

*FAST-PLAY Game*

11331

# Dungeons & Dragons®

WORLDS OF ADVENTURE

## Wrath of the Mamotaur

An Underground

Adventure for

Starting DMs

Jeff Grubb



## What is All of This?

The booklet you're holding is divided into two sections. The first is the initial *Fast-Play Rules*, which is where you should start if you've never played the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game before. If you've already read through a copy of the *Fast-Play Rules* and played "The Ruined Tower" adventure, then skip right ahead to "Expanding the Game" on page 21 and start reading. If you've also already read and played the *Eye of the Wyvern* material, then start on page 27 at "Getting Started (Again)." Keep in mind that if the players bring their heroes to this adventure from *Eye of the Wyvern*, they may want to bring any extra treasure and magical items. Let them. This is one of the cool things about the game and adds to the sense of continuity. Most of all, have fun!

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**The warrior** shouldered the door open, and it creaked on hinges unused for centuries. The air smelled of damp earth and ancient, unspoken secrets. Ahead of them, a stone-lined hall disappeared into the darkness beyond.

"Let's go," said the wizard, consulting his map.

"Hold on," said the rogue. "Listen!"

From the hallway ahead came the soft scraping of bone against bone, and out of the darkness stepped a skeleton, the torchlight reflecting off its polished bones. Another skeleton joined it, and then a third. Their lower jaws opened in a voiceless battle cry, and the undead warriors raised their rusted swords and charged the adventurers. . . .

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Welcome to the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Fast-Play Game. This booklet is an introduction to the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game—the world's most popular roleplaying game. If you're an experienced player who knows all this stuff, share it with someone who hasn't played before. If you're interested in how to play the D&D game, read on.

## What Is a Roleplaying Game?

In a roleplaying game, each individual involved pretends to be an imaginary character, much the same as an actor plays a part in a film or a play. The big difference is that in a film, the actors are following a script—but in a roleplaying game, you and the other players are writing your own lines as you play out an adventure, and the ending of the story is not determined until you get there.

One of the individuals in a D&D game is the Dungeon Master (DM for short), the person who knows what the adventure is all about and tells the players what's happening as the story moves along. It's always necessary for someone to be the DM, but this doesn't have to be the same person every time you play. The other individuals are players, each one playing the role of his or her own player character (PC for short). The adventure included with these rules, titled "The Ruined Tower," is for one DM and up to four players.

In the D&D game, player characters are heroic fighters, mighty wizards, and cunning rogues. They journey into lost ruins (the "Dungeons" of the game's title) and battle fierce monsters (sometimes, though not always, "Dragons"). To play "The Ruined Tower," each player picks one of the characters from the sheets on pages 5–6. If you want to play more adventures, you can use this character over and over—you don't have to use a new character every time you play a new game.

The DM should read over all of these rules and the adventure before starting play. The players should read pages 2–4 and look over the character sheets on pages 5–6—but don't read any farther, or the surprises of the adventure will be ruined!

## What Are Characters Made Of?

Take a minute to look at the character sheets on pages 5–6. Make photocopies of those pages if you want, cut each of the pages in half, and make sure that every player in your group has the sheet for the character he or she wants to play. Here's what all the information on the character sheets means.

**Name:** The character's name, already written in.

**Player:** That's you, the player "running" this character. Put your own name here.

**Class:** D&D characters fall into general classes. Each class has advantages over the others. The character classes in this adventure include fighters (who are good at fighting with swords and other weapons), wizards (who can't fight with swords but can cast spells), and rogues (who are okay with swords and can also do sneaky stuff like picking locks).

**Race:** In the D&D game, characters can belong to different races. In this adventure, most of the characters are human. Niles is a halfling, which is a diminutive race of beings who are known for their bravery and cunning.

**Level:** Characters can be carried over from one adventure to the next (like a "saved game"). As they have more adventures, they become more powerful. Level is a measure of how powerful the characters are. In this adventure, all the characters are level 2, which means they are still fairly inexperienced and can grow more powerful.

**Ability Scores:** These numbers are the heart of a character's description. They tell what the strong points and weak points of the character are. (Just like real people, most characters are better at some things than others.)

**Strength** is how strong your character is.

**Dexterity** is how quick your character is.

**Constitution** is how healthy your character is.

**Intelligence** is how smart your character is.

**Wisdom** is how much common sense your character has.

**Charisma** is how appealing your character is.

Ability scores range from 3 to 18, with 3 being the lowest (and weakest), and 18 being the best.

Fighters usually have high Strength, rogues have high Dexterity, and wizards have high Intelligence. Your character's ability scores have an effect on how well he or she does at certain things. We've done all the calculations you need to play the adventure, so don't sweat it.

**Armor:** This line tells you what type of armor your character is wearing.

**Armor Class:** This number tells you the benefit

## Funky Dice

Weapons (and a lot of other things in the game) come with a set of numbers, like 1d8, 2d6, and 1d4+1. What do the numbers mean?

They describe different types of dice used in the D&D game. The number after the "d" tells you how many sides the die has. A "d6" is the normal kind of die you're probably used to seeing—a cube with each side representing a number from 1 to 6. Other dice come in different shapes and have different numbers of sides: 4, 8, 10, 12, and 20.

A number in front of the "d" tells how many dice should be rolled, so 1d8 means roll one 8-sided die, and 2d4 means roll two 4-sided dice. A plus sign followed by a number means that the number should be added to the roll: "1d8+1" means roll an 8-sided die and add 1 to the result.

Sometimes, you might see a number like 1d3, which doesn't have an actual die for it. Obviously, there is no three-sided die, but you can generate the right number range by rolling a six-sided die and dividing by 2, then rounding up. Thus, a 1 or 2 equals 1, a 3 or 4 equals 2, and a 5 or 6 equals 3.

A lot of games use these dice. If you don't have them, you can get them at a game store or maybe a bookstore, or perhaps you can borrow some from someone. If you can't get them right away, here's how to use 6-sided dice to take the place of all the other sizes. This isn't a perfect solution, however, so you'll want to get your own set pretty soon if you plan to keep playing.

**d4** – Roll a 6-sided die; roll over if the result is a 5 or 6.

**d6** – Roll a 6-sided die normally.

**d8** – Roll one die and add 2 to the result.

**d10** – Roll two dice and add them together. If an 11 or 12 comes up, ignore that result and reroll.

**d12** – Don't worry about a d12 right now; you won't need one in this adventure.

**d20** – Roll three dice (or one die three times) and add them together. Then, add 2 to the result.

of the armor your character is wearing. A low number for Armor Class is a good thing—a 3 is better than a 4.

**Move:** This number describes how fast your character moves. All the characters in this adventure move at the same rate, except for Niles the halfling. He's slower than the rest. That's important if the party runs away from danger, since Niles will lag behind.

**Hit Points:** Hit points are a measure of how much damage your character can withstand. Weapons, monsters, and falling into deep holes can all do damage to your character.

**Wounds:** This line is used to keep track of the wounds your character has taken. If this number gets to be more than your character's hit points, he or she is defeated and out of the game. Use a pencil to tally your character's wounds, in case some of them get healed. (Elanna has a healing potion that, if drunk, will restore lost hit points.)

**Gold:** Money in the D&D game is expressed in gold pieces. Everybody starts out with no money, but characters can pick up gold as a treasure or a reward during an adventure. The amount of gold your character collects goes on this line.

**XP:** Short for eXperience Points, XP is a measure of how successful you are as a fighter, wizard, or rogue. Everyone has a certain amount of XP (the number varies) so that they are 2nd level.

**Next Level:** This is the amount of XP your character needs to go to the next level. You get XP by defeating monsters and completing quests.

**Weapons:** This section tells the types of weapons each character has and how much damage each weapon causes. To find out what things like "1d8" and "1d10" mean, see the box in the next column that talks about "Funky Dice."

**Spells:** Because Thaddeus is a wizard, he has spells he can cast. His spells are listed here. He can cast one *magic missile* and one *sleep* spell during the adventure.

**Abilities:** Most of the characters have different abilities, depending on their class, race, and ability scores. These are covered here.

**Equipment:** This is a listing of other important stuff your character may have. Ordinary items like cloaks or boots aren't mentioned, but things that may be useful, like rope and torches, are.

## How the Game Works

In the D&D game, the Dungeon Master and the players team up to tell a story. The DM has a script, also called an adventure, that tells what the characters will face in the dungeon. The players have character sheets, which tell them what their characters can do and what items they can use.

The DM sets the stage, usually by reading a prepared bit of text, telling the players what their characters see. This might be a brief description of the area where the characters are, or an old legend being told by the fire, or a passage from a book. The players then can ask questions and tell the DM what they want their characters to do. The DM tells the players what their characters see and hear. Here's an example of how that works:

**DM:** You see a corked bottle sitting on a shelf.

**Player:** I pick up the bottle and look to see what's in it.

**DM:** The bottle is corked, and you can't see through the glass.

**Player:** I pull the cork out of the bottle.

**DM:** A black mass of smoke swirls out of the bottle, and from the heart of the smoke a voice thunders, "At last I am free! Now I can conquer the world!"

**Player:** Uh, is it too late to put the cork back into the bottle?

You get the idea. Sometimes there is some doubt about if a particular action is successful, if you hit an opponent, or how much damage you cause. For that you need the funky dice (see the previous page). Sometimes the players will roll the dice and sometimes the DM will roll the dice, depending on the situation.

## Combat

The players are running characters who are going into a dungeon in order to defeat the monsters and take their treasure. The monsters aren't happy about this, and as a result . . . we have combat.

The players roll the dice when their characters are doing things. The DM rolls the dice for the things he controls, like the monsters, or when he wants to keep the results secret from the players. If there's any question about who rolls, the DM decides (making decisions is part of the job). In combat, players always roll for their characters.

When combat starts, each player needs to say what weapon his character is using. Darkblade, for example, may use his long bow or his long sword. Both have advantages and disadvantages.

Each of the players needs to make an "attack roll," trying to get a particular number or higher on 1d20 (a 20-sided die). In general, fighters are best at combat and wizards worst, and characters with high Strength do better than weaker ones. Each player gets to roll to see if his or her character scores a hit. In the adventure, we summarize all this and tell you what number each of the characters needs in order to hit. If you miss, there is no penalty, except that the monster is still there and takes a swing at your character in return.

## What Is All This Stuff?

The D&D game is set in a fantasy world, a lot like our world back in the Middle Ages. D&D characters use swords instead of guns, ride horses instead of cars, and fight monsters instead of rush-hour traffic. In the game, we throw around a lot of words describing stuff from that age. In case you're not sure what we mean . . .

Swords are good weapons, but not all swords are equal. Niles has a **short sword**, which is best for him because he's not very big. Darkblade has a **long sword**, which is longer and has a better reach. Elanna uses a **two-handed sword**, which causes the most damage of the three.

**Daggers** are sharp knives, handy for cutting things and stabbing monsters. Daggers can also be thrown to do damage.

A **quarterstaff** is a pole about seven feet long, useful for bashing opponents and testing the ground ahead.

Armor comes in several different styles. **Chain mail** is made of loose links of metal. **Scale mail** is made of overlapping metal sheets. **Leather armor** is more flexible and quieter (and therefore better for rogues to sneak around in), but it doesn't protect as well as chain mail or scale mail. Wizards don't wear armor—it messes up their ability to cast spells.

**Thieves' tools** are handy to have because sometimes it's easier (and smarter) to open a door by picking a lock instead of bashing it down. A set of tools includes bits of wire, clippers, metal picks, and other small items that a rogue uses to do all sorts of crafty things.

On a hit, your character's weapon causes a certain amount of damage. The long sword, for example, causes 1d8 points of damage to an opponent. The DM keeps track of damage to the monsters—when a monster's wounds are greater than its total hit points, the monster is defeated.

After the characters each get a chance to hit, the DM makes attack rolls for the monsters. Again, we've done the calculations already in the adventure, and we just give you the number required.

If a character is hit, the monster does an amount of damage determined by another die roll. The player marks this damage as wounds on his or her character sheet.

## What's Next?

You've got the character sheets, you've got the basic info about how the game is played and how combat works, and now it's time to get into the real action. The person who's going to be the DM should read the rest of this booklet. The rest of you will be players, so don't read any farther. When the DM is ready, you can begin the adventure.

# Dungeons & Dragons

## Character Sheet

Name: **Darkblade** Player: \_\_\_\_\_  
Class: Fighter Race: Human  
Level: 2

### Ability Scores

Strength	17
Dexterity	15
Constitution	14
Intelligence	11
Wisdom	13
Charisma	15



Armor: Chain mail

Armor Class: 4

Move: 12

Hit Points: 12

Wounds: \_\_\_\_\_

Gold: \_\_\_\_\_

XP: 2000 Next Level: 4000

### Weapons:

Long bow  
Damage 1d8

Long sword  
Damage 1d8

### Spells:

Darkblade has no magical spells.

### Abilities:

When attacking with his bow, Darkblade makes two attacks each round. He cannot use his bow if he is in close combat.

When attacking with his sword, Darkblade does an additional point of damage. (Roll damage, then add 1 point.)

### Equipment:

Torch  
50-foot coil of rope  
Backpack

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# Dungeons & Dragons

## Character Sheet

Name: **Elanna** Player: \_\_\_\_\_  
Class: Fighter Race: Human  
Level: 2

### Ability Scores

Strength	15
Dexterity	17
Constitution	15
Intelligence	13
Wisdom	11
Charisma	16



Armor: Scale mail

Armor Class: 3

Move: 12

Hit Points: 14

Wounds: \_\_\_\_\_

Gold: \_\_\_\_\_

XP: 2000 Next Level: 4000

### Weapons:

Two-handed sword  
Damage 1d10

Dagger  
Damage 1d4

### Spells:

Elanna has no magical spells.

### Abilities:

Elanna has three daggers. She may fight with one of them, or throw up to two per round. She cannot throw her daggers if she is in close combat.

### Equipment:

Torch

*Potion of Healing:* This is a small bottle of liquid that, if drunk, heals 2d6 hit points of damage (or 1d6 points if half is drunk). It will not raise the drinker's hit points above their original level. The potion smells of peppermint.

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# Dungeons & Dragons

## Character Sheet

Name: **Niles**  
Class: Rogue  
Level: 2

Player: \_\_\_\_\_  
Race: Halfling

Ability Scores	
Strength	11
Dexterity	18
Constitution	13
Intelligence	12
Wisdom	10
Charisma	12



Armor: Leather armor  
Armor Class: 6  
Move: 6  
Hit Points: 7  
Wounds: \_\_\_\_\_  
Gold: \_\_\_\_\_  
XP: 1250      Next Level: 2500

### Weapons:

Short Sword	Damage 1d6
Dagger	Damage 1d4

### Spells:

Niles has no magical spells.

### Abilities:

Niles has two daggers. He may fight with one of them, or throw up to two per round. He cannot throw his daggers if he is in close combat.

If Niles attacks a humanoid creature from behind, he hits more easily and doubles his damage roll.

### Equipment:

Lantern

Thieves' tools: Niles may open a locked door using his tools, and will succeed on a roll of 4 or less on 1d10.

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# Dungeons & Dragons

## Character Sheet

Name: **Thaddeus**  
Class: Wizard  
Level: 2

Player: \_\_\_\_\_  
Race: Human

Ability Scores	
Strength	9
Dexterity	12
Constitution	15
Intelligence	18
Wisdom	16
Charisma	13



Armor: None (robes)  
Armor Class: 10  
Move: 12  
Hit Points: 6  
Wounds: \_\_\_\_\_  
Gold: \_\_\_\_\_  
XP: 2500      Next Level: 5000

### Weapons:

Quarterstaff	Damage 1d6
Dagger	Damage 1d4

### Spells:

Thaddeus may cast each of these spells once per day:

*Magic missile:* This spell automatically hits a creature and inflicts 1d4 + 1 points of damage.

*Sleep:* This spell causes living things to fall into an enchanted sleep. Sleeping creatures are helpless, but can be awakened normally.

### Equipment:

Lantern

Magical Scroll: Thaddeus has a scroll with a *knock* spell on it. When he reads the scroll aloud, the spell causes a stuck or locked door to automatically open. The scroll can be read aloud only once; then it disappears.

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# The Dungeon Master's Section

*This part of the booklet is for the DM, and contains information that the DM should know, but the players should not (like what monsters are lurking behind which doors). If you just want to be a DM, keep on reading. Otherwise, pass these rules back to your DM.*

## What the DM Does

The Dungeon Master is part director, part storyteller, part central processing unit for the game. The DM is responsible for telling the players what their characters see, telling them what the results of their characters' actions are, and keeping the game moving. The DM runs all the characters and monsters that are not controlled by the players. (That's not as hard as it might seem, because only a few of these characters and monsters are active in the story at any single time.)

This part of the D&D Fast-Play Game is an introduction to being a DM. We walk through a very simple "dungeon" adventure, which you can run for your friends. We cover the basics of combat and movement. There are a lot of numbers and tables in the AD&D game, but we've simplified everything for the adventure you're about to run—we did the calculations so you don't have to.

How do you tell who wins? Well, a roleplaying game is different from a lot of other games because there is no clear "winner." Instead, the characters all grow and improve together, and the players enjoy seeing their characters succeed in one adventure after another. The DM gets his reward by helping that growth, challenging the players as everyone gets together to tell a group story. If you and the players have fun with the game, you're all winners.

## What to Tell the Players

Some sections of the text of the adventure are inside boxes. These sections are usually supposed to be read aloud to the players, and are preceded by some line like "If the characters do such-and-such, read the following aloud." This is information that you, the DM, are giving the players—what their characters see and hear.

In addition, the players will have additional questions about what their characters see and experience. You might say, "You see a door," and the players will respond, "What does the door look like?" You check the text of the adventure to see if there's anything special about the door. If there is, you say something like "It's a large oak doors with iron bands." If there isn't, you make something up. This is what the DM is allowed to do. The players won't know if it was in the text or not (well, if you

don't get carried away, that is). The DM is in charge of filling in the blanks. We can't cover everything that might happen in the text of the adventure (though we're shooting for the major ones), so the DM is encouraged to provide his own input into the game.

The DM plays the roles of particular characters from time to time. In this adventure there's an old man, the Patriarch, who sends the player characters off to the Ruined Tower, and a monstrous ghoul that shows up later. At times like this, you are asked to act "in character," as if you were the Patriarch or the ghoul. When you're "in character," you might not know certain facts. (For instance, the Patriarch doesn't know what's inside the Ruined Tower, although you, the DM, do.) Playing the parts of these characters is your chance to do a little role-playing of your own.

## Time and Combat

Time in the game is broken down into rounds—like the rounds of a boxing match, only a lot shorter. In a single round, your character can generally do one particular thing: pull a sword from a scabbard, move around a bit, take a swing at a monster, open a door, and so forth. During most of the adventure you don't have to keep close track of time. But there are certain situations, like combat, when time becomes important.

When the characters are fighting monsters, you need to know what everybody is doing at any certain time. Here's how you keep things straight:

- Decide what the monsters you control are going to do: Who are they attacking? How are they attacking? Are they running away?
- Ask each player what his or her character is doing. Usually allow a character to do only one thing at a time. (Some characters can do some things more than once a round—shoot arrows and throw daggers, for example.)
- After all the players have said what their characters are doing, let them execute their actions. (In this adventure, the players always get to try to hit their opponents first.)
- Then execute your monsters' actions.

That's about it. The rest of what you need to know to run the adventure is in the adventure itself. Go for it.

## The Physics of a Gaming Session

You're ready to play. You've read over the scenario, you're comfortable with the adventure, and you even have a set of the funky dice.

So how do you really start?

Get your friends together, as few as one and as many as four. If you have only one or two players, you might want them to double up, each playing two characters instead of just one. Give them a choice of which character to play. One player may feel more comfortable with a fighter, another with a wizard. If more than one wants a particular character, either let them hash it out among themselves or else make multiple photocopies and let them change the names. (Just remember that in the adventure, "Bob the Fighter" uses the same combat numbers as "Darkblade.")

Get comfortable someplace with enough flat space to roll dice. Usually this means a kitchen or dining room table, but if you're just as comfortable on the floor, sitting on bean-bag chairs, go for it.

The players' dice should be rolled where everyone can see them. The DM's dice may often need to be rolled in secret, where the players cannot see them. This is because the DM may have to roll the dice, then give the players information based on that die roll, and the players might get an unfair hint on how their character succeeded (or failed) if they can see the roll. In those cases, the DM should use a book or piece of paper to shield the result from others. This isn't cheating—the DM is supposed to be fair with his rolls, regardless. It's generally a good idea to make combat rolls out in the open and let the players keep track of their characters' hit points.

The DM should sit where the other players cannot look over her shoulder (so they can't read what's coming up in the adventure). Usually this is at the head of the table, with the players on both sides. Leave enough space to roll dice in front of you.

Once you get started reading the adventure, you'll ask the players what their characters are doing. At first, you should go around the table, asking each in turn. For a lot of decisions the choice is fairly clear, and after a while the DM doesn't have to ask everyone, but at first it's a good idea to keep everyone involved. In combat, you always ask each person what his character is doing, even if he is not immediately involved in the fighting.

Try to keep everyone from talking at once. When you're reading a section aloud or answer-

ing questions, the players should listen to you. Similarly, you as the DM should listen to their comments and actions fully. Get everyone's input before going on with the next round or action.

It may be to your advantage to know in the course of an adventure where all the characters are, exactly. If the characters in the front row step on a hidden trap door, or a monster attacks the last character in line, it's very important to know who is where ahead of time, so there are no arguments. Set up a "marching order" to determine who is in front and who is in the rear. You can do this on a sheet of paper, or you can arrange dice, counters, or miniature figures to show who is where. This is very useful when large combats with multiple opponents break out.

A group of players may have a natural party leader, or caller, who states what the characters are doing as a group. (For example: "We're all going down the hallway.") That's fine, but don't let the caller dominate the others or state their actions for them. (For example: "Bob's character will valiantly lay down his life while the rest of us escape with the treasure!") If this happens, turn to the other players and get confirmation. (For example: "So, Bob, do you *really* want to lay down your life here?")

Sometimes a character may discover something that the other characters might not know—an example might be the character who opens a treasure chest that might have an explosive trap on it while the other characters stay safely out of explosion range. If that is the case, ask that player to step aside, to a corner or another room, and quietly tell him what his character sees. That player in turn might have his own actions, which might require a die roll or two. Don't take too long, but give him the gist of what he sees or can do.

Last, players may disagree about the wisest course of action for their group. That's normal, and it's not your primary task to steer them to one decision or another. Let them find their own way of figuring out who's in front, who gets first dibs on the treasure, who has the best idea of how to fight the bad guys, and who's going to sacrifice herself valiantly while the rest escape. Just remember that a player controls her character's actions, and that she has the final decision on those actions.

That's about it for the basics. Get your friends and jump in!

