Miniature: Soldier of Cormyr (*Archfiends* 8/60).

Skills and Feats: 31 Bluff +4, Concentration +5 (+4 without *amulet of health* +2), Disguise +4, Heal +3, Knowledge (history) +3, Knowledge (local) +3, Knowledge (religion) +2, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +4, Ride +2, Sense Motive +4, Survival +4; Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Concentration), Weapon Focus (longsword).

Languages: Common, Damaran.

Freedom of Movement (Su): For a total of 2 rounds per day, Elaint can act normally regardless of magic effects that impede movement as if he was affected by the spell *freedom of movement*.

Good Fortune (Ex): Once per day, Elaint can reroll one roll that he's just made but must take the result of the reroll, even if it's worse than the original.

Cleric Spells Prepared: 0—create water, detect magic, guidance, virtue; 1st—bless, divine favor (+1), longstrider^D, shield of faith (+2).

D: Domain spell. **Domains:** Luck, Travel.

Possessions: Masterwork full plate, heavy steel shield, masterwork longsword, *amulet of health* +2, healer's kit, silver holy symbol of Oghma, traveler's outfit, explorer's kit (see sidebar).

Kalman Leiyraghon: Male human aristocrat 3/sorcerer 1; CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 3d8 plus 1d4 plus 3; hp 22 (6 while imprisoned); Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +2; Grp +1; Atk or Full Atk +1 melee (1d6-1, quarterstaff) or +2 ranged; SQ summon familiar (none at present); AL CN; SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 8, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 9, Cha 14. Suggested Miniature: Evoker's Apprentice (*Harbinger* 05/80).

Skills and Feats: Appraise +5, Bluff +9, Concentration +2, Disguise +6, Gather Information +6, Knowledge (arcana) +2, Knowledge (local) +5, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +5, Ride +4, Sense Motive +3, Spellcraft +2, Survival +3; Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Bluff), Toughness.

Languages: Common, Damaran, Draconic.

Sorcerer Spells Known (5/4 per day): 0—*acid splash* (+2 ranged touch), *light, mage hand, read magic*; 1st—*mage armor*†, *magic missile*.

† Already cast.

Possessions: Quarterstaff, *wand of magic missile* (CL 1st; 34 charges; command word “shyntar”), scroll of *disguise self*, scroll of *expeditious retreat*, disguise kit, traveler's outfit, explorer's kit (see sidebar).

Kara Calaudra: Female half-elf aristocrat 2/wizard 2; CR 3; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 2d8-2 plus 2d4-2; hp 13 (3 while imprisoned); Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 11, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +2; Grp +1; Atk or Full Atk +1 melee (1d4-1/19-20, dagger) or +3 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SQ familiar benefits, immunity to sleep effects, low-light vision; AL CG; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +6 (+8 against enchantments); Str 9, Dex 12, Con 8, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 11. Suggested Miniature: Evermeet Wizard (*Archfiends* 15/60).

Skills and Feats: Appraise +8, Concentration +3, Decipher Script +4, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +3, Gather Information +5, Hide +6, Knowledge (local) +5, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +5, Listen +3, Ride +7, Search +3, Spellcraft +4, Spot +3, Survival +3; Alertness^B (if familiar within 5 ft.), Great Fortitude, Scribe Scroll^B.

Languages: Common, Damaran, Dwarven, Elven, Orc.

Wizard Spells Prepared: 0—*detect magic, message, ray of frost* (+3 ranged touch), *read magic*; 1st—*burning hands* (DC 13), *shield, sleep* (DC 13).

Possessions: *Bracers of armor* +1, dagger, light crossbow with 10 bolts, *cloak of elvenkind*, scroll of *mount*, spellbook, traveler's outfit, explorer's kit (see sidebar).

