

A HEROIC TIER ADVENTURE

# DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

## ENCOUNTERS™

### KEEP ON THE BORDERLANDS

Chapter 1 of 5: A Season of Serpents™



AN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTERS OF 1<sup>ST</sup> LEVEL

Chris Sims



# INTRODUCTION

A DUNGEON & DRAGONS Encounters™ adventure for four to six 1st-level characters

Welcome to DUNGEON & DRAGONS Encounters, an exciting official D&D program. This adventure is a mini-campaign season designed to be played in one-encounter sessions once per week at your local Wizards Play Network location. Each week, players can earn in-game rewards for their characters and Renown Points toward special program-exclusive D&D Encounters Cards that can be used in this and future seasons of D&D Encounters.

## Preparing for Play

The D&D Encounters play kit provides all you need to DM this adventure, including poster maps of encounter areas and a sheet of tokens for monsters, adventurers, and battlefield effects. Follow the steps below to prepare for play.

### Before you DM your first session:

- ◆ Read the Introduction, Adventure Synopsis, Adventure Summary, and Resting sections.
- ◆ Read Session 1: Rescue Mission and Encounter 1-1: Prison Grotto. If you are starting at another point, read the appropriate sections and what has come before.

### At the table of your first session:

- ◆ Ensure each player has a character to play. Players may use one of the characters provided in the kit, or may create their own using the guidelines provided.
- ◆ Give each player has a D&D Encounters Play Tracker. This sheet is found in the play kit, and it allows the players to track treasure, experience, and Renown Points earned for each play session.
- ◆ Get a session tracking sheet from the organizer. Record all the players' DCI/RPGA numbers on it, along with your DCI/RPGA number. If you or any of the players don't have a DCI/RPGA number, ask the organizer for a membership card.

### During the session:

- ◆ Each session is one encounter in length. Just DM the encounter assigned for that week's session. Typical play-time for one encounter is about 90 minutes to 2 hours.
- ◆ Make decisions and adjudications that enhance the fun of the game. As the DM, you can make some adjustments to the adventure (see the sidebar) to facilitate the fun for players.

### At the end of your first session:

- ◆ Have the adventurers take a short rest if they want, but remind them to track their daily abilities. Healing surges used, daily powers expended, and other daily resources do not refresh in-between each session; only at the end of each chapter. Make sure your players track this information on their D&D Encounters Play Tracker.
- ◆ Turn in your session tracking sheet to the organizer. Make sure you've recorded all the DCI/RPGA numbers on it, along with names and the play date.
- ◆ Report Renown Point totals earned for each player to the organizer. The organizer fills out the Renown Point Tracker for the location and tells you if any players have earned D&D Encounters Cards.
- ◆ Give out treasure. Make sure the players write down rewards on the D&D Encounters Play Tracker.
- ◆ Collect your special reward for providing your time as a DM to make the event happen. Your organizer has more details on this reward.

### At the end of the final session of a chapter:

- ◆ The adventurers take an extended rest, regaining all of their healing surges, hit points, and daily powers. In addition, their action point totals reset to 1.

Once you've been the DM for a session, it's easy to prepare for your next session. Simply read over the session's material, and you're ready to go.

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## CREATING A CHARACTER

Players are responsible for bringing their own characters to each play session. A first-time player should bring a new 1st-level D&D character created using only the rules found in the *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Fantasy Roleplaying Game* boxed set or *Heroes of the Fallen Lands*.

If a player doesn't have a character or doesn't want to create one from scratch, several pre-generated characters are provided in the play kit. Get these from the organizer and offer a choice of one to each player that wants one.

At the end of each session, you award experience points, treasure, and Renown Points to each player. They'll track that information on their D&D Encounters Play Tracker and you'll report the Renown Points each player earned with the organizer.

### CHARACTER DEATH

If a character dies during a session, the player has two choices. He or she can bring the same character back at the beginning of the next session with a death penalty of -1 to attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks until they've hit a milestone (two encounters), or he or she can start a new character of the appropriate level.

### Advancement

At the end of each session, you award experience points when the characters complete encounters. Use this table below to award experience points for each session. Don't modify the amount of experience based on the number of characters.

#### EXPERIENCE POINT AWARDS

XP Description	XP/Character
Session 1	110 XP
Session 2	131 XP
Minor Quest: Rescue Gordi	20 XP
Session 3	120 XP
Session 4	110 XP
Minor Quest: Link Ronnik to Tiamat	20 XP

If the characters succeed at all the encounters and complete all quests, each should earn 511 XP by the end of Chapter 1.

**Milestones:** For every two encounters a character completes without taking an extended rest, the character reaches a milestone, gaining an action point.

### A CHANGING GROUP

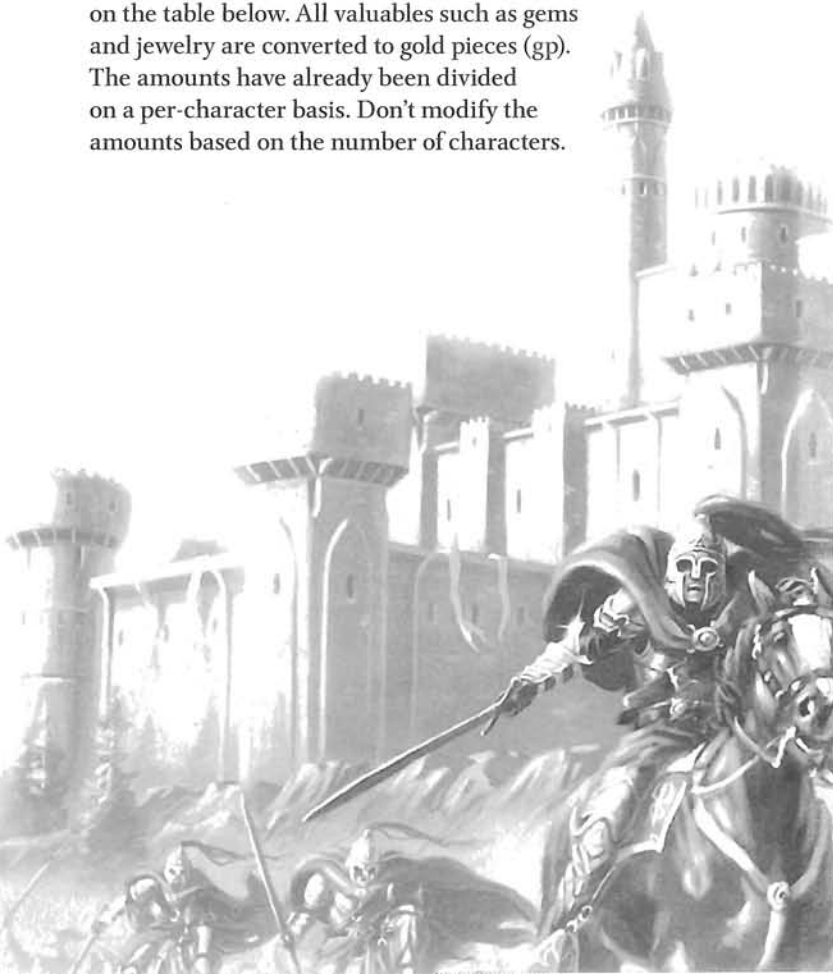
Since you can never tell who's going to show up to a D&D Encounters session from week to week, you might wind up with a different group of players. Some players might be starting in "mid-stream," some could have missed a session or two, and others might have played all the sessions with a different DM. That's fine. Update new players with a brief summary of what has come before, and make sure that returning players have marked off resources they spent (healing surges, daily powers, etc.) since their last extended rest.

**Majority Rules:** If some element of the adventure plot hinges on the adventurers making a decision in a previous session, and the group is different during the current session, simply find out how the decision went down for that group. Go with the majority, and if it's an even split, side with the most positive result. For example, if three of five players' characters at your table rescued Gordi in a previous encounter and two didn't, Gordi is considered to be rescued for your session this week.

### Treasure

As the characters progress through the mini-campaign, they have the opportunity to gain treasure in the form of gold pieces, valuables, and magic items. At the end of each session, determine if the players earned any treasure. Use the following rules to divide up treasure among the characters.

**Gold and Valuables:** If the adventurers earn it, each character gets a share as noted on the table below. All valuables such as gems and jewelry are converted to gold pieces (gp). The amounts have already been divided on a per-character basis. Don't modify the amounts based on the number of characters.



**Magic Items:** During the adventure, a number of magic items that might be discovered. They are listed on the table below. Give out magic items according to the sidebar Awarding Magic Items.

**When to Gear Up:** Characters can buy equipment before beginning play during Session 1. If a character gains a magic item that has only level and type described (for example, magic implement level 2), the player can select an item of that type and level after the session is complete, before starting the next one.

#### TREASURE FOUND

Treasure	Location
1 herbal poultice each	Encounter 1-1
Silver necklace (10 gp each)	Encounter 1-1
6 gp each	Encounter 1-1
Potion of healing	Encounter 1-1
Red garnet gems (20 gp each)	Encounter 1-3
40 sp each	Encounter 1-3
Magic implement (level 2; player choice)	Encounter 1-3

#### AWARDING MAGIC ITEMS

When the characters find a nonconsumable magic item, the players decide who receives what. If this is impossible or difficult, you assign the new item to the character who has no nonconsumable magic items. If all the characters have a nonconsumable magic item, the character with the lowest-level nonconsumable magic item receives the new item.