## Getting Started

Let's say you're going to be the DM for this evening. It's always a good idea to read through the adventure before you run it, just so you know what's coming. You bring to the table this adventure, either some 6-sided dice or a set of the funky dice (if you have some), some scratch paper, pencils, and some graph paper (if you want—it's not a necessity). If you can, photocopy the character sheets so the players can use them without writing on the originals. It should take about an hour to play this adventure, more if you take your time, less if you speed right along.

You should have between one and four players for this adventure, three or four being the ideal. If you have only one player, let him run two characters—the monsters in this adventure aren't too tough, but they could be too much for just one character to handle. It's good if the players have a chance to read pages 2–4 of this booklet ahead of time, but that's not a necessity. You can fill them in on things as they go along. It will just be easier for them if they already have a handle on the basics.

Once you get settled, here is what you, the DM, say:

What we're going to do here is tell a story, a story that you're going to help create. Each of you has a character: a fighter, a wizard, or a rogue. The story takes place in a world filled with monsters, treasure, and adventure.

I'm going to be the Dungeon Master, or DM. I'll describe what your characters see, and you're going to tell me what your characters do in response. Do well, and your characters will be rewarded with treasure and increased power. Look at your character sheets and we can run down what the various numbers and items mean.

Give the players a chance to review their character sheets and ask any questions. You should know most of the answers about what the numbers mean from reading the first section of these rules. Ask each of the players to introduce their characters to the rest of the group. For example:

"I've got Niles, a halfling rogue," says one.

"I'm running Darkblade, and he's a fighter, and he's got a bow," says another.

"I'm playing Elanna. She's real strong and has a sword that does lots of damage," says a third.

This would be a good time to explain about the funky dice to the players if they don't already know. Don't worry about when you need to roll them—we'll tell you as the adventure progresses.

## Beginning the Adventure

Once the players are comfortable with their characters, read the following aloud.

All of you are natives of the Vale, a small farming community made up of a number of small towns scattered along a broad, wooded valley. The Patriarch is the spiritual leader of the Vale, and he has asked you to come to his shrine when the noon bell sounds.

The noon bell is just striking as a servant ushers you into the Patriarch's study. The old gray-bearded man is bent with age and wisdom. He motions for you to have a seat.

Now you, the DM, are going to speak in the role of the Patriarch. You can give him an "old man" voice if you want, or just talk normally. There's a little bit of acting involved here, but you don't have to do anything you feel uncomfortable with.

"I am pleased to see that you have come," says the Patriarch. "The Vale has need for your talents, and your bravery.

"A week ago, some hunters found the ruins of an old tower in the forest. They did not like the looks of it, and quickly moved elsewhere. Now there are stories that something nasty has been raiding farms, and it might come from that tower. I'd like you and your friends to go to the tower and investigate it. Our very safety may depend on your bravery and heroism."

Now comes the players' chance to respond to the old man's request. They may have other questions about the tower and the raids on the nearby farms. Here's what you can tell them (and you can use the "old man" voice to do it, to show that this is the Patriarch speaking, and not the DM).

- No one knew about the tower before. Some hunters found it while chasing a wounded deer. However, long ago there was a powerful magician who lived in this valley. It might have been one of his towers, or his home.
- No one has seen what is raiding the farms. Several sheep have been carried off, and pens have been broken down. This always happens at night. No farmers have been attacked, but they are worried about their flocks.
- Any treasure they find, in the form of money or magical items, may be kept by the player characters. All the Patriarch asks is that any books or other useful items be turned over to him so he can learn more about the history of the Vale (he'll pay, of course).

- He tells the characters that the location of the ruined tower is off the beaten track, but easily found. (No map is provided for the Vale in this adventure, so this map is an imaginary one. If you want to have a map of the Vale to show the players, take a moment to sketch one out.) If no one brings it up, merely say, “The Patriarch unfolds a map and shows you the location of the tower. There should be no problem reaching it.”
- The Patriarch does not have any guards or assistants to spare for the expedition. If he did, he would have sent them instead of the adventurers.
- Heroes only have what supplies are on their sheets; there isn’t an opportunity for them to get anything else before starting.

## The Ruined Tower

Once the players get everything squared away with the Patriarch, the group of heroes (known as “the adventuring party” or simply “the party”) heads out toward the ruined tower with orders to investigate it and report back. Read the following to the players:

The trail to the ruined tower passes through the rolling farmland of the Vale and into the forest. The trees and undergrowth quickly grow dense, and you hear the sounds of small creatures moving through the underbrush. The thick shade of the forest cuts off a lot of the sunlight, and you move through a twilight-colored world of shadows.

Suddenly you come upon a small glade in the heart of the forest. A squat stone tower has been built into the side of the hill at the far side of the glade. The tower has been shattered, and all that remains is a ragged stump of fitted stone. Large blocks of granite litter the clearing, and some of these are covered with thick moss.

The tower is shown on the map on page 10. Use the information from this text and the map to describe the area. Don’t show the map to the players—that would tell them too much about what they are going to discover later in the adventure.

Ask each player what his or her character is doing. Most likely their responses will be along the lines of “I am looking at the tower.”

The tower is a wreck—it looks like it has been blasted by a bolt of lightning. Originally it might have been 40 feet tall, but now it is a blasted stump that does not extend more than 10 feet high. The tower wall nearest the characters is no more than a

low wall a foot high, and can be easily stepped over.

When the first member of the party enters the area of the tower itself, read the following to that player. The other players can listen in.

You step over the wall and see that the inside of the tower is filled with rubble and debris. Dead leaves, shattered stones, and rotted timbers are scattered around the floor. You see, partly buried by fallen timbers, a door on the far wall, leading back under the hillside.

As you notice this, you also see a pile of leaves rustle slightly to your left. A large rat pokes its head out from beneath the debris. It hisses a warning at you, showing long, razor-sharp teeth. It lunges forward, and behind it, three more leap from their hiding places.

There are four giant rats among the debris within the tower, and they are defending their territory. The rats are grayish-brown, about two feet long, and have wicked, sharp teeth and red, feral eyes.

They only attack characters in the tower area, and will not climb over the walls. If there is only one character in the tower area, all four attack him. If there are two characters, two attack each character. If there are three characters in the tower area, two attack the first character who entered, and one attacks each of the others. If there are four characters in the area, then one rat attacks each of them.

Each of the players needs to roll a particular number or higher on 1d20 to successfully attack a giant rat:

- Darkblade needs an 11 or higher to hit. If he hits with his sword, he does 1d8 damage, and then adds 1 point. If he uses his bow, he can attack twice in a single round, even against different rats, and do 1d8 damage on each hit, but he cannot use his bow against rats that are attacking him.
- Elanna needs a 12 or higher to hit. If she uses her two-handed sword, she rolls 1d10 to determine how much damage she does. If she uses her dagger, she rolls 1d4 to determine damage. She can throw her daggers at rats that are not attacking her directly.
- Niles needs a 13 or higher to hit. He causes 1d6 damage if he uses his short sword, and 1d4 if using his dagger. He causes 1d4 damage if he throws a dagger, but can only throw daggers at rats that are not attacking him.
- Thaddeus needs a 13 or higher to hit. He causes 1d6 damage with his quarterstaff. Thaddeus’s specialty is not combat, but magic

# MAP OF THE RUINED TOWER

Ruined Tower

Scriptorium

Corridor

Library

Secret Tunnel

One square = 10'

## MAP KEY

- door
- hidden pit
- \\$ secret door
- ✗ debris

spells. If he casts his *magic missile* spell, he does 1d4+1 points of damage to a rat of his choice (no attack roll needed). If he casts his *sleep* spell, all the rats immediately fall into an enchanted slumber and are easily defeated.

Each rat starts with 3 hit points. If a character inflicts 3 or more points of damage, the rat is defeated. If a rat takes less than 3 points of damage, note on a piece of scratch paper how much damage the rat took. Subtract that number from 3, and what remains is how many hit points the rat now has.

Any rats not defeated get their chance to attack back. For each rat, you roll 1d20 to try to hit a certain character. The rats are all equally vicious, but they need different numbers to hit the characters because the characters are wearing different types of armor and have different Dexterity scores.

- To hit Darkblade, the rats need a 16 or higher.
- To hit Elanna, the rats need a 17 or higher.
- To hit Niles, the rats need a 13 or higher.
- To hit Thaddeus, the rats need a 10 or higher.

Needless to say, it's better if Thaddeus stays away from the rats. Rats bite for 1d3 points of damage.

A rat attacks a chosen character until that character leaves the area of the tower or is reduced to 0 hit points; then the rat chooses a new target from the

remaining characters. If all the characters are reduced to 0 hit points, or if they leave the tower area, the rats burrow under the debris and flee.

It's likely that the characters will defeat the rats with minimum damage to themselves. Any damage that was taken by the characters remains until the characters go back to the town or someone uses Elanna's potion of healing to restore lost hit points.

Defeating the rats gains experience points (XP) for the surviving characters. The rats are worth 15 XP each, so four of them are worth 60 points. That means if a single character stayed in the tower area and defeated all the rats, he gets all 60 points. If two characters defeated two rats apiece, each surviving character gets 30 XP. If three characters took part in the combat, each survivor gets 20 XP, and if all four characters helped (even if some were defeated by the rats), each survivor gets 15 XP. Have the players mark the XP earned on their character sheets. Each sheet tells how many experience points that character needs to advance to the next level. (Obviously, no one will get there very fast just by defeating rats.)

There is no treasure among the debris, but if the players want their characters to look, let them do so. When they decide to move on, they should want to investigate the door partly hidden by the fallen

timbers, which can be easily moved aside.

The door is a heavy oak door, with a lock that's rusted out and useless. However, the door is swollen in its frame and badly weathered, and the characters will have to use brute strength to open it. Let the players choose which character will open the door (it makes sense to give this job to the character with the highest Strength score), and have that player roll 1d20 to determine if he succeeds. In this case, a low result is better than a high result, which means:

- Darkblade needs a 10 or less to open the door.
- Elanna needs an 8 or less to open the door.
- Niles needs a 6 or less to open the door.
- Thaddeus needs a 5 or less to open the door.

Any character can try to open the door as many times as he or she wants. There is no penalty for failing—it just takes a while longer to get the door open. Also, Thaddeus may use the *knock* spell on his scroll to open the door. The door opens immediately if he does this, but as Thaddeus reads the spell, the words on the scroll fade from the paper and the spell cannot be cast again. (Make sure the player who's running Thaddeus understands this before the scroll is used.)

When the characters open the door, go to the next section.

## The Corridor and the Pit

To start this section of the adventure, read the following paragraph to the players:

You force the door open, and a puff of damp, musty air billows out of the doorway. The dust settles, and you are looking down a long corridor leading back into the hillside. The walls and floor are made of finished stone, and are stained from water damage. The ceiling is supported by heavy oak beams. The corridor disappears into darkness about 20 feet away.

Now would be a good time for the party members to think about lighting their torches or lanterns. It only takes one torch or lantern to throw enough light to see by—but note that anyone who is carrying a lit torch or lantern has to use one hand to do so, so weapons like bows or the two-handed sword cannot be used. A lantern can be set down easily if someone suddenly needs to use both hands, but a torch goes out if it's laid on the floor. If the party heads down the corridor in darkness, tell the players that it's getting harder and harder to see . . .

This is part of roleplaying. You and the players consider the imaginary world as if it were a real one, so little things like what you're carrying in your hands or who's opening the door are some-

times important. Don't get bogged down in the details, but just keep an eye on what is going on and where.

When at least one character lights a torch or lantern, add the following information:

You see that a 10-foot-wide corridor continues into the hillside. The walls and floor have been heavily damaged by water, and the flagstones of the floor are pitched up in places from uneven settling. About 40 feet away, you see a door. There seems to be something written on the door, but you're too far away to make out what it says. What are you going to do?

Ask the players in what order their characters are moving down the corridor. (There's enough room in a 10-foot-wide area for two characters to walk or run side by side. This makes it easy for them to fight without bashing on each other.) One way to arrange the group is to put the well-armored, strong types in front to protect the guys with the lower hit points in the back. If the characters are afraid of being hit from behind, they may put a fighter in the front and one in the back.

The corridor is treacherous and uneven, and has been damaged by water seeping through the ancient walls. About 20 feet from the door, the

## A Map for the Players

The players may choose to start making their own map of the dungeon at some point. A map is often helpful because it's a reminder of how rooms fit together, where things are located, and where the exits are in case of emergency. (Remember, the players don't get to see the map we've provided for you.) If the players bring up the idea of making their own map, and you want to let them give it a try, here's how to do it.

Give them a piece of regular graph paper (four squares to the inch will do nicely), and have each square represent 10 feet. You then describe the room or area based on the text and the map we've provided. For example, there are different ways to describe a corridor, such as:

"The corridor runs ahead of you 40 feet and ends in a door. The corridor is 10 feet wide."

"The corridor runs east 40 feet to a door on the far end. You are at the west end of the corridor."

Or, if you want to be sure the players understand where they are, you can simply make a sketch on the graph paper and let them look at it. As their characters move into a different area, add another piece of information to their map, according to what the characters would see, so that step by step it starts to resemble the map you're using.



ground is so badly eroded that any pressure on the floor will cause the floor to collapse. On your map, that place is marked by the big symbol for a pit. (This is one reason you don't show the players the DM's map—you want this place to be a secret until the characters get there.)

If the characters merrily march down the corridor, heading for the door, the characters in front fall into the pit that suddenly appears before them as the floor disintegrates. Read the following aloud if this happens:

You walk down the corridor. About halfway down, the ground suddenly shifts beneath your feet and falls away, revealing a black chasm beneath you. The stones you're standing on slip into the blackness, and you follow.

The pit is 10 feet deep and filled at the bottom with water and soft earth. Each character that falls into the pit takes 1d4 points of damage. They also get muddy from the experience. The edges of the pit are rough and sloped, so it is relatively easy to climb out.

If the characters are a bit more cautious (and if the players listened to you when you told them about all the water damage in the hallway) and indicate that they are checking out the corridor as they move into the hillside, read the following:

You move cautiously down the hallway, making sure you have a firm footing on the uneven flagstones. One of the stones beneath your feet shifts as you touch it, and you pull back quickly. With a deep rumble, a large hole opens directly before you. Another step, and you would have fallen into a large, muddy pit.

If the characters were cautious, give each of them 10 XP. (As the DM, you're allowed to reward players for smart thinking.)

The pit is a ragged hole in the floor, and once it has opened it will remain there permanently. There is enough of a ledge around it that the characters can get past it easily.

Note that this is a natural pit caused by erosion. Some evil creatures put pits in their lairs just to catch those foolish enough to trespass, and sometimes those pits are filled with sharp spikes or poisonous snakes. (Just thought you'd want to know.)

When the characters reach the door at the other end of the corridor, they see it is badly rotted, and its hinges and latch are extremely rusted. There are words carved on the door, almost invisible because of the damage. The sign reads:

## SCRIPTORIUM DO NOT DISTURB

A scriptorium is a place where scrolls and books are copied, usually by scribes or monks. (You can tell the players that—it's something that their characters would likely know.)

The door is almost completely rotted out, and will disintegrate at the first touch. Go to the next section.

### The Scriptorium

When any character first touches the door (tries the knob, leans against it, knocks on it, whatever), read the following aloud:

The rotted door falls apart at the first touch. The wood cascades into a pile of splinters, and the hinges and knob clatter to the floor.

On the other side of the doorway is a large, square room, about 30 feet on a side. There is another door directly opposite yours at the far side of the room. The floor in here is more level and dry than the corridor was.

The room holds six copy desks and stools. Four of the desks are occupied by what look like monks, dressed in robes that at one time were fine but are now old and rotting, their bodies hunched over.

One of the monks looks up at you, his hood falling back as he does so. He has no skin or flesh, only a skull with small flickers of red flame burning in the pits of his eye sockets. He raises a bony hand and points at you.

As if by silent signal, the other three monks get off their stools. Their robes fly open, revealing that they are nothing more than animated skeletons. They all carry rusted, triangular daggers. They move toward you.

There are four skeletons, though only two may attack a particular target. If the characters stand their ground in the doorway, then only the front rank may be attacked. The characters get to make their attacks first, then the skeletons.

Because the skeletons are magically animated bones, they are less affected by weapons that cut. Swords, arrows, and daggers cause less damage when used against a skeleton.

- Darkblade needs an 11 or higher to hit. If he hits with his sword, he does 1d8 damage, then adds 1 point for his high strength. Find the total damage he causes, then divide by 2, rounding up (2 $\frac{1}{2}$  becomes 3). If he uses his bow, he can attack twice, even against different skeletons, and do 1d8 damage. Again, divide the damage by 2 after it is rolled. Once the skeletons get close enough to attack, the bow is useless.

- Elanna needs a 12 or higher to hit. If she uses the two-handed sword, she rolls 1d10 to determine how much damage she does. If she uses her dagger, she rolls 1d4 to determine damage. Again, divide the result by 2.
- Niles needs a 13 or higher to hit. He will cause 1d6 damage if he uses his short sword, and 1d4 if using his dagger. Divide the result by 2 to determine how much damage Niles does to the skeleton he attacks.
- Thaddeus needs a 13 or higher to hit. He causes 1d6 damage with the quarterstaff—and this result is *not* divided by 2. The quarterstaff is a blunt weapon, not a cutting weapon, so it does full damage to the skeletons. If Thaddeus casts his *magic missile* spell, he does 1d4+1 points of damage to the skeleton of his choice (no attack roll is needed). If the player running Thaddeus wants to cast his *sleep* spell, you should mention that the spell would have no effect because the skeletons are not alive and the magic of the *sleep* spell only works against living creatures.

The remaining skeletons get their chance to attack back after the characters get their chance to hit. For each skeleton, roll 1d20:

- To hit Darkblade, a skeleton needs a 15 or higher.
- To hit Elanna, a skeleton needs a 16 or higher.
- To hit Niles, a skeleton needs a 12 or higher.
- To hit Thaddeus, a skeleton needs a 9 or higher.

A skeleton causes 1d6 damage when it successfully hits a character. The skeletons have 5 hit points each.

The skeletons fight until either they are defeated or the characters are. If the characters flee the room back the way they came, the skeletons will chase them. The skeletons can't catch the human characters, but they are faster than the halfling and will overtake Niles before he escapes the underground area. (The other characters should want to turn around and come back to help if that happens. One way or another, they're going to have to deal with these skeletons.)

Skeletons are worth 65 XP each, so four of them are worth 260 XP total. Just as you did with the rats, divide up the experience points between all the characters who took part in the combat.

When the skeletons are defeated, the players may have their characters search the room. They find nothing in the desks—the scrolls the skeletons appeared to be working on are nothing more than tattered scraps. The triangular daggers the skeletons carried are of an archaic design, and, though stained with rust, are still useful. The Patriarch gives the characters 5 gold pieces per dagger if they bring them back (20 gold pieces total if they part with all of them).

When the characters get around to checking the door out of the room, read the players the following text:

The door at the far side of the room is made of heavy wood and bound with bands of iron. A large plate of metal is mounted to the door, and that plate is inscribed with a symbol of a bull's head. The door has been locked and secured from the other side.

This door is not just stuck, like the one at the start of the adventure—it has been locked by the inhabitants of the room beyond. The characters may think of a number of ways to try opening the door.

- **Force it open:** They can try to force the door open with brute strength, but it is tougher than they are. It will not open, even if two or more characters try to force it open at the same time.
- **Hack it down:** The characters can try to hack the lock and hinges off the door. Up to two characters can hack at the door, the door is hit automatically (it can't get out of the way), and takes 20 points of damage before it springs open. The downside of hacking at the door is that it warns the inhabitants of the library (the room behind the door) immediately, and they can prepare. (See the next page for more information on this.)
- **Pick the lock:** Rogues are very good at opening locks, and if Niles is present, you can tell the players this. The player running Niles needs to roll a 4 or less on 1d10 in order to pick the lock. Niles can try three times to open this door. If he succeeds on one of those tries, he unlocks it without notifying the beings on the other side. If Niles fails to pick the lock after three tries, the lock is too tough for him to open by using his tools. The characters will have to try something else.
- **Cast the *knock* spell:** Thaddeus has a scroll with a magical spell on it. If he casts the *knock* spell, the lock clicks open immediately (and the spell disappears from the scroll).

## The Library

As soon as the characters have managed to open the door, read the following to the players:

On the other side of the door is a large, well-furnished room. The walls are lined with shelves that are filled with large, water-stained books. The floor is littered with bones.

Directly before you are two zombies, unliving humans with their flesh dried and pulled tight over their bones. Their bodies are miss-

ing chunks of flesh. It looks as if something has taken bites out of their arms, legs, and torsos. They have blank, mindless expressions on their faces.

Behind these two monsters is another creature that resembles a human, but this one is more savage-looking. Its skin is the purple color of a bruise, its eyes glow with a yellowish light, its hair is mangy and patchy, and its teeth are inhumanly sharp. It is a ghoul, an undead creature of deadly power. The touch of its taloned hands or bite can paralyze a living creature.

The ghoul points at you and hisses, "Kill them! Kill the living intruders!" At his command the zombies shuffle toward you.

The ghoul in the library is the one responsible for the missing livestock on the nearby farms, and the bones scattered around the room are from the goats and lambs that it has stolen. The zombies are in its service, and it uses them as bodyguards.

The ghoul does not want to fight, but instead tries to flee with its treasure. How successful the ghoul is in getting away depends on how much warning he had before the characters entered the room. (If they tried to force the door or hack it down, the ghoul is alerted to their presence.)

Here's what the ghoul would prefer to do. As soon as it realizes that it's about to be visited by the characters, it goes to a shelf along the east wall and grabs a small chest that contains its "treasure." That takes one round. Then it goes to the northeast corner, where there is a secret door covered by a bookcase. That takes another round. It takes two more rounds to shove aside the bookcase and open the door. After the ghoul passes through the secret door into a tunnel that leads to the surface, the monster is gone, leaving the zombies to fight the characters.

Summarizing, here are the ghoul's actions, round by round:

- 1 – is made aware of the heroes outside.
- 2 – goes and gets the small chest from the shelf.
- 3 – goes to secret door.
- 4 – shoves aside the bookcase.
- 5 – opens the secret door.
- 6 (or later) – escapes through the tunnel.

This "schedule" means that if the characters take too long bashing in the door, the ghoul is well on its way to escaping. On the other hand, if the characters pick the lock or use the *knock* spell, they can catch the ghoul flatfooted. Where the ghoul is in the room depends on when the characters enter. If they take a long time to get into the room, they find the secret door open and the ghoul standing in front of it. The ghoul tells the zombies to kill them, and dashes into the tunnel in the next round.

The ghoul tries to escape, letting its zombies handle the adventurers, unless the characters manage to cause damage to it. If it is damaged (by a hit from a weapon or by the *magic missile* spell), the ghoul gets mad and attacks the party along with the zombies.

The players need to roll different numbers on 1d20 for their characters to hit the zombies or the ghoul. The ghoul's a little tougher than the zombies are.