Esselios: Raven familiar; CR —; Tiny magical beast; HD 2; hp 6; Init +2; Spd 10 ft., fly 40 ft. (average); AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed

13; Base Atk +2; Grp -11; Atk or Full Atk +6 melee (1d2-5, claws); Space/Reach 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.; SQ empathic link, improved evasion, low-light vision, share spells; AL CG; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +8; Str 1, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +1, Concentration +4, Decipher Script +0, Diplomacy +4, Knowledge (local) +1, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +1, Listen +3, Spellcraft +0, Spot +5, Survival +5; Weapon Finesse.

Language: Common.

Oreal Nanther: Male human aristocrat 2/ranger 2; CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 4d8; hp 21 (9 while imprisoned); Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +3; Grp +4; Atk of Full Atk +4 melee (2d4+1/18-20, falchion) or +5 ranged (1d8+1/×3, masterwork composite longbow) or +3/+3 ranged (1d8+1/×3, masterwork composite longbow and Rapid Shot); SA favored enemy (orcs +2); SQ wild empathy +2 (-2 magical beasts); AL CG; SV Fort +3, Reflex +4, Will +2; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 11. Suggested Miniature: Graycloak Ranger (*Archfiends* 16/60).

Skills and Feats: Bluff +3, Climb +4, Diplomacy +3, Heal +2, Knowledge (geography) +3, Knowledge (history) +3, Knowledge (local) +3, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +3, Move Silently +9, Ride +4, Sense Motive +2, Survival +3, Swim +3; Mounted Combat, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot^B, Track^B.

Languages: Common, Damaran.

Possessions: +1 studded leather armor, falchion, masterwork composite longbow (+1 Str bonus) with 10 arrows, *boots of elvenkind*, hand-drawn map of Thar, traveler's outfit, explorer's kit (see sidebar).

villains

Named NPCs appear first, in alphabetical order (except for the Zhentil Keep party), followed by generic NPCs.

Daazlag: Male orog fighter 4/rogue 3; CR 9; Medium humanoid (orc); HD 4d10+4 plus 3d6+3; hp 44; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 23, touch 17, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +6; Grp +11; Atk +13 melee (1d8+8/×3, +1 long spear) or +8 ranged (1d6+5, throwing axe); Full Atk +13/+8 melee (1d8+8/×3, +1 long spear) or +8 ranged (1d6+5, throwing axe); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft. (10 ft. with +1 long spear); SA sneak attack +2d6; SQ darkvision 120 ft., evasion, light blindness, resistance to cold 5 and fire 5, trap sense +1, trapfinding; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +3; Str 20, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10. Suggested Miniature: Orc Savage (*Deathkneel* 57/60).

Skills and Feats: Gather Information +6, Hide +5, Intimidate +5, Jump +6, Knowledge (local) +5, Listen +6, Search +5, Sense Motive +6, Spot +6; Alertness, Cleave, Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (long spear).

explorer's kit

Before embarking for Thar, the scions of Melvaunt assembled explorer's kits consisting of the following components.

Backpack, bedroll, map/scroll case, crowbar, flint and steel, 50-ft. silk rope with grappling hook, hammer with 10 pitons, hooded lantern, small steel mirror, silver mug, 3 flasks of oil, 6 sheets of parchment, vial of ink, iron pot, 3 empty belt pouches, 5 empty

sacks, soap (1 lb.), small shovel, tent, waterskin, 5 sunrods, 5 tinderwigs, and 10 days of trail rations.

An explorer's kit costs 80 gp (a bulk discount compared to buying each item individually). The PCs can find the scions' explorer's kits in area 48 of Xul-Jarak, minus the trail rations.

Languages: Common, Orc, Undercommon.

Light Blindness (Ex): Abrupt exposure to bright light (such as sunlight or a *daylight* spell) blinds an orog for 1 round. In addition, orogs take a -1 penalty on attack rolls, saves, and checks while operating in bright light.

Possessions: +1 mithral shirt, +1 longpear, throwing axe, hat of disguise, cloak of resistance +1, potion of cure serious wounds, potion of invisibility, potion of shield of faith (+5; already consumed), 55 pp, 25 gp.

