

A HEROIC TIER ADVENTURE

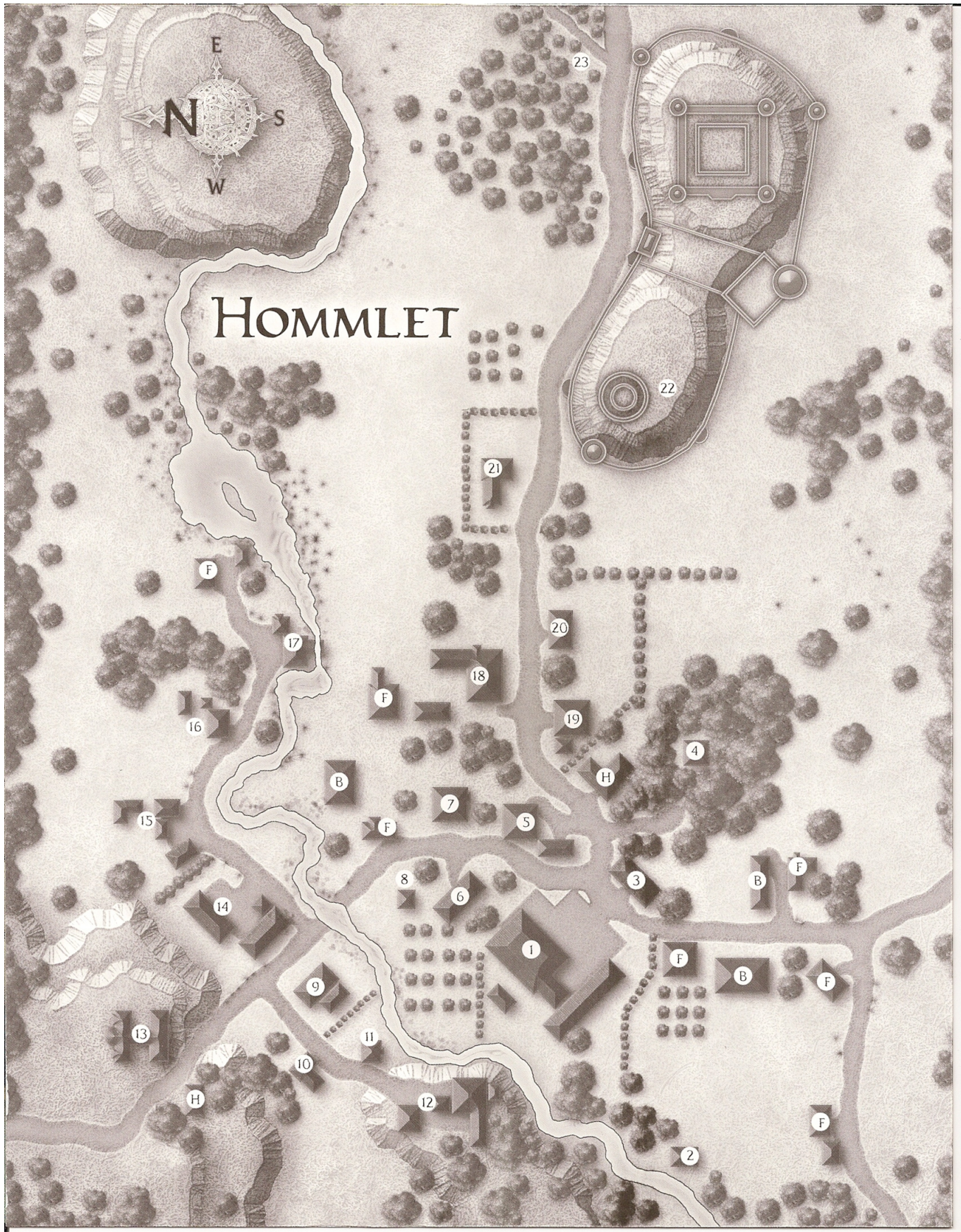
DUNGEONS & DRAGONS[®]

THE VILLAGE OF HOMMLET



AN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTERS OF 4TH LEVEL

Gary Gygax · Andy Collins



INTRODUCTION

In *The Village of Hommlet*, the player characters are introduced to the denizens of a farm village at the edge of the wilderness. There, they learn of bandits troubling the locals and head to a nearby ruined moathouse to investigate.

At the moathouse, the adventurers discover that a band of brigands is the least of the village's worries. An evil priest is assembling a small army of monsters to help restore the foul glory of the infamous Temple of Elemental Evil!

The Village of Hommlet is designed to take 4th-level characters to 5th level. It includes details on the village itself (an excellent home base for the characters in your campaign), as well as a nearby ruined castle and dungeon.

Based on the classic adventure of the same name published nearly 30 years ago, this version updates the material for the 4th Edition DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules while retaining key characters and plot elements of the original.

BACKGROUND

Hommlet is a sleepy village, its farmhouses and artisans clustered around a crossroads at the edge of the wilderness. Worshipers of Pelor and other gods mingle peacefully over ale at the local inn while merchants hawk their wares in nearby shops.

Of course, the village was not always so quiet. Less than a generation ago, powerful evil forces moved into the region and took control. Ruling from their mighty Temple of Elemental Evil, these wicked folk seemed invincible . . . until great heroes rose up and shattered the Temple's sinister hold over the land.

Peace returned. Years passed, and memories faded. Veterans of the struggle went back to their lives, and two of the heroes settled down to make Hommlet their new home.

But evil has returned to Hommlet, and now the village stands unwittingly at the forefront of a great wave poised to sweep across the land. An evil priest named Lareth the Beautiful has settled in a nearby ruined keep, charged by his depraved masters with the responsibility of gathering minions and treasure to help rebuild the fallen Temple.

As the adventure begins, the PCs have just arrived in Hommlet. Spend as much time as you and your players like getting to know the locals before sending them on the trail of bandits to the moathouse.

Of course, spies in Hommlet keep Lareth informed of all suspicious activities in the village, including the appearance of would-be heroes. . . .

THE HISTORY OF HOMMLET

In 1979, TSR, Inc. published a slim adventure entitled *T1: The Village of Hommlet*. This adventure, like the one in your hands, detailed a small farming village, its inhabitants, and a nearby moathouse populated by evil creatures.

Set in the venerable Greyhawk® campaign world, this adventure was originally intended as the first part of a larger series of adventures that culminated in the exploration of the newly repopulated Temple of Elemental Evil. However, the temple didn't see print for six long years, when it was finally published as part of a 128-page "super-adventure" named *T1-4: The Temple of Elemental Evil*. This adventure included a chapter that updated and revised *The Village of Hommlet* (the original adventure), gathering the entire storyline between two covers.

Over the years, Hommlet and the Temple have reappeared in a novel, computer game, and even another super-adventure: *Return to the Temple of Elemental Evil* (published in 2001 and set years after the original adventure).

This adventure returns to the roots of the original 24-page adventure while also incorporating a few elements from the 1985 expansion of the village and updating the whole thing to the 4th Edition of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game. Here you'll find Rufus and Burne, Elmo and Lareth, and yes, even the giant frogs.

CREDITS

Original Design: Gary Gygax

4th Edition Design: Andy Collins

Editor: Christopher Perkins

Art Director: Matthew Stevens

Cover Illustrator: Rob Alexander

Interior Illustrators: Dave Trampier, William O'Connor, Jim Nelson, Steve Prescott, Zoltan Boros & Gabor Szikszai

Cartographer: Jason Engle, Todd Gamble

Production Manager: Joe Yochum

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, AD&D, 20, d20 System, Wizards of the Coast, *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, *Monster Manual*, and all other Wizards of the Coast product names and their respective logos are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast LLC in the U.S.A. and other countries. All Wizards characters, character names, and the distinctive likenesses thereof are property of Wizards of the Coast LLC. This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of Wizards of the Coast LLC. Any similarity to actual people, organizations, places, or events included herein is purely coincidental. Printed in the U.S.A. ©2009 Wizards of the Coast LLC.

DAVE TRAMPIER



HOMMLET

The village of Hommlet sits at a crossroads, nestled at the edge of the wilderness. The northern road winds through the Kron Hills some 30 leagues to the town of Verbobonc, while the south road leads eventually to the elven forest of Celene.

The eastern road is less traveled, for it travels through a broad expanse of lonely hills and woodlands before finally reaching the great walled city of Dyvers, which sits on the shores of the Nyr Dyv (known also as the Lake of Unknown Depths). Worse still, the route is famed for the evil forces that once used it as a thoroughfare, and stories persist of undead spirits that still haunt the abandoned inns along the way.

Originally a simple collection of farms with a rest house for weary travelers, Hommlet soon became a thriving waypoint. The village prospered and grew, drawing many more to settle around the crossroads. But this prosperity also attracted those with sinister intent.

Bandits raiding travelers became bolder and more numerous, eventually forming a ramshackle community of their own, called Nulb. This sinister gathering became the nucleus of a festering pustule of villainy known as the Temple of Elemental Evil.

Soon mighty hordes of evil humanoids and monsters roamed the land, pillaging farms and enslaving townsfolk in the name of Elemental Evil. Eventually, however, a band of adventurers and a host of brave souls from nearby territories threw down the cult, scattering its surviving constituents. Peace returned to Hommlet, swords and armor were set aside for plows and anvils, and stories of goblins and demons became fireside tales to scare young children. While no villager has entirely forgotten the evil times, only a few still remain vigilant today.

But evil has a longer memory than good.

Over time, malevolent forces have crept back into the region, bent on recreating the glory days of the Temple. Today, sinister spies lurk in Hommlet while a vile priest assembles a small army in the ruins of a nearby moathouse.

KEY TO LOCATIONS

The map on the inside cover of this adventure shows the village of Hommlet. The letters and numbers on the map correspond to the location key below. Locations in bold text are detailed on the next page. The remaining locations are left to the DM to flesh out in whatever detail is required by the campaign.

B: Barn

F: Farmhouse

H: Herder

1. Inn of the Welcome Wench

2. Woodcutter

3. Leatherworker

4. Druid's Grove

5. Blacksmith

6. Village Hall

7. Weaver

8. Tailor

9. Jeweler & Moneychanger

10. Cabinet Maker

11. Potter

12. Brewer

13. Temple of Pelor

14. Trading Post

15. Teamster

16. Dairy

17. Miller

18. Village Elder

19. Wheel & Wainwright

20. Carpenter

21. Stonemason

22. Tower of Rufus and Burne

23. Shrine of Avandra

NOTABLE LOCATIONS

The following locations in Hommlet are of particular significance to the player characters. Some of the locations include minor quests that the PCs can acquire. Use these as extra adventure hooks, rewards for befriending villagers, or ways to expand the story of your campaign.

Several important villagers are mentioned by name. For more information on these NPCs, see "Notable Denizens" on pages 4-5.



INN OF THE WELCOME WENCH (AREA 1)

This large structure is the center of village life, bustling with visitors from morning to night. A human named Gundigoot owns and runs the inn, with the help of his wife, their two daughters, and an array of servants. The food is good, with specials such as poached salmon and stuffed pheasant.

Most locals can be found here at various times, particularly Elmo, Calmert, Rufus, Burne, Mytch, Fernok, Spugnois, and Zert (the last three keep private rooms).

The inn's spacious cellar includes a secret meeting room with a stash of weapons and armor (dating back to when evil held sway in the region).

Minor Quest (175 XP): Gundigoot's latest shipment of brandy is several days overdue. It should have arrived from the east, but no sign of the wagon has been reported. Bandits living in the moathouse captured the shipment, and the last few barrels are kept in a dungeon storeroom under the moathouse. If the PCs recover the shipment or at least report what happened to it, Gundigoot rewards them with 50 gp and free room and board for a month.

DRUID'S GROVE (AREA 4)

This bastion of "the Old Faith" is also the home of a half-elf druid named Jaroo Ashstaff and his companion, a cave bear.

At your discretion, characters who leave offerings worth 10 gp or more at the grove gain a +2 bonus on checks made to interact with the villagers for a week.

Minor Quest (175 XP): Jaroo needs some herbs for a healing poultice. These plants can only be found in the marshes a couple miles east of town. Jaroo advises that the PCs look for an overgrown track leading off the road just past the new guard tower.

The requisite herbs can be found with a DC 17 Nature check and a few hours of searching. Of course, during that search the PCs will also find the ruined moathouse.

TEMPLE OF PELOR (AREA 13)

Ostensibly dedicated to Pelor, this temple welcomes worshippers of any good or lawful good deity. A human priest named Terjon runs the temple with the assistance of a younger human acolyte named Calmert.

At your discretion, characters who leave offerings worth 10 gp or more at the temple gain a +2 bonus on checks made to interact with the villagers for a week.

Minor Quest (175 XP): The acolyte Calmert is madly in love with Larissa, a serving maid at the Inn of the Welcome Wench. If the PCs could convince her of his valor and kind heart, he'd be grateful. You can run this purely as a roleplaying exercise, or you can craft a complexity 1 skill challenge featuring Bluff and Diplomacy and allow characters to utilize their skills to win the day. (For more information on crafting skill challenges, see Chapter 5 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.)

TRADING POST (AREA 14)

This shop sells armor, weapons, and adventuring gear, including the occasional potion or alchemical item. Prices are high (10-25% above normal), which the shopkeepers Rannos and Gremag chalk up to high shipping costs and losses to local bandits.

See Encounter H-1 (page 6) for a map of the shop.

VILLAGE ELDER (AREA 18)

This manor houses Hesta the village elder, her husband, and their four grown sons and their families.

Minor Quest (175 XP): Hesta has begun to hear rumors of bandit activity in the area, and she's concerned for locals and travelers. However, she can't convince the council—particularly Rufus and Burne—that these are anything more than tall tales. If the PCs can bring back evidence of outlaw activity, she can formally request assistance from Burne's mercenary troops in rooting them out.

In addition to the XP reward, PCs who complete this quest gain a +2 bonus to Diplomacy checks with Hesta for the rest of their stay in Hommlet but also suffer a -2 penalty with Burne because of his loss of standing resulting from their success.

TOWER OF RUFUS AND BURNER (AREA 22)

This 60-foot-tall tower is just the first part of an entire castle planned for the site, funded by generous royalty who owe its inhabitants—the fighter Rufus and the wizard Burne—more than a few favors.