- Darkblade needs a 10 or higher to hit the zombies, and a 12 or higher to hit the ghoul. If he hits with his sword, he does 1d8 damage, and adds 1 point for his high strength. If he uses his bow, he can attack twice in one round, even against different targets, and do 1d8 damage, but cannot use it in direct combat.
- Elanna needs an 11 or higher to hit the zombies, and a 13 or higher to hit the ghoul. If she uses the two-handed sword, she rolls 1d10 to determine how much damage she does. If she uses her dagger, she rolls 1d4 to determine damage.
- Niles needs a 12 or higher to hit the zombies and a 14 or higher to hit the ghoul. He causes 1d6 damage if he uses his short sword, and 1d4 if using his dagger. As a rogue, Niles gets a special benefit for attacking from behind. If he manages to sneak up behind a zombie, he needs only an 8 or higher to hit, and if he gets behind the ghoul, he needs a 10 or higher. In addition, he does *double* damage—multiply the result of his roll by 2.
- Thaddeus needs a 12 or higher to hit the zombies and a 14 or higher to hit the ghoul. He causes 1d6 damage with the quarterstaff. If he casts his *magic missile* spell, he does 1d4+1 points of damage to the zombie of his choice or to the ghoul (no attack roll is needed). If he wants to casts his *sleep* spell, tell the player running Thaddeus that there would be no effect—the zombies and ghoul are not living things, and aren't affected by the magic.

The zombies have 9 hit points each, and cause 1d8 damage when they hit.

- To hit Darkblade, a zombie needs a 15 or higher on 1d20.
- To hit Elanna, a zombie needs a 16 or higher.
- To hit Niles, a zombie needs a 12 or higher.
- To hit Thaddeus, a zombie needs a 9 or higher.

The ghoul has 14 hit points and, unlike the zombies, can make multiple attacks against the same target. The ghoul tries to hurt the character that wounded it, but if it has to fight its way through others it will do so. It can attack with both of its claws, each causing 1d3 points of damage (roll 1d6

and divide the result by two), and its bite, which causes 1d6 points of damage. However, if it is carrying its chest of treasure in one hand, it can only make one claw attack. If the ghoul loses the chest or puts it down, it can use both of its claws.

- To hit Darkblade, the ghoul needs a 15 or higher on 1d20.
- To hit Elanna, the ghoul needs a 16 or higher.
- To hit Niles, the ghoul needs a 12 or higher.
- To hit Thaddeus, the ghoul needs a 9 or higher.

The ghoul also has a special ability. Each time it claws or bites an opponent, it has a chance of paralyzing that individual. A paralyzed character can't fight, move, or talk, so zombies can hit him automatically. This paralysis lasts for 1d6+2 rounds. A character can avoid the effects of this paralysis if the player makes a successful die roll using 1d20. This roll is called a *saving throw*. As with combat, each character has his or her own number to avoid the effect of the ghoul's special ability:

- Darkblade, Elanna, and Thaddeus all need a 14 or higher to avoid being paralyzed.
- Niles needs a 13 or higher to avoid being paralyzed.

If a character makes his saving throw, then the ghoul's touch has no effect. A new saving throw must be rolled every time a character is clawed or bitten by the ghoul—avoiding the paralysis once is no guarantee that it won't happen next time.

The characters can choose to let the ghoul escape, but they won't get any experience points for defeating it, and they won't get its treasure. Defeating the ghoul is worth 175 XP, which means 44 XP for four characters, 58 XP for three, and 88 for two.

The zombies are worth 65 XP each, so two of them are worth 130 XP total. That breaks down to 33 points per character for four characters, 43 points for three, and 65 XP for two characters.

## The Ghoul Might Fight!

The way we've set up this adventure, getting away is more important to the ghoul than seeing that the characters are defeated—but you, as the DM, can have the ghoul act any way you want. With some lucky dice rolls for the ghoul and some unlucky ones for the characters, the ghoul might be able to paralyze and defeat all the characters if it decides to stay around and fight. This might be a cruel thing to do to the characters (and their players), but it would be a good way to show the players how dangerous a monster like the ghoul can be. (And you can always back up and start the adventure over, or just replay the scene in the library, if you want to give the characters another chance.)

The room contains no monetary treasure, but the books are valuable beyond belief to the Patriarch. If the characters bring them back to the Patriarch (or simply bring news back to the Patriarch of the library's existence), he gives each of them 400 gold pieces.

The chest that the ghoul was guarding contains its personal treasure of gems and magical items. The chest is locked. Niles has a 4 in 10 chance of opening the lock (roll of 4 or less on 1d10), or the *knock* spell can be used, or the lock can be bashed in (one hit from a sword or dagger will do it). Within the box are the following items:

- 12 black pearls.
- A scroll.
- A bottle similar in shape and size to Elanna's potion of healing. If a character pulls the cork, the liquid inside smells like peppermint.
- A dagger with symbols carved along the blade in an unknown language.
- A sack made of blue cloth.

The characters may play around with the items, seeking to figure out what they are, or they can take them back to the Patriarch. The items are explained in the "Wrapping Things Up" section.

If the characters caught the ghoul by surprise and defeated it before it reached the secret door, they might not find the door (unless someone thinks to move the bookshelf aside). If they find the secret door, it leads into a narrow, dark tunnel that burrows for about 50 feet and finally surfaces on the far side of the hill from the tower. This tunnel is how the ghoul made its entry to and from his lair. Otherwise the characters can get out of the ruined tower by backtracking, and then return to the Patriarch with their information.

## Wrapping Things Up

If the characters are defeated in the dungeon beneath the ruined tower, read the following:

Alas! For all your bravery, you failed to discover and defeat the secret of the ruined tower. You awaken a day or two later, resting at the church in the Vale. Hunters found and rescued you. Your wounds are healed, so perhaps it is time to make another foray into the ruined tower.

If you want to, you can try the adventure again, either from the very beginning, or with whatever changes occurred because of the characters' actions. For example, the corridor may already have the pit in the middle of it, and there may be fewer (or more) rats.

If the characters discover some of the secrets of

the ruined tower, but then turn back before reaching the ghoul's lair, read the following:

You return to the Patriarch and tell him what you have discovered. The old man is very excited by your news, and believes that there is greater treasure and knowledge beneath the ruined pile of stones. He asks if you will return to finish the job, or if you would prefer that someone else gets the honor of discovering the secret of the ruined tower.

Again, you can run this adventure again, either from the very beginning, or with the changes that have happened because of what the characters did the first time they visited this place.

If the characters found the library (whether or not they defeated the ghoul), read the following:

The Patriarch is extremely pleased with your discovery of the library beneath the ruined tower! He believes that it may have belonged to an ancient and powerful wizard, whose lair has not yet been discovered and whose treasure still lies out there, waiting for brave adventurers to find it! Congratulations!

If the characters defeated the ghoul, add this:

The Patriarch is happy that you have defeated the ghoul that was plaguing the local farms and homesteads. With this menace put to rest, he can turn his attention to other matters, such as finding the hidden tomb of the wizard who once ruled the valley.

As stated above, the Patriarch gives each character 400 gold pieces to reward them for their discovery of the library. If they defeated the ghoul, he gives them an additional 100 gold pieces each.

Give the undefeated characters a special story award of 200 XP for completing the story, even if they didn't actually defeat the ghoul. Remember, the Patriarch wanted information, so they still accomplished a lot.

The Patriarch will gladly identify the magical items the characters found:

- The pearls are worth 100 gold pieces each.
- The dagger is made of magically sharpened and reinforced metal. It is a *dagger+1*, which adds 1 point to a character's attack roll and 1 point to any damage the attack causes.
- The scroll contains spells, which a wizard may cast. It has a *knock* spell, a *magic missile* spell, and a *lightning bolt* spell—which shoots a bolt of lightning that causes 6d6 points of damage.
- The liquid in the bottle is a potion of *extra-healing*, which heals 3d8+3 points of damage, or 1d8 if a third of the potion is drunk.
- The bag is bigger on the inside than on the outside. It is a *bag of holding*, and can hold up to 250 pounds of stuff while still being easily lifted.

The players can work out their own ways of dividing up the treasure. The best way to split up the gold and gems is to give every character an equal share. Magical items can be divided up according to usefulness—the wizard should get the scroll, one of the fighters the potion, the other fighter the dagger, and the rogue the bag, for example. Or, the players can roll dice and the high roll gets the first choice.

Each character has a new XP total now—the original number plus any XP earned during the adventure. When a character goes over the “Next Level” number, he or she gains more power, more hit points, and more abilities.

The number of gold pieces a character has is recorded in the “Gold” blank on the character sheet. As the game goes on and characters have more adventures, they can buy things with their gold—better weapons and armor, magical scrolls, and other handy items.

Once the treasure is divvied up and the XP and gold recorded on the sheets, the characters retire to the local inn for a fine meal to celebrate their adventures and brag about their success. They might even buy some more equipment in The Vale. The players can bring these characters back to play again, through another adventure, on another day.



# Expanding the Game

In "The Ruined Tower" adventure, we walked you through the basics of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS rules and what it means to roleplay. In the process, we skimmed over a few things in order to get up and playing. Now let's backtrack, explain a few things, pour in some additional neat stuff, and continue the adventure.

The material within is primarily for the DM. You can share the rules information as you see fit with the players, but they don't have to read all this. There are some changes that will need to be made to the first four characters to accommodate these new ideas. In addition, we're adding four new characters that can be played.

## The New Guys

On pages 22–23 are four new characters that can be played. They include a cleric (a holy man who has the ability to cast spells and wear armor), a dwarven warrior, an elven fighter/mage (less powerful, but more versatile, than either the warrior or the wizard), and a paladin (a holy warrior with some limited healing abilities).

These player characters can be used in a number of ways. They may be used as replacements for characters who died earlier. They may also be used to bring new players into the game. Not all eight player characters need to be in the adventuring party—it's designed for three to six.

## More Damage!

You'll notice that the weapons the new guys are carrying inflict two types of damage, separated by a slash. For example, the paladin's long sword is listed as inflicting 1d8/1d12 points of damage. What does this mean, and why don't the other guys get it?

Well, the other guys *do* get it. The damage is listed according to type. The number listed first (before the slash) is the amount of damage inflicted on creatures that are man-sized or smaller, and the second number (after the slash) is for creatures larger than man-sized. The long sword inflicts 1d8 points of damage to man-sized or smaller creatures and 1d12 points to the bigger ones.

In "The Ruined Tower" adventure, all the opponents were man-sized or smaller (giant rats, skeletons, zombies, and the ghoul). In this new adventure, the characters will encounter larger-than-man-sized nasties. Make the following additions to the character sheets (of course you can mark up your sheets!):

- Darkblade's long sword inflicts 1d8/d12 (he adds 1 extra point of damage from his high Strength, as well)
- Darkblade's long bow inflicts 1d8/1d8
- Niles' short sword inflicts 1d6/1d8
- Thaddeus' quarterstaff inflicts 1d6/1d6
- Elanna's two-handed sword inflicts a massive 1d10/3d6!
- All the daggers inflict 1d4/1d3

There may be some smart guy who just wants to punch something (or a character who has lost his or her weapon and wants to kick the monster). Without any weapon, a character inflicts 1 point of damage (plus any Strength bonus). If they are using makeshift weapons such as rocks or branches, treat them as clubs, inflicting 1d6/1d3.

## Oh Great, More Toys!

With the new player characters, there are new weapons and armor. Let's take a moment and go through them.

**Splint mail** is a type of mail made of overlapping vertical strips with chain mail at the joints. It provides better protection than chain mail.

**Plate mail** is the best type of readily available armor. It's closest to the type of "knights in shining armor" that you think of in fantasy. Plate mail consists of large sheets of steel protecting the chest and back with chain at the joints. Note that neither thieves nor wizards (including our elf) can use splint or plate; it gets in the way of thief abilities and magical spell casting.

**A shield** is just that: A flat sheet of metal with hand-holds on the inside. The big thing about shields is that, if you use one, you cannot use weapons that require two hands (in this situation, the two-handed sword and the bow).

There are a number of new weapons as well. The dwarf's **battle axe** is a huge, oversized, two-headed axe. A **war hammer** is a similarly oversized sledge hammer with a large head. Finally, the **footman's mace** is a flanged metal head atop a short wooden shaft that acts like a metal club. Priests tend to prefer blunt weapons as opposed to those that hack or slash, and the mace is a weapon of choice. (They also use war hammers, but never swords, axes, or bows.)

Mitchifer the priest also has a **Holy Symbol** of his faith. These vary from church to church, but the Holy Defender's is a sunburst. Holy symbols are used to cast spells and to turn undead. (Yeah, where was this guy when we needed him in the *first* adventure?)

## Where Do All These Numbers Come From, Anyway?

In the opening adventure, when a particular situation came up, we gave you a specific number to roll in each situation, whether it was to open a door, hit a monster, or pick a lock. Believe it or not, these numbers have a real meaning within the game, and there are various arcane methods by which we determine them.

**Armor Class:** Armor Class (AC, for short) determines the chances of a character being hit and is a reflection of both what the character is wearing and his or her dexterity. A low number for Armor Class is good, so an unarmored man (such as Thaddeus) is considered AC 10. In addition, certain situations may affect Armor Class, like when a shield is being used. (A warrior has to choose between the added protection of a shield or the added damage of a larger two-handed weapon.) Finally, there may be magical items that improve one's Armor Class and particular situations that may raise or lower it.

In this adventure, we base the numbers on the "typical" Armor Classes of the characters. If those Armor Classes change, then the other numbers will change, as well. Check out the sidebar entitled "Figuring Armor Class."

**"To Hit" Numbers:** In every encounter in the first section, we talk about the number needed to hit. You need to

# Dungeons & Dragons

## Character Sheet

Name: **Mitchifer** Player: \_\_\_\_\_  
Class: Priest Race: Human  
Level: 2

### Ability Scores

Strength	14
Dexterity	13
Constitution	15
Intelligence	11
Wisdom	17
Charisma	10



Armor: Plate mail

Armor Class: 3

Move: 12

Hit Points: 9

Wounds: \_\_\_\_\_

Gold: \_\_\_\_\_

XP: 1500 Next Level: 3000

### Weapons:

Footman's mace

Damage 1d6+1/1d6

### Spells:

Mitchifer may cast each of these spells once per day:

*Bless:* All characters in your party gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls for the rest of one particular battle.

*Protection from Evil:* Evil monsters suffer a -2 penalty to hit the recipient of this spell.

*Cure Light Wounds:* The recipient of this spell heals 1d8 hit points of damage. Mitchifer can cast two of these each day.

### Abilities:

Mitchifer can turn undead, using his holy power to drive away creatures such as skeletons and zombies.

### Equipment:

Holy Symbol (Church of the Holy Defender)

Two vials of holy water; these cause 2d4 points of damage to undead creatures if it is splashed on them.

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# Dungeons & Dragons

## Character Sheet

Name: **Sunblayne** Player: \_\_\_\_\_  
Class: Fighter/Wizard Race: Elf  
Level: 1/1

### Ability Scores

Strength	12
Dexterity	16
Constitution	12
Intelligence	12
Wisdom	12
Charisma	14



Armor: None (Robes)

Armor Class: 8

Move: 12

Hit Points: 9

Wounds: \_\_\_\_\_

Gold: \_\_\_\_\_

XP: 500 (fighter)/500 (wizard)

Next Level: 2000 (fighter)/2500 (wizard)

### Weapons:

Quarterstaff

Damage 1d6/1d6

Short sword

Damage 1d6/1d8

### Spells:

Sunblayne may cast this spell once per day:

*Magic Missile:* This automatically hits a creature of Sunblayne's choice and inflicts 1d4+1 points of damage to it.

### Abilities:

Sunblayne gains a +1 bonus to hit with her bow and her sword.

Sunblayne can see up to 60 feet in the dark.

Sunblayne has a better chance to spot Secret Doors. She detects them on a roll of 1 or 2 on a 6-sided die.

### Equipment:

Torch

50-foot coil of rope

Small metal mirror

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# Dungeons & Dragons

## Character Sheet

Name: **Thordar** Player: \_\_\_\_\_  
Class: Fighter Race: Dwarf  
Level: 2

### Ability Scores

Strength	15
Dexterity	13
Constitution	18
Intelligence	10
Wisdom	9
Charisma	10



Armor: Splint mail

Armor Class: 3

Move: 6

Hit Points: 15

Wounds: \_\_\_\_\_

Gold: \_\_\_\_\_

XP: 2000 Next Level: 4000

### Weapons:

War hammer

Damage 1d4+1/1d4

Battle axe

Damage 1d8/1d8

### Spells:

Thordar has no magical spells

### Abilities:

Thordar can throw his hammer up to 30 feet away. He cannot throw his hammer if he is in direct combat.

Thordar gains a +1 bonus to hit orcs, half-orcs, goblins, and hobgoblins. Ogres, trolls, and giants all suffer a -4 penalty to hit him.

Thordar can see in the dark up to 60 feet away.

### Equipment:

Lantern  
Blanket  
Chalk

# Dungeons & Dragons

## Character Sheet

Name: **Peregrine** Player: \_\_\_\_\_  
Class: Paladin Race: Human  
Level: 2

### Ability Scores

Strength	14
Dexterity	12
Constitution	10
Intelligence	9
Wisdom	14
Charisma	17



Armor: Plate mail and Shield

Armor Class: 2

Move: 12

Hit Points: 12

Wounds: \_\_\_\_\_

Gold: \_\_\_\_\_

XP: 2250 Next Level: 4500

### Weapons:

Long sword

Damage 1d8/1d12

### Spells:

Peregrine has no magical spells

### Abilities:

Peregrine has the ability to detect evil creatures and evil intent, at will.

Peregrine can heal up to 4 points of damage per day, to himself or to others by touching them.

All evil creatures suffer a -1 penalty to hit Peregrine and any of his friends within 10 feet of him.

### Equipment:

Lantern  
Holy Symbol (Church of the Holy Defender)

## Figuring Armor Class

Start with what your character is wearing:

Normal clothes or robes	AC 10
Leather armor	AC 8
Scale mail	AC 6
Chain mail	AC 5
Splint mail	AC 4
Plate mail	AC 3

If your character has a shield, you lower the number by 1. Therefore, our paladin with the plate mail and shield is AC 2.

Check out your Dexterity. High Dexterity gives you a bonus to your Armor Class (and low Dexterity imposes a penalty, but we don't have to worry about that with these characters).

If your Dexterity is:	Lower your Armor Class by:
15	1
16	2
17	3
18	4

So Niles, our nimble halfling thief, has an AC of 8 (from the leather armor he's wearing). He doesn't carry a shield (no bonus there), but he does have a Dexterity of 18. His AC drops to 4, which is a very nice thing for Niles.

roll the "to hit" number or greater in order to strike an opponent. We're going to figure that out and present it in future sections, but for now, you are probably asking, "where are we getting these numbers?"

Different character classes at different levels of experience need different numbers to hit certain types of armor. Let's break that down a little. In general, fighters hit a target more easily than wizards, with priests and thieves falling in the middle. In addition, a higher level character hits a target more easily than a lower level one. Finally, stronger characters hit more easily than weaker ones.

When determining how well someone hits, we use a number called THAC0, which means "To Hit Armor Class 0." That would be the number needed to hit a creature of AC 0. The THAC0s for the various player characters are fairly low, since they are mostly starting out:

Darkblade, Elanna, Peregrine, and Thordar all have a THAC0 of 19.

All other characters have a THAC0 of 20.

That sounds pretty dire, but remember that most of the creatures you're fighting have ACs significantly worse than AC 0. To figure out what you need to hit a creature, you subtract its Armor Class from the THAC0. For Darkblade to hit a creature with Armor Class 6, he needs a ( $19 - 6 = 13$ ) to hit.

But wait, there's more. A number of other situational modifiers affect the "to hit" roll. Strength is one of the most important ones for melee weapons (swords, maces, and

other things you need to be close to an opponent to use) and thrown weapons (like a dagger), and Dexterity is important for missile weapons (stuff that is thrown or fired). And yes, this means you get to add both a Strength bonus and a Dexterity bonus when you throw a dagger, if you are entitled to them. It's a benefit of how hard you throw and how well you aim.)

If your character has a Strength of 17 or 18, add 1 to the "to hit" roll for those times when your character is using a melee weapon or is throwing something.

If your character has Dexterity of 16, add 1 to the "to hit" roll if your character is using a bow or throwing something.

If your character has a Dexterity of 17 or 18, add 1 to the "to hit" roll if your character is using a bow or throwing something.

In addition, particular races gain abilities that affect the "to hit" roll. Elves get a +1 bonus to hit when using a sword or a bow. Dwarves get a +1 bonus to hit particular races because of long-standing grudges, while particularly large beings like giants and ogres (but not minotaurs, alas) suffer a penalty to hit dwarves.

**Ability Checks:** Often, the player characters are called upon to roll less than one of their abilities. This is a handy way to determine if they have successfully leapt over a small pit, manhandled a large object out of the way, or some other feat of strength or skill. If a player wants his or her character to do something, and you have *no idea* how to handle it, an ability check is a pretty nice way of determining whether he or she succeeds or not.

Here's an example: In "The Ruined Tower" adventure, we had that pit collapse in front of the characters. Whether someone fell in or not depended on whether they were moving cautiously or not. You, the DM, might decide that a sufficiently dexterous character may cause the collapse but be nimble enough to back away. A Dexterity check would be called for, and the player would have to roll his or her character's Dexterity or less.

A couple of guidelines here: First, let common sense prevail. Even your most heroic fantasy hero can't leap across the Grand Canyon or move Mt. Rushmore. Some things are flat-out impossible, and don't be afraid to tell your players that.

That being said, you can modify the check upward or downward as you see fit in order to match the situation. If you think the job is fairly easy, tell the player to subtract 1 or more points from the die roll. If you think it's a more difficult task (but not impossible), add a few points to the die roll. You can also declare that an unmodified 1 will always succeed and an unmodified 20 will always fail. (By unmodified, we mean what actually comes up on the top face of the die before changing it with bonuses and penalties. And yeah, this ability check stuff is backwards from what you need for "to hit" rolls, where a high number is good and a low number is bad. Sometimes dice that are hot for you one way will suddenly turn against you, and vice versa.)

Ability checks are a method by which you, the DM, will use your own judgement in a particular situation. We can handle the major ones, but this is a tool you can use to handle those that are not foreseen in this text. It's a rule of thumb, not a rule.

**Saving Throws:** When the adventurers fought the ghoul, they had to roll a die to avoid being affected by the ghoul's paralyzing touch. This is called a saving throw. Saving

throws are used against particular types of attacks with specific results, such as paralyzation (to avoid being frozen), poison (to avoid sickness or death), or against spells (to avoid or reduce particular spell effects, like becoming ensorcelled or taking large amounts of damage from a fireball).

## Time, Movement, and Combat

**Time:** In the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game, time is pretty flexible for story telling. You can say "Three days pass" and three days within the game go by in the snap of a finger. Or you can become involved in combats where many things occur in the manner of instants. In order to control this, we talk about "rounds" or "combat rounds." As a rule of thumb, your characters (and the monsters) can do one thing during a single round. As the DM, you might decide that several simple actions can be performed in a single round. ("I'm pulling out my *potion of healing* from my pocket, uncorking it, and drinking from it" may be something that takes only 1 round, while "I'm searching my backpack for a potion, uncorking it, and drinking it" may take several.)