Jurrig: Female orc adept 6; CR 5; Medium humanoid; HD 6d6; hp 23 (35*); Init +3 (+4*); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (13*), touch 9 (13*), flat-footed 11; Base Atk +3; Grp +5; Atk or Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+3, masterwork quarterstaff) or +2 ranged (+4 ranged*); SQ darkvision 60 ft., familiar benefits, light sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +4 (+6*), Ref +1 (+3*), Will +7; Str 14, Dex 9 (13*), Con 11 (15*), Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 6. Suggested Miniature: Orc Druid (*Dragoneye* 57/60).

Skills and Feats: Concentration +6 (+8*), Craft (alchemy) +3, Heal +5, Knowledge (history) +3, Knowledge (religion) +3, Listen +4, Spot +4; Alertness^B (if familiar within 5 ft.), Brew Potion, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (quarterstaff).

*With *potion of cat's grace* or *potion of bear's endurance*.

Languages: Common, Orc.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Jurrig is dazzled in bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell.

Adept Spells Prepared: 0—*create water*, *cure minor wounds* (DC 12), *detect magic*; 1st—*burning hands* (DC 13), *cure light wounds*, *protection from good*; 2nd—*invisibility*, *scorching ray* (+2 ranged touch, or +4 ranged touch with *potion of cat's grace*).

Possessions: Leather armor, masterwork quarterstaff, *periapt of Wisdom* +2.

Snyrr: Rat familiar; CR —; Tiny magical beast; HD 6; hp 11; Init +2; Spd 15 ft., climb 15 ft., swim 15 ft.; AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +3; Grp -9; Atk or Full Atk +7 melee (1d3-4, bite); Space/Reach 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.; SQ deliver touch spells, improved evasion, link, low-light vision, scent, share spells, speak with master; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 2, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Balance +10, Climb +12, Concentration +6, Hide +14, Knowledge (history) +2, Knowledge (religion) +2, Move Silently +10, Swim +10; Weapon Finesse.

Livikus Arthantar: Male human cleric 5 (Bane); CR 5; Medium humanoid; HD 5d8+5; hp 31; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +3; Grp +5; Atk or Full Atk +7 melee (1d8+4, +1 *morningstar*) or +4 ranged; SA hate 1/day, rebuke undead 2/day (+1, 2d6+6, 5th), smite 1/day, spells; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +7; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 8. Suggested Miniature: Human Cleric of Bane (*Archfiends* 35/60).

Skills and Feats: Concentration +9 (+13 casting defensively), Knowledge (religion) +3, Listen +4, Spellcraft +3, Spot +7; Combat Casting, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (*morningstar*).

Languages: Common, Damaran.

Hate (Su): Once per day, against one opponent of his choosing, Livikus gains a +2 profane bonus on attack rolls, saving throws, and AC for 1 minute. Activating this ability is a free action.

Smite (Su): Once per day, Livikus can make a single melee attack with a +4 bonus on the attack roll and a +5 bonus on the damage roll. He must declare the smite before making the attack.

Cleric Spells Prepared: 0—*create water*, *cure minor wounds* (2), *detect magic*, *read magic*; 1st—*bane* (DC 14), *divine favor* (+1 atk, +1 dmg), *doom*^D (DC 14), *shield of faith* (+2); 2nd—*scare*^D (DC 15), *resist energy*, *sound burst* (DC 15); 3rd—*contagion*^D (DC 16), *create food and water*, *summon monster III*.

D: Domain spell. *Domains:* Destruction, Hatred (see page 87 of *Player's Guide to Faerûn*).

Possessions: +1 full plate, +1 *morningstar*, holy symbol of Bane, key to locked chest in area 12.

Xeldar Orsalyn: Male human fighter 2; CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 2d10+4; hp 19; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 10, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +2; Grp +4; Atk or Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+2/19-20, masterwork short sword) or +2 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +0, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 13. Suggested Miniature: Zhentarim Fighter (*Archfiends* 40/60).