If more than one character has no nonconsumable magic item, or two characters tie for the lowest-level magic item, those the players decide who receives the new item. If they can't decide, have each roll a d20 until one rolls higher than the other. That player receives the new item.

You can distribute consumable items in the same way if the players can't decide who takes such items. Just remember not to count these items as nonconsumable magic items.

## Renown Points

One of the great rewards for playing in a D&D Encounters season is the accumulation of Renown Points (RPs), which are given out for accomplishments made by players during, and sometimes in-between, sessions. These Renown Points are tracked at the Wizards Play Network location, and reaching certain thresholds garners the player a tangible reward—a D&D Encounters Card.

Players can use these cards during the current D&D Encounters season, as well as in subsequent seasons. Each card has all the information on how it works printed right on the card.

As the DM, it's your task to award Renown Points at the end of a session of play, just like you would award experience and treasure. Unlike experience and treasure though, Renown Point totals earned for each player must be reported to the organizer at the conclusion of the session when you turn in your session tracking sheet. The organizer can then tell you if any players have qualified for a card.

The Renown accomplishments, their frequency, and the point values of each are listed below.

#### RENOWN POINT AWARDS

Accomplishment	Frequency	RPs
Complete an encounter	Session	3
Hit a milestone	2/Chapter	2
Moment of greatness	1/Chapter	2
Create a D&D Essentials character	Season	5
Create a Character Builder character	Season	5
Revive a dying adventurer ally	Season	1
Hit for 15+ damage against 1 enemy	Season	1
Kill 3 minions in 1 attack	Season	1
Take 50 enemy damage in 1 session	Season	1
Survive 12+ sessions without dying	Season	2
Complete all quests	Season	5

**Moment of Greatness:** This is a discretionary award given out by the DM or through party vote to a player for doing something inventive, daring, or just plain cool during a session of play.

## Renown Rewards

When a player earns 20 RPs, he or she earns the first D&D Encounters Card, called the Delver Reward. This is awarded to the player immediately following the session in which it is earned. The second award is called the Adventurer Reward, and a player qualifies for the reward by obtaining 100 Renown Points in the season.

The final award is given out at the conclusion of the season. At the end of the season, a number of D&D Encounters Cards are distributed among those who qualify for the reward. If more players qualify for the reward than the number of cards available, the organizer will determine how they will be distributed.



*Keep on the Borderlands: A Season of Serpents™* pits a group of inexperienced adventurers against the unknown and dangerous borderlands near the Chaos Scar. These introductory pages provide background information for Dungeon Masters running the storyline.

## Keep on the Borderlands

Legends claim that dwarven-built Restwell Keep has been the fortress of a hobgoblin king, the home of an infamous bandit lord, a linchpin garrison of fallen Nerath, and the lair of a dragon. Indeed, the keep has been all this and more. At present, it is a faint but steady light struggling against a growing darkness. Its intrepid folk are in constant danger from within and without.

**Government:** Not long ago, the Keep on the Borderlands was a freewheeling place with lax law enforcement. Lord Peridin Drysdale, paladin of Erathis, recently took command. More than a few residents, accustomed to the old regime, resent the paladin's uncompromising push toward order and morality. As a result, Drysdale's authority is weak in the outer bailey.

**Defense:** Mercenary guards watch the barracks, as well as the towers and gate of the outer bailey. Kendon Longstrider, a 60-year-old human veteran, is in charge.

Drysdale's soldiers patrol the keep proper and the inner bailey. The lord has mandated that capable individuals serve as militia if the need arises.

**Room and Board:** The gruff and greedy Nerrin Silverhand runs the seamy Travelers Inn on Fountain Square. A private room (suitable for four occupants) runs 1 gp per night; a spot in the common room costs 1 sp. Nerrin doesn't serve food or drink.

Victuals can be purchased from jolly Mother Aran of The Stumbling Giant, a fine tavern also on Fountain Square.

**Temple:** The local chapel (along the inner bailey wall) is open for worship of all accepted deities, but Avandra is esteemed above others. Chendera, the striking half-elf caretaker and priestess, is a devotee of the luck goddess. She spends much of her time mingling with folks in The Stumbling Giant. She counts among her friends the itinerant priest, Benwick.

**Other Services:** Local farmers and traveling merchants set up stands from time to time in the keep's Fountain Square. Regular establishments include a general store, a bank, a smithy, a jeweler, and a mage's guildhouse.

For those interested, more information on Restwell Keep can be found in *Dungeon* 176.

## Serpent in the Fold

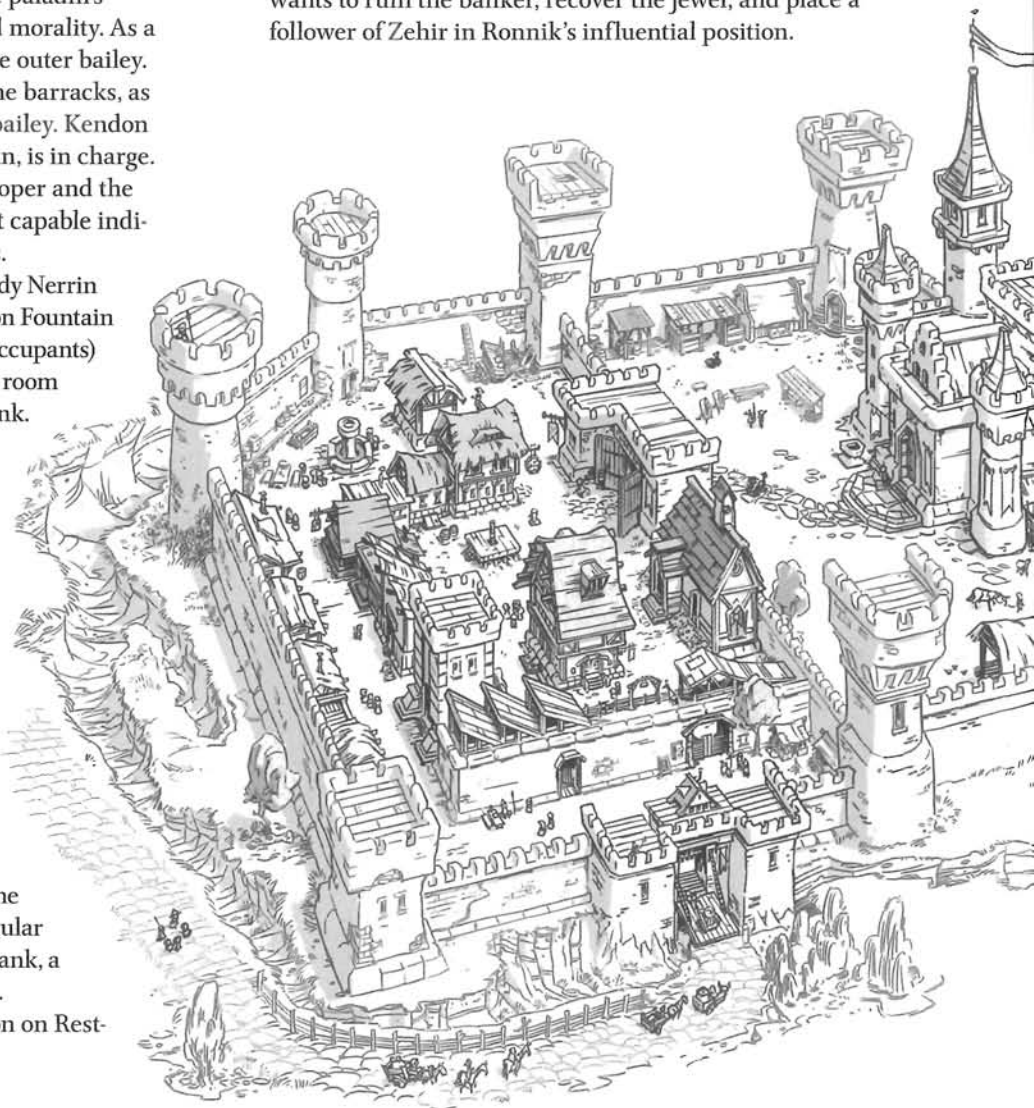
Benwick plays the part of a jolly, fat friar who worships Avandra, Ioun, and Sehanine. In truth, he and his acolytes are servants of the evil god, Zehir. Benwick has grand plans of turning the keep into a citadel for the snake god's faithful. He's courting the local lizardfolk for his plot.