**Movement:** In "The Ruined Tower," we treat movement in a generally rough fashion, as a comparative idea of how fast characters move. Humans move at a certain speed, dwarves and halflings slightly slower. What does this translate into in real terms?

Well, every character has a "Move" value (also known as movement rate). A single point of movement is about 10 feet, walking cautiously and at a reasonable rate each round. (Thus, a Move value of 12 means walking up to 120 feet in a round.) Characters can run faster, as can the monsters chasing them, but the relationship of their movements stays about the same.

One thing that players are going to want to do is have their characters run into battle and hit their opponents. As a rule of thumb, if they have to run less than half their movement, then they can attack at the end of that charge. So a typical human with a movement rate of 12 can run up 60 feet and still bash an opponent, while a dwarf or halfling can run up to half that much.

**Combat:** In the thick of combat, who can attack whom will vary by situation. Many DMs use small figures, coins, or dice to show the spatial relationship between the various characters—who is bashing whom, and can someone reach another target? Here are some rules of thumb that are pretty common in the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game:

- No more than two people across in a ten-foot-wide corridor. Yep, there's room there for more than two, but keep in mind, you are often flinging spells and flashing blades through there.
- No more than two people attacking the same side of a man-sized target. Only so many folk can get in and take a whack at an opponent. More folk can get in to attack a larger creature, and if you can surround a target, then you can attack from all sides. This cuts the other way as well, and limits the number of bad guys that can hit the player characters. So if your heroes open the door into a room full of zombies, it might be smarter to hold your ground at the door and fight them as they come through.
- Don't fire into melee. When your friends are fighting the zombies, the last thing they need is an arrow in the back. There are a couple ways to handle this in the rules (an

even chance of hitting a friend as well as an enemy, for example), but at this stage of the game, just remember it's a bad idea. Spells are another matter, and may be good or bad, according to the spell.

- If an opponent tries to run away from combat, the attacker still gets one last hit on his, her, or its back. This applies both to monsters and player characters.

**Initiative:** In "The Ruined Tower," the players always got to move and hit first in each round. Now, let's make things more interesting, by giving the monsters the chance to hit first, instead. This is the idea of initiative, of who goes first. Here's how it works:

- The DM (you) determines what the monsters are going to do. (Which monster is going to try to hit which character? Are some going to try to run away?) Write it down if it helps, but otherwise just keep it in your memory.
- The players determine what their characters are going to do and tell the DM.
- Each side (one person for the players, the DM for the monsters) rolls a d10. The side with the lower roll gets to go first and take their actions. Reroll ties.
- Magic takes place after all other actions on a side occur. The fighters take their swings, then the wizard's spell fires off.

Now, one side's actions may change or negate the other side's actions. If a hero is fighting a goblin, and that goblin suddenly dies before the hero can attack, then the attack is lost. A DM may call for a Dexterity ability check if a player wants the character to alter or cancel his or her action.

**Death:** Yep, your character can die in this game. In "The Ruined Tower," we talked about being knocked to 0 hp and being defeated and thereby taken out of the game. In a longer running campaign, death (and the potential of death) becomes more important.

A character that is knocked to 0 hp (or below) is dying. The character will lose 1 hit point per round while dying. Any type of medical attention (binding the wounds or staunching the bleeding, which takes 1 round, but not necessarily performing a magical spell) will stop that reduction, and the character is alive—though unconscious—at 0 hit points. A character can be brought back from an unconscious state through raising his hit points back above 0 with magic or rest.

If a character drops 10 points *below* 0 (in other words, -10 hp), then the character is dead. Kaput, pushing up daisies, cue the choir celestial. Even then, the character can be restored to the land of the living by the Patriarch, who has great and powerful spells. Reduce the character's Constitution by 1 point and return the character to play after the party (if the party) returns to the Patriarch.

## Experience

Characters grow more powerful by gaining experience. Experience is gained through killing monsters, completing specific tasks, and coming up with good ideas, and is awarded by the DM. In the Fast-Play Game, each encounter lists the amount of experience the characters gain. Usually, that experience is for defeating monsters, but additional experience may be awarded for making correct decisions, solving puzzles, or acting according to the role

## Switching Weapons/New Weapons

Here's the scene: It's after a major battle, the fallen form of the warrior is sprawled on the cold stones, dead. The priest examines his wounds, and the other party members surround the pair.

PRIEST: Alas! The noble warrior has fallen!  
OTHERS: Alas!  
PRIEST: His wounds were more than my skills could cure. He is dead!  
OTHERS: Alas!

<There is a brief pause>

THIEF: So, uh, does anyone want his sword?

The characters all start with particular weapons and armor, and the damage that they inflict (and protection they provide) are listed on their character cards. Over the course of the game, the characters may purchase, discover, or otherwise acquire other items, which in turn will affect how they hit their opponents and how they are hit.

When dealing with armor, you can calculate the new AC as listed in the section on Armor Class. When dealing with weapons, the weapon will inflict the listed damage. Note that particularly strong characters will inflict more damage, and hit more easily, with the same weapon.

There are limitations on weapons and armor, according to the character class. They include:

The fighters (Darkblade, Elanna, Thordar, and Peregrine the paladin) can wear any type of armor and use any type of weapon with equal ease. However, Thordar is a dwarf, and his armor will not fit the others, nor will armor made for a human fit him.

The thief, Niles, can only wear leather armor or worse (higher AC). This is because the heavier armors inhibit the smooth motions needed for thiefly behavior. In addition, he's a halfling, so any armor designed for another race would have to be cut down to fit him. As a thief, he also normally only uses a select number of weapons: dagger, knife,

short bow, a number of swords (broad, short, and long, but not two-handed), and quarterstaff. He can use other weapons, though he's not trained with them and not very good. When using a weapon not on the above list, he suffers a -3 penalty to the roll (so instead of needing a 16 to hit, he would need a 19). Best for Niles to stick to the weapons he knows.

The priest, Mitchifer, has similar limitations. Like a fighter, he can wear any type of armor, but he is also limited to what weapons he can use. Most faiths take a dim view of spilling blood, so he is limited to blunt weapons such as the club, mace, flail, sling, quarterstaff, and whip. If he uses any other weapon, he suffers a -3 penalty to the roll.

The wizard, Thaddeus, has the greatest limitations, since he is the most effective spell caster. He cannot wear any armor at all, as it messes up the forces of magic. He is also more interested in spells than weapons, so he is limited to dagger, quarterstaff, dart, knife, and sling. In a pinch, he could use other weapons, but it would be a rather dire situation that would cause him to do so, and he would suffer a -5 penalty to the roll. Nasty stuff, indeed.

The elf, Sunblayne, is both a fighter and a wizard, and her limitations are a combination of both. Like a fighter, she may use any weapon without penalty, but as a wizard she may not wear armor.

So, for example, a party consisting of Darkblade, Elanna, and Thordar find some human-sized chain mail. Thordar can't fit into it, since he is a dwarf. Darkblade is already wearing chain mail, but Elanna would go from being AC 3 to AC 2 as a result of changing to the chain mail. Through mutual consent, Elanna gets the chain mail.

In another example, Niles, Sunblayne, and Mitchifer find a magical long sword. Mitchifer cannot use a blade without a penalty, but both Niles and Sunblayne could use the sword. They may determine who gets it through discussion, carefully reasoned arguments, or a random die roll.

that one is playing.

As a rule of thumb, experience from killing monsters is awarded equally to everyone in the party who participated in the battle. In general, that means anyone that fought the monster, cast a spell, held his ground, or otherwise did not flee in craven cowardice at the first sign of the enemy. That means that a priest who might have used his spells to heal the fighters after the fight, or the wizard who stood in the back rank but helped argue tactics, should all get a share of the experience. This method of awarding experience is particularly useful for those characters that might not otherwise survive long in combat (such as wizards).

Awards that are given for particular actions should be made to those players whose characters take the actions, solve the puzzle, or otherwise make the breakthrough. These awards should not be split up between party members. If more than one party member works together to solve a particular puzzle, then give them each the same full amount of experience.

Players should keep a running total of their experience. Over the course of time they may reach the "Next Level" mark of experience. Here's what happens as they reach the next level:

- Darkblade reaches Level 3 at 4,000 XP. His THAC0 drops from 19 to 18 (he now is effectively 1 better to hit than he was before). In addition, he gains another hit die. Roll 1d10 and add the result to Darkblade's total (when healthy) hit points. He rises to Level 4 once he gains 8,000 XP.
- Elanna reaches Level 3 at 4,000 XP. Her THAC0 drops from 19 to 18. She also gains another hit die. Roll 1d10 and add 1 (Elanna has an excellent Constitution score), and add that result to Elanna's total hit points. She rises to Level 4 at 8,000 XP.
- Niles reaches Level 3 at 2,500 XP. His THAC0 drops from 20 to 19. Roll 1d6 and add the result to Niles' total hit points. Thieves are not as powerful at fighting as warriors, and they gain fewer hit points with each level. He rises to Level 4 at 5,000 XP.

- Thaddeus reaches Level 3 at 5,000 XP. His THAC0 is unchanged. Roll 1d4 and add 1, then add that result to Thaddeus' total hit points. However, Thaddeus now is able to learn 2nd-level spells (everything he's cast so far is a 1st-level spell). He gains the *blur* spell. He rises to Level 4 at 10,000 XP.
- Thordar the Dwarf reaches Level 3 at 4,000 XP. His THAC0 drops from 19 to 18. In addition, he gains another hit die. Roll 1d10 and add 4(!), then add that result to his total hit points (Thordar has a great Constitution, as befits a dwarf). He rises to Level 4 at 8,000 XP.
- Peregrine the Paladin reaches Level 3 at 4,500 XP. His THAC0 drops from 19 to 18, and he gains an additional hit die. Roll 1d10 and add the result to Peregrine's total hit points. As he is more powerful, Peregrine can heal up to 6 hit points of damage per day, instead of 4, to himself or others. He rises to Level 4 at 9,000 XP.
- Mitchifer the Priest reaches Level 3 at 3,000 XP. His THAC0 is unaffected, but he does gain an additional hit die. Roll 1d8 and add that result to Mitchifer's hit points. In addition, Mitchifer can now cast two additional spells per day along with the rest of his arsenal. These are *find traps* and *spiritual hammer*. These are 2nd-level priest spells. He rises to level 4 at 6,000 XP.
- Sunblayze the Elf is a special case, since she has two classes (and is called multi-classed as a result). All experience gained is divided evenly between the two classes, with half going to the fighter and the other 50% going to the wizard. When Sunblayze goes up a level in one of her two classes, different things happen.

Sunblayze reaches Level 2 as a fighter at 2,000 XP. Her THAC0 goes from 20 to 19. She also gains half a fighter's hit die. Roll 1d10 and divide the number by two (rounding up), then add that result to Sunblayze's total hit points. She needs 4,000 XP to go to Level 3 in the fighter class.

Sunblayze reaches Level 2 as a wizard at 2,500 XP. Her THAC0 is unaffected. She does gain half a wizard's hit die. Roll 1d4 and divide the number by two (rounding up), then add that result to Sunblayze's total hit points. In addition, she can cast the *sleep* spell. She needs 5,000 XP to go to Level 3.

In general, when you go up a level, you get a little bit tougher to kill, hit your opponents a little better, can utilize more powerful magic, and generally get more powerful.

And, of course, you get more powerful opponents, courtesy of the DM.

## Getting Started (Again)

After playing the Fast-Play Game adventure "The Ruined Tower," your players should be fairly comfortable with the basics of the D&D game. The "Wrath of the Minotaur" adventure takes the concepts we introduced there and expands them into the full range of role playing.

Characters from "The Ruined Tower" can be brought over to "Wrath of the Minotaur." They retain all the experience they gained, any gold they acquired, and any items they picked up in the course of that first adventure. New players can be added here, as well, and can pick from either the original characters that were not used or the new characters presented with this adventure.

## New Spells

As mages and priests grow more powerful, they may learn a larger number of spells and acquire more powerful spells. In the Fast-Play adventures, these spells are predetermined. Thaddeus gains *blur* at Level 3, while Mitchifer gains *find traps* and *spiritual hammer* at Level 3.

**Blur**—For the remainder of one combat, Thaddeus' form becomes blurred and indistinct. Anyone attempting to hit Thaddeus suffers a -4 penalty to hit him on the first attempt and a -2 penalty each round thereafter. Thaddeus also gains a +1 bonus to saving throws against spells.

**Find Traps**—This spell allows Mitchifer to automatically find traps (like Niles, but with no die roll needed) for the next thirty minutes of game time. Usually this means one particular encounter, but if several traps are close together, all are revealed.

**Spiritual Hammer**—For the remainder of this combat, Mitchifer can create and use a phantasmal hammer that flies around and strikes at opponents up to 90 feet away. The hammer is treated as a +1 magical war hammer, so Mitchifer has a THAC0 of 19 with it, and it inflicts  $1d4+2/1d4+1$  points of damage.

The adventure assumes that the players have run their characters through "The Ruined Tower," but this is not really necessary (although it's a good idea). New players will have to be brought up to date by the individuals who have already played "The Ruined Tower." (For example: "Ah, that's the symbol of the ancient mage that once ruled this valley," says one player, since her character saw the symbol in "The Ruined Tower.")

Finally, while "The Ruined Tower" was written to be played in an hour or less (to give a taste of role playing), the players may take several sessions to finish this adventure. See the sidebar entitled "Gaming over Several Sessions."

When you're ready to go, read the players the following aloud:

You receive a message from the Patriarch requesting that you appear in his study just after the noon bell. You arrive this time to find the room a maze of confusion. Ancient, rotting texts are everywhere; water-damaged books with broken spines are open on every flat surface, and yellowed scrolls are unfurled over the backs of chairs. There is barely room to stand, nowhere to sit, and the air is filled with the moldy smell of rotting paper. The afternoon sun shines through a badly tattered map tacked up over the window itself.

The Patriarch, hunched over one of the texts, smiles and nods as you enter. "Excellent," he says, "I am pleased to see you here. Again, the Vale has need of your services."

The aged figure waves at the scattered mess surrounding you. "I have been going over the books recovered from the ruined tower," he says excitedly, "and they have been extremely useful. Much has been lost, of course, but that which survives . . . ah, that tells

## Power Shopping

In "The Ruined Tower," the players were brought to the door of the dungeon with little preamble. Now, as experienced heroes (with a bit of pocket change), they might want to pick up a few things before they get going.

The Vale is dominated by small towns, of which the largest, Haven, is the player's main base of operations and the site of the Church of the Holy Defender (that is, where the Patriarch can be found). There are a number of small shops making a variety of things needed for successful adventuring. Here is a partial list:

Item	Price	Item	Price
Backpack	2 gp	Map case	8 sp
Belt pouch	1 gp	Mirror, metal	10 gp
Blanket	3 sp	Mule	8 gp*
Bucket	5 sp	Oil	6 cp/flask
Chain, light	3 gp/foot	Paper	2 gp/sheet
Chest, large	2 gp	Parchment	1 gp/sheet
Chest, small	1 gp	Piton	3 cp
Candle	1 cp	Rations (food)	3 gp/week
Chalk	1 cp	Rope	1 gp/50 feet
Flint and steel	5 sp	Sack, large	2 sp
Glass bottle	10 gp	Sack, small	5 cp
Holy symbol	25 gp	Thieves' picks	30 gp
Holy water	25 gp/vial	Shovel	5 sp
Ladder, 10'	5 cp	Wine	2 sp/skin
Lantern	12 gp		

Armor	Price	AC Benefit
Banded mail	200 gp	AC 4
Chain mail	75 gp	AC 5
Leather armor	5 gp	AC 8
Padded armor	4 gp	AC 8
Plate mail	600 gp	AC 3
Ring mail	100 gp	AC 7
Scale mail	120 gp	AC 6
Shield	10 gp	Reduce AC by 1
Splint mail	80 gp	AC 4

Weapons	Price	Damage
Battle axe	5 gp	1d8/1d8
Bow, short (2 shots/round)	30 gp	1d8/1d8
Crossbow (1 shot/round)	35 gp	1d4/1d4

a very interesting story." He runs his fingers over an open book, touching the nearly illegible handwriting, and seems lost in a daydream for a moment.

The elderly priest catches himself and looks up, smiling slightly in embarrassment. "Sorry. I have been searching for this for so long, it's hard not to be distracted. But I believe that I have found the lost tomb of Alaxus, also known as the Minotaur Mage, and I want your group to explore it."

As the DM, play the Patriarch as a warm individual who is truly delighted by the magnitude of the discovery and

Weapons	Price	Damage
Dagger	2 gp	1d4/1d3
Footman's flail	15 gp	1d6+1/2d4
Footman's mace	8 gp	1d6+1/1d6
Hand axe	1 gp	1d6/1d4
Knife	5 sp	1d3/1d2
Morning star	10 gp	2d4/1d6+1
Quarterstaff	—	1d6/1d6
Spear	8 sp	1d6/1d8
Sword, broad	10 gp	2d4/1d6+1
Sword, long	15 gp	1d8/1d12
Sword, short	10 gp	1d6/1d8
Sword, 2-handed	50 gp	1d10/3d6
Warhammer	2 gp	1d4+1/1d4

gp = gold piece

sp = silver piece; 10 sp = 1 gp

cp = copper piece; 100 cp = 1 gp

\***Mules:** the players may want to purchase a mule (or two) in order to carry their purchases. The mule will be more than willing to be led to the entrance to the dungeon, but it bridles at any attempt to drag it inside. There are mules that have been trained to handle dungeon adventures (strange smells, odd floors, and maniacs with weapons all around them), but these are not currently available. The mule has 15 hp and is AC 7 and, if attacked, tries to flee as soon as possible.

**A note on purchases:** The above are only guidelines. Characters can quickly overload themselves with all manner of gear, so don't dwell on purchases too long. Your players should be after high adventure, not bargains. Check the sidebar about using other weapons for limitations on which characters can use which weapons and armor. Armor purchased is fitted for the race of the character that bought it.

Regardless, it's likely there are items players want for their characters that are not on the list (one enterprising halfling in my first campaign wanted to buy an elephant, for example). There are a couple of options that you, as the DM, can use:

The item is not available in the Vale.

The item can be ordered and will be available after the adventure is over. This is particularly true for special orders.

Make up a price based on the guidelines listed above.

expects the heroes to be equally excited by the prospect. He expects the characters to leap at the chance to uncover this ancient tomb and discover its secrets, particularly if he and the characters have a good relationship (read: If they depended on him for healing in "The Ruined Tower"). The players will probably be interested in the Patriarch's offer (what else are they going to do?), but don't force it down their throats. Instead, the Patriarch has more information to offer the heroes:

- There are legends about the Vale that predate the arrival of the first modern settlers. Long ago, there was a powerful wizard that ruled the valley with an iron hand.

Some say he had the ability to move mountains, and others whisper darkly that he communed with the spirits of the dead. His chief servants were minotaurs—great bull-headed humanoids that wielded wicked, sharp axes. Using these minotaurs, he enslaved the various goblin tribes—orc, hobgoblins, and kobolds—and raided the lands beyond the valley's mouth. At that time, he was said to live in a series of towers such as the one the heroes found and explored. His name was Alaxus, but because of his powerful servitors, he was known as the Minotaur Mage. His symbol was a bull's head, similar to that found on the door to the library of the ruined tower.

- A hero, her name lost to the sands of time, came to the Vale to destroy the evil wizard. The hero's name may be lost, but she carried a magical sword that was remembered, a sword called the *Blade of Runes*. The hero defeated Alaxus at the cost of her own life. The *Blade* was lost, and Alaxus's body was spirited away by his minotaur servants, laid secretly in a great tomb. The power of the Minotaur mage broken, the inhuman tribes of orcs, hobgoblins, and kobolds were pushed out of the Vale by human settlers who founded towns and homesteads.
- Alaxus's towers were abandoned and in many cases taken over by later wizards or monsters. The Tomb of the Minotaur Mage was never found and remained a secret from that day to this. Now (and the Patriarch will tap an open, mud-spattered book for effect), they have records that speak of great excavation using slaves captured from Alaxus's raids. This may be the Tomb of the Minotaur Mage, and the Patriarch needs someone to find out.
- While the power of Alaxus has been long broken, his body was never found. As a result, there are legends of the Minotaur Mage's ghost being abroad in the land on the blackest nights. Interestingly, none of these ghost stories take place near the supposed site of the tomb.
- As before, the heroes may take any monetary treasure or magical items found within the tomb as their own, but any books, scrolls, or other items of knowledge should be turned over to the church. In addition, should they find the tomb, they should map it out as completely as possible and clear out any creatures that may have made a lair there so that others may come and investigate it.
- Should the heroes prove to be a bit mulish about the idea of plowing into another unknown underground region, note that the *Blade of Runes* has never been recovered and may have been taken with the body of the Minotaur Mage.
- The Patriarch points at the map tacked over the window. It is an original map from the ruined tower laid over one of the current Vale. It shows the supposed location of the tomb, not less than three days' travel up one of the tributaries of the river. There are no nearby towns, but there might be homesteads (small farms) along the mountain valley. The entrance to the tomb is apparently a cave marked with the bull-headed symbol of the Minotaur Mage.
- As before, the Patriarch has no men to spare as guards or helpers. If asked for other help, he provides a letter, set with his seal, explaining the purpose of the heroes and asking that those who read it aid the heroes in their quest.

## The Journey

Read the following aloud to the players:

## The Fine Art of Winging It

"Wrath of the Minotaur" has been written along the same lines as "The Ruined Tower," in that we're laying out all the encounters and detailing the numbers the players need to roll for their characters to perform certain actions. But we're dealing with a roleplaying game here; it's not just rolling the dice and moving your heroes around. Your players are going to do things that are not planned for in this book, like:

- Trying to buy things not listed for their characters;
- Using everyday items as weapons (or even kicking an opponent with a heavy boot); or
- Wanting to know more about the Vale than is listed in the booklet.

Welcome to the fine art of winging it. This is why the D&D game has a DM as opposed to a CPU. As the DM, you're entrusted to come up with answers. When confronted with a situation that you don't have an immediate answer for, you can make up the answer. Often you'll be right. Occasionally you'll be wrong. That's part of the adventure of the D&D game.

Looking at the questions we pulled out of our hat above, here are some general answers:

- If the item is reasonable, set a price. If the item is not, it is either not in stock (sorry, no elephants today) or not available at all (sorry, no shotguns in this world).
- Set up how much damage the impromptu weapon would inflict. The weapon probably won't do as much as a real weapon; 1–2 points at most for a fist, kick, or two-by-four. A torch might do the same but also set flammable materials alight (an additional 1–2 points/round for 2 rounds). Don't give a Strength bonus, and if using a weapon that can break, tell them it breaks on an unmodified roll of 1 or 2.
- Make it up. No, we're serious. The Vale is a small set of farming communities located in a valley. Long ago, a powerful wizard ruled this territory. What lay beyond the mouth of the valley? What other secret places are hidden in its woods? What other creatures lurk in the hills? That's for you, the DM, to decide.