Sixteen loyal human guards, known as Burne's Badgers, reside in the tower. Though not part of the militia, they readily come to the aid of any villagers if so ordered by either of the tower's owners.

Minor Quest (175 XP): Hommlet has more than its share of evil spies. If the PCs manage to gain the trust of Rufus or Burne, they are asked to keep an eye out for spies in the village. Both men correctly believe that evil forces are at work in the region, and they need all the keen lookouts they can get. The PCs receive the quest reward for each spy they expose; Rannos Davl, Gremag, and Zert all fit the bill.

SHRINE OF AVANDRA (AREA 23)

This small roadside shrine is frequented by travelers coming in and out of the village. No priest of Avandra lives in Hommlet; Gundigoot, the local innkeeper, charges his servants with keeping the shrine tidy.

At your discretion, characters who leave offerings worth 10 gp or more at the shrine gain a +1 bonus on checks made to interact with the villagers for a week.

The evil traders Rannos Davl and Gremag use this location as a drop point for messages they need delivered to Lareth. Every few days, a bandit from the moathouse sneaks up just after nightfall to check for notes. The messages use only initials; no full names ever appear.

NOTABLE DENIZENS OF HOMMLET

While most folk residing in the village are simple farmers or artisans, Hommlet has many unusual inhabitants, some with allegiances that stretch beyond the town's borders.

ELMO THE SECRET AGENT

As far as anyone in Hommlet knows, this jovial man is just a strong, slow-witted bumpkin who enjoys his ale a bit too much. His family still works their farm southwest of town, and his brother went off in search of fame and fortune some years back.

In reality, Elmo is an agent of a local viscount, who has charged him with keeping an eye on all newcomers to the area. Experience has taught Elmo to be suspicious, so he works to insinuate himself into any expeditions launched by the PCs. Assuming their actions mark them as friends of good, Elmo remains a loyal ally (though he keeps his allegiance secret as long as possible). If wronged, Elmo and his not-too-distant friends become the PCs' enemies.

Elmo makes a great supporting character for a party missing a defender. See *Dungeon Master's Guide 2* for rules on supporting characters.

Elmo, Local Bumpkin Level 4 Soldier

Medium natural humanoid, human

Initiative +3 Senses Perception +8

HP 47; Bloodied 23 Healing Surges 12

AC 21; Fortitude 20, Reflex 18, Will 16

Speed 6

⚔ Battleaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon

+10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage, and the target is marked until the end of Elmo's next turn.

⚔ Bell Ringer (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon

+10 vs. Fortitude; Elmo gains 5 temporary hit points, and the target is dazed until the end of Elmo's next turn.

Guard Ally (minor; encounter)

One ally adjacent to Elmo gains a +5 bonus to AC until the end of Elmo's next turn or until the two characters are no longer adjacent.

Alignment Good Languages Common

Skills Endurance +9, Insight +8

Str 18 (+6)

Dex 12 (+3)

Wis 13 (+3)

Con 14 (+4)

Int 11 (+2)

Cha 10 (+2)

Equipment chainmail, heavy shield, battleaxe

GUNDIGOOT

As the owner and proprietor of the Inn of the Welcome Wench (see page 3), Gundigoot is likely the first notable NPC encountered by the characters upon their arrival. He spends most of his waking hours inside the inn, performing various chores. He talks freely but says little. Surprisingly, his wagging tongue belies a keen judge of character.

Gundigoot serves as the sergeant of the Hommlet militia and also maintains the shrine of Avandra east of town. If statistics are needed for Gundigoot, treat him as a human guard (see page 6 for statistics).

RANNOS DAVL AND GREMAG, CULT SPIES

These two male humans run the local trading post.

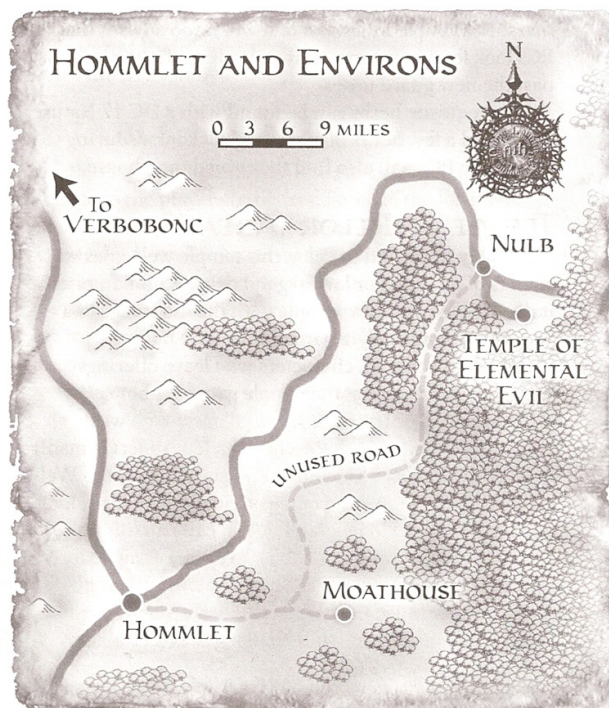
The heavy-set Rannos is friendly to all, while the gaunt Gremag tends to fuss, particularly when customers poke at his merchandise. They are relative newcomers to town, having been here barely two years.

Both men are actually evil servants of the same cult that employs Lareth the Beautiful (see the Moathouse, page 8). They don't know Lareth (or even his name), but they feed information to the priest via bandit couriers from time to time. Neither one carries any clue to their real allegiance, though hidden in their quarters (Perception DC 22 to find) is a small black scarab inscribed with the letters TZGY. The significance of this item is left to the DM—is it a badge, a passkey, a dormant magic item, or something more sinister?

When the traders meet the PCs, they offer the service of one of their guards (use the human guard statistics on page 6) for a mere 12 sp per day. Of course, this guard's job is to report back on the PCs' activities.

Despite these two men's foul allegiance, the locals consider them upstanding members of the village and won't stand for anyone attacking them unless the PCs can somehow produce hard evidence of their treachery.

See Encounter H-1: Trading Post for more information.



RUFUS AND BURNE, RETIRED ADVENTURERS

These two humans came to Hommlet a few years ago after successful adventuring careers (including the slaying of a green dragon some leagues away). They are quite popular in town and can frequently be seen at the Inn of the Welcome Wench.

Though Rufus and Burne are quite capable of defending themselves (Burne is a talented wizard, while Rufus is an experienced fighter), these men rely on their retinue of loyal guards unless their talents are sorely needed.

They resist any invitations to join the PCs on an adventure, though Burne knows many useful rituals that he's willing to cast for the right price, and could be cajoled into brewing a potion or other alchemical item.

TERJON THE PRIEST

This stern, unfriendly human oversees the local temple of Pelor. Terjon doesn't enjoy his position. He was dispatched here not long ago when the previous leader of the temple, Y'dey, left unexpectedly. As a former adventurer, he'd rather be fighting evil directly; if he learns that the PCs are setting off on an expedition, he offers his services.

Terjon makes a great supporting character for a party missing a leader (or needing an extra healer). See the *Dungeon Master's Guide 2* for rules on supporting characters.

Terjon, Priest of Pelor		Level 4 Controller (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid, human		
Initiative +3	Senses Perception +5	
HP 41; Bloodied 20	Healing Surges 9	
AC 19; Fortitude 18, Reflex 16, Will 20		
Speed 6		
⚔ Mace (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+10 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage, and Terjon and one ally adjacent to him gain a +1 power bonus to AC until the end of Terjon's next turn.		
⚔ Command (standard; encounter) ♦ Charm, Implement		
Ranged 10; +8 vs. Will; the target is dazed until the end of Terjon's next turn. In addition, Terjon can choose to knock the target prone or slide it 2 squares.		
Healing Word (minor; twice per encounter) ♦ Healing		
Close burst 5; Terjon or one ally in the burst spends a healing surge.		
Alignment Good	Languages Common	
Skills Heal +11, Religion +9		
Str 11 (+2)	Dex 12 (+3)	Wis 18 (+6)
Con 14 (+4)	Int 14 (+4)	Cha 8 (+1)
Equipment chainmail, mace, holy symbol		

OTHER CHARACTERS

Here are some other NPCs that the adventurers might encounter while in Hommlet.

Calmert (male human): This zealous acolyte serves in the temple of Pelor under Terjon and handles services in Terjon's absence. He's also madly in love with one of the serving maids at the inn (see "Temple of Pelor," page 3).

Furnok of Ferd (male dwarf): This gambler and self-proclaimed treasure hunter lives at the inn, making a modest living by cheating passing merchants. He's willing to accompany PCs for an equal share of treasure (use the statistics for the dwarf bolter on page 97 of the *Monster Manual*), but he's not particularly brave.

Jaroo Ashstaff (male half-elf): This aging champion of the Old Faith lives in a secluded grove at the south edge of town. He works as an agent of a powerful druidic order, sent here long ago to keep watch for signs of evil returning to the land. He has access to a few useful rituals but won't accompany the party on an adventure.

Mytch the Miller (male human): One of the pillars of the community, Mytch is a member of the Hommlet militia (use the human guard statistics on page 6). He doesn't trust newcomers as a general rule.

Spugnois (male tiefling): This talented warlock hopes to search the moathouse for arcane secrets. He keeps a low profile, wearing nondescript garb and avoiding displays of power. He offers to accompany the PCs if he learns they are headed to the moathouse, as long as he's promised at least one magic item in his share of treasure. Use the tiefling heretic statistics on page 250 of the *Monster Manual*.

Hesta the Village Elder (female human): This wise and respected woman leads the town council (whose other members include Jaroo, Terjon, Elmo's father Lar, Mytch, Burne, and Rufus, in descending order of seniority) and also serves as Hommlet's Justice of the Peace.

Zert (male human): This burly fighter is another spy for the same organization that employs Lareth and the traders. He's willing to join the PCs for an equal share of treasure. Use the human berserker statistics on page 163 of the *Monster Manual*.

TREASURE

This adventure uses the "parcel" technique of treasure distribution described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. You'll need eight parcels in addition to the non-parcel treasures already listed in the adventure. You can use the list of parcels below, or you can create your own using the rules in Chapter 7 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

If you're using the "wish list" suggestion in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, you can assign magic items based on those lists. Otherwise, select magic items from the *Player's Handbook*® core rulebook or the *Adventurer's Vault*™ supplement appropriate for your characters and the adventure.

Parcel 1: Magic item, level 8

Parcel 2: Magic item, level 7

Parcel 3: Magic item, level 6

Parcel 4: Magic item, level 5

Parcel 5: One 100-gp gem, 2 *potions of healing*, and 80 gp

Parcel 6: One 250-gp art object and 300 sp

Parcel 7: One *augmenting whetstone** and 65 gp

Parcel 8: One *potion of healing* and 40 gp

*This item appears in the *Adventurer's Vault* supplement; replace with 75 gp if that book is not available.

ENCOUNTER H-1: TRADING POST

Encounter Level 6 (1,250 XP)

SETUP

Use this encounter only if the PCs start a fight with the traders Rannos Davl and Gremag, or if the traders believe that their cover is blown and they have no choice but to defeat the PCs before the secret gets out.

Despite their evil natures, both traders would prefer that their identities remain secret, even if the PCs seem tough enough to give Lareth a good fight. Rather than taking on the PCs themselves, they'll give one of their guards a message to deliver to one of the bandits at the designated drop point (the shrine of Avandra). Other than this occasional communication, both traders engage in no activities that might appear suspicious.

This encounter includes the following enemies:

Rannos Davl, human trader (R)

Gremag, human trader (G)

3 human guards (H)

If the PCs approach the trading post during the day, read:

A shield hanging outside this wooden structure is painted with a sword and wedge of cheese. Through the windows you can see a skinny shopkeeper tending to shelves of trade goods.

At night, the trading post is closed and its windows shuttered. A DC 22 Thievery check is required to pick the lock on a door or window.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Barnyard: This filthy yard has several dogs running loose. These animals avoid combat, but they have fouled the grounds to such an extent that any character standing from prone must succeed on a saving throw or fall prone again immediately.

Shelves: These racks stand 5 feet high. The shelves are too flimsy to climb or stand upon, but they can be tipped over with a DC 7 Strength check as a standard action. Tipping over a shelf creates a close burst 1 attack (+6 vs. Reflex; the target is knocked prone on a hit) and fills the area of the burst with difficult terrain.

Stables: Each space marked with an "M" holds a surly mule that lashes out at anyone moving adjacent to it (other than the traders or guards, who have cowed the mules into submission). Treat this as an immediate reaction melee attack (+5 vs. AC; 1d6 + 2 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square).

TACTICS

Once a fight begins, neither Rannos nor Gremag pull any punches. They work together to neutralize the PCs as quickly as possible, knowing that if their secret gets out they're as good as dead (either at the hands of angry townsfolk or their own dark masters).

Rannos works with the guards to gain combat advantage against one or more foes, the better to maximize the effectiveness of his blade flurry. He uses surprise lunge to move past the front line and strike at vulnerable or injured PCs.

Gremag begins by poisoning a dagger, then throws it at the same target that Rannos faces. He prefers to stay out of the fray, moving into melee only when he can pin down a lone enemy.

The guards are well paid to protect the traders, and they lay down their lives to do so. Even though they enjoy reach with their halberds, they stay adjacent to PCs whenever possible to keep their foes from slipping away.

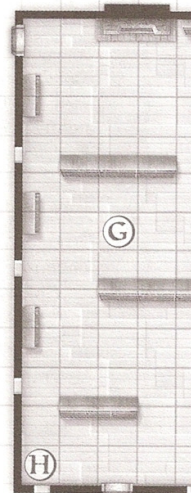
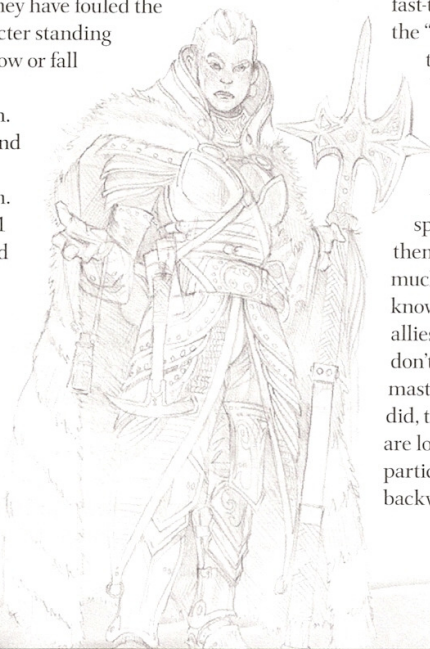
NONCOMBAT INTERACTIONS

It's entirely likely that most encounters between the PCs and the traders will be friendly exchanges rather than combat. Use these notes, along with relevant details from the stat blocks, to adjudicate the outcome of such interactions.