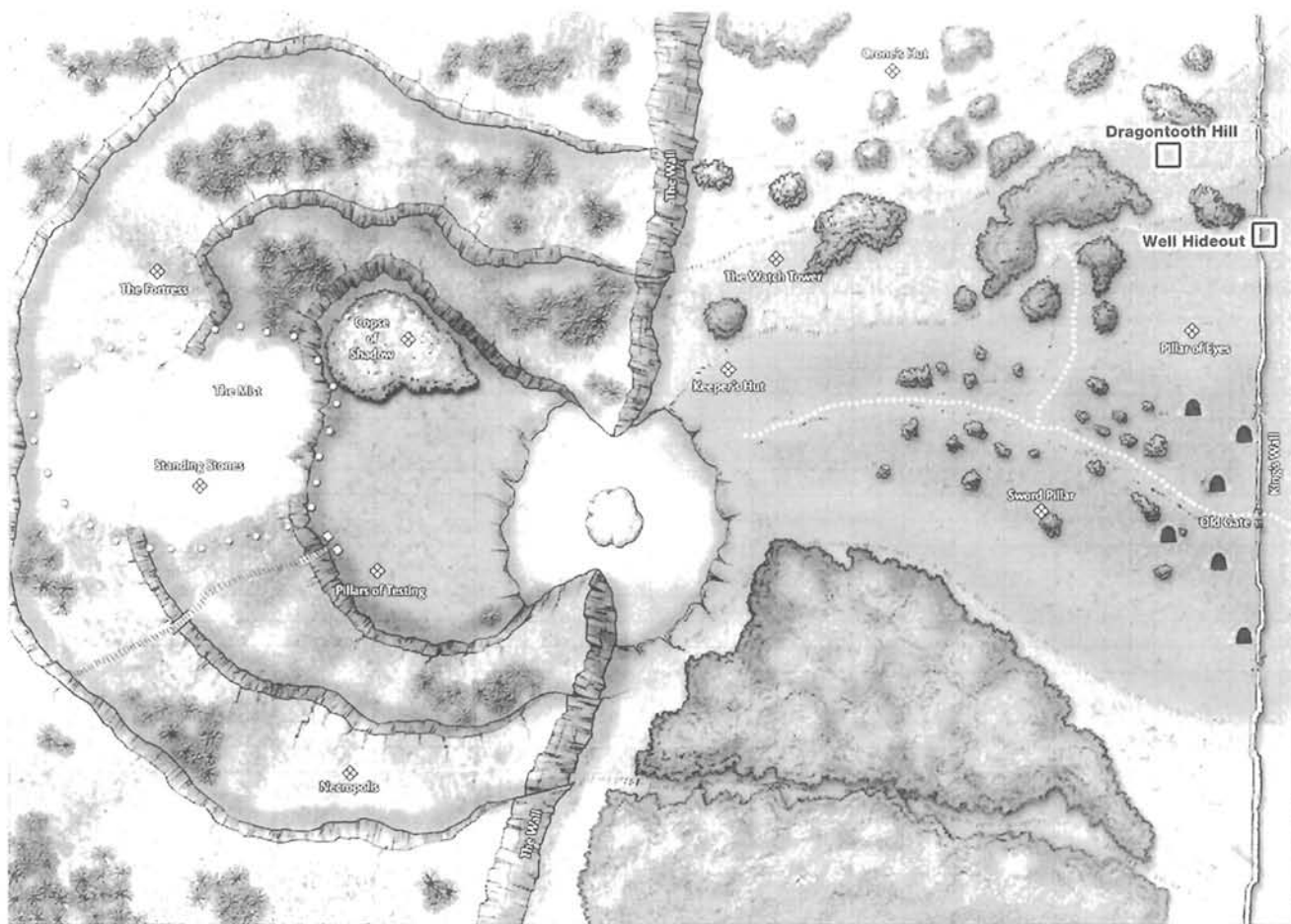
Most of the folks in the outer bailey are fond of Benwick, who is a subtle, entertaining critic of Drysdale's rule. He cheerfully feeds rumors that the paladin intends to impose Keep-wide worship of Erathis and to launch expeditions that might rile up the evil in the Chaos Scar. Benwick's allies include Kendon Longstrider and Chendera.

## The Banker

A rogue-turned-banker, Ferdinand Ronnik is an athletic human with nice clothes, close-cropped dark hair, and a mustache. His latest and greatest heist involved a temple of Zehir in the town of Fallcrest, during which he scored a wondrous jewel known as the Serpent's Eye.

Ronnik is high on Benwick's hit list. The Zehirite wants to ruin the banker, recover the jewel, and place a follower of Zehir in Ronnik's influential position.





## Cult of Tiamat

Benwick's growing influence with the lizardfolk has not gone unchallenged. A cult of Tiamat has arisen near the Chaos Scar. Benwick plans to rid himself of both the cult and the banker at once by making Ronnik look like the leader of the cult and setting some capable adventurers against him and his "followers." All he needs are some suckers unknown in the keep and unaware of local politics. Enter the characters.

## The Chaos Scar

For eons, an evil star roamed the space between worlds, seeking a place to touch down and wreak havoc. It found this world.

As the falling star passed through the sky, milk curdled, livestock fell dead, and ill fortune flourished. The celestial body crashed into the earth

with deafening force, carving a valley-sized furrow in its wake. Red radiance lit the sky for a week. Thus, the Chaos Scar was born.

Over a mile long and several hundred feet deep, the Scar is an angry, blighted gash in the world. As the star carved its path through the earth, shards and fragments

tore away until only its heart remained, embedded in an escarpment at the far end of its new home.

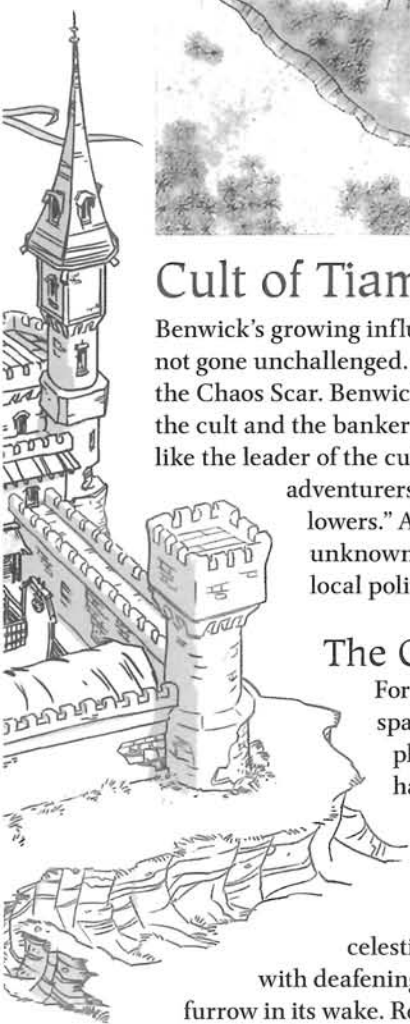
Patient beyond mortal comprehension, the malevolent remains began to sow seeds of wickedness, to reach out to those of a perverse and corruptible bent. Over the centuries, creatures of evil spirit have been drawn to this beacon.

The dark sentence spurs competition among the malefactors who carve out dominions within the valley's many caves. The weakest ones settle near the mouth of the valley and the plain beyond. The strongest villains lair closer to the valley's terminus and in the fortress.

Rulers have tried to contain the threat of the Chaos Scar in the past, with little to no success. A long-forgotten king erected a wall across the valley's mouth. It still stands, partly in ruins, its gates open and unguarded.

The Chaos Scar is filled with malice, promising death to those who enter. It is riddled with caves natural and tunneled by generations of monstrous denizens. The deeper one travels into the valley, the deadlier the foes lurking in its hollows.

Many adventurers have entered the Chaos Scar seeking wealth and glory. Few have returned. Those heroes that survive its depths weave dark stories of cults, inhuman tribes, and monsters working in blasphemous concert. Other explorers tell of monstrous creatures engaging in vicious, unrelenting warfare. All agree that fatality is far more prevalent than fortune.



## ADVENTURE SUMMARY

*Keep on the Borderlands: A Season of Serpents* is an adventure for the third D&D Encounters season. This adventure comes in chapters, each of which contains four sessions. Every session is one encounter in length and designed to be run once per week. The following section gives you an overview of the storyline in Chapter 1.

### ROLEPLAYING

Some of the adventure's sections call for roleplaying, and all of the encounters allow for it. A portion of the information in this book exists to help you roleplay with the players. You might prepare a list of names to use if players want to talk to creatures unexpectedly. As long as all the players are having fun, and it's not going to make the session too long, play it up and enjoy. Just make sure to include everyone.

Further, allow for cinematic maneuvers and clever strategies. Try to reward bold play and clever play. Let players use their characters' skills and powers. Encourage this sort of gaming by being prepared and by using the monsters, NPCs, and scenarios with equal boldness and cleverness.

### Chapter 1: Playing for Keeps

The characters recently arrived in Restwell Keep. Soon after, Benwick pegs them as capable, opportunity-seeking individuals with few ties to the area. That type is exactly what he needs to set his plan in motion to destroy Ferdinand Ronnik and secure power among the local lizardfolk.

Benwick gathers his troubleshooters, the characters, and entrusts them with dark information. He suspects Ferdinand Ronnik is a member of a burgeoning cult of Tiamat. Worse, Ronnik has imprisoned one of Benwick's spies. The false friar wants the adventurers' help, since Ronnik doesn't know them and won't immediately know whom they work for. Benwick, of course, cannot reveal his involvement. It's too risky.

In this first chapter, the characters follow Benwick's lead and rescue his friend. They quickly find out more about the darkness in the banker's heart from Benwick and through their own investigation. "Ronnik's thugs" attack them and the race to catch Ronnik is on.

### Session 1: Rescue Mission

With a short introduction and a roll of initiative, a battle to rescue Benwick's mole unfolds. The rescuers have a pitched battle with kidnapper followers of Tiamat, possibly leading to the surrender of a dragonborn mercenary. But the liberators can't rest long, because the enemy has poisoned Benwick's infiltrator, and he must be returned to Restwell Keep quickly. **Session 1: Rescue Mission** starts on page 8, and **Encounter 1-1: Prison Grotto** is found on page 12.