Remember, the goal is to have fun with the players within the bounds of the adventure. If the characters are seeking magic and weapons that would make it too easy, they cannot find those items. The adventure should be a challenge, but it should be fun, as well.

Armed with a copy of the map provided by the Patriarch, your group leaves Haven for the supposed tomb. The map leads to a stream along the eastern side of the valley and up a narrow mountain canyon. Three days pass, and aside from a few nervous deer spotted along the wooded hillsides, you see no other animal life.

Finally, early in the morning, you reach a slight widening of the canyon, and the stream broadens into a flat, mirror-like lake, flanked by woods. Along one

## Fighting Macques

The encounter with Macques is here in part to show that your players don't have to kill everything they encounter. Indeed, sometimes it's better not to. Treating Macques well results in gaining access to the cavern and also a warning that there are kobolds around, monsters likely to be encountered.

However, some players may react violently to the sudden appearance of a man with a crossbow, and the situation may devolve into a battle (though not much of one; Macques isn't all that powerful). Remember to roll initiative and subtract 2 from Macques's roll (he's got a bolt already loaded and he's rather suspicious).

Macques is wearing the equivalent of leather armor, giving him an Armor Class of 8. This means the player characters need the following numbers to hit him:

**Darkblade** needs an 10 to hit, with either his sword or bow.

**Elanna** needs an 11 to hit with her sword or dagger in hand and a 9 to hit if she throws a dagger.

**Niles** needs a 12 to hit with his sword or dagger in hand and a 10 to hit with a thrown dagger. If he somehow gets behind Macques, he needs an 8 to hit and inflicts double the normal damage.

**Thaddeus** needs a 12 to hit with his staff or dagger. His *magic missile* spell automatically hits. If he casts a *sleep* spell, Macques automatically falls asleep. Spell casting is a very obvious action, and if Thaddeus starts casting spells, Macques fires at him.

**Mitchifer** needs a 12 to hit Macques. None of his spells harm the herdsman (they are more defensive and healing in nature), but Macques doesn't know that and will fire if he sees spell casting.

**Sunblayne** needs a 12 to hit Macques and hits automatically with her *magic missile* spell. Again, casting spells draws Macques's fire.

**Thordar** needs an 11 to hit Macques with his hammer or mace.

**Peregrine** needs an 11 to hit Macques. Peregrine is a paladin and a symbol of all that one considers good and right. Before he attacks, you might want to ask the player running Peregrine if he thinks it is good and right to attack a herdsman. Allow him to pass on his attack if he changes his mind.

Macques only has 8 hit points. He has a THAC0 of 20, which means he needs the following to hit the players with his crossbow:

18 to hit **Peregrine**

17 to hit **Elanna, Thordar, or Mitchifer**

16 to hit **Darkblade**

14 to hit **Niles**

12 to hit **Sunblayne**

10 to hit **Thaddeus**

Macques fires once then tries to run off (he has a movement rate of 12, which means that Niles or Thordar cannot keep up with him). If the player characters do attack, he tries to run away, then comes back for his goats later. If the player characters beat on Macques, after he fires the bolt, he surrenders. He provides no other help or information and reports the characters to the Patriarch.

In the unfortunate event that the players reduce Macques to 0 hit points, there are no immediate repercussions. They can press on with the adventure (getting past the goats). Macques's brother Phritz is waiting in the brush and comes to rescue his brother soon after the heroes enter the cavern. Phritz gets his brother down to the Patriarch for healing, and the heroes are in a good deal of trouble when they get back to Haven.

Now, it is unlikely that the players will have their heroes attack Macques, but it is possible; hence, this long discussion. They should know that there are times when violence is not the first choice. If they defeat Macques in combat, no experience should be awarded; they screwed up.

side of the canyon wall, at the place noted by the map, is a cavern. The rocks above the canyon are weathered and worn, but in the morning light they look like a great bull's head with shattered horns.

You approach the cavern's entrance and notice that the opening has been fenced off with a low barrier of woven branches. Above the barrier, small heads appear—goats. They regard you curiously, and one or two bleat at you.

You hear the sound of a crossbow bolt being clicked into a groove, and then a voice to one side of the entrance says, "And how can we be helping you lot?"

Looking towards the sound of the voice, the heroes see a short, slender man dressed in a brown leather vest and leggings. He has a shepherd's crook laid to one side of the canyon wall but is carrying a crossbow. The crossbow has a bolt laid in the firing groove but is not aimed directly at the heroes.

The speaker is Macques (pronounced "Max"), a simple herdsman who brings his herd of goats up for the summer

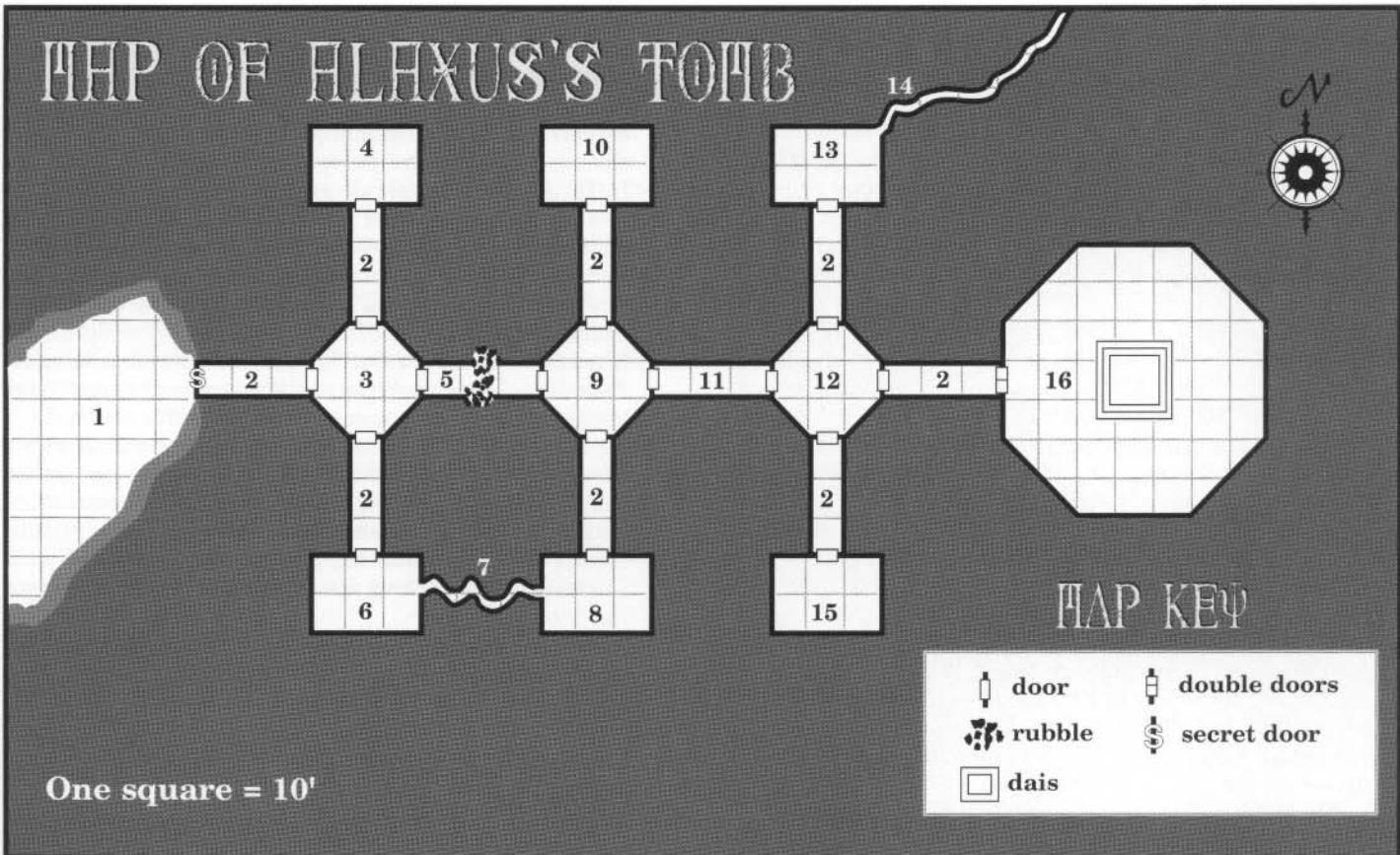
grasses. He is concerned that the adventurers may be bandits seeking to steal his goats. He is prepared to ask questions first and shoot later.

Macques, like the Patriarch, is your character to run as the DM. You can run him as a crusty old coot, like a western sidekick. Or you can make him a gruff man with a bit of an Irish lilt to his voice and just a hint of larceny about him. Or you can run him in your normal voice. Do what feels comfortable to you.

Macques does not intend to harm the heroes; he's just worried about his goats. He brings up the crossbow as a warning if the heroes approach, but otherwise keeps it pointed slightly away. He fires only if someone tries to attack, fire a weapon, or cast a spell at him. Then he runs (He moves 12 and knows a number of hiding places along the canyon).

The heroes can get Macques to put aside the crossbow by explaining why they are there and that they mean no harm to him or to the goats. He's a little dubious about letting the heroes into "his" goat-pen but can be easily convinced. Options the players can try include:

# MAP OF ALAXUS'S TOMB



- Showing him the letter from the Patriarch. Macques is a faithful follower of the Church of the Holy Defender and is more than willing to let the heroes examine the cave.
- Paying him off. Macques gladly "rents" the cave for about 10 gp to the players.
- Telling the truth about why they are there, or coming up with a good story. Macques really isn't interested in why the players want his goat cavern, but he's willing to let the players check it out if they treat him nicely and let him move the goats off to their grazing lands first.
- Frightening Macques off. Verbal threats work, though that is not the best answer for the players. He fires his crossbow and runs if physically threatened. Then the players have to get past 20 goats, chasing them out of the cavern in order to find what's beyond.

If treated well, Macques warms to the heroes and provides what little information he has:

- He is taking his goats further up the valley to some meadows.
- He (and other herdsmen) have been using Bullhead Cavern (he noticed the similarity as well) as a night resting spot for the herd for about a decade.
- He keeps them in the cave because there are kobolds in the hills ("Nasty little vermin!" he spits, "Little cusses, but there are a lot of them, and they'll stab you in the back as soon as look at yah.")
- The kobolds are also why Macques carries the crossbow.

Macques doesn't know anything about Alaxus the Minotaur Mage and doesn't have much belief in "ghost stories" and "lost treasure." He goes on his way with his herd if the players give him a chance to vacate the cave, wishing them

well. He agrees to carry any message back to the Patriarch at Haven (being a faithful follower of the Holy Defender), but notes that the heroes will likely be back there before he is. If the players deal with Macques in a nonviolent manner, give them 10 XP each. If one player was particularly good at dealing with Macques, give him or her an extra 10 XP.

Once the players have dealt with Macques, go to the next section and look at the map above, which shows the layout of the Minotaur Mage's lair. The numbered areas on the map correspond to the numbered sections below.

## 1) Bullhead Cavern

The first step for the players is to get the goats out of the cavern, either by removing the barrier and shooing them out or letting Macques lead them out of the area. The goats are more nuisance than real threat and would rather move out than fight.

If the heroes try to investigate the cavern while the goats are still in there, have them be constantly underfoot, nuzzling into the heroes' packs in search of food or nibbling on their cloaks.

Once the cavern is cleared of goats, read the following aloud to the players:

The cavern runs about twenty feet back into the canyon wall. It has been occupied, off and on, by goats and other herd beasts for years and looks and smells of it. Clumps of dried grass have been pressed into the muddy floor, and the air reeks of wet goat fur. The walls are smooth but could be a natural formation instead of being made by human hands.

## It Takes A Thief (Other Things That Niles Can Do)

In "The Ruined Tower" adventure, Niles was shown to have the ability to open a locked door using his thieves' tools. Thieves have a number of special abilities that allow them to do things that other characters cannot. In the "Wrath of the Minotaur" adventure, there are some situations where Niles may have useful abilities.

**Open Locks:** This ability was covered already and allows Niles to unlock doors and open secured chests. The player running Niles can make the roll, and there is a 4 out of 10 chance of opening the lock. Certain locks can allow multiple tries (up to three), while some just allow one, at the judgement of the DM. This ability cannot affect magically secured doors.

**Find Traps:** Using his thieves' tools and his extensive knowledge of traps and other thief-deterrant devices, Niles can search a box, chest, or door to detect if there are traps present. He has a 4 out of 10 chance to detect the trap. The DM makes the roll and, if it fails, merely states, "You detect no traps" (which would be the result if there was not a trap, as well). Once detected, the thief can foil the trap on another 4 out of 10 roll, but failure indicates the trap is sprung, instead. Let the player running Niles make this roll.

**Move Silently:** This is an ability to sneak quietly along, perhaps to get past some monsters or to creep up behind them. Niles has a 4 out of 10 chance of moving silently. The DM will make the roll; Niles always assumes that he's moving silently when he tries (even when he's not). The ability is not used too much in the adventure since, even if Niles is moving silently, he is accompanied by guys in full plate wearing heavy boots. Moving silently is best done alone, and being alone is not a good idea in the dungeon.

**Detect Noise:** This is the ability to listen to a door and hear if something is on the other side. Noises are not distinct; you cannot hear conversations. But you might get an idea of what is on the other side. For example, if there is a room full of kobolds right next door, you might here snippets of their high, yipping language. The undead make no noise, nor do traps or magical creatures that are not activated. There is a 3 in 10 chance of detecting noise, and the DM makes the roll. If the roll fails (or there is nothing to hear), tell Niles that he has not heard anything.

There are other abilities, but these are the ones that may have an effect on the current adventure. As the DM, you can choose to share this information with Niles (Take him aside as play begins; no need to let everyone know about this), or you can bring it up in the course of play. ("You know," you say, "Niles could *listen* to that door to hear if anything is on the other side.")

- If Sunblayne the elf is present, roll 1d6. On a 1 or 2, she has a feeling that the northern passage of the cave feels wrong, as if there were more there than meets the eye. Rubbing her hands along the wall, she feels a thin ridge carved in the stone. Running her fingers along the ridge, she soon sketches the dimensions of the doorway.
- If Thordar the dwarf is present, he has a feeling of "wrongness" about the northern end of the cavern, as well. On a roll of 1 to 4 on 1d6, Thordar feels that the northern end is unnatural but carved to look natural. As with Sunblayne, careful examination shows the dimensions of the door.
- If neither Sunblayne nor Thordar discover anything (if their die rolls are too high) or if they are not present, have the characters each make a Wisdom ability check. Each player rolls 1d20 and compares it to his or her character's Wisdom score. Those that roll below the number realize that the air is cooler and slightly fresher in the northern part of the cave. A careful examination of the wall indicates a straight fissure carved into the side of the wall. Running a finger along the fissure reveals the frame of the door.
- If, after all this, *no one* figures out what the door is, chose the character whose player rolled lowest on the Wisdom ability check. That person recognizes the secret door.

Finding the door is one thing, opening it is another. Brushing the grime from the area reveals not only the dimensions of the door but the carved head of a bull across the front of the doorway. The door and the head are carved of the same material as the rest of the cave, but its eyes are made of a bluer granite. Depressing both of the eyes simultaneously causes the latch securing the door to release, which causes the entire door to pop open a half-inch. Opening the door the rest of the way requires some raw effort. You've done the drill before, but here's what the heroes need to open the door:

Thaddeus	5
Niles	6
Sunblayne	7
Elanna, Mitchifer, Thordar, or Peregrine	8
Darkblade	10

As before, there is no rush if they can't get the door open. It just takes several tries. If Thaddeus has a *knock* spell (on the scroll or by gaining a level), he can use it to open the door, as well.

## 2) Hallway

After opening the door, read the following aloud to the players:

You see a ten-foot-wide corridor running ahead of you, about thirty feet long and ending in a wooden door. The walls are wet from seeping water; erratic drops of water drip from the ceiling, and the flagstones of the floor are canted and uneven from settling.

There is nothing unusual about the hallway, but look at the map on page 31. You'll see that there are eight areas marked with the number 2. Each time you reach such a hall-

If this is the entrance to the Lost Tomb of Alaxus, (and it is), the heroes have to search for the secret entrance. Since we want the players to find the entrance, the only question is *how* they find it. Do the following in the order presented:

way, read the above passage to the players.

There is a reason for this (more than just the fact that we don't want to have to repeat ourselves every time we have a hallway). This is setting up a routine. After about three times, the players will be pretty used to it. However, that's when we hit them with a cave-in in area 11.

If the players move carefully down the hall, tapping walls, testing footholds, looking for pits, allow them to and inform them that they find nothing. Tell the dwarf (if present) that the walls and ceiling look sturdy enough, but there has been severe water damage. Obviously, the builders of this tomb were not dwarves; dwarves would use better material and cross-bracing. Nondwarves should be aware that the structure is crumbling but secure.

The door at the end of the hallway opens away from the players and needs no door-opening roll. In fact, none of the interior doors require such a roll unless otherwise stated.

Now is a good time (if the players have not done so already) to figure out the marching order (who is in front, who is in back, and who is in the middle) and who is carrying what (weapons, shields, and in particular, torches).

### 3) First Chamber

Read the following aloud to the players:

The door opens into a domed, eight-sided room. There are four doors in the room (including the one you came in), one at each of the cardinal points.

The room is empty, but the floor and ceiling are worth noting. The floor here, unlike the hallway, is made of well laid stone and is dominated by a great monument of blue granite in the center. The blue stone plinth is deeply carved with angular runes.

The ceiling is a great dome and painted a sky blue, with painted greenery and shrubs along the rim where it meets the walls. It seems to be a pastoral scene in the early days of the Vale. Over the far door looms a painting of a tall, young male figure dressed in robes. He has jet black hair worn loose over his shoulders and a neatly trimmed beard and moustache. Around his neck he wears a chain, and from that chain hangs a silver key.

The painted figure is Alaxus, of course, and the plinth is carved with the following declaration in the languages of humans, dwarves, and elves. The inscription reads:

Behold!  
This Is The Final Resting Place Of  
Alaxus  
The Minotaur Mage  
The Master Of The Vale  
The Enslaver Of Races  
May His Name Never Be Forgotten  
Ye Who Seek His Blessing  
Bow Down In Worship Of His Power

Those following the instructions on the plinth suffer no penalty or benefit, but ask them for a 1d20 roll, anyway. The roll means nothing, but it may seem to the players that it does mean something. It's all right to keep them guessing.

The room has its own magical lighting, set around the rim of the dome. The doors to the north and south are clear-

ly marked with the words "The Doomed." The far door, beneath the portrait of Alaxus, is marked with the words "Enter And Be Damned."

There are no monsters, tricks, or traps in this room.

### 4) Boneyard

Read the following aloud to the players:

The door opens to reveal a room filled with bones. There are large and small ribs and leg bones, bare and white, piled ankle deep, with three huge piles in the center. Each of the larger piles is topped by a cow's skull, and you see numerous other skulls, shattered and broken, hidden among the other bones. There are no other visible doors from this room.

This is one of the two rooms where the original builders of the tomb were interred after their jobs were complete. The bones are of a mixture of races—minotaurs, kobolds, hobgoblins, and orcs. They were slain by Alaxus after the completion of the tomb in order to keep the tomb's secrets concealed. The room is 30 feet wide and 20 feet across.

Each of the large piles of bones contains an animated minotaur skeleton. They have been enchanted so that only one will animate at a time, and then only if someone enters the room and begins searching among the bones. Read the following aloud to the players if they enter the room:

As you enter the room, the centermost pile of bones stirs from its resting place. It rises from a crouch to reveal a fully constructed minotaur skeleton. Within its bovine skull flicker twin motes of malevolent light.

Remember to roll initiative, with the low roll going first. As with the skeletons of "The Ruined Tower" adventure, the minotaur skeleton is less affected by particular weapons and more affected by others. Minotaur skeletons are AC 6. The skeletons are 7 1/2 feet tall and as such are considered Large opponents.

#### Minotaur Skeleton

AC:	6
hp:	14
THAC0:	19
#Atts:	1
Damage/Att:	1d6
Notes:	Edged and piercing weapons inflict half damage.

**Darkblade** has a THAC0 of 19 (18 if you count his Strength bonus) and as such needs a 12 or better to hit. If he hits with his sword, he inflicts 1d12 points of damage (because the monsters are Large creatures), adding one point for his Strength. Find the total damage he inflicts,

then divide by 2, rounding up (4 1/2 becomes 5). If he uses his bow, he can attack twice and inflict 1d8 points of damage, but he cannot use it in direct combat. Again, halve the damage from arrows after it is rolled.

**Elanna** has a THAC0 of 19 and as such needs a 13 or better to hit with sword or dagger in hand or an 11 if she throws her dagger. If she uses the two-handed sword, she rolls 3d6 to determine how much damage she does (for Large creatures), dividing the result by 2. If she uses her dagger, she rolls 1d3 to determine damage, again dividing the result by 2 (and rounding up).

**Niles** has a THAC0 of 20 and as such needs a 14 or better to hit with sword or dagger in hand or a 12 if he throws his dagger. He inflicts 1d8 points of damage if he uses his short

sword and 1d3 if using his dagger (damage vs. Large creatures). Divide the result by 2 to determine how much damage Niles does to the skeletons. As a thief, Niles gets a special benefit for attacking humanoid creatures from behind. If he manages to get behind a minotaur skeleton, he only needs a 10 to hit. In addition, he inflicts *double* damage; in effect, he is unaffected by the penalty for the skeleton's hard bones.

**Thaddeus** has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 14 or better to hit. He inflicts 1d6 points of damage with the quarterstaff, and this result is *not* halved (the quarterstaff is a blunt weapon and inflicts full damage on the minotaur skeleton). If he casts his *magic missile* spell, he inflicts 1d4+1 points of damage (no "to hit" roll is needed). If he casts his *sleep* spell, there is no effect; the skeletons are not living things and as such do not fall asleep.

**Sunblayne** has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 14 or better to hit. She inflicts 1d6 points of damage with the staff, and, as with Thaddeus's weapon, the amount is not halved. If she attacks with her short sword, she needs only a 13 to hit (all elves gain a benefit to hit with a sword) and inflicts 1d8 points of damage, halved. Ask Sunblayne's player what weapon she is using if she attacks. If she casts her *magic missile* spell, she inflicts 1d4+1 points of damage automatically.

**Thordar** has a THAC0 of 19 and needs a roll of 13 or better to hit. Before he attacks, ask the player running the dwarf which weapon he is using to attack. He inflicts 1d8 points of damage with the battle axe, but this is halved. He inflicts 1d4 points of damage with the war hammer, but this is not halved. In addition, he can throw his hammer, but not in direct combat.

**Peregrine** has a THAC0 of 19 and needs a roll of 13 or better to hit. Using his long sword, Peregrine inflicts 1d12 points of damage, the result being halved. The minotaur skeletons are mindless magical constructs and are not evil *per se*. As a result, Peregrine's ability to detect evil or affect evil creatures is not applicable here.