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +5, Listen +4, Search +0, Spot +4; Alertness, Dodge, Mobility, Weapon Focus (short sword).

Languages: Common, Damaran.

Possessions: Half-plate, heavy steel shield (emblazoned with the Zhentarim emblem), masterwork short sword, light crossbow with 10 bolts, *oil of magic weapon*, *potion of blur*, 2 *potions of cure light wounds*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of protection from arrows* (10/arrows).

Naazlog: Male orog barbarian 1/fighter 2; CR 5; Medium humanoid (orc); HD 1d12+2 plus 2d10+4; hp 29; Init +0; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +3; Grp +8; Atk or Full Atk +10 melee (1d8+8/×3, +1/+1 *orc double axe*) or +4/+0 melee (1d8+6/×3, +1/+1 *orc double axe*) or +3 ranged; SA rage 1/day (7 rounds); SQ darkvision 120 ft., light blindness, resistance to cold 5 and fire 5; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +0, Will +2; Str 21, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 12. Suggested Miniature: Eye of Gruumsh (*Dragoneye* 51/60).

Skills and Feats: Climb +6, Craft (armorsmithing) +3, Craft (weaponsmithing) +3, Intimidate +5, Jump +6, Listen +2; Cleave, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (*orc double axe*).

Languages: Orc, Undercommon.

Rage (Ex): While raging, Naazlog gains an additional 2 hp and the following statistics: AC 14, touch 8, flat-footed 14; Grp +10; Atk or Full Atk +12 melee (1d8+11/×3, +1/+1 *orc double axe*) or +6/+2 melee (1d8+8/×3, +1/+1 *orc double axe*); SV Fort +9, Will +4; Str 25, Con 18; Climb +8, Jump +8.

Light Blindness (Ex): Abrupt exposure to bright light (such as sunlight or a *daylight* spell) blinds an orog for 1 round. In addition, orogs take a -1 penalty on attack rolls, saves, and checks while operating in bright light.

Possessions: Masterwork chain shirt, +1/+1 *orc double axe*, *potion of enlarge person*, *potion of haste*.

Rûlgar: Male orc ranger 2/rogue 2; CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 2d8+4 plus 2d6+4; hp 27; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (16 with shield), touch 12, flat-footed 13 (14 with shield); Base Atk +3; Grp +5; Atk or Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+2/19-20, masterwork short sword) or +6 ranged (1d6+2/×3, composite short bow) or +4/+4 ranged (1d6+2/×3, composite short bow with Rapid Shot); SA favored enemy (humans +2), sneak attack +1d6; SQ darkvision 60 ft., evasion, light sensitivity, trapfinding, wild empathy (+0, -4 magical beasts); AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 6. Suggested Miniature: Orc Archer (*Harbinger* 72/80).

Skills and Feats: Hide +9, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +6, Knowledge (geography) +6, Listen +3, Move Silently +9, Open Lock +4, Search +2, Spot +3, Survival +5 (+7 underground, +7 to avoid hazards and getting lost), Swim +4, Tumble +5; Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot^B, Track^B.

Languages: Common, Orc.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Rūlgar is dazzled in bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell.

Possessions: Masterwork studded leather armor, masterwork light steel shield, masterwork short sword, composite shortbow (+2 Str bonus) with 20 arrows, *lesser bracers of archery*, 150 gp in pouch, iron ring of keys (keys unlock manacles in area 46).

Thrull: Male orog fighter 9; CR 9 (11 when armored); Medium humanoid (orc); HD 9d10+27; hp 81; Init -1; Spd 30 ft. (20 ft. in +2 *full plate*); AC 12, touch 10, flat-footed 12 (21, touch 10, flat-footed 19 in +2 *full plate*); Base Atk +9; Grp +13; Atk +15 melee (1d10+9/×3, *Hammer of Gruumsh*) or +8 ranged; Full Atk +15/+10 melee (1d10+9/×3, *Hammer of Gruumsh*) or +8/+3 ranged; SQ darkvision 120 ft., light blindness, resistance to cold 5 and fire 5; AL LE; SV Fort +9, Ref +2, Will +3; Str 19, Dex 8, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 6, Cha 15. Suggested Miniature: Orog Warlord (*Angelfire* 47/60).

