Game Quotes  
  
Durnaan’s Speech  
\*\*“The Mad Mage, eh? You want the story? Well, I’ve heard it all, many times, from more adventurers than I care to count. Halaster Blackcloak, the fool who thought he could control a maze of madness. They call it Undermountain now, but back when he first carved it out of the bedrock, it was meant to be a place of study. Magic, treasure, power—he wanted it all. But that was before his obsession got the better of him.

I’ve been running this tavern for decades, and I can tell you this much—Undermountain doesn’t care about your plans. It’s a monster, alive in its own way. Halaster? He was just a man, after all, no different than any of the adventurers who come crawling in here thinking they can conquer the place. You ask me? He *did* conquer it, once. He made himself king down there, built it into something that shouldn’t exist. But eventually, something broke. Maybe it was the magic, maybe it was the madness, maybe it was both. The man vanished, or *was* lost, or whatever you want to call it. Left Undermountain to its own devices.

I should know—I’ve had more than a few try to get to the bottom of that place, including myself. I’ve seen adventurers who are full of hope and swagger when they walk into the Yawning Portal. They hear the rumors about the riches in Undermountain and think they’ll be the ones to outsmart it, outlast it, whatever. But Undermountain chews them up, one way or another. A few return, but mostly… well, they don’t.

As for Halaster, there are some who say he’s still down there. Some say he’s alive, some say he’s a ghost, others say he’s something worse—some sort of mad god holding the dungeon together. Maybe he is, maybe he isn’t, but I’ll tell you this: I’ve been around long enough to know that the dungeon has its own rhythm. There’s something *else* down there, something darker than even Halaster’s madness.

I keep the well in the center of the tavern open because it’s the only way in and out. It’s how people get to Undermountain, whether they’re foolish enough to try their luck or not. As for me? I’ve seen enough to know that some things are better left alone, and some mysteries should stay buried. But those fools—*they* never listen.

So if you’re planning to head down there, don’t say I didn’t warn you. You’ll see the treasure, sure, but you might lose your soul long before you find it.”\*\*