**Mitchifer** has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 14 to hit. He inflicts 1d6 points of damage with his mace, which, like the quarterstaff, is a blunt weapon and is not penalized because of the minotaur skeletons' bony nature. Despite their attacks, the skeletons are not considered evil (they are mindless things), so *protection from evil* does not help in this situation (you can tell the player running Mitchifer this).

In addition, Mitchifer is armed with holy water, which, when splashed on the minotaur skeleton, inflicts 2d4 points of damage upon it. Finally, Mitchifer has the ability to turn undead. This involves leveling the divine power of his faith against undead creatures such as skeletons and ghouls to drive them away. In this case, Mitchifer needs to roll a 13 or higher on 1d20 to turn the minotaur skeleton. If he succeeds, the skeleton does not attack any of the heroes and instead hangs back. Mitchifer must maintain the turning in order to keep it active (thus, he cannot take other actions such as attacking or casting spells). If another character attacks the minotaur skeleton, the turning is broken and the monster is free to attack and cannot be turned again.

The minotaur skeleton, when it is its turn to hit, has a THAC0 of 19. It gets to attack once per turn. If it has multiple targets available (several heroes are within range and beating on it), determine who it attacks randomly. Assign each possible target a number and roll to see who the minotaur skeleton attacks. The minotaur skeleton attacks those closest to it

first, so only consider those people as likely targets.

The minotaur skeleton needs the following number or better to hit the characters (assuming they still have the same armor on; if they have switched armor, the numbers will have changed):

Thaddeus	9
Sunblayne	11
Niles	13
Darkblade	15
Elanna, Mitchifer, or Thordar	16
Peregrine	17

The minotaur skeleton inflicts 1d6 points of damage when it successfully hits a character. Each minotaur skeleton has 14 hit points and likely requires a group effort to destroy.

Only one minotaur skeleton attacks at a time. Once dispatched, the next minotaur skeleton only activates if the door is closed and then opened again or if the pile of bones that covers the minotaur skeleton's body is disturbed (that is, heroes can search the room after defeating one minotaur skeleton *provided* that they specifically avoid the other large piles of bones with cow skulls).

Each minotaur skeleton is worth 125 XP, divided among all the members of the party (we're going to assume you got a handle on divvying up experience from "The Ruined Tower," so we're not going to go into it here). There is no treasure in the room.

## 5) Cave-In (Part One)

When the characters open the east door from the first chamber, read the following aloud:

You see a ten-foot-wide corridor running ahead of you, about fifteen feet long and ending in a pile of rubble. The walls are wet from seeping water; erratic drops of water drip from the ceiling, and the flagstones of the floor are canted and uneven from settling.

This area has suffered from a cave-in due to water seepage and shifting earth. The cave-in is quite thorough, and it would take four people with shovels three days to clear enough earth to be able to squeeze through. Stress how the cave-in fills the area completely. If the dwarf is present, tell him that it is a major collapse, and indiscriminant digging might bring more of the entire structure down.

There are no monsters in this hallway. Its purpose is to stress to the players that parts of this place are coming down already, so they may want to check the hallways more carefully. This will have an effect in area 11.

## 6) The Cube

Read the following aloud to the players when they enter this room:

The door opens to reveal a room filled with bones. There are large and small ribs and leg bones, bare and white, piled evenly, and ankle deep. There are no other visible doors from this room. To your left, the air shimmers as if a bit of fog was present in the room.

### Gelatinous Cube

AC:	8
hp:	22
THAC0:	17
#Atts:	1
Damage/Att:	2d4

Notes: Successful attacks force characters to roll a successful saving throw or be paralyzed for 5d4 rounds.

The shimmering is a gelatinous cube, a denizen of underground places such as this tomb. It appears as a cube of clear gelatin 10 feet on a side and is difficult to see under normal circumstances (hence the "shimmering" to one side). Once the cube attacks it is quite visible.

The cube scours the area looking for trash and carrion, and kobolds have been using the cube's room as a dump for their trash. There were originally a set of minotaur skeletons in this room, as well, guarding the bones of the original builders, but the cube defeated them long ago, and their bones have been mixed in with the others by the cube's relentless pursuit of more remains.

The cube remains inert until someone comes within striking distance (about 5 feet) of it. Then it lurches forward, seeking to engulf its prey. The cube only has a movement rate of 6, so everyone but Niles and Thordar can easily outrun it if they want to.

Roll for initiative, with the low roll attacking first. The cube is quite large, so three heroes can attack it on a side. The cube has an Armor Class of 8 and is considered a Large creature. It has 22 hit points.

**Darkblade** has a THAC0 of 19 (18 if you count his Strength bonus) and as such needs a 10 or better to hit. If he hits with his sword, he inflicts 1d12 points of damage, adding 1 point for his Strength. If he uses his bow, he can attack twice and inflict 1d8 damage but cannot use it in direct combat.

**Elanna** has a THAC0 of 19 and as such needs an 11 or better to hit with sword or dagger in hand or a 9 if she throws her dagger. If she uses the two-handed sword, she rolls 3d6 to determine how much damage she does. If she uses her dagger, she rolls 1d3 to determine damage.

**Niles** has a THAC0 of 20 and as such needs a 12 or better to hit with sword or dagger in hand or a 10 if he throws his dagger. He inflicts 1d8 points of damage if he uses his short sword and 1d3 if using his dagger. Niles get no benefit for "backstabbing" the cube since, well, the cube has no real back.

**Thaddeus** has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 12 or better to hit. He inflicts 1d6 points of damage with the quarterstaff. If he casts his *magic missile* spell, he inflicts 1d4+1 points of damage automatically (no "to hit" to roll is needed). If he casts his *sleep* spell, there is no effect; the cube is immune to this type of attack. If Thaddeus chooses to cast his *sleep* spell, inform him of this fact.

**Sunblayne** has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 12 or better to hit. She inflicts 1d6 points of damage with the staff. If she attacks with her short sword, she only needs an 11 to hit and inflicts 1d8 points of damage. If she casts her *magic missile* spell, she inflicts 1d4+1 points of damage automatically.

**Thordar** has a THAC0 of 19 and needs a roll of 11 or better to hit. He inflicts 1d8 points of damage with the battle axe or 1d4 points of damage with the war hammer. In addition, he can throw his hammer, but not in direct combat.

**Peregrine** has a THAC0 of 19 and needs a roll of 11 or better to hit. Using his long sword, Peregrine inflicts 1d12 points of damage. The gelatinous cube is voracious and hungry, but not evil. As a result, Peregrine's ability to detect

### Who Gets to Test the Potion?

Magic rarely comes with an operator's manual. Often, magical items are found in the tombs and dungeons without any clue as to what they are. A battered piece of armor may be an ancient artifact, and an oily, viscous liquid may be exactly what the players need at this moment, should they only realize it.

By the same token, that battered piece of armor may be useless scrap, or, worse yet, may be under the onus of an elder curse that causes more harm than good. And that thick, oily liquid may be a deadly poison, waiting for a hapless victim to consume it.

If the players bring magical items back to Haven, the Patriarch gladly identifies them in a manner that involves minimal danger. However, in the dungeon itself, trial and error may be called upon. Here are some helpful hints:

- Look to those with good saving throws. If poison is involved, halflings and dwarves have great saves. Dwarves also benefit from good saving throws from magic. For other matters, priests such as Mitchifer have a high resistance.
- Keep curative magic handy. If the priest or paladin is on hand, keep them close. Their abilities may be needed.
- Decide who among the party is trying the potion (or the armor, or whatever). The one who risks his life in this manner should be rewarded (a bit more experience from the DM—say 20 XP—or first dibs on the item if it turns out to be useful).

Questions about who risks life and limb to find out what a mysterious item does are standard grist for inter-party relationships. Let the players figure out among themselves how to resolve such matters, stepping in only if they are truly argumentative and slow down play. Spreading the risk around is usually a good idea, and if anyone is felled by some piece of unknown magecraft, strongly recommend that the survivors get the body back to Haven to be restored to life by the Patriarch.

evil or affect evil creatures is not applicable here.

**Mitchifer** has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 12 or better to hit. He inflicts 1d6 points of damage with his mace.

Again, the cube attacks a random opponent and switches opponents each round (it is unintelligent) without penalty from those attacking it. It has a THAC0 of 17.

The gelatinous cube needs the following number or better to hit the characters (assuming they still have the same armor on; if they have switched armor, the numbers will have changed):

Thaddeus	7
Sunblayne	9
Niles	11
Darkblade	13
Elanna, Mitchifer, or Thordar	14
Peregrine	15

## Paladins, Priests, and Evil

The priests of the Holy Defender, such as Mitchifer and the Patriarch, stand against the tide of evil in the world. In particular, holy fighters such as Peregrine can sense evil in others. How does this work? And what does one do when one confronts evil?

A paladin's ability to sense evil usually has to be "turned on;" the player running the paladin has to say he is detecting for evil. Particularly evil situations (like meeting Alaxus) can trigger this ability to sense evil automatically, at the DM's judgement. Moving down the passage of area 7 causes the hairs on the paladin's neck to bristle because there is evil ahead, but this will not apply to every case. Usually, you have to be close or be able to see the target in order to detect its evil intent.

The ability to detect evil depends on the nature of the target (there are folk who revel in evil behavior in this world) and intent (the target means malicious intent against the paladin and his friends). Animals are motivated by hunger or conditioning, not evil itself, and as such do not register. The undead and magical constructs are not truly living and as such do not register, nor do traps, pits, falling rocks, or other inanimate dangers. Thieves (such as the halfling) may or may not trigger this detection, based on their intent; a thief that betrays an ally is generally evil, while one who uses his abilities to help the other members of the party is not.

Once confronted with evil, how does one deal with it? Well, this is one of the questions of roleplaying and one that is up to the DM and the players to determine. Should evil be eradicated wherever it can be found? Should evil be simply contained? Can evil be controlled and made ineffective? Is it all right to use one evil to fight another?

There are no "right" answers to these questions; it is up to your players in general (and the priest and paladin in particular) to determine how they handle it. Some may take a hard line, condoning nothing that even has a whiff of evil to it. Others may deal with it in a situation-by-situation basis. Some may feel the need to take matters into his or her own hands.

This is part of what makes roleplaying games interesting. There may be more than one solution to any given situation, and as you play your character, you may discover how you yourself feel about particular situations.

The cube inflicts 2d4 points of damage when it successfully hits a character. Besides the potential embarrassment created by being attacked by a dessert (There's always room for . . . no, never mind), the cube has some nasty surprises. Its flesh exudes a dangerous slime that causes those touched to be paralyzed for 5d4 rounds if they fail their saving throws. The saving throws of the entire party are as follows (remember, a successful saving throw means roll that number or higher on 1d20):

**Darkblade, Elanna, Sunblayne,  
Thordar, Peregrine, and Thaddeus** 14

Niles  
Mitchifer

13  
10

If the cube paralyzes all the characters, it rolls over them and, well, eats them. Later visitors to the tomb find the hero's belongings among the other trash and litter in the room, and their bones have joined those entombed by Alaxus.

Should the heroes defeat the cube, they find that it has a number of items it has been unable to digest in its insides, the remains of trash unthinkingly thrown out by the kobolds. There is a scattering of coins worth 20 gp, a nonmagical dagger with a small carbuncle in the hilt worth 120 gp, and a *potion of healing*, unlabeled, in a vial of cut glass (the potion smells of peppermint, which is one clue what it is. In addition, if someone takes a small sip, they realize what it is immediately). They also find three intact cow skulls among the debris, the remains of the animated minotaurs.

The cube is worth 650 XP, divided among the members of the party.

There are no obvious doors from the room, but if the cube moves away from the eastern wall (or it is slain, causing it to sag into a mushy pile of gelatin) an opening is revealed in the wall. Go to area 7.

## 7) The Narrow Passage

Read the following aloud to the players:

The gelatinous cube's immense bulk was hiding a small hole in the wall about two feet high and two feet across. There is enough room for a human to crawl through or a halfling or dwarf to walk crouched over. The passage's dirt floor is worn smooth by the trodding of many feet and twists and turns as it winds through the earth. The passage smells of stagnant water.

The "many feet" belong to kobolds who have been using the gelatinous cube as a dumping ground for their trash. If the party learned about the kobolds from Macques, they recognize what made the footprints. The passage is wide enough for a small creature, such as a halfling, kobold, or dwarf. The elf and the humans have to crawl through the passage on their hands and knees. Those with torches must shove them along the ground as they move.

Reorganize the marching order and find out who is going down the passage first. There is room for about four people along the entire length of the passage. Not everyone needs to be in the passage at once; the party can choose to send ahead one member as the scout, though they have no idea of what is happening in room 8 if they do.

As the lead hero moves through the passage, the smell of wet dog gets stronger. Those with the ability to detect evil (such as the paladin) will have the hairs at the base of their necks bristling as they move forward.

The passage leads out into area 8, with the lead hero being attacked almost immediately by the kobolds within.

## 8) Kobolds!

The heroes are making their way through the passage one at a time. Only the lead character knows fully what is going on. As the DM, you have a choice. You can either read the following to all the players (letting them know the peril the

## Roleplaying Kobolds

Kobolds are nasty, foul-tempered, treacherous creatures. They would sell their own brothers into slavery and cannot be trusted beyond the reach of a broad sword. They live to make other creatures suffer; they are cruel beyond compare. They are evil, evil, evil!

Despite this, some bright soul might suggest, "Hey, can't we just *talk* to them?"

Talking to kobolds will be difficult but not impossible. They have a tendency to attack first and make personal inquiries later. Negotiating from a position of strength is a must in party-kobold dealings; if you're standing over a fallen kobold with your blade at its throat and demand its surrender, it might just surrender. Or it might try to bite you on the ankle. That's the DM's choice.

One trick that might work is to use a *sleep* spell to knock out the entire group of kobolds, then tie them all up, wake one, and question the critter.

So you, the DM, have to know how to run kobolds.

Kobolds are nasty, venal creatures. Their natural language (which the heroes cannot understand) sounds like small dogs barking, and when they talk to humans, their speech is clipped and nasal with a lot of threats and baring of teeth. They are not cute. They have few (if any) redeeming qualities. When playing a kobold, think of running a humanoid weasel, but with fewer scruples. They have names like Goiter and Ratbiter.

Kobolds lie their fool heads off to save their own skins. They try to escape at the earliest opportunity or to take revenge on their captors. They gladly lead the party into traps or ambushes. They promise anything and go back on their word without thinking twice. If left unwatched, they run off. If forced into combat, they flee (or turn on their captors).

All of that said, a captured kobold will have useful (and less so) information for players about the tomb. He must be bribed or threatened to give up any of it. Here's what a typical kobold says:

lead figure is in), or you can take the player of the lead hero aside and inform him of the following:

The narrow passage ends in a room of similar dimensions to the last. The area is littered with trash and bones. In the room are four small humanoid figures.

The creatures are all of perhaps 3 feet tall, with stooped shoulders and slender, muscular bodies. They are covered with black scales from dog-like nose to rat-like tails. Their eyes glow with a malicious red sheen, and they have short horns jutting from their foreheads. They are dressed in tattered leather armor with multi-pocketed orange vests worn over it. All are armed with ancient, rust-pitted swords.

The creatures are kobolds—evil natives of the subterranean places of the world. As one, they shout at you in a strange, barking language and charge at you.

Only the character in front can react to the attack—either fighting, trying to push into the room, or retreating back down the passage.

**About Area 9:** Nobody there. We're the only kobolds here (a bald-faced lie).

**About Area 10:** Yep, there's lotsa treasure there. Lotsa gold in boxes. We left it alone. You can't eat gold (a half-truth; there is gold, but the chests containing them are trapped).

**About Area 11:** Just a hallway (technically the truth; the kobolds don't know about the ceiling).

**About Area 12:** Nobody there. We're the only kobolds here (a bald-faced lie again).

**About Area 13:** Where we throw our trash (another lie; he also won't mention the passage leading to the surface, area 14. The players might realize he is lying since they already *met* the kobold's garbage disposal unit, the gelatinous cube).

**About Area 15:** You don't want to go there. There are ghosts there that will suck the life out of you (Another lie; the kobold tries to keep the players away from the chieftain's lair).

**About Area 16:** Nasty place. A big minotaur lives in the tomb that breathes steam and burns people (That much is true and indicates the secret place beneath the crypt). The big minotaur came out a while back and took some of the gold from the Treasure Room. Took some kobolds with it as well.

Using a kobold as a door-opener/trapspringer is a bad idea as well, since it tries to show that it is unable to open the simplest door or unlatch the simplest lock. If threatened, it either runs or attacks (a disarmed kobold can still bite for 1d3 points of damage).

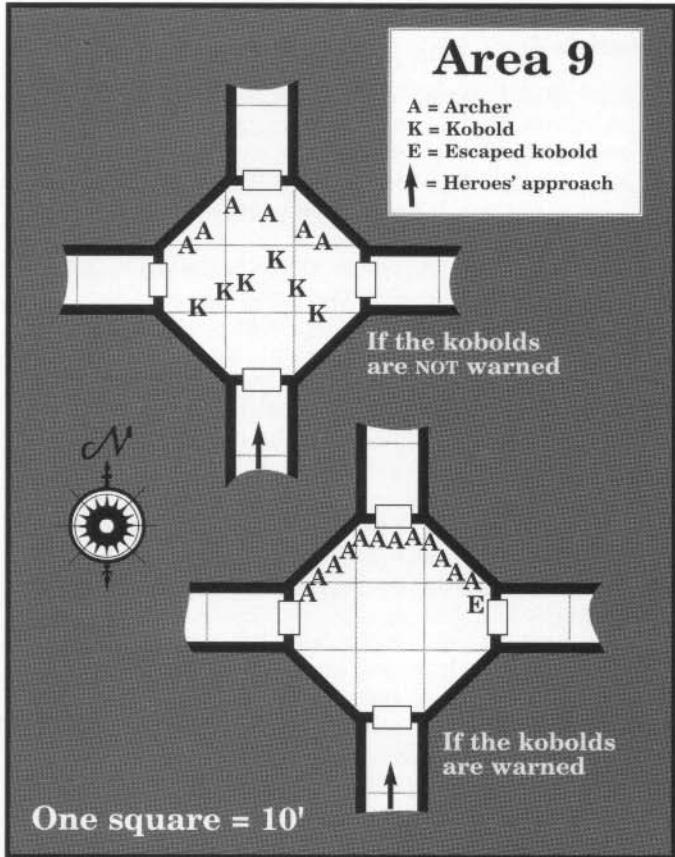
A captured kobold may act as a guide and translator, though again, speaking with other kobolds in its own language gives it the chance to doublecross the characters: "Wait five minutes, then follow behind us and attack the back line."

<b>Kobolds</b>	
AC:	7
hp:	3
THAC0:	20
#Atts:	1
Damage/Att:	1d4
Notes:	Up to 3 kobolds can attack each character.

If the hero fights, he or she is blocking the passage, and only he or she can fight the kobolds. The heroes in the passage hear the battle ahead of them (and probably the cursing of the hero in the fight) but cannot get involved. Nor can heroes in the passage cast spells or fire missiles as long as their friend is blocking the passage.

If the hero tries to push into the room, this replaces an attack. The kobolds are small and easily pushed back, but they all make attacks on the hero who does so. The advantage of this is that the next hero in the passage has the chance to get involved in the fight.

If the hero tries to retreat back down the passage, the kobolds pursue. A human or elf has to back away on hands and knees, while a dwarf or halfling can just turn and run. The kobolds follow, but the passage forces them to move in single file. The lead hero can even the odds, forcing the



kobolds to fight one-on-one, or retreat fully to room 6, where everyone can fight the kobolds.

Roll for initiative: low roll goes first. The kobolds are small creatures and have a Move of 6—about equal to that of a human crawling quickly through the tunnel. They are Armor Class 7 and have only 3 hp each.

**Darkblade** has a THAC0 of 19 (18 if you count his Strength bonus) and as such needs an 11 or better to hit. If he hits with his sword, he inflicts 1d8 points of damage, adding one point for his Strength. He cannot use his bow in the tight confines of the passage. If he uses his bow elsewhere, he can attack twice and inflict 1d8 points of damage but cannot use it in direct combat.

**Elanna** has a THAC0 of 19 and as such needs a 12 or better to hit with sword or dagger in hand or a 10 if she throws her dagger. The passage is too narrow for her to use her two-handed sword normally, but she can stab with it for 1d6 points of damage. In a normal situation (she's standing up in a room) using the two-handed sword, she rolls 1d10 to determine how much damage she inflicts. If she uses her dagger, she rolls 1d4 to determine damage, and she can use it in the passage without any difficulty.

**Niles** has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 13 or better to hit with sword or dagger in hand or an 11 if he throws his dagger. He inflicts 1d8 points of damage if he uses his short sword and 1d4 if using his dagger. If Niles somehow manages to get behind a kobold, he needs only a 9 to hit. In addition, he inflicts double damage—2d8 with the sword, 2d4 with the dagger.

**Thaddeus** has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 13 or better to hit. He inflicts 1d6 points of damage with the quarterstaff and 1d4 with his dagger. If he casts his *magic missile* spell, he inflicts 1d4+1 points of damage (no “to hit” to roll is needed). If he casts his *sleep* spell, all four of the kobolds fall

asleep. Note that to cast either spell, Thaddeus needs to see the target(s) (so he's either in the lead or the hero in front of him gets out of the way).

**Sunblayne** has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 13 or better to hit. She inflicts 1d6 points of damage with the staff. If she attacks with her short sword, she needs only a 12 to hit (all elves gain a benefit to hit with a sword) and inflicts 1d6 points of damage. If she casts her *magic missile* spell, she inflicts 1d4+1 points of damage automatically.

**Thordar** has a THAC0 of 19 and needs a roll of 12 or better to hit. He inflicts 1d8 points of damage with the battle axe. He inflicts 1d4 points of damage with the war hammer. He cannot throw his hammer into combat when he is in the passage; the quarters are too tight.

**Peregrine** has a THAC0 of 19 and needs a roll of 12 or better to hit. Using his long sword, Peregrine inflicts 1d8 points of damage. The kobolds are evil, and this makes it harder for the kobolds to hit Peregrine and those near him.

**Mitchifer** has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 13 to hit. He inflicts 1d6 points of damage with his mace.

When the kobolds attack, they have a THAC0 of 20. Three of the four kobolds can attack a character at the entrance to the passage. Within the passage, only the lead kobold can attack. The kobolds need the following number or better to hit the characters (assuming the characters still have the same armor on; if they have switched armor, the numbers will have changed):

Thaddeus	10
Sunblayne	12
Niles	14
Darkblade	16
Elanna, Mitchifer, or Thordar	17
Peregrine (but see below)	18

Now, as a paladin, Peregrine exudes a continual aura of protection against evil creatures. This protective force works for every hero who is within 10 feet of Peregrine, including the paladin himself. A kobold attacking any of the characters within that protective zone subtracts 1 from the die roll to hit. So, if Sunblayne is within 10 feet of Peregrine and a kobold attacks her, a “to hit” roll of 12 (normally a hit) becomes an 11 (which would be a miss).