Skills and Feats: Climb +10 (+5 in +2 *full plate**), Craft (armor-smithing) +6, Craft (weaponsmithing) +6, Intimidate +8, Jump +10 (+5 in +2 *full plate**), Listen +1, Spot +1; Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Sunder^B, Iron Will, Leadership (+11), Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Focus (maul), Weapon Specialization (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (maul).

*+2 *full plate* has been donned hastily; if a full 4 minutes are taken to don the armor, Thrull's full and flat-footed AC increase by 1 and his armored Climb and Jump modifiers increase by 1.

Languages: Common, Orc, Undercommon.

Light Blindness (Ex): Abrupt exposure to bright light (such as sunlight or a *daylight* spell) blinds an orog for 1 round. In addition, orogs take a -1 penalty on attack rolls, saves, and checks while operating in bright light.

Possessions: +2 *full plate* (in area 48), *Hammer of Gruumsh* (see sidebar), *ring of protection +1*, *potion of shield of faith* (+2).

Vhazror: Male orc barbarian 1/fighter 6; CR 7; Medium humanoid; HD 1d12+2 plus 6d10+12; hp 66; Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +7; Grp +12; Atk +14 melee (1d10+10/×3, +1 *halberd*) or +9 ranged (1d6+5, masterwork javelin); Full Atk +14/+9 melee (1d10+10/×3, +1 *halberd*) or +9 ranged (1d6+5, masterwork javelin); SA rage 1/day (7 rounds); SQ darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 20, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 6. Suggested Miniature: Orc Champion (*Archfiends* 55/60).

Skills and Feats: 18 Climb +9, Jump +10, Listen +4, Spot +4, Survival +2, Swim +8, Tumble +3; Alertness, Cleave, Dodge, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (halberd), Weapon Specialization (halberd).

Languages: Common, Orc.

Rage (Ex): While raging, Vhazror gains an additional 2 hp and the following statistics: AC 14, touch 9, flat-footed 13; Grp +14; Atk or Full Atk +16 melee (1d6+13/×3, +1 *halberd*) or +9 ranged (1d6+7, masterwork javelin); Full Atk +16/+11 melee (1d6+13/×3, +1 *halberd*) or +9 ranged (1d6+7, masterwork javelin); SV Fort +11, Will +4; Str 24, Con 18; Climb +11, Jump +12, Swim +10.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Vhazror is dazzled in bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell.

Possessions: +2 *studded leather armor*, +1 *halberd*, masterwork javelin, *potion of barkskin* (+3), *potion of cure light wounds*, iron key (unlocks chest in area 26).

Mountain Orc: Barbarian 2; CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 2d12+4; hp 22; Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 13, touch 11, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +2; Grp +6; Atk or Full Atk +6 melee (1d12+6/×3, greataxe) or +3 ranged (1d4+4, sling); SA rage 1/day (7 rounds); SQ darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity, uncanny dodge; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 19, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 6. Suggested Miniature: Mountain Orc (*Aberrations* 55/60).

Skills and Feats: Jump +7, Listen +3, Survival +3, Swim +6, Tumble +3; Dodge.

Languages: Common, Orc.

Rage (Ex): While raging, the mountain orc gains an additional 4 hp and the following statistics: AC 11, touch 9, flat-footed 11; Grp +8; Atk or Full Atk +8 melee (1d12+9/×3, greataxe); SV Fort +7, Will +2; Str 23, Con 18; Jump +9, Swim +8.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Mountain orcs are dazzled in bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell.

