

# KING THADAR'S CATACOMBS UNDER KERTHAZ

Vale is the eastern province of Kelet. This colorful region thrives in a hundred dells cut through the Frosthorn Mountains. The many hollows come together in a wide central valley to the great Hegi River. Vale was once the thriving empire of Naerod. The dunaelfs of Naerod built structures in and around the mountains, and they still stand, scattered across the valley. Many Keleti nobles live in usurped Naerodian castles or built on their foundations.

The nobles of Vale are joined in a confounding network of alliances. For some, the most binding is with the church of the Triad. These nobles are colloquially referred to as the Greens. Their opposites are known as the Blues. Presently, the tension between the two factions is evident throughout the valley. The Greens are gathering their armies of thrymm and half-blooded slave soldiers in preparation for war.

Our adventurers begin in Kertaz, a fortified town in central Vale. Built on the foundations of an old Naerodian settlement, few ruins of the dunaelfin town are visible on the surface, but underground there is an extensive network of tunnels. Gabriel Kertaz, the baron of Kertaz and a Green, has ordered a survey of the tunnels. Surveyors of the discovery estimate only a small portion of the underground has been mapped. Sanctioned teams of explorers have ventured the entrance hall of the underground but after three deaths, Lord Gabriel has deemed it too dangerous to continue with his own people.

The baron has now offered a reward to map the tunnels. Explorers that successfully map them are entitled to ten percent of the wealth found there. News of the reward has spread to all the towns of Vale and teams of explorers are making the trip to Kertaz...

**The Catacombs:** The catacombs were once the stronghold of House Vogt. The ruined castle of this vast underground network stands abandoned one mile south of Kertaz. Rumors of the haunted place blame it for missing travelers and livestock. The catacombs beneath Kertaz are an extension of the castle tunnels.

Before gaining entrance, the adventurers must leave one item of significant value as collateral. Dominik, a Triad cleric knows a spell that measures the emotional significance of the object to the owner. Upon your return, you may reclaim the item in exchange for the mapped tunnels, then an armed escort will accompany you to collect your reward.

Down an adjacent hall is a shrine to Vesna the goddess of spring and youth. Resting only an hour in this room will heal the adventurers of fatigue and  $id4$  Power (per day).

9. The tunnels then narrow. Curiously the adventurers pass over mounds of sand into the bottleneck. If they have already fought the sandstone guard statues this will look familiar. The adventurers can only walk single file through this area. There is a hidden door here. Putting pressure on this portion of the wall will reveal a passageway but beware, there is a mad blind minotaur roaming these halls. If the adventurers are too loud the minotaur may burst

through the faux wall and attack. How it got there is anyone's guess, but the room nearest to the hidden door reeks of manure. Continuing on will surely end with confrontation. Chamber number 9 is the largest area. It is filled with hay (indicating someone has been putting it there). Two large statues of famous dunaelfin queens act as support pillars for the room.

10. The forbidden shrine is only accessible through a hidden door, if one pushes the right stone brick. Inside is a statue of Toth. Toth is not part of the Naerodian Pantheon. When the Maetrians and Naerodian dunaelfs fought, Toth

was divorced from the Naerodian Pantheon. It is now forbidden to worship him. Conversely, the Maetrians worship only Toth. Praying to Toth or resting at his feet will kindle an inner fire and grant the adventurers  $id6$  Temporary Life for the remainder of the day.

11. Exiting this area will reveal the slain corpses of an explorer group. They have been

1. There is a large stone block out of place and in the center of the hall, a single hewn block appears to have smashed the ground just behind the statue of a tall dunelf. This is the beginning of a booby-trapped corridor where the wrong step will cause a block to drop down atop an adventurer. There is at least one pool of dried blood under another fallen block.

On closer inspection, not all the blood is congealed. It can't be older than two days.

2. Here is a shrine to Kazimir the god of violence, sometimes used to ward away thieves or as a warning. This hall is lined with steel posts topped with candelabras. Under the shrine is a hidden vault. Within is Marevect, a sentient blacksteel sword.

3. Mounds of silver pieces, candlesticks, utensils, and dishware are covered in a thick dust and webbing. Giant spiders protect their treasure trove and block the way. There are human remains visible in the webbing.

4. Zisa's room is a shrine to the stars. She is the goddess of companionship and beauty. This particular room is very tall.  $25\text{ ft}$  up the ceiling will glitter with a little light. Huge diamonds stud the distant ceiling.

5. The walls of this room are covered in carved murals, including special stone screens dividing the center of the room. It depicts the Naerodian creation story and all the Naerodian gods, particularly Bogdan, god of fire and

craft. His statue is at the center of the room. For interested explorers, it's curious that the gods strongly resemble wild giants and even more curious are the depictions of the four-armed servants accompanying them in the foreground.

6. This next room is similar to Bogdan's chamber. This is the chamber of Milogost, the god of the hunt. The murals in this room depict a war. For explorers with knowledge of the dunaelfs, they can deduce that this is one of the great wars between Maetra and Naerod, the two dunaelfin empires. The sandstone statue of a dunaelfin warrior blocks the hall leading to the next room. There are also two other statues in this room. If the adventurers attempt to continue past it, the statue will come to life and block the path. If they draw their weapons all three statues in the room will attack. They may pass, if they bear with them a Naerodian item.

7. This is the chamber of Radomil, god of wine and celebrations. There is a fountain here that still flows. If an adventurer tastes the liquid in the pool they will find it tastes like wine. The wine helps the adventurers of  $id4$  Life (per day) and intoxicates its drinker. The adventurers may wish to rest, at least until the effects wear off.

8. This is the Hall of Heroes. Each statue here is of a famous dunaelfin warrior. There is dried blood in this room. Not pooled, but seemingly dragged across the floor. There is a faux wall in the Hall that leads to more catacombs and the old ruined castle one mile south of Kertaz. The area with the blood has a statue of Anselm, a great hero. If the dagger at his hip is pulled it gives way two inches and the faux wall drops. Behind it is the escaped slave-soldier and rebel Berzeg and three compatriots. These thrymm warriors despise the Greens and work against them. Berzeg will begin as hostile but depending on the adventurers' allegiances can be talked out of a confrontation. Beyond this room there is an exit to the outside (it exits outside the town of Kertaz) and also the tunnel leading to the ruined castle. Berzeg and company are unwilling to pass through to the castle. They say something haunts it (a wight).



If the door is opened, a room lined with shields, suits of armor, and a variety of arms are revealed inside. These items are all masterworked. The suits of armor are intended for dunaelfs, but the arms and shields work just as well for a human.

are even slightly touched a heavy cylindrical mechanism will break off whatever was put inside.

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