Rannos Davl is garrulous and witty, bantering with any customer who enters the trading post. This chatty nature belies a deep-seated suspicion of everyone in the village, particularly newly arrived adventurers. Despite his friendliness, Rannos doesn't visit the local watering hole, concerned about the effect of a few pints on his ability to keep his cover.

Gremag avoids chatting with the PCs. He knows that he's not as glib as Rannos, and he prefers to let his partner do the fast-talking for both of them. He chafes at the "no killing" policy that Rannos holds them to, often itching to put his dagger between the ribs of an annoying customer. Like his partner, he steers clear of the inn.

The guards are unaligned but mean-spirited. They keep to themselves and don't talk much, even to locals. They know that their employers have allies outside town, but they don't suspect the extent of their masters' treachery. Even if they did, they'd remain loyal—none are locals, and they have no particular affection for this backwater village.



AFTERMATH

The traders keep very little money on the premises, sending most of their income back to their masters. Thus, PCs looking for a big score here will likely be disappointed to find only 152 cp and 77 sp (plus whatever mundane equipment survives the fight).

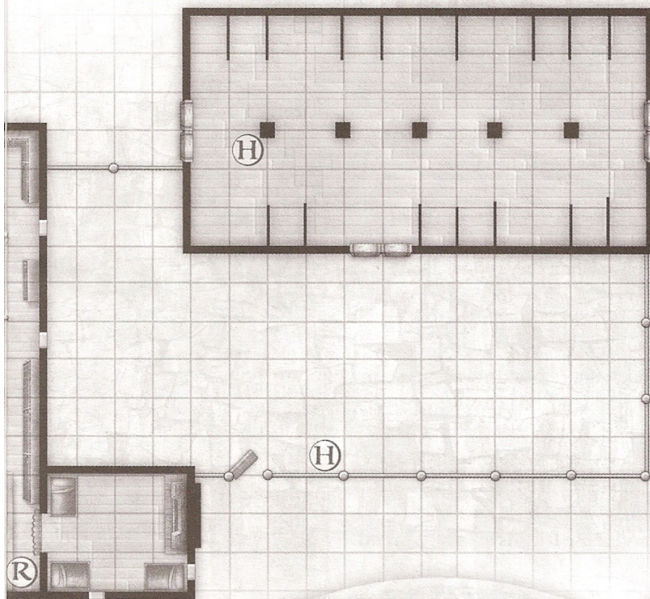
In the event that the traders are killed or run out of the village, the trading post and all its merchandise are declared village property until the council decides what to do with them.

What's more, unless the PCs provide evidence of the traders' misdeeds, they'll have to do some fast-talking to avoid being charged as murderers. You can treat this as a roleplaying exercise or a skill challenge (complexity 3 using Diplomacy, Bluff, and other appropriate skills). Characters who have already performed good deeds for the town should have a much easier time; grant them a +2 to +5 bonus on checks made as part of the challenge.

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

Rannos Davl (R)	Level 5 Elite Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid, human	XP 400
Initiative +6	Senses Perception +8
HP 126; Bloodied 63	
AC 22; Fortitude 17, Reflex 20, Will 17	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 6	
Action Points 1	
⚔ Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+10 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage.	
⚔ Blade Flurry (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Rannos Davl makes two short sword attacks and shifts 1 square before either or both attacks.	
Surprise Lunge (move; recharges when bloodied)	
Rannos Davl shifts 4 squares. When he ends this move, he gains combat advantage against each enemy adjacent to him until the end of his turn.	
Marked Advantage	
Rannos Davl gains combat advantage against any target marked by one of Davl's allies.	
Combat Advantage	
Rannos Davl deals 2d6 extra damage against any target granting combat advantage to him.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common
Skills Bluff +9, Insight +8, Stealth +11	
Str 8 (+1) Dex 18 (+6) Wis 12 (+3)	
Con 15 (+4) Int 14 (+4) Cha 15 (+4)	
Equipment leather armor, short sword	

Gremag (G)	Level 5 Elite Lurker
Medium natural humanoid, human	XP 400
Initiative +8	Senses Perception +1
HP 96; Bloodied 48	
AC 22; Fortitude 20, Reflex 22, Will 17; see also cowardly stance	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 6	
Action Points 1	
⚔ Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+10 vs. AC; 1d4 + 4 damage.	
🏹 Thrown Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 5/10; +10 vs. AC; 1d4 + 4 damage.	
⚔ Sudden Riposte (immediate reaction, when hit by a melee attack; recharge ⏏ ⏏ ⏏ ⏏) ♦ Weapon	
Gremag makes a dagger attack against the triggering attacker. This attack gains a +2 bonus to the attack roll and deals 5 extra damage.	
Poisoned Blade (standard; at-will)	
The next time Gremag hits with a dagger or thrown dagger attack during this encounter, the target also takes ongoing 10 poison damage (save ends).	
Cowardly Stance	
If two or more enemies are adjacent to Gremag, he takes a -4 penalty to all defenses.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common
Skills Bluff +7, Stealth +11, Thievery +11	
Str 17 (+5) Dex 18 (+6) Wis 8 (+1)	
Con 12 (+3) Int 10 (+2) Cha 11 (+2)	
Equipment 3 daggers	



THE MOATHOUSE

Years ago, this small keep served as an outpost for the Temple of Elemental Evil. From here, the cultists organized raids on outlying areas, particularly Hommlet, gathering loot and slaves to serve their vile masters.

In the aftermath of the battle that destroyed the Temple, the forces of good razed much of the moathouse and sent its inhabitants fleeing into the surrounding marsh.

Today, a new evil has arisen in the moathouse.

Lareth the Beautiful is the dark hope of chaotic evil— young, handsome, well endowed in abilities and aptitudes, thoroughly wicked and depraved.

Lareth has been sent to this area to forge an alliance with local forces of evil, aiming to build a formidable fighting force with which to sweep across the land. Those within the moathouse refer to him only as “the New Master” and know nothing of his true allegiances, which are up to you as the Dungeon Master (see the “Whom Does Lareth Serve?” sidebar).

Though his number of recruits is still relatively small, if left to his own devices Lareth will soon become a major threat to the entire region. The PCs must strike now, before it is too late!

Despite the devastating siege of this keep, the moathouse is remarkably intact. Though the upper story has fallen to ruin, the walls are mostly solid to this day, with only a few notable gaps. The bandits living within have filled these gaps with rubble to avoid easy entrance.

The dungeon level of the moathouse bustles with activity, having more inhabitants than at any time in recent memory. Even so, some shadowy corners beneath the moathouse remain off-limits to most who live here, as even foul cultists fear the hungry darkness.

WHOM DOES LARETH SERVE?

The *Village of Hommlet* adventure published in 1979 described Lareth as serving Lolth, the Spider Queen, who sought to use the Temple’s power for her own. However, the 3rd Edition adventure *Return to the Temple of Elemental Evil* suggested that Lareth in truth belonged to the cult of the Elder Elemental Eye (a front for the dark god Tharizdun).

In your campaign, Lareth can stand at the forefront of a variety of evil plots. If Lolth and Tharizdun don’t feature in your story, perhaps one of these options works better:

- ♦ Lareth worships Torog, taking great delight in the imprisonment and torture of innocent villagers beneath the moathouse. Lareth believes that a hidden entrance to the Underdark exists somewhere nearby.

- ♦ Lareth worships Vecna and has come to the moathouse to uncover the secrets hidden far beneath its walls—secrets which, if unearthed, could spell doom for the nearby village.

- ♦ Lareth worships Zehir and works for a coven of yuan-ti. He has come to set up a snaketongue cult in the vicinity of Hommlet.

INHABITANTS OF THE MOATHOUSE

While most of the creatures living within or beneath the moathouse owe at least a modicum of loyalty to the New Master, there remain several distinct factions.

Bandits: Lareth’s first act was to buy the allegiance of the bandits who had settled in the moathouse. With his backing, the bandits have become more successful and cautious in their raids. They don’t trust the bugbears or gnolls living in the dungeon level, but they remain loyal to Lareth.

Bugbears: These goblinoids symbolize Lareth’s first major success in building the new army of the Temple of Elemental Evil. They represent a large tribe of goblins, hobgoblins, and bugbears based to the south.

Gnolls: Lareth has recently begun discussing an alliance with a local tribe of gnolls, and those here are his current guests. The gnolls don’t get along with anyone else in the moathouse and won’t lift a finger to help anyone but themselves.

Lareth’s Guards: These humans were recruited by a dragonborn soldier named Drex (now their leader) in the nearby village of Nulb, a wretched hive of scum and villainy. They serve Lareth to the death.

Lubash the Ogre: The dimwitted ogre serves Lareth as long as the priest keeps him fed and happy.

Undead: Most of these creatures predate Lareth’s arrival, though he has added to the number of zombies since resuming the vile tortures that once made this moathouse infamous. Lareth has built an uneasy alliance with the ghouls, though he worries that their presence might soon become troublesome.

DEVELOPMENTS

Thanks to the proximity of Nulb and the Temple, Lareth can recruit reinforcements from the surrounding regions to replace some or all of the lost bandits, guards, bugbears, and zombies.

Once the PCs’ assault on the moathouse begins, if they pause for more than one full day, refill one or two encounters to ensure that the PCs have a good challenge when they return. Don’t worry about restocking every room (unless the PCs take a particularly long break), but any partially defeated encounters can be replenished to full. The players shouldn’t feel that their earlier efforts were wasted; instead, they should realize that the denizens of the moathouse have friends—and those friends aren’t too far off.



KEY TO THE MOATHOUSE

There are two moathouse maps—one depicting the surface ruins and another depicting the dungeon beneath the ruins. Areas of interest are marked with numbers keyed to the text below.

1. The Pond: Five giant frogs call this pond—and the nearby moat—home. The moathouse bandits give them a wide berth.
See Encounter M-1: Entrance (page 11).

2. Empty Tower: This cobweb-filled tower holds nothing of interest except for a small ivory box buried under the rubble (Perception DC 22 to find). The box is worth 50 gp and holds 71 cp and 38 sp.

3. Ruined Courtyard: This empty yard is open to the sky. Two bandit archers watch the courtyard from area 4 at all times.
See Encounter M-2: The Bandits (page 12).

4. Great Hall: Once a great audience chamber, this room now houses nine bandit archers under the command of Enzer, the bandit leader. Bedrolls and supplies lie scattered around the room; the various packs and bags hold a total of 175 sp and 15 gp.

5. The Black Chamber: This room is floored in black flagstone, and tattered ebon-colored tapestries still hang from the walls. Once the home of the lord of the moathouse, this chamber now shelters Enzer, the bandit leader. The door can be barred from the inside (Strength DC 20 to burst).

Buried beneath the rubble in the southeast corner is a locked chest (Thievery DC 22 to open; Enzer carries the key). The chest holds two treasure parcels.

A secret door (Perception DC 20 to notice) hides a staircase leading down to area 14.

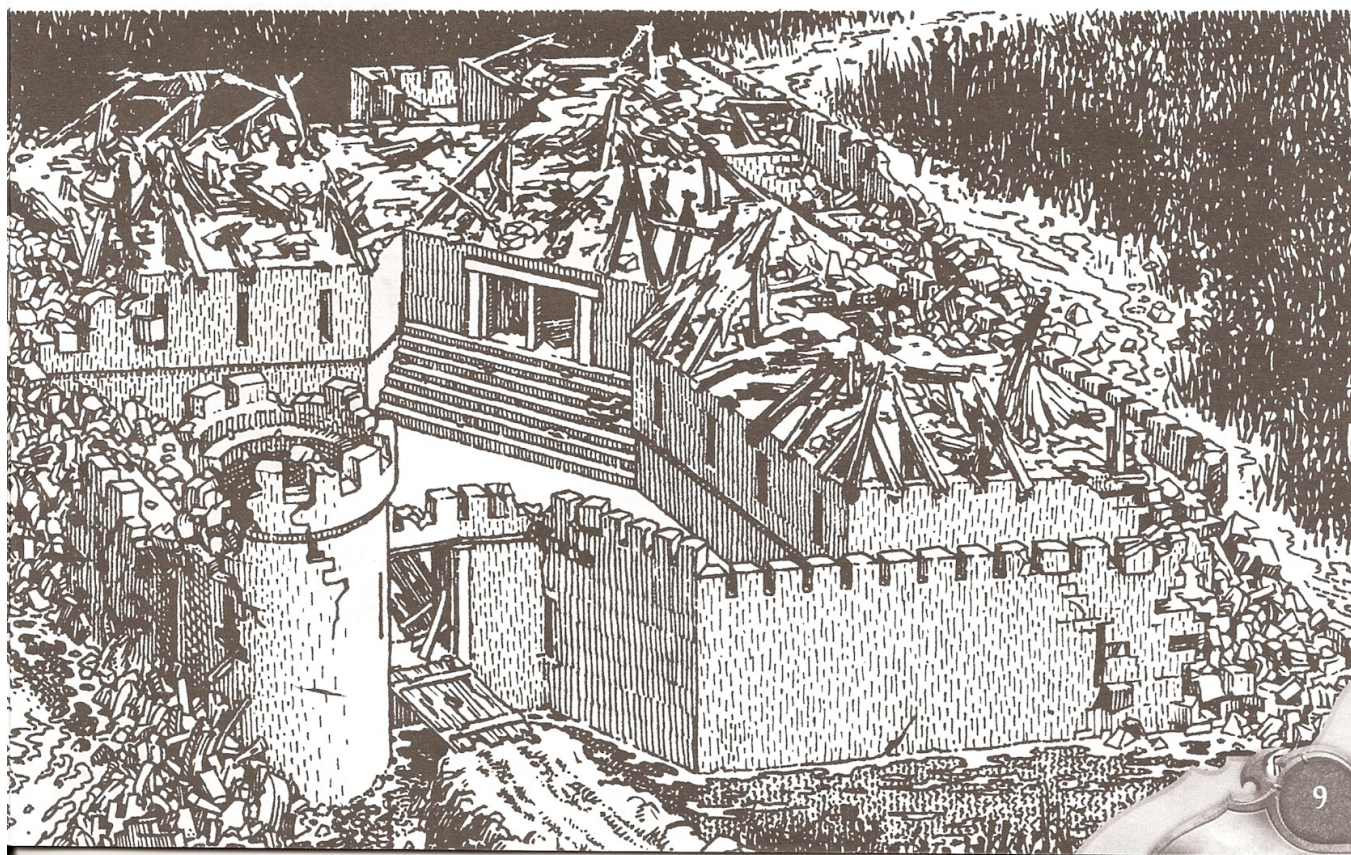
6. Stairs Up: This staircase originally led to the second floor of the moathouse (now destroyed). Today, a brave soul could use them to ascend to the unstable remains of that floor, which completely covers areas 5-10. The entire area is difficult terrain, and any time a character starts his turn in the area, he must succeed on a DC 12 Acrobatics check or fall prone as the floor crumbles slightly beneath his feet.