### Session 2: Jumped in the Bailey

Back at Restwell Keep, Benwick takes his friend to heal. While later wrapping up events with Benwick and learning more about the friar's spies among Ronnik's ruffians, the troubleshooters might spy an eavesdropper. Regardless, the keep's fountain square is the location for Ronnik's thugs' ambush against the characters. Ronnik has figured out whom his enemy is, it seems. Good old Benwick still has the party's back, however, with a plant among the attackers and the means to identify her. With Ronnik's goons dispatched, the spy or suspicious lights then send the characters rushing to Ronnik's apartment to confront the dastard. **Session 2: Jumped in the Bailey** starts on page 10, and **Encounter 1-2: Fountain Square** is found on page 14.

### Session 3: Rush to Ronnik's

Bursting through the door into Ronnik's bank and apartment, the characters receive a warm welcome from rampaging elementals. The scoundrel is trying to cover his tracks with fire and water! After bringing the problem under control, the characters learn where to go next. It looks like Ronnik isn't too far ahead, and maybe catching him before bedtime is within reason. **Session 3: Rush to Ronnik's** starts on page 10, and **Encounter 1-3: Pressure Cooker** is found on page 16.





## Session 4: King's Wall Hideout

It turns out that evildoers sometimes fool would-be heroes, and Benwick's troubleshooters have stumbled into a trap.

Although the party's information indicates Ronnik has a hidey hole in part of the King's Wall, the followers of Tiamat know to murder anyone who snoops around there.

**Session 4: King's Wall Hideout** starts on page 11, and **Encounter 1-4: Well Watch** is found on page 18.

## Resting

The adventurers could afford only short rests between encounters (and sessions) until this point. After session 4, the characters can rest at the King's Wall before heading toward Ronnik's real lair at Dragontooth Hill. They know that Ronnik has nowhere else to go, so they can take a few hours to rest before continuing their adventure.

## ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTERS

Chapter 1 assumes you have a normal party of five 1st-level characters and players familiar with the D&D game at your table. Compare the party at your table to this assumption, using the following guidelines.

**Weak Party:** You have a weak party at your table if it consists of only four characters, or if most or all the players are new to the D&D game. If you have a weak party, remove one of the lowest level or least important non-minion monsters from the encounter. For instance, in Encounter 1-1 (level 1 encounter), you might subtract the guard drake.

**Strong Party:** You have a strong party at your table if it consists of six characters, or if most or all the players are veteran 4th-Edition D&D players who want an extra challenge. If you have a strong party, add one of the simplest non-minion monsters among those in the encounter whose level most closely matches the encounter level. For instance, in Encounter 1-1, you might add another guard drake.





This chapter is the first of five chapters for this D&D Encounters season. The subsequent adventures will be available separately as the season progresses. Check with your organizer upon completion of this adventure to receive the next one.

## Chapter 1: Playing for Keeps

The encounters of this chapter start with the characters taking action on Benwick's behalf. Events quickly lead the adventurers into the Chaos Scar.

### Session 1: Rescue Mission

When everyone is ready, set up the action.

*After traveling with a trade caravan for a time—common work for beginning adventurers—you arrive at Restwell Keep. You've heard that fortune and glory await those bold enough to brave the dangers of the nearby Chaos Scar, a valley carved ages ago by a fallen star. The same tales warn that this Chaos Scar draws wickedness to it. Perhaps you can help stem this tide . . . and gain some treasure as you do so.*

A thin, bald human friar named Venn approached you shortly after your arrival at the Keep. He said his teacher, another holy man named Benwick, craved the pleasure of your company to discuss important matters. A free meal was to be your reward for merely accepting the invitation.

Thus, this evening, you are visiting a comfortable apartment on the west side of the keep's inner bailey. At the table is your host, the well-proportioned Benwick, along with fellow adventurers both familiar and newly met. Venn and another priestly man, Jarell, serve victuals to you and Benwick.

Give the players time to introduce themselves and their characters. They can roleplay dinner with Benwick or get straight to the point, as they like.

### Roleplaying the Scene

Benwick is jolly and bright-eyed, given to smiling and laughing. His acolytes grin and interact briefly with the characters when addressed, but they are not nearly as outgoing as their mentor. In securing the heroes' aid, Benwick is happy to impart a number of facts:

- ◆ Benwick and his followers belong to an order that holds Avandra, Ioun, and Sehanine in high regard.
- ◆ The priest is a nonmagical healer and herbalist (Heal +14).
- ◆ Although Benwick is certain that Lord Drysdale, the keep's lord and a staunch adherent of Erathis, has the best intentions, the friar has grave concerns. The lord

seems intent on imposing devotion to Erathis, on militarizing the keep, and on launching an ill-prepared attack that will serve only to rile up the monsters of the Chaos Scar.

- ◆ Benwick is dedicated to humbly offering aid and guidance to the people of the keep. He is most concerned with preventing insidious Chaos Scar influences from infiltrating Restwell Keep.
- ◆ The friar admits to having widespread influence in the outer bailey—influence that is sure to benefit those who help him. He considers most people in the outer bailey friends or allies, especially the priestess Chendera of the chapel.

### The Tasks

When prompted or when he feels the time is right, Benwick turns solemn and begins discussing the mission. He says,

*"Friends, here on the borderlands, we must be ever mindful of dark influences creeping in the night. In doing so, I have become suspicious of the banker, Ferdinand Ronnik. His wealth and greed are well known. Also, he has never publically denied that he was once a successful thief in the city of Fallcrest. To learn more, I asked a trusted friend—a man named Gordi who worked for Ronnik—to inform me of anything unusual.*

*"I say 'worked,' because Gordi is now missing. Before his disappearance, Gordi provided me with two grave reports. First, he glimpsed accoutrements of Tiamat worship hidden among Ronnik's belongings. Second, Gordi recognized a jewel in Ronnik's possession known as the Serpent's Eye. As you might know, that item was treasured by Moonsong Temple in Fallcrest before disciples of Zehir pilfered it.*

*"Ronnik and his lackeys didn't try to hide the fact that they spirited Gordi to a grotto near the northern swamps. I believe Ronnik hopes to flush out me and Gordi's other allies when we attempt a rescue.*

*"I truly believe that you all are a blessing sent to me. No one in this keep yet knows you. I realize that I'm about to ask much of you, but you can act boldly where I cannot.*

*"First, I want you to go to Ronnik's prison grotto and rescue Gordi. Also, I hope that you are able to secure proof that Ronnik is an unholy follower of Tiamat. If all else fails, at least try to recover the Serpent's Eye so we can return it to Avandra's chapel.*

*"If you're willing, I suggest an early start after a full night's rest. Although I hope that I've impressed on you my sincere purpose, I would take no offense if you wish to confirm my reputation among the folks of the outer bailey. Still, I ask that you be discrete about your task. No need to provide the scoundrels more warning than we must.*

*"So, what say you?"*

Any character who makes an Insight check gathers that Benwick is genuine in his desire to recover Gordi and the Serpent's Eye, as well as to stop Ronnik. A character that succeeds on a DC 19 Insight check also gathers that he is hiding something. If pressed, Benwick confesses that he has a small personal interest in seeing the Serpent's Eye returned to its rightful owners.

Benwick wants the characters to leave early the next morning and return directly to him when they finish the task. He describes Ronnik (see "The Banker," page 4) and offers one *herbal poultice* (see below) per hero, as well as a map of the keep's region with the prison grotto marked on it. Finally, he offers his skills and influence at the Keep in aiding the characters. To any request for pay, he responds with a wink, a smile, and the promise, "Ronnik's lackeys are likely to be funded well, considering their boss's line of work."

**Quests:** The adventurers have three minor quests (20 XP each) at this point. The first is to rescue Gordi and return him to Benwick. The second involves proving Ronnik's link to Tiamat. Finally, the characters should keep an eye out for the Serpent's Eye. Returning it can provide a large reputation boost.

## Preparation

The characters have no time to outfit themselves further before the mission. No shop opens until after the party leaves the keep. The adventurers do have time to follow up on Benwick's assertions before the next morning. If you have access to the *Dungeon* 176 article entitled "Keep on the Chaos Scar," and are comfortable with an evolving series of improvised encounters, you can roleplay the night's activities based on the information given below. Alternatively, you can announce the skills below and allow each hero to make a skill check or aid in one.

**Diplomacy DC 12:** Schmoozing at The Stumbling Giant (page 4), the character discovers that Benwick has a stellar reputation in the outer bailey. He's especially friendly with the priestess at the chapel.

**DC 15:** Mother Aran, the alehouse's owner, considers Benwick's suspicions of Lord Drysdale understandable, but misguided. The lord is clearly an ardent follower of Erathis, but Mother Aran doesn't believe he's going to enforce Erathis worship or a military takeover of the keep.

**Heal or Nature DC 12:** The *herbal poultices* are genuine articles and attest to Benwick's skill in herbalism.

**History DC 12:** The Serpent's Eye was once stored in the Moonsong Temple of Fallcrest.

**DC 15:** The jewel was stolen from the temple long ago. Because several of the priests guarding it were poisoned, rumor has it that disciples of Zehir were responsible.

**DC 19:** The Serpent's Eye was seen in Fallcrest a few years ago in the hands of a thief who claimed to have "recovered" it from a hidden temple.

**Religion DC 12:** If Ronnik is a worshiper of Tiamat, deity of greed, he has something in common with numerous types of evil draconic and reptilian creatures, such as kobolds, lizardfolk, and some dragonborn.

