

ELF-BANE

A ONE-PAGE ADVENTURE BY SCOTT MARCLEY

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INTRODUCTION

While traveling cross-country, the characters pass through a strip of broken, craggy hills. As the party searches for a good spot to rest, they hear guttural sounds (shouting, cursing, etc.) echoing off the steep gully walls.

If investigated, the party finds an orc camp in a box canyon, at the base of a 100-ft. high cliff. A path climbs halfway up the cliff face, where carved pillars frame the entrance to a ruined orc temple. The remains of other long-demolished orcish structures cling to the canyon walls.

Centuries ago, a tribe of orcs held sway over this region—before clans of elves and humans arrived and drove them out. A powerful chieftain named *Thrugg the Unyielding* once ruled the tribe. Upon his death, he was entombed within this temple.

AREA 10: MANTICORE DEN

An earthquake opened a natural fissure here, creating a small cave with a wide crack in the ceiling. The crack forms a tight shaft leading 20 ft. up to a hidden cave entrance beneath a rock shelf at the top of the cliff outside. A vicious manticore has moved into this hidey-hole, coming and going via the shaft. It will investigate any noise or light coming from Area 9.

AREA 8: ANTECHAMBER

The opening from Area 3 emerges into a short passage to Area 9. Hidden trapdoors dump the unwary into a 10-ft. deep spiked pit.

AREA 5: FALSE CRYPT

The crypt walls are carved with crude orcish glyphs praising *Thrugg*. Two stone sarcophagi, carved with hundreds of skulls, hold moldering bones and jewelry (worth 100 gp each). One has a false bottom that opens into Area 6 below. Lifting either sarcophagus lid triggers a trap, however:

>>**Trap 1:** Scythe blades from beneath the lid slash anyone within 5 ft. of the sarcophagus.

>>**Trap 2:** Dozens of darts fire from the carved skulls in every direction; anyone in the room suffers 1d4+2 dart attacks.

AREA 1: PORTICO

A narrow switchback path leads 40 ft. up the cliff face to a crumbling portico supported by four thick pillars. The walls are carved with orcish petroglyphs. Pottery shards litter the floor. A dark, rugged cave entrance leads inside.

ORC CAMP

This band of (6) orcs has roamed the hills for several weeks, searching for the ruins. Their legends tell them that the long-dead chieftain was buried with a fabled magic spear called *Elf-bane*.

After finding the site, the orcs have spent days trying to dig through the solid stone walls inside the temple and still haven't found the entrance to the chieftain's tomb. The answer has been under their noses the whole time, but they're too stupid to figure it out. The orcs are mighty frustrated, and their current leader suspects a revolt is in the making.

AREA 9: CHIEFTAIN'S CRYPT

This chamber has a 20-ft. high ceiling. Rough stone pillars support a 12-ft. high ledge surrounding the room. Orcish scrawls cover the walls. A past earthquake has cut a large crack across the walls, floor, and ceiling. Portions of the upper walls and ceiling have collapsed, scattering rubble on the floor.

In the center of the room, *Thrugg*'s mummified body sits on a crude throne of rocks and skulls, draped with moldering animal furs. Propped against his shrouded body is an orc-crafted long spear. Arrayed on the floor around the dead chieftain are dozens of skeletons of his concubines and loyal followers.

Lurking among the shadows on the ledge is a **manticore**, which will pepper the party with spikes before dropping down to attack.

If the throne is carefully searched or smashed apart, then a large stone chest is found beneath the pile. It holds 2,000 ancient silver coins, ten gold bars (worth 50 gp each), a jeweled goblet made from a rival chieftain's skull (worth 500 gp), a wolf's fur mantle that acts as a *magical cloak* and a *magic hand axe*.

The long spear is *Ulfbahn <Elf-bane>*.

Made of cold iron and inscribed with various orcish curses, this feared *magic weapon* does double damage to elf-kind.

AREA 6: TRAPPED HALL

The shaft from Area 5 drops 10 ft. to a narrow passage. At 'x', a trap strikes anyone crossing the spot with (2) spear attacks.

The passage then turns and widens, sloping 10 ft. down to a pair of doors identical to those at Area 4. Opening the false doors triggers a 10-ft. deep spiked pit trap; simultaneously, trapdoors in the ceiling open at the top of the slope and deposit a **jelly-like cube** into the hall. It slides down the slope, dropping into the opposite pit in (3) rounds.

AREA 7: TREASURE VAULT

A secret door reveals a chamber that hides 500 ancient silver coins, 10 gems, and a *horn of bravery*.

AREA 4: HALL OF THE DEAD

The walls of this cobweb-filled hall are painted with crude murals of orc warriors marching toward the far end, where a pair of timber and bronze doors stand.

Opening the false doors triggers a 10-ft. deep spiked pit trap. In addition, secret panels open in the hall, releasing (6) **orc zombies**.

AREA 3: STAR CHAMBER

Painted on the ceiling 10 ft. above is a mural of the night sky, with a dire yellow eye ringed by lightning in the center. Crude wall murals depict orc supplicants reaching for the eye. To the right and left, narrow stone steps descend to Areas 4 and 5. If the eye mural is prodded, bits of plaster fall to reveal a square clay tile. If struck, the thin tile breaks, creating a 4-ft. sq. opening to Area 8.

AREA 2: TEMPLE CHAMBER

The rough-hewn walls are covered with faded murals of orcish combat and the slaughter of enemies. Digging tools litter the floor and the walls are marked with chinks and deep gouges—evidence of the orcs' fruitless efforts. In the center of the room is a blood-stained altar stone. On the far wall is a raised platform, upon which stands a 10-ft. high statue, crudely sculpted from a massive block of stone. A hammered bronze brazier sits to either side.

The statue depicts a hideous orc deity with a snarling face. A bronze ring hangs from its wide nose. One of its clenched fists bears a 2-in. diameter hole that once held a stylized spear. If a pole or haft is inserted in the hole and the bronze ring is pulled down, the statue and rear wall pivot to reveal Area 3.