Possessions: Leather armor, greataxe, sling with 20 bullets, *potion of cat's grace*, 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds*, 1d6 gems (worth 100 gp each).

Orc Archer: Warrior 2; CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 2d8+2; hp 11; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 10, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +2; Grp +5; Atk or Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+3/×3, handaxe) or +3 ranged (1d6+3/×3, composite shortbow); SQ darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will -2; Str 17, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 7, Cha 6. Suggested Miniature: Orc Archer (*Harbinger* 72/80).

Skills and Feats: Climb +4, Intimidate +2, Listen +0, Spot +0; Weapon Focus (composite shortbow).

Languages: Common, Orc.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Orcs are dazzled in bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell.

hammer of gruumsh

The *Hammer of Gruumsh* is a +1 *maul* engraved with abstract designs. The orc king Gorak was the first to wield the maul four hundred years ago, but many warlords have held it since, most recently Kursk One-Tusk. It was lost in Thar for a time, but Rūlgar recently found it and brought it back to Xūl-Jarak as a gift to Thrull.

The weapon grants its wielder the Improved Sunder feat if he

doesn't already possess it, even if he doesn't meet the prerequisites for the feat. Furthermore, the wielder of the maul gains a +4 circumstance bonus on Diplomacy and Intimidate checks made against creatures with orc blood (including orogs, tanarukks, and half-orcs).

Moderate enchantment and evocation; CL 7th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *eagle's splendor*, *shout*; Price 8,115 gp.

Possessions: Studded leather armor, handaxe, composite shortbow (+3 Str bonus) with 20 arrows, 30 gp.

Orc Berserker: Barbarian 1; CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 1d12+2; hp 14; Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +1; Grp +5; Atk or Full Atk +5 melee (1d12+6/×3, greataxe) or +2 ranged (1d4+4, sling); SA rage 1/day (7 rounds); SQ darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 19, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 6. Suggested Miniature: Orc Berserker (*Harbinger* 73/80).

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +2, Jump +7, Survival +4; Iron Will.

Languages: Common, Orc.

Rage (Ex): While raging, an orc berserker gains an additional 2 hp and the following statistics: AC 12, touch 9, flat-footed 11; Grp +7; Atk or Full Atk +7 melee (1d12+9/×3, greataxe) or +2 ranged (1d4+6, sling); SV Fort +6, Will +4; Str 23, Con 18; Jump +9.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Orcs are dazzled in bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell.

Possessions: Studded leather armor, greataxe, sling with 20 bullets, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of haste*, *potion of jump*, 90 gp.

Orc Brute: Barbarian 1; CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 1d12+2; hp 14; Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +1; Grp +5; Atk or Full Atk +5 melee (1d10+6, greatclub) or +2 ranged (1d4+4, sling); SA rage 1/day (7 rounds); SQ darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 19, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 6. Suggested Miniature: Orc Brute (*Giants of Legend* 56/72).

Skills and Feats: Climb +8, Listen +4, Survival +4, Swim +8; Iron Will.

Languages: Common, Orc.

Rage (Ex): While raging, an orc brute gains an additional 2 hp and the following statistics: AC 12, touch 9, flat-footed 11; Grp +7; Atk or Full Atk +7 melee (1d10+9, greatclub) or +2 ranged (1d4+6, sling); SV Fort +6, Will +4; Str 23, Con 18; Climb +10.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Orcs are dazzled in bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell.

Possessions: Masterwork studded leather armor, greatclub, sling with 20 bullets, *potion of cure light wounds*, *oil of magic weapon*, *potion of protection from arrows* (10/magic), *potion of shield of faith* (+2).

Orc Raider: Rogue 2/barbarian 1; CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 2d6+2 plus 1d12+1; hp 19; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +2; Grp +6; Atk or Full Atk +8 melee (1d6+4/18-20, masterwork scimitar) or +4 melee (1d6+4/18-20, masterwork scimitar) and -2 melee (1d4+2, shield bash); SA rage 1/day (6 rounds), sneak attack +1d6; SQ darkvision 60 ft., evasion, light sensitivity, trapfinding; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will -1; Str 19, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 6. Suggested Miniature: Orc Raider (*Archfiends* 56/60).