7. Stairs Down: These worn stone steps lead down to area 11.

8. Empty Room: Each of these rooms contains rotted furnishings and rubble from the upper story.

9. Drake's Nest: The bandits keep a barely trained rage drake here. None are yet brave enough to try riding it. Droppings litter the floor.

DAVE TRAMPIER



10. Barracks: The two normal bandits share this room. They like it because of the sightlines it allows to the north and west, and also for its proximity to an escape route.

11. Cell Block: This ancient prison hasn't had a living occupant since the original owners of the moathouse long ago. Today, some of those long-dead prisoners still exist as horrid zombies.

See Encounter M-3: Cell Block (page 14).

12. Storeroom: The two rooms bearing this number are locked (Thievery DC 22 to open). Drex, the dragonborn soldier, carries the keys.

The southern room holds 12 suits of leather armor, 6 suits of chainmail, and several barrels (some holding salted meat, the others fine brandy). The brandy is all that's left of Gundigoot's missing shipment (confirmed by the distiller's mark).

The northern room holds 20 spears, 20 maces, 10 halberds, 10 crossbows, and 200 crossbow bolts. A crate in the corner contains 50 black cloaks, each bearing the symbol of a golden eye on fire.

13. Torture Chamber: After long years of silent waiting, this horrific room has recently come alive once more at the hands of the New Master of the Moathouse, Lareth the Beautiful. Lareth takes care to capture individuals easily missed by the local villagers, to avoid suspicion.

See Encounter M-3: Cell Block (page 14).

14. Ogre's Den: The result of one of Lareth's more significant alliances, Lubash has been lured to service by baubles and the promise of fresh humanoid meat. Scattered around the room is a treasure parcel.

Lubash joins any fight occurring in area 13. See Encounter M-3: Cell Block (page 14).

15. Pantry: The door to this room is barred from the outside, for within are three prisoners meant for Lubash's stewpot.

Two of the prisoners are human merchants from the city of Dyvers who were captured after leaving Hommlet a few days ago. They promise rewards if freed, and sure enough one treasure parcel arrives for the PCs a month after their escape.

The third captive, a badly beaten gnome named Hadrus Winterwell, was caught by a local goblin tribe. If released, he grants one of the PCs a plain iron ring as a gift. The bearer of this ring gains a +5 bonus to Diplomacy checks made with unaligned, good, or lawful good fey creatures within 100 miles of Hommlet, as it marks him a friend of feykind.

16. Portcullis Trap: Hidden in the ceiling at this point is an iron portcullis (Perception DC 22 to spot). It remains locked and hidden until triggered.

The triggers for the portcullis trap are located at the two doors in nearby rooms marked "T." Each of these doors, when opened, reveals only a blank stone wall and causes the portcullis to drop along the dotted line marked on the map.

Once down, the wooden portcullis locks in place and can only be lifted with a DC 23 Strength check. Behind the secret door is a short tunnel that leads to a winch used to haul the portcullis back up (standard action, DC 12 Strength check).

17. Bugbear Recruits: A small group of bugbears, representatives of a larger tribe allied with Lareth and his masters, occupies this area.

See Encounter M-4: Bugbear Recruits (page 16).

18. Gnoll Den: Gnolls from a pack that Lareth bribed into allegiance live in this room. Recent losses and poor treatment have left them sullen and resentful.

See Encounter M-5: Gnoll Den (page 17).

19. Mysterious Pool: An enormous crayfish lurks in this freshwater pool. The pool also contains a treasure parcel.

See Encounter M-6: Mysterious Pool (page 18).

20. Burial Crypts: The walls of this room are lined with deep alcoves. Though most of the niches are empty, fragments of coffins and splintered bones litter a few of them.

Many years ago, a small pack of ghouls tunneled in from the swamp. Today, they dine on victims provided by the New Master of the moathouse.

See Encounter M-7: The Crypt Keepers (page 19).

21. Escape Passage: At this point, the passageway begins to slope upward. After about 150 feet, the PCs can feel a slight breeze from up ahead.

Eventually, the tunnel comes out at the surface amid a clutter of rocks and brambles nearly 500 feet east of the moathouse.

22. Guard Post: Lareth has stationed a number of guards here.

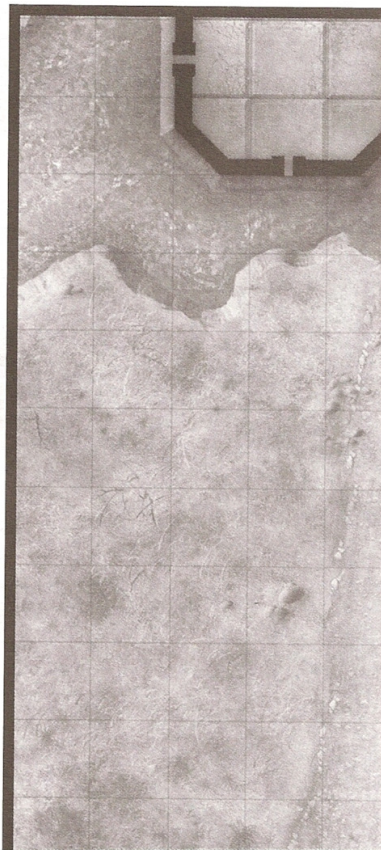
See Encounter M-8: The New Master (page 20).

23. Barracks: Lareth's retinue of soldiers lives here, amid piles of supplies.

See Encounter M-8: The New Master (page 20).

24. Chamber of the New Master: Lareth the Beautiful lives in this lavishly furnished room. Among the various luxuries are two treasure parcels.

See Encounter M-8: The New Master (page 20).



ENCOUNTER M-1: ENTRANCE

Encounter Level 3 (800 XP)

SETUP

This encounter takes place in area 1. A rotting drawbridge provides access to the main level of the moathouse. The bandits don't use this entrance because of the pack of giant frogs that lives here, instead wading through the water and entering area 5 through the ruined wall.

This encounter includes the following creatures:

5 giant frogs (F)

Two frogs begin in the marked spaces (don't place them until the PCs spot them); the rest arrive after combat begins, one per round until all five are present.

As the PCs arrive at the moathouse, read:

A small ruined keep surrounded by a dank, algae-filled moat stands in the middle of the bog. An ancient drawbridge lies open, allowing entrance into the main courtyard.

Perception Check

DC 19 Two pairs of bulbous eyes stare at you from the shallow pond nearby.

DC 22 You see the glint of metal from the shallow pond.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Drawbridge: Though sturdy enough for up to two Medium creatures, the rotting wood gives way if three or more Medium creatures or a single Large creature steps upon it, dropping anyone on the bridge into the moat.

Moat: The moat is 8 to 10 feet deep, requiring characters to swim across (Athletics DC 10).

Pond: This shallow pool is difficult terrain. Half buried in the muck is a treasure parcel.

Wall: The 10-foot-tall crumbling masonry walls have plenty of handholds, but a coating of moss and slime renders them surprisingly difficult to climb (Athletics DC 20).

TACTICS

The giant frogs wait until a character enters the water or crosses the drawbridge before using *grasping tongue* to pull the unwary target in for a bite. They haven't eaten well lately, so they fight to the death.

Giant Frog (F)	Level 3 Controller
Medium natural beast	XP 150 each
Initiative +5	Senses Perception +6
HP 44; Bloodied 22	
AC 18; Fortitude 15, Reflex 16, Will 13	
Speed 4, swim 6	
⊕ Bite (standard; at-will)	
+8 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage, and a Medium or smaller target is swallowed. A swallowed target is stunned, takes ongoing 5 damage, and can't be targeted by any effect (save ends all effects). A giant frog can have only one target swallowed at a time and cannot make bite attacks as long as the swallowed target is alive.	
➤ Grasping Tongue (minor; at-will)	
Ranged 3; +7 vs. Reflex; the target is pulled 2 squares.	
Prodigious Leap (move; at-will)	
The giant frog shifts 4 squares. It can shift through enemy squares as long as it ends its movement in an unoccupied space.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages —
Skills Athletics +8, Stealth +9	
Str 14 (+3)	Dex 17 (+4) Wis 11 (+1)
Con 12 (+2)	Int 2 (-3) Cha 6 (-1)

JIM NELSON



ENCOUNTER M-2: THE BANDITS

Encounter Level 4 (879 XP)

SETUP

This encounter begins in area 3. Two bandit archers stand guard at the arrow slits between areas 3 and 4, while the rest relax. If they spot the PCs, one sneaks back to area 5 to warn their leader while the other moves to area 9 to release the rage drake.

This encounter includes the following creatures:

Enzer, bandit leader (L)
9 human bandit archers (A)
2 human bandits (B)
Rage drake (R)

As the adventurers enter the courtyard, read:

Weeds and mud fill the cracks between the flagstones of this ruined courtyard. Empty window frames look down on the yard from two walls, and a pair of broken doors lies in shambles at the top of a short flight of steps.

Perception Check

DC 12 Those windows look more like arrow slits to you.

DC 24 You notice movement behind the two arrow slits at the top of the stairs.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Wall: The 10-foot-tall crumbling masonry walls have plenty of handholds, but a coating of moss and slime renders them surprisingly difficult to climb (Athletics DC 20). The areas where the wall has been reduced to rubble require only a DC 10 Athletics check.

Arrow Slits: These narrow gaps don't allow characters outside them a very good view of what's inside. Unless a character is adjacent to an arrow slit, apply a -10 penalty to Perception checks made from outside to detect anyone inside. Creatures on the inside enjoy superior cover against attacks from the outside.

TACTICS

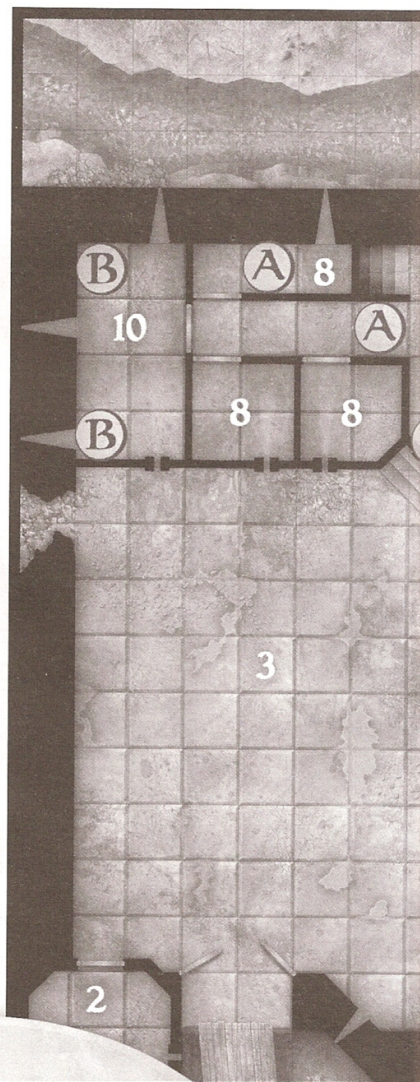
The rage drake charges down the stairs and into the fray, going after the toughest PC it can see.

The bandits follow the rage drake in, using the drake or each other to set up flanks. The bandits retreat to the great hall (area 4) if bloodied or if the drake falls.

Enzer, the bandit leader, commands the others from the safety of the great hall. He takes position behind an arrow slit if either of the archers in that room is taken out.

The outlaw archers move to the nearest arrow slits and rain down attacks on PCs in the courtyard. If the rage drake is dropped or the PCs push into the great hall, the archers fall back to provide artillery support for their allies.

The bandits don't chase retreating characters. If both Enzer and the rage drake are defeated, the remaining bandits flee into the swamp, barring the door to area 5 if possible to slow pursuit.



Rage Drake (R)**Level 5 Brute**

Large natural beast (mount, reptile)

XP 200

Initiative +3 Senses Perception +3

HP 77; Bloodied 38; see also *bloodied rage*

AC 17; Fortitude 17, Reflex 15, Will 15

Immune fear (while bloodied only)

Speed 8

⬇️ Bite (standard; at-will)

+9 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage; see also *bloodied rage*.

⬇️ Claw (standard; at-will)

+8 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage; see also *bloodied rage*.

⬇️ Raking Charge (standard; at-will)

When the rage drake charges, it makes two claw attacks against a single target.

Bloodied Rage (while bloodied)

The rage drake gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls and deals an extra 5 damage per attack.

Raging Mount (while bloodied and mounted by a friendly rider of 5th level or higher; at-will) ♦ **Mount**

The rage drake grants its rider a +2 bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls with melee attacks.

Alignment Unaligned

Languages –

Str 19 (+6)

Dex 13 (+3)

Wis 13 (+3)

Con 17 (+5)

Int 3 (–2)

Cha 12 (+3)

Enzer, Bandit Leader (L)**Level 3 Soldier**

Medium natural humanoid, human

XP 150

Initiative +5

Senses Perception +6

HP 47; Bloodied 23

AC 18; Fortitude 16, Reflex 15, Will 14

Speed 5

⬇️ Longspear (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the leader's next turn.