Mitchifer's spell *protection from evil* works in a similar fashion, save that the kobold subtracts 2(!) from the die roll. This spell lasts until the end of the combat.

As a general rule, a natural 20 rolled on the die always hits. So even if Peregrine is fighting the kobolds and is the recipient of the *protection from evil* spell, he is hit on a natural 20.

The kobold inflicts 1d4 points of damage when it successfully hits a character. The kobolds attack until two are defeated. One of the remaining two stays behind to fight while the other tries to flee to warn the other kobolds in the tomb.

If the last kobold escapes, the other kobolds (in area 9) are ready and prepared for invaders. In general, this means that weapons are drawn, and they are anticipating the heroes' arrival.

If the last kobold does not escape, then the kobolds are not as ready for an attack. This means that the heroes automatically have initiative the next time they meet kobolds (no roll needed).

Kobolds are relatively weak and worth only 7 XP each. The swords are usable but not really salable. They have only 5 gp

total on their bodies. One has a dead scorpion in its pocket as a good-luck charm (yeah, freak the players out when they find *this* while going through the kobold's vest pockets).

## 9) Second Chamber (More Kobolds!)

Read the following aloud to the players:

The door opens to reveal an eight-sided room with doors at each of the cardinal points. As with the first large chamber, this one has a lit dome depicting a mural of numerous humanoids building great towers. There is a large monument made of blue stone in the center of the room. Over the eastern door is another portrait of a tall human figure.

Of more pressing concern is the dozen kobolds in the room.

If the heroes defeated the kobolds in area 8 without any escaping, add the following:

The kobolds look up at you in surprise, then hiss and draw their rusted swords. Some in the back pull out small bows and arrows.

There are 12 kobolds present. Six of them choose to use their bows and arrows; the rest charge to attack those characters entering the room. The heroes get the initiative and can take a free action while the kobolds are reacting.

If the heroes allowed one (or more) of the kobolds to escape, add the following:

They are on the far side and are armed with bows and arrows. They have arrows notched. One kobold to one side has his arm raised, and the rest prepare to fire.

### Kobolds

AC:	7
hp:	3
THAC0:	20
#Atts:	1
Damage/Att:	1d4
Notes:	Up to 3 kobolds can attack each character.

In the second case, make an initiative roll to see if the heroes act before the kobolds fire their bows (in the first case, remember the players automatically have the first initiative). If the players win the initiative, they can do things like close the door fast before they get hit (the door

shakes with the number of arrows that hit it; of course, the kobolds are ready for them on the other side and will stay ready for about a half an hour thereafter). There are 12 kobolds present (plus a 13th without a bow if one escaped from area 8). After firing 1 round, six of the creatures drop their bows, draw their swords, and close to fight with the players in the front lines. Once the heroes have gotten past the warrior kobolds with the swords, then the kobolds with bows drop their bows and draw their own swords.

This is a rather large combat; the kobolds aren't particularly powerful, but there are an awful lot of them, and they are in two groups: those with bows and those with swords. The map on the opposite page shows how the kobolds are positioned, depending on whether they are expecting the heroes or not. This would be a good time to sketch out the situation for the players on a piece of scratch paper, showing the arrangement of the kobolds and the party. Another option is to use coins, counters, or miniatures to represent

the members of the party and the kobolds. The kobolds, as before, are Armor Class 7 and have only 3 hp each.

**Darkblade** has a THAC0 of 19 (18 if you count his Strength bonus) and as such needs an 11 or better to hit. If he hits with his sword, he inflicts 1d8 points of damage, adding one point for his Strength. If he uses his bow, he can attack twice and inflict 1d8 points of damage but cannot use it in direct combat. He could use the bow if others are holding the kobolds off.

**Elanna** has a THAC0 of 19 and as such needs a 12 or better to hit with a sword or dagger in hand or a 10 if she throws her dagger. The two-handed sword inflicts 1d10 points of damage. If she uses her dagger, she rolls 1d4 to determine damage and can throw it against the kobolds on the far side of the room.

**Niles** has a THAC0 of 20 and as such needs a 13 or better to hit with sword or dagger in hand or an 11 if he throws his dagger. He inflicts 1d8 points of damage with his short sword and 1d4 points of damage with his dagger. If Niles somehow manages to get behind a kobold, he only needs a 9 to hit. In addition, he inflicts *double* damage (2d8 with the sword, 2d4 with the dagger).

**Thaddeus** has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 13 or better to hit. He inflicts 1d6 points of damage with the quarterstaff and 1d4 with his dagger. If he casts his *magic missile* spell, he inflicts 1d4+1 points of damage (no "to hit" roll is needed). If he casts his *sleep* spell, roll 2d4. Twice that many kobolds fall asleep. He can cast his spells from the back lines of combat, provided the DM rules that he can see his targets. If he can see them, he can target the kobolds in the back of the room and catch any in the front of the room, as well. This, by the way, is a great place to use a *sleep* spell.

**Sunblayne** has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 13 or better to hit. She inflicts 1d6 points of damage with the staff. If she attacks with her short sword, she only needs a 12 to hit (all elves gain a benefit to hit with a sword) and inflicts 1d6 points of damage. If she casts her *magic missile* spell, she inflicts 1d4+1 points of damage automatically.

**Thordar** has a THAC0 of 19 and needs a roll of 12 or better to hit. He inflicts 1d8 points of damage with the battle axe and 1d4 points of damage with the war hammer. He can throw his hammer into combat to harm kobolds that are using bows.

**Peregrine** has a THAC0 of 19 and needs a roll of 12 or better to hit. Using his long sword, Peregrine inflicts 1d8 points of damage.

**Mitchifer** has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 13 to hit. He inflicts 1d6 points of damage with his mace.

When the kobolds attack, they have a THAC0 of 20. Up to three kobolds can attack any one character. (Note that if the characters pull back into the hallway, only six kobolds can attack at a time, three each facing off against the two characters in the front row.)

The kobolds with the bows think nothing of firing arrows through their own people to get at the players. To represent this, if a kobold with a bow rolls a natural 1, it instead hits a kobold attacking that character as opposed to hitting that hero. The kobolds need the following number or better to hit the characters (assuming the characters still have the same armor on; if they have switched armor, the numbers will have changed):

Thaddeus  
Sunblayne

10  
12

## Gaming Over Several Sessions

By this point, your group will have fought a gelatinous cube, a heaping helping of kobolds, and maybe some minotaur skeletons, and they might have discovered the treasure boxes. You may have played for a couple hours, and you want to take a rest. Can you break from the game now and come back to it later?

Sure. After all, it's your game.

Here are some hints to help you in playing the game over several sessions:

- Make sure the players have their current hit points and items marked down on their character sheets. Put a little "x" next to spells that have been cast. People forget over time, and it's a good place to mark it down.
- Gather up the sheets. This is not a necessity, but some DMs like to hold onto the character sheets, particularly if they might otherwise get lost. If your players are not prone to forgetting things, then let them keep the sheets.
- Set up the next time. A lot of D&D players meet on a weekly basis to play for a few hours. Pick a time suitable for everyone, including you.

There are a few things to worry about when running over several sessions:

- What has gone before. Run through at the start of the new session (briefly) a summary of what the characters are doing and what the heroes have done. If a player cannot make it, decide what to do with his or her character. This can either be done by assigning the character to another player to run, or simply "retiring" the hero back to watch the mules outside the tomb, or having that character not contribute anything, effectively vanishing from play.
- You may have need to add new players in later sessions. One trick is to have the new heroes "catch up" with the old ones, meeting them in the dungeon (having encountered no traps or monsters, nor gaining any experience). Another is to have new players take on characters whose original players are not available.

It's possible that you'll wrap up this adventure in an afternoon or evening, or you might take a couple of sessions to finish. Roleplaying isn't a race; it's not important how fast you complete the adventure, only that you feel you've accomplished something once you've done so.

Niles	14
Darkblade	16
Elanna, Mitchifer, or Thordar	17
Peregrine	18

paladin himself. A kobold attacking any of the characters within that protective zone subtracts 1 from the die roll to hit. Mitchifer's spell *protection from evil* works in a similar fashion, save that the kobold subtracts 2 from the die roll. This spell lasts until the end of the combat.

As before, a natural 20 rolled on the die always hits.

A kobold inflicts 1d4 points of damage when it successfully hits a character, either with a sword or a bow. The kobolds fight until all are dead.

The kobolds are worth only 7 XP each and are relatively poor; among the bodies, the heroes find 100 gp in a variety of coins. One kobold has a nonmagical ring worn on a chain around his neck. The ring has a rudely-carved inscription on the inside of it. The inscription is in kobold and, if translated (later, back with the patriarch), reads, "This Ring Belongs to Goiter." The players may think the ring is magical or has special meaning. Actually, it's just something for them to think about. It's worth 20 gp.

Once the kobolds are dispatched, the players may want to know more about the room. A careful examination is only possible once the kobolds are dead.

The dome is a darker blue than the one in the first chamber and portrays a number of humanoid races laboring to build large towers, palaces, and other edifices. It does not seem to be any particular place in the Vale, but rather a collection of different sites. One tower under construction looks very much like the ruined tower the group visited previously.

There are a number of humanoid races working on the towers and battlements—kobolds, orcs, goblins, hobgoblins, and races that the heroes do not recognize. The various races are in chains as they pull heavy blocks up to construct the towers. Overseeing their work are minotaurs—huge, bull-headed men armed with whips and axes.

The figure over the door is Alaxus again. This time, he is older and without a beard, but his size and stance are the same. His eyes have a look of madness about them, and he still wears a silver key on a chain around his neck. He is dressed in rich, green robes and is flanked by a pair of heavily armored minotaurs.

The monument in the center of the room has been scarred and defaced by numerous sword-scratches; the kobolds have been using the plinth as a whetstone for sharpening their blades and care little for the memory of Alaxus. The badly-defaced inscription reads (in the language of men, dwarves, and elves):

Behold!  
The Great Achievements Of Alaxus  
The Minotaur Mage  
The Master Of The Vale  
The Enslaver Of Races  
May His Towers And Edifices  
Serve As Eternal Reminders  
Of His Might And Power

## 10) Treasure and Traps

Before the players open the door to the room, read the following aloud to the players:

The door before you is similar to the others you have seen within the tomb. However, it has a rough "X" scrawled in what looks like old blood across the front.

This may cause some debate among the party over who should open the door and how it should be done. If Niles the thief is present, mention that he has a chance to detect if the door is trapped. The door is not trapped, or even locked, but make the roll in any event. There is also nothing to hear on the other side.

Once the heroes open the door, read the following aloud:

The room is twenty feet deep and thirty feet wide. There are four large chests in the room, one to the left, two in front of you, and one to the right. The one farthest to the right has been opened and is surrounded by scorch marks on the walls and floor.

If the characters search the open chest, they find a sliding compartment in the lid that the kobolds missed (who opened that chest then decided it wasn't worth opening the others). The compartment is about the size of one's palm and contains a small gold ring that feels surprisingly heavy.

The ring is a *ring of fire resistance*, though one can determine it only by experimentation, magical spells such as *identify*, or the research of powerful and wise individuals such as the Patriarch. Keep track of who has the heavy gold ring and if they are wearing it or not. Here are the effects of the ring:

- The wearer is immune to normal fires—torches, flaming oil, etc. These fires (those inflicting up to 10 hit points of damage per round) do no damage.
- Very hot fires (those inflicting 11 to 24 hit points of damage per round), including large bonfires and molten lava, cause only 10 points of damage per round instead of their normal damage.
- Extremely hot fires, such as the breath of a red dragon or a *fireball* spell, grant the wearer a +4 bonus to the saving throw roll and a -2 modifier to each die of damage of the attack (minimum of 1 point of damage per die).

In terms of the other trapped boxes, this means that if the hero wearing this ring is in the blast radius of the explosion, he or she suffers less (or no) damage. Thus, if the amount of damage (after rolling saving throws) is less than 10 points, the hero takes no damage. If the amount of damage is more than 10 points, then damage is reduced to 10 points.

A careful examination of the floor indicates that there are lighter spots on the stonework, rectangles about the size of the chests. There are six of these, indicating that once there were more treasure chests here that have been hauled away. The fire marks around the opened chest, which extend about 10 feet away from it, might give a hint that the remaining unopened cases may be trapped, as well.

Then again, the heroes may want to find out for themselves.

Each of the three remaining chests is latched but not locked; the latch in each case is made of ornamental brass that requires a bit of muscle to open (so a captive kobold could struggle with it convincingly for a while before giving up). The latches are trapped to go off when they are thrown.

When the trap goes off, the area within 10 feet of the chest is engulfed in a ball of fire that inflicts 2d6 points of damage to all within. For that reason, ask where all the heroes are before anyone opens a chest. (No, "just outside the blast radius" is not an answer; sketch out the room and ask the players to show where their characters are). A successful

saving throw reduces the damage by half. The heroes need the following numbers to "save" against the explosion:

Niles	12
Sunblaze	13
Elanna	14
Thaddeus	15
Darkblade and Mitchifer	16
Thordar and Peregrine	17

Any other character (such as, say, a captured kobold) needs a 20 to save, and, in the case of kobolds, even taking half damage is likely to be fatal.

If Niles is present, he can search for traps and remove them (check under "It takes a Thief" on page 32). Remember that if Niles fails to detect traps, tell the player running him that he has found no traps; if he fails to remove a trap, he detonates it instead. The traps are identical, so Niles can learn from experience. If he successfully detects a trap in one chest, he notices the same characteristics in others. Each time he successfully removes a trap, increase his chances of doing so the next time by 2. This applies to these trapped chests only.

The player running Niles may surmise that, given the scorch marks, the boxes are trapped and check each in turn until he successfully finds one, only then trying to remove it. Reward such thinking with 45 XP to Niles.

If Niles is not present, the heroes are not necessarily lost. They can try to smash open the latches from a distance, using a mace or perhaps a thrown war hammer (consider the latch to be AC 7 to hit with 3 hp, the same as a kobold, so use the numbers on page 39). Alternatively, they might use several 10-foot poles to flip the latches open (have the heroes trying this make Dexterity checks). Either action sets off the trap, so check to see where everyone is before you detonate it. Reward creative behavior with a small (20–50) XP bonus. The chests can be dragged out of the dungeon and shipped back to Haven (by mule) to be opened there, if needed.

The trap is a combination of magic and mechanism, so foiling it ruins the trap; it cannot be removed and used elsewhere (and yes, the players probably will think about that).

Each chest holds 200 gp (600 gp total), a small reward for the time and effort that may be involved in opening them.

## 11) Cave-In (Live and in Person!)

Read the following aloud to the players when they open the door to this corridor:

You see a ten-foot-wide corridor running ahead of you, about thirty feet long and ending in a wooden door. The walls are wet from seeping water; erratic drops of water drip from the ceiling, and the flagstones of the floor are canted and uneven from settling.

Sound familiar? Right; that's what you've been reading for every hallway so far. This time, however, things are different.

As the characters reach the far door and prepare to open it, read the following aloud:

As you touch the door, the floor shifts a few inches beneath your feet. You stagger to one side as the walls begin to shake. Behind you, heavy blocks of stone drop from the ceiling, blocking the door behind you.

## Camping in the Dungeon

At the beginning of each new day, spell casters regain the use of their spells. This often makes it advantageous for adventurers to retreat out of the dungeon after they have been banged up and wait a day (or ten) to heal up fully before challenging the dungeon further.

However, with the cave-in, the characters are trapped with no (immediate) chance of rescue. It is possible that they will choose to camp out overnight in the dungeon itself. Here's how to handle the situation:

- Insist on knowing where the heroes are throughout the night. Usually a party will have an evening and morning watch and break the party up accordingly. Know where the players who are on watch are stationed in the room.
- Know what is next door. If the players hole up in a location without "neighbors," it is unlikely that they will be disturbed. If there are monsters in the rooms nearby, as the DM, you should determine if they come and visit the characters over the evening. If they do, they won't be in the rooms when the players arrive. Some dungeons use "random monsters" that might just pop up in this case. Wrath of the Minotaur has no random monsters.
- If there is a situation that demands the players' attention, know how long it takes the characters to pull themselves together for battle. In general, sleeping characters miss the first round of combat unless immediately awakened by their comrades (shouts do it). They are up the second round of combat (or the round after they have been warned) and are ready to fight normally on the third. Note that they might be attacked while they are on the ground, in which case they have a -2 penalty to hit and their opponents have a +2 bonus to die rolls to hit them.

In the morning, the mages can regain their spells through meditation, the priests can entreat the gods to grant them their spells, and play continues. Anyone who gets a good night's rest (uninterrupted by visiting monsters) regains 1 hit point.

If the players are resting for the night, this might make a good place to call the game for that evening. See the sidebar "Gaming over Several Sessions" on page 40.

The entire hallway rocks as the ground shifts, causing a cave-in similar to the one in area 5. Each hero in the corridor should make a Dexterity check to stay on their feet (each character must roll their Dexterity score or less on 1d20). The ground rocks, and larger blocks drop behind them on the corridor.

Make it clear to the players that the door back to area 9 is already blocked off, and more dirt and loose stone is filling the corridor with every passing moment. Stress the uneven ground, the heaving floor, the dust filling the passage and clogging their lungs. They can barely see, much less act. Keep the pressure up on them; demand to know what they are doing. Demand quick decisions. The only way to go is forward, through the door into area 12.

And of course, the door is jammed. The characters need the following rolls or less on 1d20 to open the door:

Thaddeus	5
Niles	6
Sunblayne	7
Elanna, Mitchifer,	
Thordar, or Peregrine	8
Darkblade	10

In addition, the desperate heroes can hack through the door. They hit it automatically, withstanding 10 hp before shattering.

The heroes should be relatively safe in the last 10 feet of corridor (despite the heaving floor and billowing cloud of dirt). If a hero tries to break for area 9 and the entrance, have that character make a Dexterity check. If the hero makes it, he or she pulls back before another large chunk of the mountain slams down, blocking the exit fully. Otherwise, that individual suffers 1d8 points of damage from falling stones before the exit is blocked.

The purpose of this sequence is to raise the players' concerns about being trapped in the dungeon. There is another exit, relatively nearby (area 14), but you don't have to tell them that, yet. Stress the feeling that they are trapped far beneath ground, and it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to dig their way back out. If curious, tell them that it would take four people at least four days to dig loose the debris, and there would be no guarantee that the digging would not bring the whole roof down on them.

There is a chance that some of the party members will be elsewhere when the cave-in occurs (*Darkblade*: I'm going down the hall to check the next door! *Elanna*: You go ahead, I'm going to make a tracing of this inscription!) This is unlikely but should be covered in the event it occurs. The group that is left behind must either dig their way through, or they must backtrack out of the dungeon and find the entrance to area 14 from above (which takes the better part of a day). This is known as "split moderation;" neither group should know what the other is doing. You can do it as one group (with the heroes not officially knowing) or take the trapped group aside to run their adventure separately. This leaves those players left behind with little to do, so it's important to rejoin the two halves of the party as soon as possible.

## 12) The Third Chamber

Read the following aloud to the players:

When the door creaks open, it reveals an eight-sided room. There are four doors in the room (including the one you came in), one at each of the cardinal points.

The ceiling is a great dome and painted night black. The perimeter of the dome is etched with red flames, as if the entire world is on fire. Over the far door looms a painting of a tall, ancient, almost skeletal figure dressed in green robes. He wears an ornate headdress with minotaur horns. Around his neck he wears a chain, and from that chain hangs a silver key.

The room is empty, but the floor and ceiling are noteworthy. The floor, unlike the hallway, is made of well laid stone. In the center of the room is a pile of blue granite rubble. Amid the rubble is the collapsed skeleton of a human in full armor.

The painted figure is Alaxus in his final days, as the rebelling nonhuman tribes revolted and torched his empire, and he fell into final madness. The rubble was from one more plinth extolling his greatness.

The collapsed figure is a (nonanimated) skeleton of a man in full armor. He was found here by the kobolds, who looted the sword and left the rest. The warrior has excellent (if archaic) armor and a shield (the kobolds found it too large and bulky to be used). All other possessions have been removed.

The armor is plate mail and can be used by Darkblade, Elanna, Mitchifer, and Peregrine. Peregrine and Mitchifer already are wearing plate armor, so changing provides no benefit to them, but Darkblade would become AC 2 and Elanna would be AC 0(!).

The shield is embossed with the sunburst symbol of the Church of the Holy Defender and is magical. It provides a +1 bonus to the user's AC when used, in addition to the +1 benefit for using a shield (in other words, it *lowers* the user's AC by 2). That means that if Mitchifer used it, his AC would move from AC 3 to AC 1. Mitchifer, Darkblade, Elanna, Peregrine, and Thordar can all use the shield. If a hero uses a shield, he or she cannot use weapons that require two hands (bows, for example, or the two-handed sword).

### 13) Centipede Farm

Read the following aloud to the players:

The room is filled with debris. Leaves, litter, branches, and other refuse litter the floor, piled up in the corners. The walls are wet from water leaking through the mortar and have collapsed entirely to the far right, revealing a narrow passage winding north.

#### Centipedes

AC:	9
hp:	1
THAC0:	20
#Atts:	1
Damage/Att:	none
Notes:	A successful bite causes hero to roll a successful saving throw or fall asleep for 1d6 hours.

This is an area used by the kobolds to raise centipedes (they consider the eggs to be a delicacy and mash them up in their porridge). There are about 30 huge centipedes in the room, curled up beneath the litter. They are not aggressive unless the characters go rooting around in the litter. If the heroes set fire to the litter, the leaves and the centipedes burn easily and the smoke drifts up the narrow passage.

The centipedes are about 6 inches long and, unless provoked, are quite content to remain hidden under the leaves. They are 1 hp each—so *any* hit kills one—and are AC 9.

**Darkblade** has a THAC0 of 19 (18 if you count his Strength bonus) and as such needs a 9 or better to hit.

**Elanna** has a THAC0 of 19 and as such needs a 10 or better to hit with sword or dagger in hand, 8 with thrown dagger.

**Niles** has a THAC0 of 20 and as such needs an 11 or better to hit with sword or dagger in hand, 9 with thrown dagger. Niles gets no benefit for attacking a small arthropod from behind.

**Thaddeus** has a THAC0 of 20 and needs an 11 or better to hit. If he casts his *magic missile* spell, he automatically kills one centipede. If he casts his *sleep* spell, he automatically puts to sleep *all* the centipedes.

**Sunblayne** has a THAC0 of 20 and needs an 11 or better

to hit. If she casts her *magic missile* spell, she kills a centipede automatically.

**Thordar** has a THAC0 of 19 and needs a roll of 10 or better to hit.

**Peregrine** has a THAC0 of 19 and needs a roll of 10 or better to hit. The centipedes are not intelligent and as such are not evil.