**Streetwise DC 8:** Ferdinand Ronnik has a reputation for exorbitant loan rates. He's often seen at The Stumbling Giant, but he's been in and out of the keep a lot recently.

**DC 12:** The banker makes no effort to quiet rumors that he was a thief in Fallcrest. If the character asks, Gordi did work for Ronnik, and he hasn't been seen for a short while.

### Herbal Poultice

Level 3 (Common)

*This pungent bundle of specially prepared medicinal herbs aids the body's natural recuperative ability.*

**Alchemical Item** 30 gp

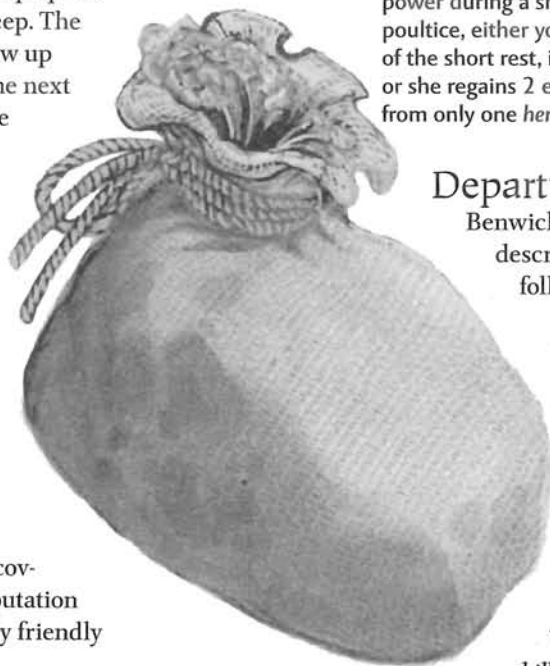
**Power (Consumable ♦ Healing):** Standard Action. Use this power during a short rest. Choose a target for the herbal poultice, either you or an ally adjacent to you. At the end of the short rest, if the target spends a healing surge, he or she regains 2 extra hit points. The target can benefit from only one *herbal poultice* at a time.

## Departure

Benwick's map makes travel easy. Quickly describe it to the players and then read the following text.

*You depart early under a gloomy sky and travel northwest from the keep. The ridges of the Chaos Scar loom in the distant west as you pass over a rolling, sparsely wooded plain and enter marshy woodlands punctuated with stony outcroppings. In the late morning, you come to the bog surrounding the hill that contains the prison grotto. Wisps of smoke curl from a cave on the hill's south side.*

While players decide how to approach the grotto, set out the map and proceed to **Encounter 1-1: Prison Grotto** (page 12).



## Session 2: Jumped in the Bailey

At the start of the session, read the following text.

*As you head back toward Restwell Keep, the afternoon grows late. The rain falls in heavy sheets, soaking you and Gordi. Over the course of the trip, Gordi becomes sicker, babbling incoherently between his heaving coughs.*

He needs treatment he can't receive on the road. A character trained in Heal that succeeds on a DC 15 Heal check can help him move easier, though it does not cure him.

Gordi is coherent enough to suggest that he be cloaked before entering the keep to avoid arousing undue suspicion. Otherwise, the heroes notice quizzical looks from the gate guards and other citizens as they arrive under thunderous skies with an obviously sick man.

### Returning to Benwick

Benwick is happy to have Gordi back and takes some time to treat him in his residence in Fountain Square. (The characters gain 20 XP for completing the minor quest of rescuing Gordi.) A hero trained in Heal is welcome to assist Benwick. The treatment goes well, but Gordi remains too ill to divulge any information. Benwick offers to pay for an early dinner at The Stumbling Giant. (Ronnik's bank is closed for the day, in case it matters.) After the party is seated, read:

*In the boisterous atmosphere of the tavern, Benwick joins you, bringing ale with him.*

*"You were truly sent from on high, friends. Gordi is recovering as we speak. Tomorrow, once this beastly weather passes, we can decide how to move against Ronnik. Enjoy tonight. I've paid for your rooms in the Travelers Inn next door. Rest well."*

*His voice drops to a whisper.*

*"I have secured the aid of a spy among Ronnik's guards. Her name is Sal. She's a human with blond hair and gray eyes. She'll help us in what's to come."*

*Benwick then stands up to leave.*

### Eavesdropper

While speaking with Benwick, the adventurers might notice a suspicious halfling near the alehouse's front door (DC 19 passive Insight). The halfling has long, braided hair and nice leather armor. He seems interested in the adventurers' meeting. If anyone makes a move toward him, he leaves with haste. Those who follow this halfling run into **Encounter 1-2: Fountain Square** (page 14). However, the characters' suspicions are aroused and they cannot be surprised.

### Fountain Square Ambush

If none of the characters notice the halfling, they can stay in the tavern for a while. When they leave The Stumbling Giant, they enter the ambush unprepared and might be surprised. See **Encounter 1-2: Fountain Square** (page 14).

## Session 3: Rush to Ronnik's

At the start of the session, read the following text.

*The rain has slackened only slightly and the early evening remains gray. Smoke rises from Ronnik's bank on the other side of the plaza is Ronnik's bank. Flickering flames are visible through gaps in the shutters, and you can hear sinister, crackling laughter. Sal looks at the party anxiously and says, "Ronnik must have seen that his ambush failed and is trying to destroy evidence of his treachery. We must hurry!"*

Reveal the encounter map and allow the players to place their miniatures in the starting area. Time is of the essence, so have the players roll initiative.

### Breaking In

The adventurers will quickly discover that the bank's windows are barred and its doors are locked. To gain entry, characters can take the following standard actions.

**Bending Bars** (Athletics DC 19): The windows are above the bench and planter on the map. Success removes the bars on one window. Once the bars are gone, a move action opens the window.

**Breaking the Door** (Athletics DC 15): Success bursts the door open.

**Detect Magic** (Arcana DC 12): Something magical is going on within the bank. If the character succeeds by 5 or more, he or she detects elemental influences.

**Open Locks** (Thievery DC 19): Success opens the door.

When the characters open the way, go to **Encounter 1-3: Pressure Cooker** (page 16).





## Session 4: King's Wall Hideout

At the start of the session, read the following text.

*After the flames subsided, you recovered a map of the nearby area. Most of the map's labels appear to indicate locations around the Chaos Scar. You take interest in one part near the King's Wall that is labeled "Well Hideout." If that location is indeed Ronnik's hideout, you might be able to catch him if you hurry.*

The players hopefully want to chase Ronnik. If they don't, Sal or Benwick can show up to encourage the adventurers to catch the banker before he reaches "his followers." Given the state of Ronnik's safe, the banker is likely to have taken the Serpent's Eye with him.

### Approaching the Wall

After the players leave Restwell Keep, read the following text.

*The rain intensifies during your dark trip to the King's Wall. After a short search, you find a section of the wall that has an old well house in it, as depicted on your map.*

Darkness has fallen by the time the adventurers reach Ronnik's false hideout in the King's Wall. Despite the darkness, it is easy to find the hideout using the map. Reveal the encounter map and allow the players to place their miniatures in the starting area. Go to **Encounter 1-4: Well Watch** (page 18).

### Resting

If the characters survive their ordeal at the King's Wall, the hideout is a fine place to camp before heading toward Dragontooth Hill. The adventurers could afford only short rests between encounters (and sessions) up until this point. Now they're sure where Ronnik is, and they know he has nowhere else to go. Exhausted after a day's work, the heroes can take a well-earned extended rest, concluding Chapter 1.



## ENCOUNTER 1-1: PRISON GROTTO

Encounter Level 1 (552 XP)

### Setup

Kesk, dragonborn mercenary (D)

Guard drake (G)

Greenscale trapper (T)

4 poisonscale needlers (N)

A character can approach unobserved and learn the location of the trapper, dragonborn, and drake with a successful DC 19 Stealth check. Otherwise, the guard drake is alerted and hisses, warning its handlers.

#### When the party enters the area, read:

*Redolent with the smell of swamp and the smoke of two small fires, the grotto is a well-lit cave featuring a couple pools. Near the fire to the left of the entrance is a pile of furs and a hole in the floor. A reptilian humanoid with yellow-green scales and a net and spear rests there. A dragonborn in heavy leather tends the other campfire to the right of the entrance, with a green drake at his side. The firelight doesn't reach the rear of the grotto.*

The needlers are initially on the ledge in total concealment. A character that succeeds on a DC 15 Perception check or has a passive Perception of 15 or higher ignores the concealment. Kesk, the dragonborn mercenary, and his drake, as well as the greenscale trapper do not welcome intruders.

### Roleplaying

Kesk, the dragonborn mercenary, might speak with the characters if approached correctly. He's aggressive and challenges them as to why they're here. If he can, he speaks in Draconic so the lizardfolk can understand. Regardless of the discussion, the prisoner won't be released without a fight.

### Tactics

As combat opens, Kesk uses overwhelming strike quickly, hoping to give the trapper combat advantage as it throws its net over clustered adventurers. When it can, the trapper drags enemies into the prison pit. The needlers fire from the dark ledge into the lighted area, remaining there even if attacked.

The lizardfolk fear Tiamat's wrath and will not flee. The dragonborn surrenders if the situation appears hopeless.