⬇️ Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Ranged 15/30; +9 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage.

⬇️ Sweeping Strike (standard; recharge ⏏️ ⏏️) ♦ **Weapon**

Requires longspear; reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 7 damage, and the target is knocked prone.

Alignment Evil

Languages Common

Skills Streetwise +7, Thievery +8

Str 16 (+4)

Dex 14 (+3)

Wis 11 (+1)

Con 15 (+3)

Int 10 (+1)

Cha 12 (+2)

Equipment chainmail, longspear, crossbow with 20 bolts, key to the locked chest in area 5

Human Bandit Archer (A)**Level 2 Minion Artillery**

Medium natural humanoid, human

XP 31 each

Initiative +4

Senses Perception +6

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

AC 16; Fortitude 13, Reflex 14, Will 11; see also *mob rule*

Speed 6

⬇️ Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Ranged 15/30; +9 vs. AC; 3 damage.

⬇️ Spear (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+7 vs. AC; 2 damage.

Mob Rule

A human bandit archer gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses while at least two other human bandit archers are within 5 squares of it.

Alignment Evil

Languages Common

Str 14 (+3)

Dex 16 (+4)

Wis 10 (+1)

Con 12 (+2)

Int 10 (+1)

Cha 10 (+1)

Equipment leather armor, spear, crossbow with 20 bolts

Human Bandit (B)**Level 2 Skirmisher**

Medium natural humanoid

XP 125 each

Initiative +6

Senses Perception +1

HP 37; Bloodied 18

AC 16; Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 12

Speed 6

⬇️ Mace (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+4 vs. AC; 1d8 + 1 damage, and the human bandit shifts 1 square.

⬇️ Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Ranged 5/10; +6 vs. AC; 1d4 + 3 damage.

⬇️ Dazing Strike (standard; encounter) ♦ **Weapon**

Requires mace; +4 vs. AC; 1d8 + 1 damage, the target is dazed until the end of the human bandit's next turn, and the human bandit shifts 1 square.

Combat Advantage

The human bandit deals 1d6 extra damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.

Alignment Any

Languages Common

Skills Stealth +9, Streetwise +7, Thievery +9

Str 12 (+2)

Dex 17 (+4)

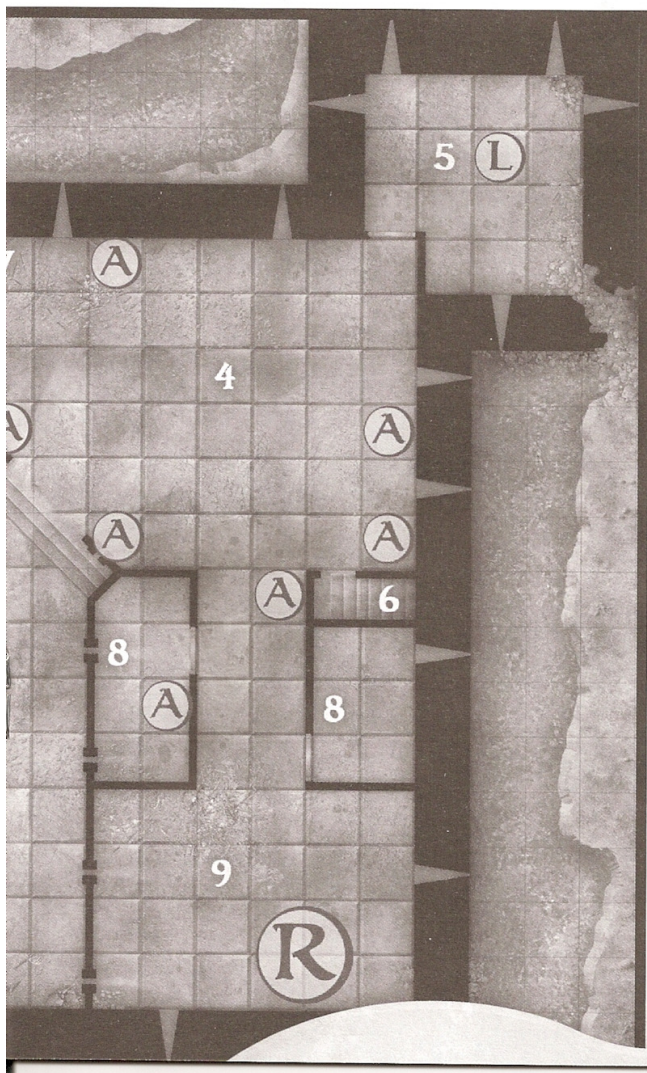
Wis 11 (+1)

Con 13 (+2)

Int 10 (+1)

Cha 12 (+2)

Equipment leather armor, mace, 4 daggers



ENCOUNTER M-3: CELL BLOCK

Encounter Level 5 (1,105 XP)

SETUP

This encounter unfolds in areas 11-14. Don't place any monsters on the battlefield at the start. The zombies and zombie rotters begin out of sight in the cells, while Lubash the ogre starts in area 14.

If the characters make a lot of noise (perhaps in the act of breaking into one of the storerooms), the three nearest zombie rotters move into the room, drawn by the commotion. Once battle begins, another cell of zombies shuffles out each round to join the fray.

If the characters remain quiet, the zombies enter combat only if the characters move into their line of sight.

Once the fight starts, roll initiative for Lubash. Each round on his turn, roll a DC 12 Perception check to see if he hears the fight and joins in (after first lighting a torch so he can see).

This encounter includes the following creatures:

Lubash the ogre (O)

3 zombies (Z)

10 zombie rotters (R)

As the adventurers come down the stairs, read:

Light from above faintly illuminates the slime-crusted archway marking the bottom of the stairs. The smell of death and rot wafts up from below.

If the PCs have light, read:

The stairway leads down to a pillared, L-shaped chamber. Rubble is piled against two doors along one wall.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Locked Doors: The two doors leading to the storerooms (area 12) bear new, well-oiled locks (Thievery DC 22 to open).

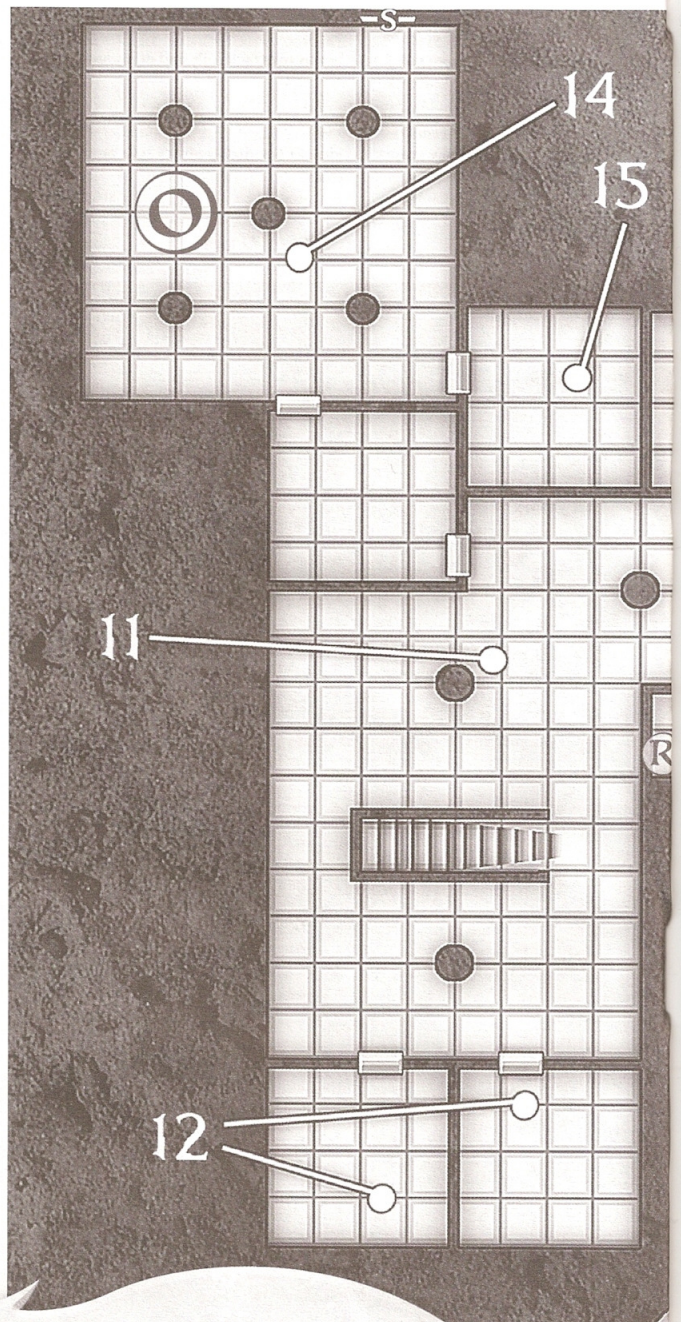
Torture Equipment: Though many of the implements in the torture chamber (area 13) are corroded and rusty, a DC 12 Perception check reveals that some bear signs of recent use.

Blood Trail: A DC 17 Perception check made within the torture chamber (area 13) reveals a faint trail of dried blood leading to the southernmost pillar. The trail is no more than a few days old.

Hollow Pillar: The southernmost pillar in the torture chamber (area 13) is hollow and conceals a shaft that drops 20 feet to a narrow tunnel leading to area 20. Iron rungs set into the stonework allow easy descent. Discovering the secret shaft requires a DC 22 Perception check.

TACTICS

The zombies engage the nearest targets they can see, using *zombie grab* to keep them from escaping. The rotters swarm any PC grabbed by a zombie, or the nearest character otherwise.



Lubash gives the zombies a wide berth, instead going after a PC outside the fray. If he drops a PC to 0 hit points, he drags that character to his pantry (area 15), leaving the rest to the mercy of the zombies.

The zombies aren't allies of Lubash, but they don't attack the big ogre unless he's the only foe in sight. Similarly, the ogre doesn't bother to attack the zombies, retreating to his chamber if the PCs flee or are defeated.

If any PCs wear the garb of Lareth's men (a black cloak adorned with a yellow eye of fire), the ogre doesn't attack them, instead offering them sanctuary in his chamber.

Lubash the Ogre (O)

Large natural humanoid

Level 8 Skirmisher

XP 350

Initiative +8

Senses Perception +4

HP 91; Bloodied 45

AC 22; Fortitude 22, Reflex 20, Will 18

Speed 8

⬇ Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon

Reach 2; +13 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage; see also skirmish.

✈ Javelin (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon

Ranged 10/20; +13 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage; see also skirmish.

✈/⬇ Hurling Charge (standard; encounter)

Lubash makes a javelin attack followed by a charge attack.

Skirmish

If, on his turn, Lubash ends his move at least 4 squares away from his starting point, he deals 1d8 extra damage on his melee attacks until the start of his next turn.

Alignment Chaotic evil

Languages Common, Giant

Str 18 (+8)

Dex 14 (+6)

Wis 11 (+4)

Con 19 (+8)

Int 4 (+1)

Cha 6 (+2)

Equipment hide armor, club, 6 javelins

Zombie (Z)

Medium natural animate (undead)

Level 2 Brute

XP 125 each

Initiative -1

Senses Perception +0; darkvision

HP 40; Bloodied 20; see also zombie weakness

AC 13; Fortitude 13, Reflex 9, Will 10

Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant

Speed 4

⬇ Slam (standard; at-will)

+6 vs. AC; 2d6 + 2 damage.

⬇ Zombie Grab (standard; at-will)

+4 vs. Reflex; the target is grabbed. Checks made to escape the zombie's grab take a -5 penalty.

Zombie Weakness

Any critical hit to the zombie reduces it to 0 hit points instantly.

Alignment Unaligned

Languages -

Str 14 (+3)

Dex 6 (-1)

Wis 8 (+0)

Con 10 (+1)

Int 1 (-4)

Cha 3 (-3)

Zombie Rotter (R)

Medium natural animate (undead)

Level 3 Minion Brute

XP 38 each

Initiative -1

Senses Perception +0; darkvision

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

AC 13; Fortitude 13, Reflex 9, Will 10

Immune disease, poison

Speed 4

⬇ Slam (standard; at-will)

+6 vs. AC; 5 damage.

Alignment Unaligned

Languages -

Str 14 (+3)

Dex 6 (-1)

Wis 8 (+0)

Con 10 (+1)

Int 1 (-4)

Cha 3 (-3)

AREA M-4: BUGBEAR RECRUITS

Encounter Level 5 (1,050 XP)

SETUP

This encounter takes place in areas 16–17. The five bugbears in area 17 represent a large tribe of goblinoids that has thrown its lot in with Lareth's masters. They respect the New Master's power, and as a result they enjoy a high standing among his followers.

This encounter includes the following creatures:

Bugbear strangler (S)
4 bugbear warriors (W)

When the PCs enter the southern chamber, read:
This room smells of refuse. You see a pile of trash and dim light to the north.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Candles dimly illuminate the northern chamber, but the southern room is empty and dark. (The bugbears have a pile of torches to light when they need to leave their chamber.)

Trash Pile: The bugbears dump their garbage here, specifically gnawed bones, scraps of cloth, and a few broken weapons.

Trigger Door: Opening the door marked "T" in the southern room reveals a bare stone wall and causes the portcullis in area 16 to drop. A DC 10 Perception check allows the characters to hear the heavy clang of the portcullis falling closed.

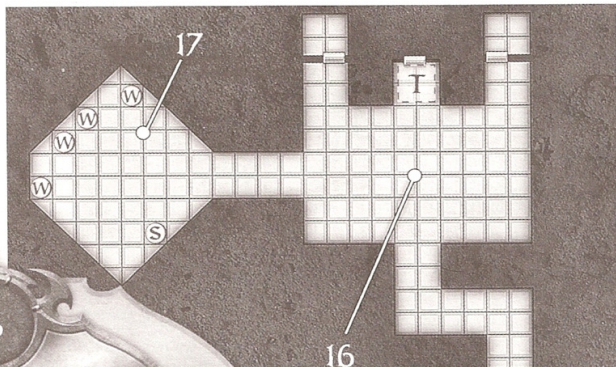
TACTICS

If the bugbears notice any bright light or hear PCs moving about in the southern room, they use Stealth to remain hidden while approaching the intruders.