**Mitchifer** has a THAC0 of 20 and needs an 11 to hit.

The centipedes have a THAC0 of 20 and any number of them can attack the heroes; they crawl up pants legs, into armor, and otherwise attack any bit of exposed flesh. They only attack individuals who are standing in or near the refuse (they do not suddenly charge across the room to attack the heroes). The centipedes need the following numbers or better to hit the characters (assuming the characters still have the same armor):

Thaddeus	10
Sunblayne	12
Niles	14
Darkblade	16
Elanna, Mitchifer, or Thordar	17
Peregrine	18

The centipedes inflict *no* damage when they hit, but they do deliver a nasty poisonous bite. This mild poison immobilizes its target for 1d6 hours unless the bitten hero rolls a successful saving throw, in which case the character is not poisoned and takes no damage. The heroes need to roll the following numbers or higher to save against the poison:

Thordar	5
Niles and Mitchifer	6
Darkblade, Elanna, Thaddeus, and Sunblayne	10

A note of interest: dwarves do really well against poison, which is why Thordar's number is so low here. Halflings (like Niles) are also more resistant to poison; some say it is the result of their cooking.

If all the heroes are poisoned, the centipedes burrow back into the leaves and the heroes wake up in 1d6 hours. The centipedes are not interested in such large prey.

The presence of a pile of dead leaves in the tomb may clue a number of players in to the fact that the passage is a way out. Check area 14 for details on this.

There is no other treasure in the room. The centipedes are worth 35 XP each or 1,050 XP total.

### 14) The Narrow Passage

Once the heroes check out the hole in the north-eastern wall, read the following aloud to the players:

The passage leads upward through moist earth and rock. The walls are muddy and the floor is littered with small footprints.

The passage is similar to that in area 7 and used by the kobolds as their route to the outside world. It winds and twists through the side of the cliff until finally coming out a half-mile north of Bullhead Cavern in a small entrance hidden by some dead brush.

Heroes on the outside searching for the cavern find it

easily by just following the cliff north. Those who have been trapped within the cavern may breathe a sigh of relief that they have found a way out.

Like area 7, the heroes must pass through the passage single file. At the DM's option, they could meet a lone kobold coming the other way with a sack full of grubs and worms for the centipedes to eat. That is your choice; if the players are pretty banged up or you're seeking to wrap things up quickly, forego this encounter.

## 15) The Kobold Lord

Read the following to the players when they open the door:

You see something that resembles a makeshift throne room. A badly rotted chair is propped against the far wall on some heavy sacks of grain. Standing in front of the chair is a kobold dressed in tattered robes with a small crown on its head and bearing a glowing, blue sword.

A kobold stands on each side of the throne, each holding the leash of a very large weasel (almost as large as the kobolds themselves). There are six other kobolds in the room, all armed with swords.

The kobold with the crown points his sword at you and shouts, "Kill Them!"

### Kobolds

AC:	7
hp:	3
THAC0:	20
#Atts:	1
Damage/Att:	1d4
Notes:	Up to 3 kobolds can attack each character.

There is not much room for discussion here; the heroes have stumbled into the lair of the Kobold Lord, the local chieftain of the kobolds. The kobold lord is more powerful than his fellows and is armed with the magical sword once possessed by the warrior who killed Alaxus.

The kobolds fight until they are dead or until the kobold lord is killed, at which point they surrender if given the opportunity (and eventually seek to flee out the passage at the first opportunity). The large weasels fight until they are dead. The kobolds, as before, are Armor Class 7 and

have only 3 hp each. The Kobold Lord has an Armor Class of 7 and 9 hp. The two weasels have an AC of 7 and 18 hp each.

**Darkblade** has a THAC0 of 19 (18 if you count his Strength bonus), and as such needs an 11 or better to hit any of the potential targets. If he hits with his sword, he inflicts 1d8 points of damage, adding one point for his Strength. If he uses his bow, he can attack twice and inflict 1d8 points of damage but cannot use it in direct combat.

**Elanna** has a THAC0 of 19 and as such needs a 12 or better to hit, 10 with thrown dagger. The two-handed sword inflicts 1d10 points of damage. If she uses her dagger, she rolls 1d4 to determine damage.

**Niles** has a THAC0 of 20 and as such needs a 13 or better to hit, 11 with thrown dagger. He inflicts 1d8 points of damage if he uses his short sword and 1d4 if using his dagger. If Niles somehow manages to get behind a kobold, he needs only a 9 to hit. In addition, he inflicts double

damage (2d8 with the sword, 2d4 with the dagger). This ability does not apply to the weasels; he can only affect humanoid targets.

**Thaddeus** has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 13 or better to hit. He inflicts 1d6 points of damage with the quarterstaff and 1d4 with his dagger. If he casts his *magic missile* spell, he inflicts 1d4+1 points of damage (no "to hit" roll is needed). If he casts his *sleep* spell, all of the "regular" kobolds fall asleep; the Kobold Lord and the weasels are unaffected (this is because the *sleep* spell affects less powerful creatures first).

**Sunblayne** has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 13 or better to hit. She inflicts 1d6 points of damage with the staff. If she attacks with her short sword, she needs only a 13 to hit (all elves gain a benefit to hit with a sword) and inflicts 1d6 points of damage. If she casts her *magic missile* spell, she inflicts 1d4+1 points of damage automatically.

**Thordar** has a THAC0 of 19 and needs a roll of 12 or better to hit. He inflicts 1d8 points of damage with the battle axe. He inflicts 1d4 points of damage with the war hammer.

**Peregrine** has a THAC0 of 19 and needs a roll of 12 or better to hit. Using his long sword, Peregrine inflicts 1d8 points of damage.

**Mitchifer** has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 13 to hit. He inflicts 1d6+1 points of damage with his mace.

When the "regular" kobolds attack, they have a THAC0 of 20. Up to three kobolds can attack a single character. The kobolds need the following numbers or better to hit the characters (assuming the characters still have the same armor on):

Thaddeus	10
Sunblayne	12
Niles	14
Darkblade	16
Elanna, Mitchifer, or Thordar	17
Peregrine	18

Remember, Peregrine exudes a continual aura of protection against evil creatures. This protective force works for every hero who is within 10 feet of Peregrine, including the paladin himself. A kobold attacking any of the characters within that protective zone subtracts 1 from the die roll to hit. Mitchifer's spell *protection from evil* works in a similar fashion, save that the kobold subtracts 2 from the die roll. This spell lasts until the end of the combat.

The weasels are much nastier and have a special ability. They can grab onto an opponent and not let go, sucking the blood out every turn after a successful hit. The weasels have a THAC0 of 17 and need the following numbers or better to hit the characters (assuming the characters still have the same armor on):

Thaddeus	7
Sunblayne	9
Niles	11
Darkblade	13
Elanna, Mitchifer, or Thordar	14
Peregrine	15

The weasels inflict 1d6 hp of damage. In addition, if the weasels strike an opponent, read the following aloud to the player whose character has been hit:

The weasel latches onto you, digging its sharp, daggerlike teeth into your flesh. It does not let go, and it begins to suck the blood out of your body.

### Kobold Lord

AC:	7
hp:	9
THAC0:	19
#Atts:	1
Damage/Att:	2d4

Notes: Wields a magical sword that grants a +1 bonus to attacks and damage against most characters but a +2 bonus against Thaddeus and Sunblayne.

A weasel that hits in this fashion hits that same target automatically the next round, inflicting another 1d6 points of damage from blood loss. This makes the weasels the nastiest opponent of the three kinds in the room.

The Kobold Lord is everyone's worst nightmare—a kobold with a magical weapon. The sword is a *broad sword* +1, +2 vs. *magic-using and enchanted*

creatures. (The kobold wields this weapon with both hands, but it's a regular-sized broad sword). The "bonus" of a magical sword adds to the damage it inflicts, as well as its chances to hit.

- A regular broad sword inflicts 2d4 points of damage to Small and Man-sized targets (including the heroes) and 1d6+1 to Larger creatures.
- This magical broad sword grants the wielder a +1 bonus to hit and adds 1 to damage (in addition to all other modifiers).
- If the target is a wizard, can cast spells, or is a creature that has been summoned, created, or called into being by magic, the sword grants the wielder a +2 bonus to hit and adds 2 to damage.

Remember, the Kobold Lord is a little tougher than its subjects, especially with that sword, so it has a THAC0 of 19 and needs the following numbers or better to hit the characters (assuming the characters still have the same armor on):

Thaddeus	7
Sunblayne	9
Niles	12
Darkblade	14
Mitchifer, Elanna or Thordar	15
Peregrine	16

The kobold lord shouts and screams at the players as it fights ("Die, pigs!" or, "That's for caving in my corridor!" or, "You're too tall to live!"). It believes it can take out the player characters (after all, *it* has the magical weapon).

The "regular" kobolds are worth 7 XP each. The Kobold Lord is worth 75 and each of the weasels is worth 150 XP, making the combined total worth 431 XP.

In addition to the sword, there is a chest behind the Kobold Lord's throne. The chest is locked but not trapped; Niles can attempt to pick the lock or it withstands 5 hp of damage before springing open. Remember that if Niles checks for traps, make the roll anyway, even though there are no traps to be found. Within the chest are 300 sp (worth 30 gp), a pearl necklace worth 500 gp, a *potion of healing* (smells like peppermint), and a *wand of magic missiles*. If Thaddeus or Sunblayne is present, they can recognize the wand. Otherwise, the heroes must experiment to learn how it works. Any character can use it, and it works just like a *magic missile* spell. After 4 uses, though, it crumbles to dust. The wand can be used once per round. Don't tell the players how many uses the wand has; tell them only that it has a limited number and keep track secretly.

Within the chest is also a scroll and a small box. The scroll reads, "The minotaur never rests. The mage never sleeps." Within the box is a silver key identical to the ones shown around Alaxus's neck in the various murals. It is the key to open the black doors to area 16.

## 16) Alaxus's Lair

As the heroes approach the door leading to Alaxus's lair, read them the following aloud:

The door in front of you is jet-black and menacing. It is a set of double doors with large, silver door knobs and silver hinges. Each half of the door shows the bas relief of a minotaur bearing a great axe.

The door is made of magically reinforced obsidian and the handles are solid silver. (If the heroes later pry the doors off their hinges, they can get 100 gp for them, but that's not something they should be worrying about right now.) The door is magically locked and can be opened with a *knock* spell (if they have one) or the key from room 15. Niles is unable to open the lock with his lock-picks. If he wishes to make the attempt, roll the die and tell him, "The mechanism is far beyond your ability to foil. It is a very well made lock, perhaps magical in nature." The door is similarly invulnerable to heroes beating on it (though they may deface the minotaurs in the process).

The heroes may have come directly here from area 12 and be foiled by the door. As the DM, you can hint that perhaps the secret to opening the door lies elsewhere and they must search on their own. Messing with the door, leaving, and returning again does not affect the final encounter; Alaxus is used to the kobolds making trouble in the halls beyond his sanctum and is equally ready for the heroes, regardless.

Once the players get the door open, read the following:

The double doors swing noiselessly open to reveal a huge vault. This is another eight-sided room, but it is of immense size, at least seventy feet to the far wall. Against that wall, a huge pile of treasure reflects your torch light.

In the center of the room, there is a dais of three broad steps. Atop the highest step is a great stone coffin. Around the base of the dais, facing the door, there are the shadowy figures of animated minotaur zombies.

As you enter, the lid of the great stone coffin swings to one side, steam pouring out. A great minotaur rises from the crypt. The minotaur is dressed in green robes, similar to those of the man in the final mural.

"You have invaded my home," thunders the minotaur, "Now you will die!"

### Minotaur Zombies

AC:	6
hp:	9
THAC0:	17
#Atts:	1
Damage/Att:	2d4

Notes: Minotaur zombies always attack last in the combat round.

The powerful creature is Alaxus, slain and returned to life as a minotaur and kept magically alive within his vault. He has slowly been regaining the use of his spells, but it is very difficult for a minotaur. He only has a few spells that can be used in this situation (fortunately for the

### Alaxus

AC:	6
hp:	32
THAC0:	13
#Atts:	1
Damage/Att:	2d4
Notes: Alaxus can cast spells.	

players). He does have a number of minotaur zombies under his control that he can use to keep the heroes from reaching him. There are as many minotaur zombies as there are individuals in the party, but no more than four.

The minotaur zombies are large and slow and attack last in the round regardless of the initiative (roll initiative anyway, to determine if Alaxus takes his actions before or after the heroes; there may be cases where Alaxus does something, the players do something, then the minotaur zombies do something).

Alaxus can and does cast spells. Here are the spells that Alaxus knows that are useful here. You as the DM can choose if Alaxus casts a spell, wades into combat, or what.

- *Burning Hands:* Alaxus the Minotaur mage puts his thumbs together, fans his fingers out, and flames shoot from his fingertips. The spell inflicts 1d3+6 points of damage to everyone in front of him up to five feet away. The hero (if any) who is wearing the *ring of fire resistance* suffers no damage. Otherwise, a saving throw cuts the damage taken in half (round up). Here is what each hero needs to save:

Sunblayne	10
Niles	11
Thaddeus	12
Thordar	13
Elanna	14
Mitchifer	15
<b>Darkblade and Peregrine</b>	<b>17</b>

Alaxus can cast this spell only once.

- *Enlarge:* Alaxus can cast this spell on himself, growing from 7 ½ feet tall to 11 feet tall. His damage in combat increases by half again (so if you roll a 5 for his damage, take half [round up—3 points] and add it to the roll [5+3= 8 points of damage]). This spell lasts for the remainder of the combat.
- *Shield:* A glowing disk of blue energy appears in front of Alaxus that improves his Armor Class. Characters who throw items (like daggers or war hammers) suffer a -4 penalty to hit him. Other missile attacks (like arrows) incur a -3 penalty and all other attacks from the front have a -2 penalty to hit. Attacks from behind (like Niles' backstab) are unaffected. The spell completely blocks *magic missile* spells. As the DM, you can decide if an attack comes from the back or not. This spell lasts for the remainder of the combat.

You the DM decide when and if Alaxus casts his spells. Here are some suggestions:

Alaxus casts his *shield* spell the first round after the heroes enter. This gives him a better Armor Class against missile attacks from the heroes while they fight the minotaur zombies and he casts the rest of his spells.

Alaxus casts his *enlarge* spell next so he can inflict additional damage when he enters combat.

Alaxus casts his *burning hands* if it looks like some of the heroes are going to get past the minotaur zombies and charge him.

If struck before he gets the spell off (you decide to cast a spell, then Alaxus loses initiative and takes damage that round), Alaxus loses the spell and it does not take effect. He cannot cast it again.

Alaxus prefers to stay up on the dais, casting his spells and waiting for the players to come to him. He hopes his minotaur zombies take care of the heroes for him. If in combat with several individuals, Alaxus prefers to fight the one who is using the magical sword, as he recognizes it as the agent of his earlier death. Remember, the sword gives its extra benefit when attacking Alaxus.

Both Alaxus and the minotaur zombies have an AC of 6 (although Alaxus's Armor Class improves if he casts the *shield* spell). The minotaur zombies have 9 hit points each. Alaxus himself has 32 hit points.

**Darkblade** has a THAC0 of 19 (18 if you count his Strength bonus) and as such needs a 12 or better to hit any of the potential targets. If he hits with his sword, he inflicts 1d12 points of damage, adding one point for his Strength. If he uses his bow, he can attack twice and inflict 1d8 points of damage.

**Elanna** has a THAC0 of 19 and as such needs a 13 or better to hit. The two-handed sword inflicts 3d6 points of damage. If she uses her dagger, she rolls 1d3 to determine damage.

**Niles** has a THAC0 of 20 and as such needs a 14 or better to hit. He inflicts 1d8 points of damage if he uses his short sword and 1d3 if using his dagger. If Niles somehow manages to get behind Alaxus or one of the minotaur zombies, he needs only a 10 to hit and inflicts double damage.

**Thaddeus** has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 14 or better to hit. He inflicts 1d6 points of damage with the quarterstaff and 1d4 with his dagger. If he casts his *magic missile* spell, he automatically inflicts 1d4+1 points of damage. The *sleep* spell has no effect on any of the creatures here.

**Sunblayne** has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 14 or better to hit. She inflicts 1d6 points of damage with her staff. If she attacks with her short sword, she needs only a 13 to hit (you know, elves and swords), and inflicts 1d8 points of damage. If she casts her *magic missile* spell, she inflicts 1d4+1 points of damage automatically.

**Thordar** has a THAC0 of 19 and needs a roll of 13 or better to hit. He inflicts 1d8 points of damage with the battle axe. He inflicts 1d4 points of damage with the war hammer.

**Peregrine** has a THAC0 of 19 and needs a roll of 13 or better to hit. Using his long sword, Peregrine inflicts 1d12 points of damage.

**Mitchifer** has a THAC0 of 20 and needs a 14 to hit. He inflicts 1d6 points of damage with his mace. Mitchifer can attempt to turn the minotaur zombies, needing a 16 or better to succeed. If he does turn them, they simply retreat from the fight and hover near the back of the room.

The minotaur zombies have a THAC0 of 17. They attack last in every round regardless of whether Alaxus wins the initiative or not. They need the following numbers or better to hit the characters (assuming the characters still have the same armor on):

Thaddeus	7
Sunblayne	9
Niles	11
Darkblade	13
Elanna, Mitchifer, or Thordar	14
Peregrine	15

Peregrine's protective ability does not affect the minotaur zombies.

Alaxus needs the following numbers to hit the characters (assuming they're wearing the same armor), which are the same regardless of his size (only his damage is affected by the *enlarge* spell):

Thaddeus	3
Sunblayne	5
Niles	7
Darkblade	9
Elanna, Mitchifer, or Thordar	10
Peregrine	11

Peregrine's protection does apply to attacks from Alaxus, as does Mitchifer's *protection from evil* spell.

Note to the DM: this is a very difficult encounter for low-level heroes and represents the climax of the adventure. How you run it may depend upon the nature (and number) of your players. If they are banged up, feel free to reduce (or eliminate entirely) the minotaur zombies or have Alaxus refuse to use his spells. The minotaur zombies are worth 400 XP each. Alaxus is worth 3,000 XP.

The far wall is piled high with Alaxus's treasures, including large (untrapped) chests similar to those in area 10. There are 6,000 gp, 10,000 sp (worth 1,000 gp), and 10 large sapphires (each worth 300 gp). The grand cash total comes to 10,000 gp, which is a very nice haul for the players. Within one of the crates there are also numerous volumes of ancient histories and old legends, written in archaic, barely understandable languages.

## Getting Back to Town

If the characters all die in the tomb, read the following aloud to the players:

Despite your heroism, the tomb of Alaxus has defeated your group. Weeks later, a lone shepherd returns to Haven, speaking of how you were spotted venturing into the tomb, never to return. The Patriarch offers a prayer for your immortal souls and speaks to the other church elders. Other heroes must be called upon to discover what lies within the legendary tomb of the Minotaur Mage.

If you want, you can try the adventure again, either from the very beginning, or with whatever changes occurred because of the adventurers' actions. For example, the rock fall may still be there (necessitating the discovery of the second entrance), or the kobolds may have dug it out and reinforced it.

If the players discover some of the secrets of the crypt but then turn back before defeating Alaxus, read the following aloud:

You return to the Patriarch and inform him of the wonders of the old tomb. The old man is convinced that there is greater treasure within it. He asks if you would be interested in returning to finish the job or if you would prefer that someone else has the honor of fully exploring the tomb of the Minotaur Mage.

Again, you can run this adventure a second time, either from the very beginning or with the changes the player characters have made. Any XP and gold gained is retained from one adventure to the next (so the characters might want to buy more supplies or better armor before returning to the tomb), and there may be fewer or different monsters present, according to what the players did.

The Patriarch is willing to offer what help he can (including restoring dead heroes back to life). If the heroes were stopped by the black door, he provides a *knock* spell on a scroll, but he suggests that the answer to opening the doors should be somewhere within the tomb.

If the heroes defeated Alaxus, read the following aloud:

The Patriarch listens to the tale of exploits with rapt attention, interrupting only occasionally for clarification on some point or another. He is very pleased and relieved to hear that the Minotaur Mage is no more, for who knows what havoc a magical minotaur could wreak. The entire Vale owes you a debt of gratitude for your bravery and heroism. Congratulations!

The Patriarch pays the party 500 gold pieces for the books found in Alaxus's lair. He also mentions that since the party has newfound riches, it would be nice if the heroes made a donation to the Church of the Holy Defender for the support he has given (scrolls, healing, and restoring heroes to life). A tithe (10%) would be proper, though some, like Mitchifer and Peregrine, would be expected to contribute more.

The Patriarch gladly identifies the magical items the players found, including the *ring of fire resistance* and the +1 sword, +2 versus magic-using and enchanted creatures. He will also want the volumes, which may provide the starting points for future adventures in the Vale.

## Where Do We Go From Here?

Congratulations! You've run your first (and perhaps your second) D&D adventure. If you've had a good time, you might want to know where you can go from here:

Other D&D adventure modules; "Wrath of the Minotaur" is one of two fast-play adventures now on sale. The other is "Eye of the Wyvern," which is an adventure that takes the players on an adventure through the unexplored forests of the Vale to defeat a plague of wyverns threatening the land.

If you think you've got a handle on playing DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, you might want to check out the *Introduction to ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* boxed game, also available at your nearby stores. This introductory project leads you through more of the nitty-gritty of the game and gets into more detail while still being easy to follow for new players and DM.

If you want to leap into the deep end (and admit it, you really want to), you might want to check out the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS hardback rule books, again available at many fine stores. These books contain all the information you need to start and play an AD&D campaign.

And Darkblade, Elanna, Niles, and the rest? They'll still be around for the next time your players want to use them. Or, you may want to create your own characters, adventures, and legends.

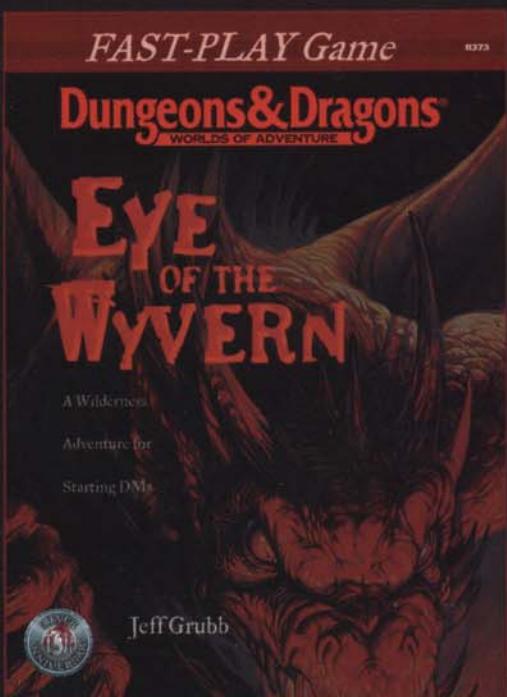
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ISBN 0-7869-1331-2



50495

EAN

9 80786 913312

U.S. \$4.95

CAN \$6.95