### Features of the Area

**Illumination:** The campfires brightly light the grotto to the northern ledge. The upper area on the ledge is dark.

**Campfire:** A creature that enters a square of campfire or ends its turn there takes 1d6 fire damage.

**Fur Pile:** Loosely stacked to form bedding, these cured hides are difficult terrain.

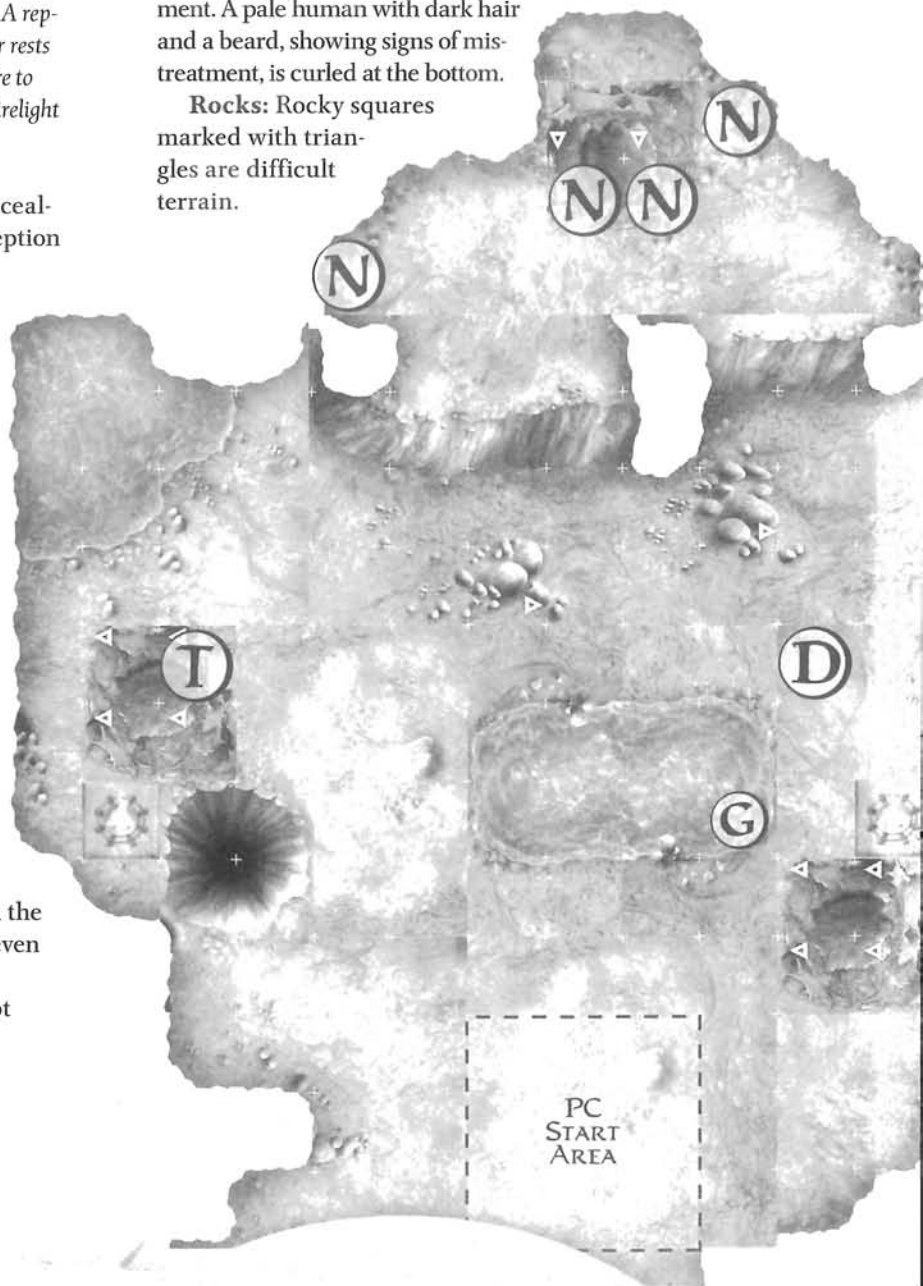
**Goods:** The containers for food, ale, and other supplies are difficult terrain.

**Ledges:** These rises are 15 feet high. Climbing up or down requires a DC 12 Athletics check and 5 squares of movement.

**Pools:** The pools are shallow and are difficult terrain. The water is fresh and cool.

**Prison Pit:** This hole is 10 feet deep. Climbing in or out requires a DC 12 Athletics check and 3 squares of movement. A pale human with dark hair and a beard, showing signs of mistreatment, is curled at the bottom.

**Rocks:** Rocky squares marked with triangles are difficult terrain.



## Conclusion

If captured, Kesk bargains for his life honorably. The only way he'll reveal anything is if the adventurers promise him release or he is threatened (DC 19 Intimidate check). He reveals a human named Ronnik hired him to kidnap Gordi, and he describes Ronnik accurately (In reality, the person Kesk met was the dopelganger Sal, disguised as Ronnik; see Session 2). If the characters decide to execute Kesk, the dragonborn asks for a duel to the death.

**Prisoner:** Gordi is ill (DC 12 Heal check reveals he's poisoned by a slow-acting agent). He claims Benwick can restore him to health if he returns to the keep quickly (see **Session 2: Jumped in the Bailey**, page 10).

**Treasure:** Kesk has a silver necklace with a pendant bearing the symbol of Tiamat (50 gp) and 30 gp. The supplies contain a *potion of healing* (see the *Heroes of the Fallen Lands*™ supplement).

### Kesk, Dragonborn Mercenary (D) Level 2 Skirmisher

Medium natural humanoid XP 125  
**HP 38; Bloodied 19** Initiative +6  
**AC 16, Fortitude 13, Reflex 14, Will 14** Perception +2  
**Speed 6**

#### TRAITS

##### Skirmish

If the dragonborn ends a move on its turn at least 4 squares from where it started the move, it deals 1d6 extra damage with melee attacks until the start of its next turn.

#### STANDARD ACTIONS

##### ⬇ Battleaxe (weapon) ♦ At-Will

**Attack:** Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC, or +8 vs. AC while the dragonborn is bloodied.

**Hit:** 1d10 + 4 damage, and the dragonborn shifts up to 2 squares.

##### ⬇ Overwhelming Strike (weapon) ♦ Encounter

**Attack:** Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC

**Hit:** 2d10 + 4 damage, and the target grants combat advantage (save ends).

**Miss:** Half damage.

#### MINOR ACTIONS

##### ⬅ Dragon Breath (lightning) ♦ Encounter

**Attack:** Close blast 3 (creatures in the blast); +5 vs. Reflex

**Hit:** 1d6 + 2 lightning damage.

#### TRIGGERED ACTIONS

##### Tactical Withdrawal ♦ Encounter

**Trigger:** The dragonborn is bloodied.

**Effect (Immediate Reaction):** The dragonborn shifts up to 3 squares.

**Str 18 (+5) Dex 16 (+4) Wis 13 (+2)**

**Con 14 (+3) Int 8 (+0) Cha 10 (+1)**

**Alignment** unaligned **Languages** Common, Draconic

**Equipment** hide armor, battleaxe

### Guard Drake (G) Level 2 Brute

Small natural beast (reptile) XP 125  
**HP 48; Bloodied 24** Initiative +3  
**AC 15, Fortitude 15, Reflex 13, Will 12** Perception +7  
**Speed 6**

#### STANDARD ACTIONS

##### ⬇ Bite ♦ At-Will

**Attack:** Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC

**Hit:** 1d10 + 3 damage, or 1d10 + 9 while the drake is within 2 squares of an ally.

**Str 16 (+4) Dex 15 (+3) Wis 12 (+2)**

**Con 18 (+5) Int 3 (-3) Cha 12 (+2)**

**Alignment** unaligned **Languages** —

### Greenscale Trapper (T) Level 3 Controller

Medium natural humanoid (reptile), lizardfolk XP 150  
**HP 46; Bloodied 23** Initiative +5  
**AC 17, Fortitude 14, Reflex 16, Will 14** Perception +3  
**Speed 6 (swamp walk)**

#### STANDARD ACTIONS

##### ⬇ Spear (weapon) ♦ At-Will

**Attack:** Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC

**Hit:** 1d8 + 6 damage.

##### ⬅ Net Toss (weapon) ♦ At-Will

**Requirement:** The trapper must be wielding a net.

**Attack:** Close blast 2 (enemies in the blast); +6 vs. Reflex

**Hit:** 1d4 + 3 damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).

**Miss:** The trapper can slide the target 1 square to a square not in the blast.

#### MOVE ACTIONS

##### Net Drag ♦ At-Will

**Effect:** The trapper moves up to its speed, pulling creatures immobilized by its net an equal number of squares. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks from creatures immobilized by the trapper's net.

#### MINOR ACTIONS

##### ⬇ Feral Kick ♦ At-Will

**Requirement:** The trapper must be bloodied.

**Attack:** Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. Reflex

**Hit:** The trapper can slide the target 1 square.

**Skills** Athletics +7, Stealth +10

**Str 13 (+2) Dex 18 (+5) Wis 14 (+3)**

**Con 14 (+3) Int 8 (+0) Cha 8 (+0)**

**Alignment** unaligned **Languages** Draconic

**Equipment** 3 nets, spear

### 4 Poisonscale Needlers (N) Level 3 Minion Artillery

Medium natural humanoid (reptile), lizardfolk XP 38 each  
**HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.** Initiative +5  
**AC 17, Fortitude 13, Reflex 16, Will 14** Perception +3  
**Speed 6 (swamp walk)**

#### TRAITS

##### Sniper

A hidden needler that misses with a ranged attack remains hidden.