Once battle begins, the bugbear warriors pair up against tough-looking PCs, one using *skullthumper* to grant combat advantage to its partner, allowing that bugbear to use *predatory eye* to increase its damage.

Meanwhile, the bugbear strangler tries to strangle a less agile-looking PC so that it can use that character as a shield.

The bugbears know that they can't count on either the ogre in area 14 or the gnolls in area 18 for assistance, so they fight to the death.



Bugbear Strangler (S)

Medium natural humanoid

Level 6 Lurker

XP 250

Initiative +11 **Senses** Perception +5; low-light vision

HP 82; **Bloodied** 41

AC 21; **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 18, **Will** 16; see also *body shield*

Speed 7

⬇ **Morningstar** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+10 vs. AC; 1d12 + 4 damage.

⬇ **Strangle** (standard; sustain standard; at-will)

Requires combat advantage; +9 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 4 damage, and the target is grabbed. A target trying to escape the grab takes a -4 penalty to the check. The bugbear strangler can sustain the power as a standard action, dealing 1d10 + 4 damage and maintaining the grab.

Body Shield (immediate interrupt, when targeted by a melee or a ranged attack against AC or Reflex; recharge ⬇ ⬇ ⬇ ⬇)

The bugbear strangler makes its grabbed victim the target instead. The bugbear strangler can't use this power to redirect attacks made by a creature it is currently grabbing.

Predatory Eye (minor; encounter)

The bugbear strangler deals 1d6 extra damage on the next attack it makes with combat advantage. It must apply this bonus before the end of its next turn.

Alignment Evil

Languages Common, Goblin

Skills Intimidate +10, Stealth +14

Str 18 (+7)

Dex 18 (+7)

Wis 14 (+5)

Con 16 (+6)

Int 10 (+3)

Cha 10 (+3)

Equipment leather armor, morningstar, rope garrote

Bugbear Warrior (W)

Medium natural humanoid

Level 5 Brute

XP 200 each

Initiative +5 **Senses** Perception +4; low-light vision

HP 76; **Bloodied** 38

AC 18; **Fortitude** 17, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 14

Speed 6

⬇ **Morningstar** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+7 vs. AC; 1d12 + 6 damage.

⬇ **Skullthumper** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Weapon**

Requires morningstar and combat advantage; +5 vs. Fortitude; 1d12 + 6 damage, and the target is knocked prone and dazed (save ends).

Predatory Eye (minor; encounter)

The bugbear warrior deals 1d6 extra damage on the next attack it makes with combat advantage. It must apply this bonus before the end of its next turn.

Alignment Evil

Languages Common, Goblin

Skills Intimidate +9, Stealth +11

Str 20 (+7)

Dex 16 (+5)

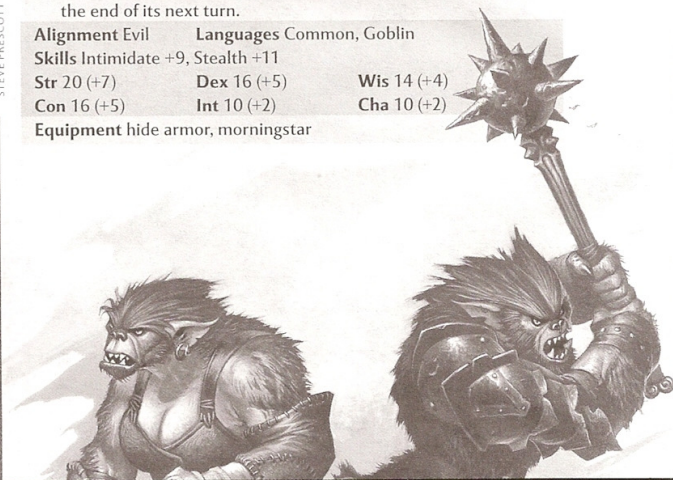
Wis 14 (+4)

Con 16 (+5)

Int 10 (+2)

Cha 10 (+2)

Equipment hide armor, morningstar



ENCOUNTER M-5: GNOLL DEN

Encounter Level 5 (1,100 XP)

SETUP

This encounter takes place in areas 16 and 18. Four gnolls are holed up in area 18. Their pack has lost several members on recent raids. They grow impatient with Lareth, and they are frustrated by the greater status he grants the bugbears in area 17.

This encounter includes the following creatures:

Gnoll demonic scourge (D)

3 gnoll claw fighters (C)

When the PCs enter the eastern chamber, read:

This dark room stinks of wet fur. Dim light can be seen to the west.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

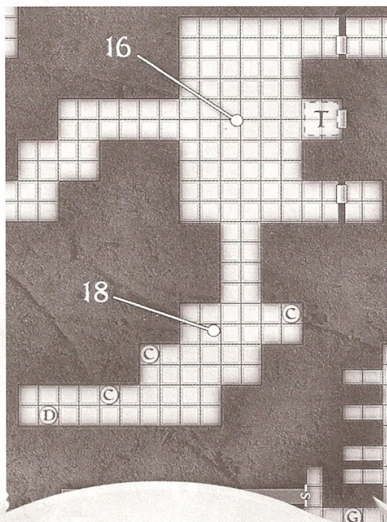
A single sputtering torch lights the western room where the gnolls live. The eastern room is dark.

Beds: The western chamber (area 18) contains rudimentary beds made from furs, torn blankets, and branches. There are many more beds than gnolls (due to their recent losses).

Trigger Door: Opening the door marked "T" in the eastern room reveals a bare stone wall and causes the portcullis in area 16 to drop. A DC 12 Perception check allows the characters to hear the heavy clang of the portcullis falling closed.

TACTICS

The gnolls gang up on a single PC to benefit from *pack attack*. If only a single claw fighter is left, he offers to share information in exchange for his life. Should the PCs accept, he tells them how to find "the New Master" and identifies the locations and numbers of guards in the dungeon before leaving through the secret exit passage (area 21). This gnoll survivor returns to his tribe, bringing tales of the vulnerability of their would-be allies in the Elemental Evil cult. (Future encounters with gnolls allied with the Temple should be reduced in difficulty to reflect their dissatisfaction with the cult.)



Gnoll Demonic Scourge (D)

Medium natural humanoid

Level 8 Brute (Leader)

XP 350

Initiative +6

Senses Perception +7; low-light vision

Leader of the Pack aura 5; allies in the aura gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls. While this creature is bloodied, the bonus increases to +2.

HP 106; **Bloodied** 53

AC 20; **Fortitude** 21, **Reflex** 18, **Will** 18

Speed 5

⬇ **Heavy Flail** (standard; at-will) ⬆ **Weapon**

+13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage, or 2d6 + 7 while bloodied; against a bloodied enemy, this attack also knocks the target prone; see also *pack attack*.

Bloodthirst

If the gnoll demonic scourge bloodies an enemy with a melee attack, an ally adjacent to the enemy can make a melee attack against that enemy as an immediate reaction.

Overwhelming Attack (free; encounter)

The gnoll demonic scourge applies its *bloodthirst* power to two allies instead of one.

Pack Attack

The gnoll demonic scourge deals 5 extra damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the demonic scourge's allies adjacent to it.

Alignment Chaotic evil

Languages Abyssal, Common

Skills Insight +10, Intimidate +13, Religion +10

Str 20 (+9)

Dex 14 (+6)

Wis 12 (+5)

Con 16 (+7)

Int 13 (+5)

Cha 15 (+6)

Equipment hide armor, heavy flail

Gnoll Claw Fighter (C)

Medium natural humanoid

Level 6 Skirmisher

XP 250 each

Initiative +7

Senses Perception +6; low-light vision

HP 70; **Bloodied** 35

AC 20; **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 16, **Will** 15

Speed 8; see also *mobile melee attack*

⬇ **Claw** (standard; at-will)

+11 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage, or 1d6 + 6 while bloodied; see also *pack attack*.

⬆ **Clawing Charge** (standard; at-will)

The gnoll claw fighter charges and makes two claw attacks against a single target instead of one melee basic attack.

⬆ **Mobile Melee Attack** (standard; at-will)

The gnoll claw fighter can move up to 4 squares and make one melee basic attack at any point during that movement. The gnoll doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when moving away from the target of its attack.

Pack Attack

The gnoll claw fighter deals 5 extra damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the gnoll claw fighter's allies adjacent to it.

Alignment Chaotic evil

Languages Abyssal, Common

Skills Intimidate +8

Str 19 (+7)

Dex 15 (+5)

Wis 12 (+4)

Con 14 (+5)

Int 9 (+2)

Cha 7 (+1)

Equipment leather armor

ENCOUNTER M-6: MYSTERIOUS POOL

Encounter Level 4 (875 XP)

SETUP

This encounter takes place in area 19. When the original builders of the moathouse dug out this dungeon, they discovered a natural source of fresh water. Since that time, a large subterranean crayfish found its way into the pool from an underground stream. Over the years, strange magical energies from an unknown source caused this creature to grow until it was too large to leave the pool.

Today it jealously guards its lair, devouring stray creatures that wander in. Lareth has left it alone so far, but every now and then, one of his troops gets too close and becomes a snack.

This encounter features the following creature:

Giant crayfish (C)

If the PCs bring light into the room, read:

Cool, damp air clings to you as you look out over a large, dark pool. Faint ripples move across the water.

Perception Check

DC 14 You see the glitter of treasure at the bottom of the pool.

DC 19 You can't be sure, but you think those ripples are caused by something large hiding in the water.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

This room is dark.

Pool: This steep-sided pool is filled with cool fresh water from an underground stream. The edges are shallow (difficult terrain), but the central portion quickly drops away to a depth of 10 feet (allowing the giant crayfish to lurk unseen). Scattered along the bottom of the pool is a treasure parcel.

TACTICS

The crayfish lurks in the pool, using its *natural camouflage* to remain hidden and its blindsight to detect approaching characters. When a PC moves within 2 squares of the pool, the crayfish crawls out and attacks. It has grown far too big to leave the way it came in, so it fights intruders to the death.

Giant Crayfish (C)

Level 4 Solo Soldier

Large aberrant beast (blind)

XP 875

Initiative +4 **Senses** Perception +3; blindsight 4

HP 224; **Bloodied** 112

AC 22; **Fortitude** 21, **Reflex** 16, **Will** 15

Saving Throws +5

Speed 2, swim 4

Action Points 2

⚔ **Claw** (standard; at-will)

+11 vs. AC; 3d8 + 4 damage.

⚔ **Double Attack** (standard; at-will)

The crayfish makes two claw attacks. If both attacks hit a single target, the target is grabbed. As long as a target is grabbed, the crayfish can't make claw attacks (but see pincer crush).

⚔ **Pincer Crush** (standard; at-will)

+9 vs. Fortitude; targets a creature the giant crayfish has grabbed; 4d10 + 4 damage.

Bloodied Rage

While the crayfish is bloodied, it takes a -2 penalty to attacks and defenses but gains a +5 bonus on damage rolls.

Natural Camouflage

If the crayfish begins its turn underwater, it becomes invisible until it moves or attacks.

Alignment Unaligned

Languages –

Skills Stealth +9

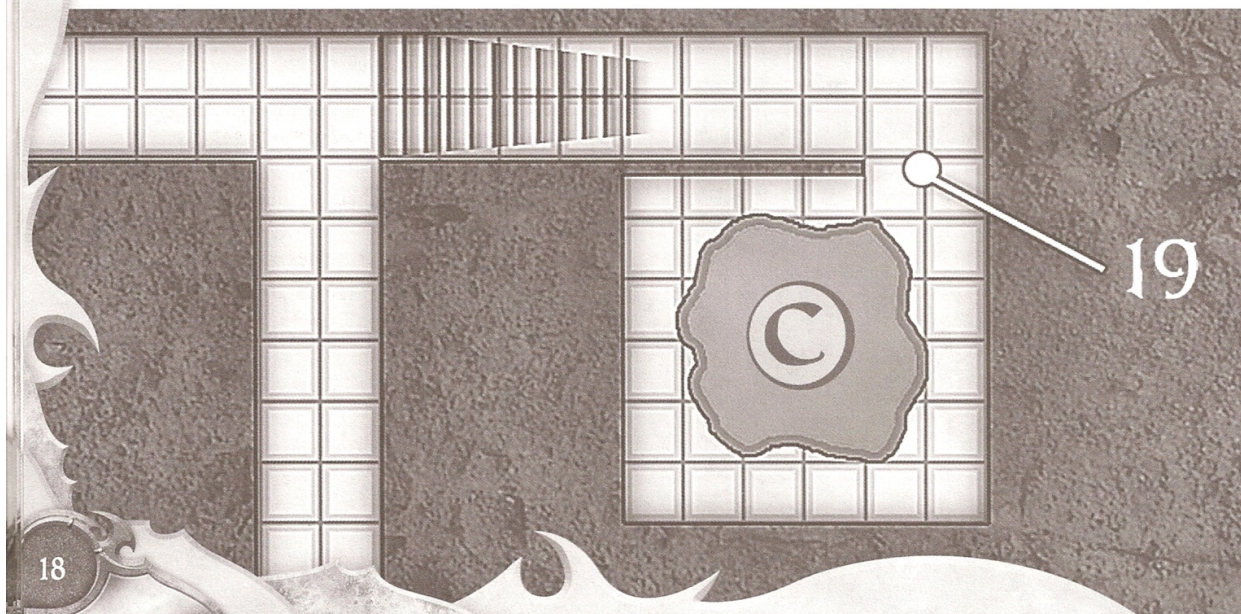
Str 20 (+7)

Dex 15 (+4)

Wis 12 (+3)

Con 16 (+5)

Int 1 (-3)**Cha** 5 (-1)



ENCOUNTER M-7: THE CRYPT KEEPERS

Encounter Level 3 (800 XP)

SETUP

This encounter takes place in area 20. Four ghouls inhabit this crypt, fed by the regular arrival of victims thanks to the New Master. Two ghouls crouch in the northern portion of the crypt, sucking the marrow from the bones of their last meal. The other two rest in the dug-out den to the south.