Skills and Feats: Balance +9, Climb +9, Hide +7, Jump +11, Listen +4, Move Silently +7, Spot +4, Survival +3, Tumble +9; Improved Shield Bash, Weapon Focus (scimitar).

Languages: Common, Orc.

Rage (Ex): While raging, the orc raider gains an additional 2 hp and the following statistics: AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 13; Grp +8; Atk or Full Atk +10 melee (1d6+6/18-20, masterwork scimitar) or +6 melee (1d6+6/18-20, masterwork scimitar) and +0 melee (1d4+4, shield bash); SV Fort +5, Will +1; Str 23, Con 17; Climb +11, Jump +13.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Orcs are dazzled in bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell.

Possessions: +1 leather armor, +1 spiked light steel shield, masterwork scimitar.

Orc Sergeant: Fighter 3; CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 3d10+6 plus 3; hp 30; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +3; Grp +7; Atk or Full Atk +8 melee (2d4+6/18-20, masterwork falchion) or +4 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SQ darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 19, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 6, Cha 11. Suggested Miniature: Orc Sergeant (*Aberrations* 57/60).

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +2, Listen -1, Spot +1; Cleave, Iron Will, Power Attack, Toughness.

Languages: Common, Orc.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Orcs are dazzled in bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell.

Possessions: Studded leather armor, *amulet of natural armor* +1, masterwork falchion, light crossbow with 10 bolts, *potion of cure light wounds*, *oil of magic weapon*.

Orc Spearfighter: Fighter 2; CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 2d10+2; hp 17; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +2; Grp +6; Atk or Full Atk +6 melee (1d8+6/×3, long spear) or +6 melee (1d4+4/19-20, dagger) or +3 ranged; SA 10 ft. reach with long spear; SQ darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 19, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 6. Suggested Miniature: Orc Spearfighter (*Harbinger* 74/80).

Skills and Feats: Climb +4, Intimidate +2, Listen +3, Spot +3; Alertness, Endurance, Power Attack.

Languages: Common, Orc.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Orcs are dazzled in bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell.

Possessions: Studded leather armor, long spear, dagger, 2 *potions of cure light wounds*, *potion of heroism*, *potion of shield of faith* (+3), 150 gp.

Orc Warrior: Warrior 1; CR 1/2; Medium humanoid; HD 1d8+1; hp 5; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 10, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +1; Grp +4; Atk or Full Atk +4 melee (2d4+4/18-20, falchion) or +1 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SQ darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will -2; Str 17, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 7, Cha 6. Suggested Miniature: Orc Warrior (*Harbinger* 75/60).

Skills and Feats: Listen +1, Spot +1; Alertness.

Languages: Common, Orc.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Orcs are dazzled in bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell.

Possessions: Studded leather armor, falchion, light crossbow with 10 bolts, 15 gp.