#### STANDARD ACTIONS

##### ⬇ Claw (weapon) ♦ At-Will

**Attack:** Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC

**Hit:** 5 damage.

##### ⬇ Blowgun (poison, weapon) ♦ At-Will

**Attack:** Ranged 10 (one creature); +10 vs. AC

**Hit:** 5 poison damage. On a critical hit, the target also falls unconscious (save ends).

**Str 12 (+2) Dex 18 (+5) Wis 15 (+3)**

**Con 11 (+1) Int 7 (-1) Cha 9 (+0)**

**Alignment** unaligned **Languages** Draconic

**Equipment** blowgun, 10 poisoned blowgun needles



## ENCOUNTER 1-2: FOUNTAIN SQUARE

Encounter Level 2 (655 XP)

### Setup

Halfling thief (H)

3 common bandits (B)

5 human goons (G)

The characters start in the indicated area, in the middle of the plaza.

If the characters pursued the halfling, read:

*The halfling runs through the rain and down the wet street toward the keep's fountain. At the last possible moment, he veers off to the side, leaving you exposed as several rough-looking individuals come out of the shadows.*

*"They're onto us," cries the halfling. "Get 'em!"*

If the characters arrive unaware, read:

*Heading through the rain to your inn, you hear a whistle as you enter the keep's Fountain Square. In the dying light of the day, you see the flash of steel as a few rough-looking individuals emerge from the shadows in the empty plaza.*

A character is surprised unless he or she has a passive Perception of 12 or higher.

### Tactics

If the characters are surprised, the bandits throw daggers. They and the goons try to force enemies to close in the open plaza. Otherwise, each thug fights as best it can, according to its powers.

Sal surrenders as soon as the characters are clearly gaining the upper hand. Choose an exciting moment. The other thugs try to flee.

### Features of the Area

**Illumination:** Evening approaches but the area is still brightly light.

**Benches/Planter:** Squares containing these obstacles are difficult terrain.

**Fountain:** A creature pushed, pulled, or slid into a fountain square must succeed on a saving throw or else fall prone in the fountain. Otherwise, the fountain is difficult terrain.

### Sal

During the fight, Sal remains hidden in the shadows, watching from under the eaves of one of the buildings. A character that has a passive Perception of 19 or higher notices her and can recognize her from Benwick's description. She doesn't assist in battle, instead following her instructions from Benwick to keep an eye on Ronnik's bank.

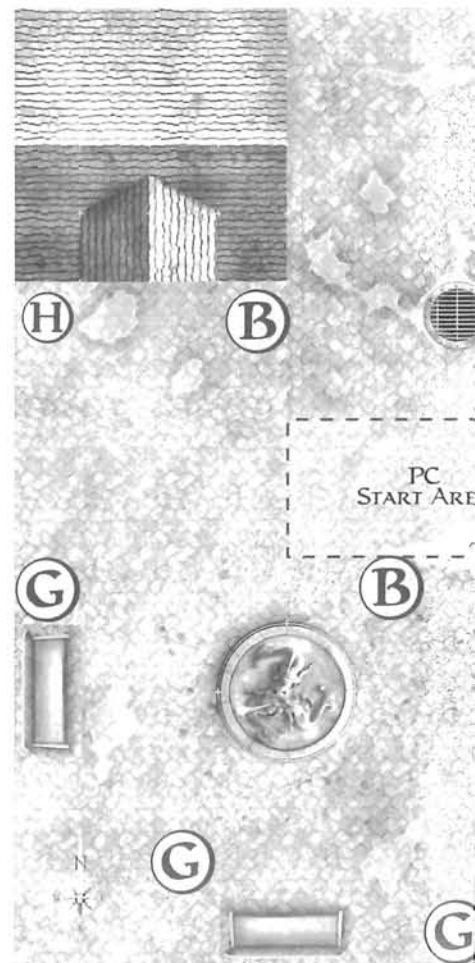
### Conclusion

The thugs and the halfling believe that Ronnik ordered them to eliminate the party, but in fact it was Sal acting under Ronnik's guise.

When the fight concludes, Sal approaches the party. It's not obvious that Sal is a doppelganger. She says she saw Ronnik enter the bank several hours ago and hasn't seen him leave. She suggests the party wait and search his place when it gets dark.

If the party questions why Sal did not join them in the fight or warn them of the ambush, he answers that he couldn't risk blowing his cover. He is well known in The Stumbling Giant, and he didn't want to reveal his connection to Benwick and the characters.

As the characters' short rest ends, smoke starts to come out of a shuttered window of Ronnik's bank.



**Halfling Thief (H)** **Level 2 Skirmisher**  
 Small natural humanoid XP 125  
 HP 34; Bloodied 17 Initiative +6  
 AC 16, Fortitude 13, Reflex 16, Will 14 Perception +1  
 Speed 6

#### TRAITS

##### Nimble Reaction

The halfling gains a +2 bonus to AC against opportunity attacks.

#### STANDARD ACTIONS

##### ⬇ Dagger (weapon) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC

Hit: 2d4 + 5 damage, plus 1d6 if the halfling has combat advantage against the target.

Effect: The halfling can shift 1 square.

##### ✈ Throwing Dagger (weapon) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Ranged 5 (one creature); +7 vs. AC

Hit: 2d4 + 5 damage, plus 1d6 if the halfling has combat advantage against the target.

##### ⬇ Mobile Melee Attack ♦ At-Will

Effect: The halfling moves up to 4 squares, using *dagger* at any point during the move. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks from the target of the attack.

Skills Acrobatics +9, Stealth +9, Thievery +9

Str 12 (+2) Dex 16 (+4) Wis 11 (+1)

Con 10 (+1) Int 10 (+1) Cha 14 (+3)

Alignment unaligned Languages Common

Equipment leather armor, 6 daggers

**3 Common Bandits (B)** **Level 2 Skirmisher**  
 Medium natural humanoid, human XP 125 each  
 HP 37; Bloodied 18 Initiative +6  
 AC 16, Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 12 Perception +1  
 Speed 6

#### TRAITS

##### Combat Advantage

The bandit deals 1d6 extra damage against any creature granting combat advantage to it.

#### STANDARD ACTIONS

##### ⬇ Mace (weapon) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC

Hit: 1d8 + 5 damage, and the bandit can shift 1 square.

##### ✈ Dagger (weapon) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +7 vs. AC

Hit: 1d4 + 5 damage, and the bandit can shift 1 square.

##### ⬇ Dazing Strike (weapon) ♦ Recharge when the attack misses

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC

Hit: 1d8 + 5 damage, and the target is dazed until the end of the bandit's next turn.

Effect: The bandit can shift 1 square.

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

Str 12 (+2) Dex 17 (+4) Wis 11 (+1)

Con 13 (+2) Int 10 (+1) Cha 12 (+2)

Alignment unaligned Languages Common

Equipment leather armor, mace, 4 daggers

**5 Human Goons (G)** **Level 2 Minion Soldier**  
 Medium natural humanoid, human XP 31 each  
 HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. Initiative +3  
 AC 15, Fortitude 13, Reflex 11, Will 11 Perception +2  
 Speed 6

#### TRAITS

##### Mob Rule

While at least two other human goons are within 5 squares of the goon, it gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses.

#### STANDARD ACTIONS

##### ⬇ Club (weapon) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC

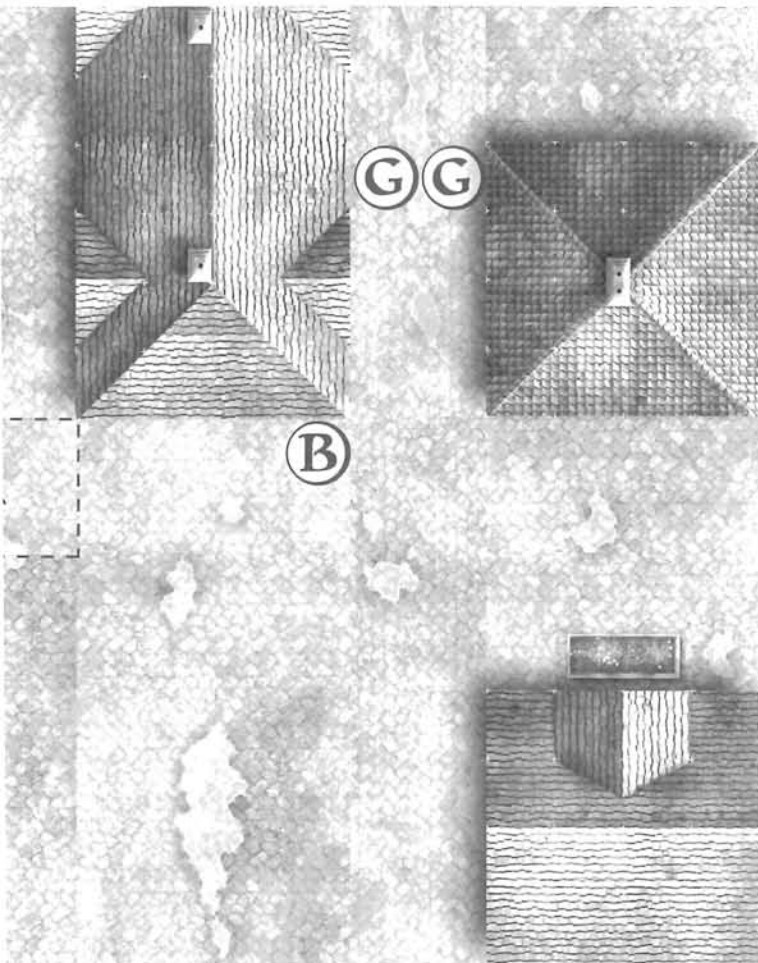
Hit: 5 damage.