This encounter includes the following creatures:

4 ghouls (G)

When the adventurers enter the crypt from the main hallway, read:

A dusty crypt lies before you. Most of the burial niches are empty and appear unused, while a few hold crumbling bits of wood and bone.

If the adventures enter through the secret tunnel, instead read:

The narrow tunnel opens into a burial alcove, with fragments of coffin and bone strewn across the floor.

Perception Check

DC 17 Some of the bone fragments have been gnawed and split open.

DC 21 You hear the sound of bones cracking from around the corner.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

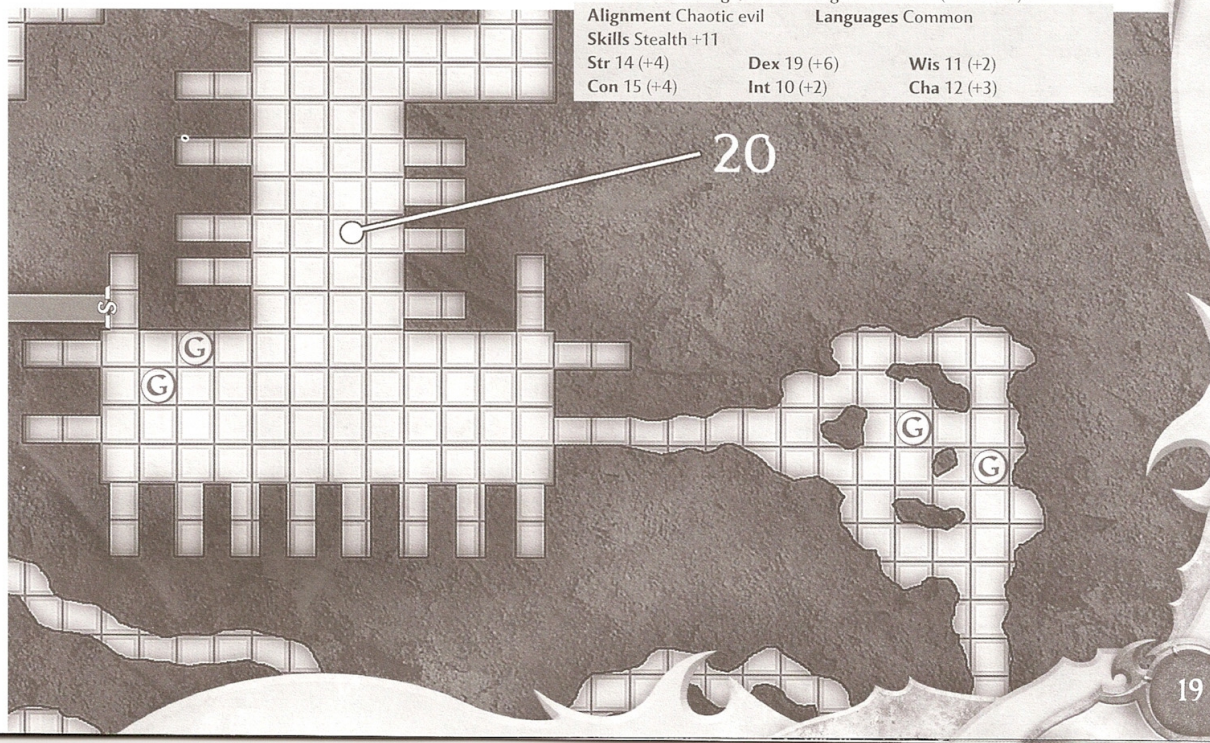
Tunnel Network: The warren of narrow tunnels leading out from the crypt quickly becomes mazelike. Characters who don't take care to mark their trail become lost after a few hundred feet, finding their way back only with a DC 24 Dungeoneering or Perception check (one check per hour; any number of PCs can assist with either skill).

TACTICS

The ghouls to the north drop their meal as soon as they notice the PCs; on the next round, the ghouls in the southern den sneak up behind the distracted characters.

If any PC becomes stunned or unconscious, the ghouls attempt to grab that character and drag him toward the den to be devoured (see the Grab rules on page 290 of the *Player's Handbook*).

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



ENCOUNTER M-8: THE NEW MASTER

Encounter Level 6 (1,260 XP)

SETUP

This encounter unfolds in areas 22–24. Lareth the Beautiful, a chaotic evil priest known to his servants as “the New Master,” resides here with his personal retinue of guardians.

Each creature here wears a black tunic and a black cloak bearing an embroidered eye of golden fire.

This encounter includes the following creatures:

Lareth the Beautiful (L)

Drex, dragonborn soldier (D)

3 human guards (G)

10 human rabble (R)

When the PCs open the door into area 22, read:

Behind the door lies a surprisingly clean and well-lit passageway. A few humans dressed in ratty black cloaks and bearing the emblem of a golden eye of fire stand guard.

When the PCs reach area 24, read:

Thick rugs cover the floor, and soft chairs and a couch seem out of place in the dungeon setting. A burning brazier filled with incense fills the chamber with a warm fragrance.

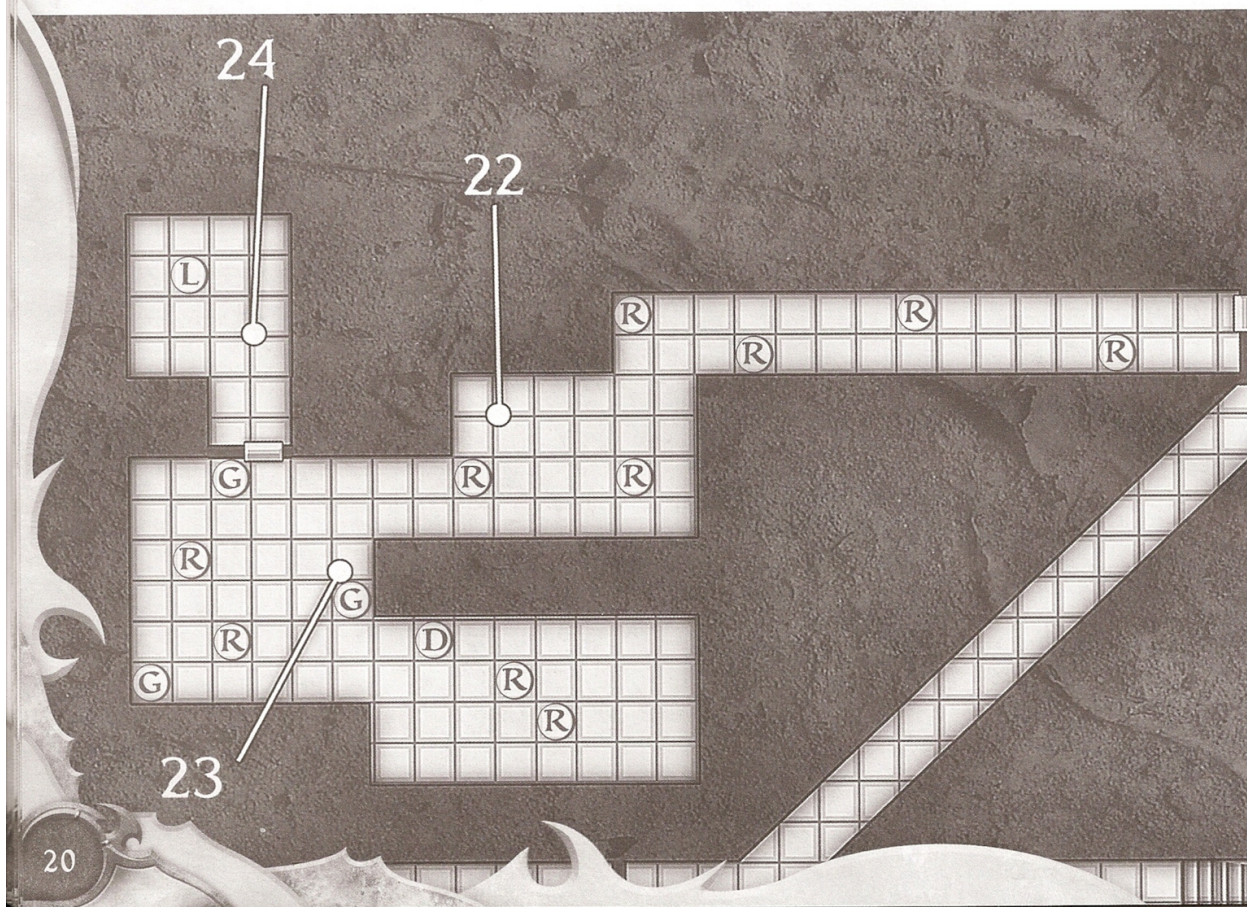
FEATURES OF THE AREA

Supplies: The southwestern room holds salted meat, barrels of watery wine, and biscuits—enough to keep the troops here fed for weeks.

Writing Desk: This table in Lareth’s chamber contains papers, ink, and several notes written to “L” from “RD” detailing recent events in Hommllet. These messages come from the evil trader Rannos Davl and might lead the PCs back to him. Hidden in a secret drawer (Perception DC 22 to find) is a half-written letter from “L” to “H” describing the current troop numbers in the moathouse and asking for orders. Let the PCs wonder as to the identity of the mysterious H; it’s up to you to decide who Lareth’s ultimate master in the cult is.

TACTICS

The human rabble engages immediately, shouting for reinforcements. The guards use the reach of their halberds to attack from the second rank (or fire their crossbows if melee combat isn’t possible). Together, these humans slowly give ground to the PCs, trying to draw them into area 23 to surround them.



The dragonborn soldier, Drex, waits for the rabble to wear down the PCs a bit before entering combat; he knows how easily they can be replaced.

Lareth stays behind his troops, using *ward of vitality* to keep them fighting and *commanding voice* and *curse of blindness* to hamper enemies. He enters melee if necessary, using his *scepter of striking* ability to daze the PCs for his allies' attacks. When bloodied, he lashes out angrily at the adventurer who dared to mar his handsome visage.

If Lareth is bloodied and his forces are on the verge of defeat, the evil priest offers to trade vital information in exchange for his safe release. It's up to the DM to determine exactly what this information is—and how truthful or useful it is—but keep in mind Lareth's cunning and thirst for survival. He's not above ratting out his newfound allies (such as giving up the location of the tribe of gnolls from which the pack in area 18 comes) to save his own skin. Of course, he also bears a wicked grudge. . . .

Lareth the Beautiful (L) Level 4 Elite Controller (Leader) Medium natural humanoid, human XP 350

Initiative +2 Senses Perception +4

Ward of Vitality aura 5; allies who begin their turn within the aura gain 3 temporary hit points as long as Lareth is not bloodied.

HP 104; Bloodied 52; see *terrible visage*

AC 20; Fortitude 17, Reflex 16, Will 20

Saving Throws +2; see also the *phylactery of action* magic item description

Speed 5

Action Points 1

⬇ **Scepter of Striking** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+9 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage, and the target is dazed until the end of Lareth's next turn.

⬅ **Commanding Voice** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Psychic**
Close burst 5; targets enemies in burst; +8 vs. Will; 1d6 + 4 psychic damage, and Lareth slides the target 2 squares.

⬅ **Curse of Blindness** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Necrotic**
Close burst 3; targets enemies in burst; +8 vs. Fortitude; 1d6 + 4 necrotic damage, and the target is blinded (save ends).

Terrible Visage

After Lareth first becomes bloodied, until the end of the encounter, he gains a +2 bonus on melee attacks and melee damage rolls against the character who bloodied him.

Alignment Chaotic evil Languages Abyssal, Common

Skills Bluff +11, Diplomacy +11, Religion +9

Str 16 (+5) Dex 11 (+2) Wis 14 (+4)

Con 12 (+3) Int 15 (+4) Cha 18 (+6)

Equipment plate armor, light shield, scepter, *phylactery of action*, black cloak, black tunic

Phylactery of Action Level 3

When tied around your arm, this black leather box lets your mind or body escape restraint.

Item Slot: Arms 680 gp

Power (Encounter): No action. Reroll a saving throw against any effect on you that applies one or more of these conditions: dazed, immobilized, petrified, restrained, or stunned. You must use the new result, even if it is lower.

Drex, Dragonborn Soldier (D) Level 5 Soldier Medium natural humanoid XP 200

Initiative +6 Senses Perception +3

HP 63; Bloodied 31; see also *dragonborn fury*

AC 20; Fortitude 18, Reflex 16, Will 15

Speed 5

⬇ **Longsword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+10 vs. AC (+11 while bloodied); 1d8 + 3 damage.

⬅ **Dragon Breath** (minor; encounter) ♦ **Acid**
Close blast 3; +6 vs. Reflex (+7 while bloodied); 1d6 + 2 acid damage.

Dragonborn Fury (only while bloodied)

Drex gains a +1 racial bonus to attack rolls.

Impetuous Spirit (immediate reaction, when an enemy leaves an adjacent square; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
Drex makes a melee basic attack against the enemy, even if the enemy is shifting.

Martial Recovery (free, when Drex misses with a melee attack;

recharges when Drex uses *impetuous spirit*) ♦ **Weapon**

Drex makes another melee basic attack against the same target.

Alignment Evil Languages Common, Draconic

Skills Endurance +9, History +4, Intimidate +8

Str 16 (+5) Dex 15 (+4) Wis 12 (+3)

Con 15 (+4) Int 11 (+2) Cha 9 (+1)

Equipment scale armor, light shield, longsword, black cloak, black tunic, key (opens the doors to area 12)

Human Guard (G) Level 3 Soldier Medium natural humanoid XP 150 each

Initiative +5 Senses Perception +6

HP 47; Bloodied 23

AC 18; Fortitude 16, Reflex 15, Will 14

Speed 5

⬇ **Halberd** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
Reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the human guard's next turn.

⬇ **Powerful Strike** (standard; recharge Ⓜ) ♦ **Weapon**
Requires halberd; reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 7 damage, and the target is knocked prone.

⤵ **Crossbow** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
Ranged 15/30; +9 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage.