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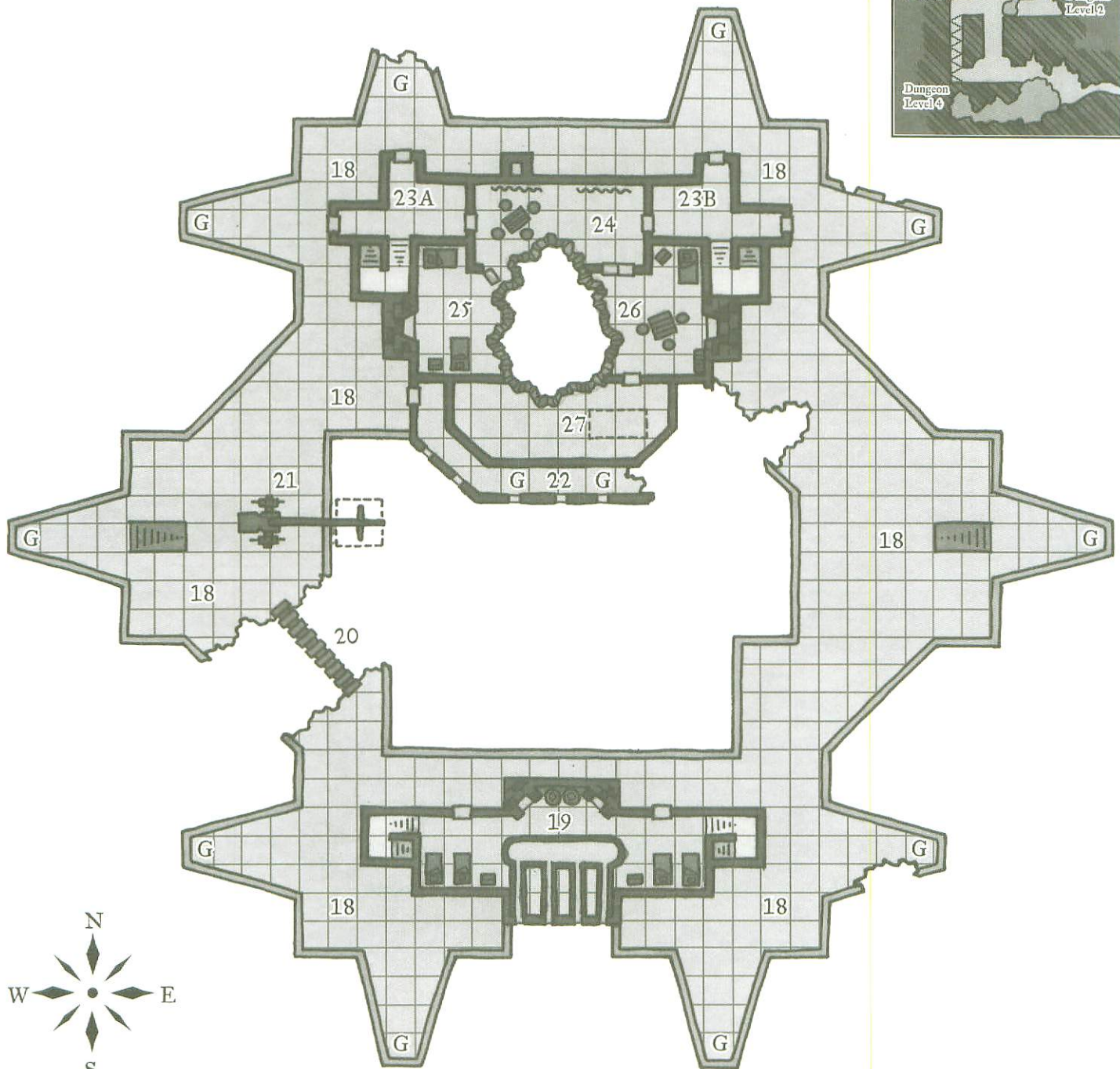
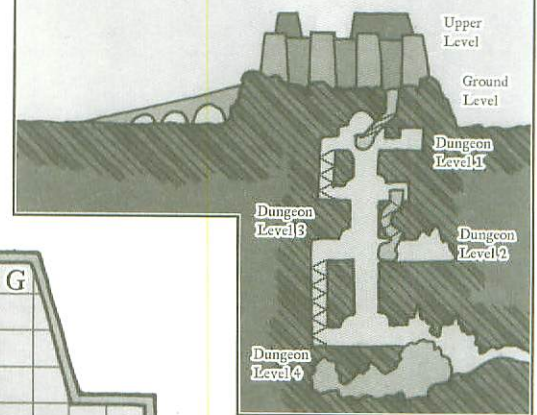
XÛL-JARAK

Upper Level

One Square = 5 Feet

XÛL-JARAK SIDE VIEW

not to scale



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