Alignment Any Languages Common

Skills Streetwise +7

Str 16 (+4) Dex 14 (+3) Wis 11 (+1)

Con 15 (+3) Int 10 (+1) Cha 12 (+2)

Equipment chainmail, halberd, crossbow with 20 bolts, black cloak, black tunic

Human Rabble (R) Level 2 Minion Soldier Medium natural humanoid XP 31 each

Initiative +1 Senses Perception +1

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

AC 15; Fortitude 13, Reflex 11, Will 11; see also *mob rule*

Speed 6

⬇ **Club** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+6 vs. AC; 4 damage.

Mob Rule

The human rabble gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses while at least two other human rabble are within 5 squares of it.

Alignment Any Languages Common

Str 14 (+3) Dex 10 (+1) Wis 10 (+1)

Con 12 (+2) Int 9 (+0) Cha 11 (+1)

Equipment club, black cloak, black tunic

CONCLUSION

Defeating Lareth ends the threat of the moathouse. While the PCs might still have a few loose ends to tie up (such as the treacherous traders in Hommlet), the downfall of the evil priest concludes the action of this adventure.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Of course, suspicious characters have plenty of reasons to believe that the evil rising around Hommlet is far from over. If you want to expand this adventure into a campaign arc, consider the following options:

Cult Agents: The PCs' actions in Hommlet and the moathouse do not go unnoticed by Lareth's masters. A few weeks after the overthrow of the New Master, the PCs and their friends are targeted by spies, thieves, or assassins seeking to learn more about—or end the lives of—the adventurers responsible for Lareth's defeat. These attacks continue over the course of the next few months, until the PCs realize they must take action. The foes could take a number of forms, depending on your campaign:

- ♦ A doppelganger sneak (*Monster Manual*, page 71) poses as a sage interested in learning whatever the PCs discovered in the moathouse, particularly any clues that would lead them to meddle in the affairs of Lareth's masters.

- ♦ A squad of hobgoblin soldiers led by a hobgoblin commander (*Monster Manual*, pages 139–140) begins attacking merchants near Hommlet, hoping to draw the PCs into an ambush.

- ♦ A gang of zombies and zombie rotters (see page 14 for statistics) wanders into the village, attacking everyone they see. While the PCs fight off the attack, a pair of tiefling darkblades (*Monster Manual*, page 250) rifle through their quarters.

- ♦ A cadre of snaketongue cultists (*Monster Manual*, page 272) sneaks into Hommlet at night to attack the PCs.

Nulb: This ramshackle gathering of outlaws, bandits, river pirates, and thieves lies about 30 miles down the eastern road from Hommlet. Despite its dilapidated state, the turf and mud-brick village holds roughly 100 dastardly souls loyal to the highest bidder. Any investigation of the return of the Temple of Elemental Evil must begin here, among the cutpurses and cutthroats of Nulb.

Temple of Elemental Evil: The magnificent ruins of the temple stand a few miles south of Nulb, choked by weeds and brambles. Bandits loyal to the cult occupy these ruins, guarding against casual intruders while maintaining the facade of disuse.

Beneath the surface, however, a vast dungeon complex teems with cultists and horrible monsters. Four rival temples, each dedicated to one of the principle elements of Earth, Air, Fire, and Water, vie for control of the overall temple. Meanwhile, the high lords of the cult plot to unleash a powerful demon imprisoned in the dungeon's depths.

Overthrowing the entire temple should be a massive undertaking, requiring many sessions and several levels of play.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

First, I have to confess, I never owned the original *Village of Hommlet*.

By the time I got into D&D in 1981, there were (at least it seemed) plenty of other adventures to choose from. Since my youthful DM exuberance ran to dungeons, not villages, I never bothered to pick it up (though the Jeff Dee ghouls on the cover always intrigued me).

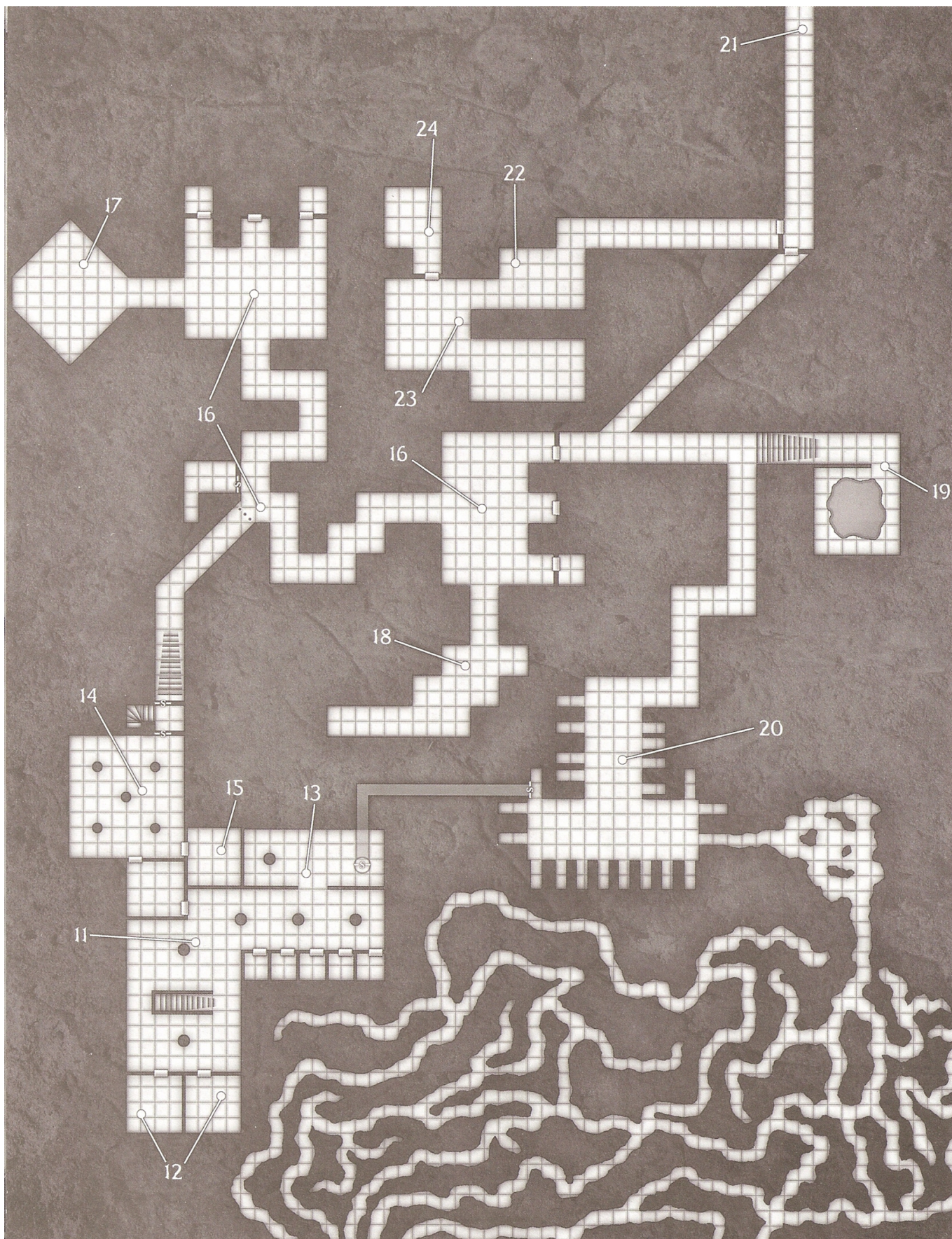
But when *The Temple of Elemental Evil* came out in 1985, I grabbed it immediately as the foundation of my next D&D campaign. I carried it to Chinook Middle School every day for weeks to study its pages between assignments. I wrote up elaborate versions of the Nodes (which I still have in a plastic binder that proudly proclaims "By Andy Collins with Gary Gygax and Frank Mentzer"). And yes, I named every single person in the village, just like Gary suggested in the Introduction.

My game group still talks about that campaign. We remember when Ratheof the halfling thief got his hands chopped off by a trap while he was exploring the dungeon by himself (my brother Greg wanted to find "Christmas presents" for the other characters). We remember Breygon the cavalier wading through enemies with Scather, the sword of answering. But most of all, we remember countless hours of action, dice-rolling, roleplaying, and laughter.

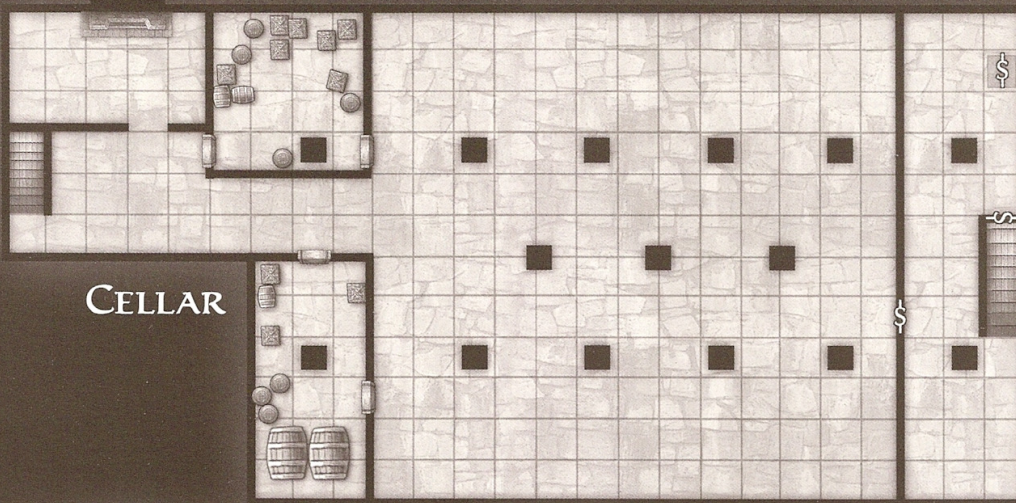
So whether you're returning to the village after a long absence or visiting for the first time, welcome to Hommlet ... and beware the giant frogs!

—Andy Collins

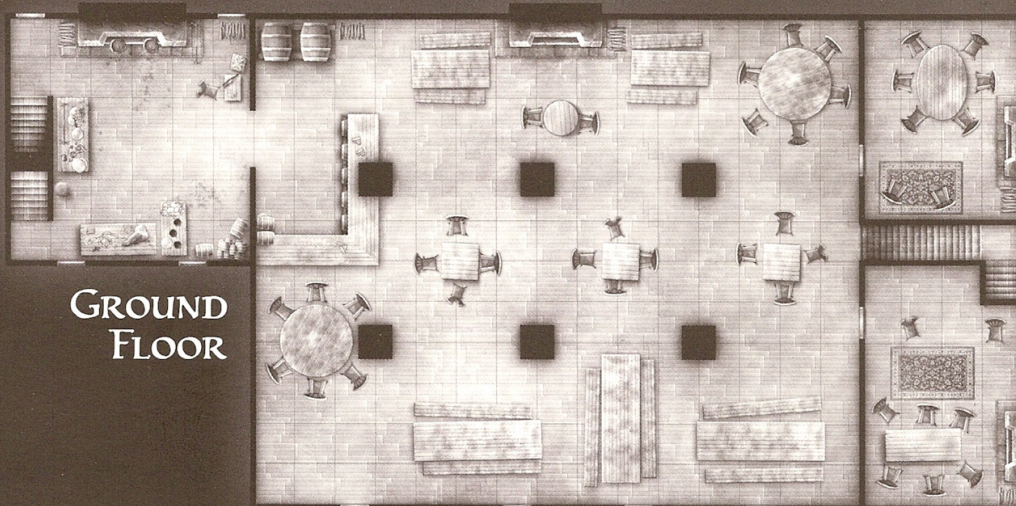




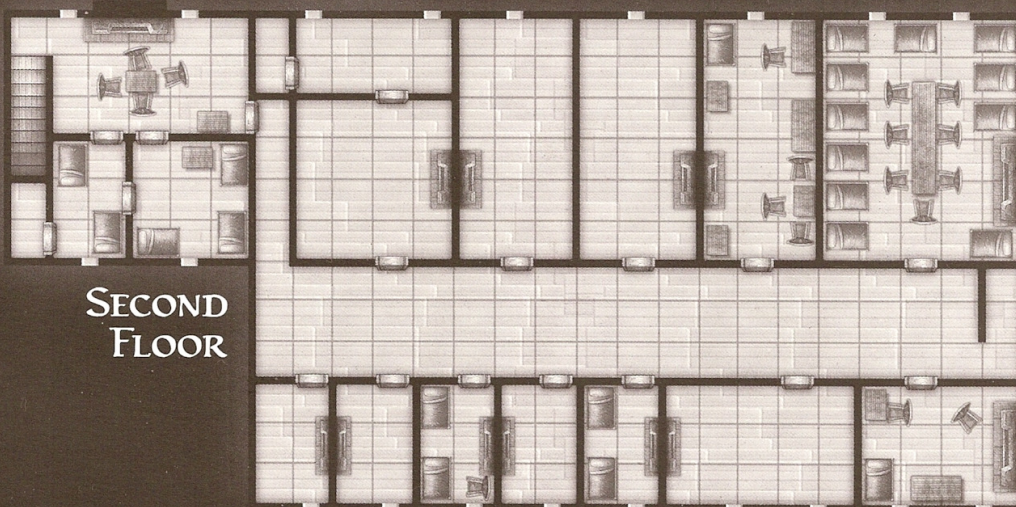
INN OF THE WELCOME WENCH




CELLAR



GROUND
FLOOR



SECOND
FLOOR



EVIL

HAS A

NEW FACE

Hommlet has grown up around a crossroads. Once far from any important activity, the village became embroiled in the struggle between gods and primordials when the Temple of Elemental Evil arose but a few leagues away. Luckily for the village's inhabitants, the Temple and its evil hordes were destroyed a decade ago, but Hommlet still suffers from incursions of bandits and strange monsters. . .

The Village of Hommlet is designed for five characters of 4th level and is inspired by Gary Gygax's classic adventure of the same name. This DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® adventure includes a full-color battle map, ready-to-play encounters, and information on the Village of Hommlet—an excellent base of operations for heroic-tier characters.

For use with these 4th Edition DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® core products:

Player's Handbook® *Monster Manual®*
Dungeon Master's Guide® *D&D™ Dungeon Tiles*
D&D® Miniatures



All trademarks are property of Wizards of the Coast LLC.
©2009 Wizards. Cover Illustration by Rob Alexander.