Str 14 (+3) Dex 11 (+1) Wis 12 (+2)

Con 12 (+2) Int 9 (+0) Cha 13 (+2)

Alignment unaligned Languages Common

Equipment club



## ENCOUNTER 1–3: PRESSURE COOKER

### Encounter Level 1 (600 XP)

#### Setup

Lesser water elemental (W)

4 lesser fire elementals (F)

You also need hazard tokens or some other easy, flat way to mark squares that are on fire.

#### When the party enters, read:

Ronnik's bank looks to be part comfortable home, part business. It's furnished in a manner suitable for a successful merchant—a business counter divides the central hall. All very mundane... if it weren't for the fiery humanoid capering through the place, and the watery humanoid, gurgling with mirth.

Behind the counter, a circle of arcane sigils glows blue, pulsing in time with the elementals, who seem fueled by its power. Two other objects, a brazier and a basin, also pulse in time with the circle.

#### Skill Challenge: Putting Out Fires

The goal in this skill challenge is to shut down the magical system fueling the flames. Arcane skill can be used to draw power out of the network. Also, knocking over the brazier or the basin disturbs the system. Finally, the sigil can be deftly marred to help quench the flames.

If the players are unfamiliar with skill challenges, you can explain how they can use their skills or you can provide descriptions that suggest how they can tamper with the various components of the magical system.

**Level:** 1 (XP 100).

**Complexity:** 1 (requires 4 successes before 3 failures).

**Primary Skills:** Arcana, Athletics, Thievery.

**Arcana (DC 12, standard action):** The character draws magic out of the system, diminishing it and gaining a success.

**Thievery (DC 12, standard action):** A hero adjacent to the sigil circle mars the signs, weakening the magical system.

**Athletics (DC 12, standard action):** An adventurer adjacent to the water basin or the brazier can make one of the following attacks when he or she achieves a success. The attack is based on the item the character successfully knocks over. Each of the items can be used to achieve only one success.

#### Water Basin

Single-Use Terrain

*Frigid water washes out, chilling all it touches.*

**Target:** Each creature in a close blast 3, treating the basin's square as the blast's origin

**Attack:** +4 vs. Fortitude

**Hit:** 1d6 + 4 cold damage.

**Effect:** Fire hazards in the blast's area are removed.

#### Fire Brazier

Single-Use Terrain

*The burning fuel scatters about the room, burning all it touches.*

**Target:** Each creature in a close blast 3, treating the brazier square as the blast's origin

**Attack:** +4 vs. Reflex

**Hit:** 1d6 + 4 fire damage.

**Success:** The elemental fires in the room go out. Remove all fire tokens from the map. No more are placed during the combat.

**Failure:** If the heroes fail the skill challenge, the flames burn throughout combat until all the elementals are destroyed. The heroes receive experience for this skill challenge even if they fail it.

#### Burning the Bank

The elementals aim to burn down the bank. Use fire tokens to represent the spread of their elemental fire.

**Placing Fire Tokens:** At the start of the combat, place a fire token in each fire elemental's starting square.

Whenever a fire elemental ends its turn, one unoccupied square adjacent to it ignites. Place a fire token in one of those squares if the square does not already have one. Favor any square that is also adjacent to characters.

**Effects Fire Tokens:** Whenever a nonelemental creature enters or ends its turn in a square containing a fire, that creature takes 1d6 fire damage. Whenever a nonelemental creature ends its turn, it takes 2 fire damage for each square adjacent to it that contains a fire.



## Tactics

The fire elementals rush to take out intruders, moving about to spread fires. The water elemental does its best to guard the circle of arcane sigils, pushing enemies away and into burning squares, where they will take damage.

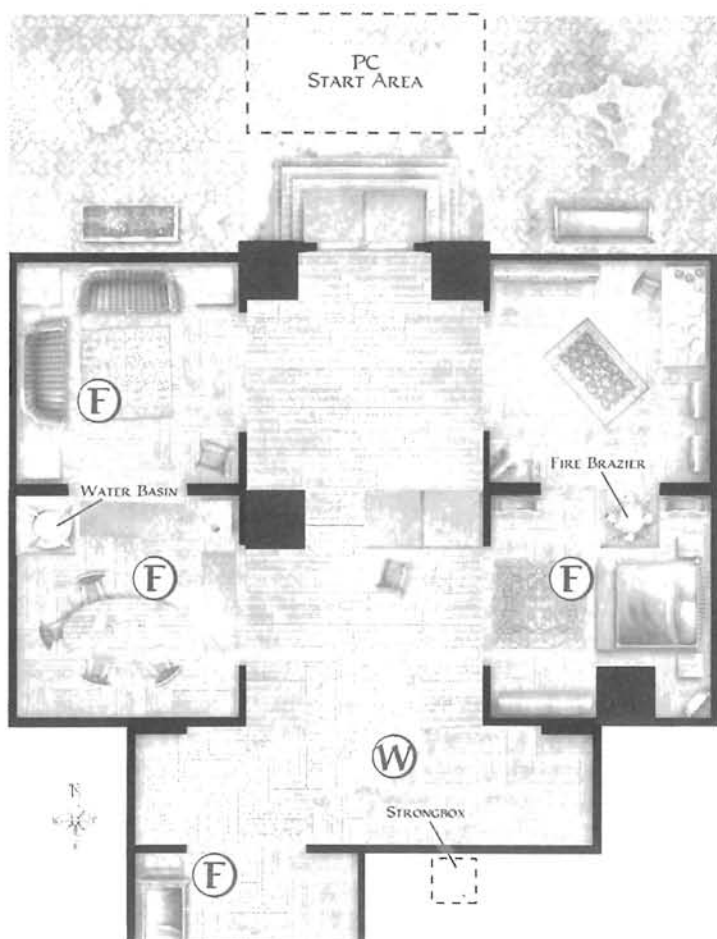
## Features of the Area

**Illumination:** The fires and sigil circle brightly light the area.

**Furniture:** Squares containing furniture are difficult terrain. The stove, which is not lit, is furniture for this purpose.

**Sigil Circle:** If a character succeeds on a DC 19 Arcana check, he or she can tell that the circle was created within the last half hour. (In reality, Benwick created the circle after leaving the The Stumbling Giant and then activated it in an attempt to set the heroes on Ronnik's trail).

**Treasure:** Ronnik's strongbox is in the wall niche noted on the tactical map. It is open and disheveled, but it still contains one red garnet (100 gp), 200 sp, and a level 2 magic implement.



## Conclusion

Whether or not the adventurers put out the fires, eventually the flames subside, and they are able to search the bank. Inside the desk, they find singed papers, including a map of the keep's environs. The map reveals a location called "Well Hideout," where the characters can assume Ronnik has fled (See **Session 4: King's Wall Hideout**, page 11). In reality, Benwick planted the map, intending that the heroes go there to deal with part of the Tiamat cult before moving on to Dragontooth Hill where the bulk of the cult is hiding.

Lesser Water Elemental (W)	Level 1 Controller
Small elemental natural beast (aquatic, water)	XP 100
HP 29; Bloodied 14	Initiative +2
AC 15, Fortitude 14, Reflex 13, Will 12	Perception +0
Speed 6, swim 6	

### TRAITS

#### Aquatic

The elemental can breathe underwater. In aquatic combat, it gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls against nonaquatic creatures.

#### Sensitive to Cold

Whenever the elemental takes cold damage, it gains vulnerable 5 against the next attack that hits it before the end of its next turn.

### STANDARD ACTIONS

#### ⬇ Slam ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +4 vs. Reflex

Hit: 1d6 damage, and ongoing 5 damage (save ends).

#### ◀ Whelm ♦ Encounter

Attack: Close blast 3 (enemies in the blast); +4 vs. Fortitude

Hit: 2d6 + 2 damage, and the elemental pushes the target up to 2 squares and knocks it prone.

### MINOR ACTIONS

#### Drowning Essence ♦ At-Will (1/round)

Effect: The elemental slides each creature taking ongoing damage from its slam 1 square.

Str 16 (+3) Dex 14 (+2) Wis 11 (+0)

Con 13 (+1) Int 5 (-3) Cha 8 (-1)

Alignment unaligned Languages understands Primordial

4 Lesser Fire Elementals (F)	Level 1 Skirmisher
Small elemental magical beast (fire)	XP 100 each

HP 27; Bloodied 13 Initiative +6

AC 14, Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 13 Perception +1

Speed 8, fly 4 (clumsy)

### TRAITS

#### Frozen in Place

Whenever the elemental takes cold damage, it cannot shift until the end of its next turn.

#### Heart of Flame (fire)

Whenever an enemy adjacent to the elemental misses it with a melee attack, that enemy takes 3 fire damage.

### STANDARD ACTIONS

#### ⬇ Slam (fire) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +4 vs. Reflex

Hit: Ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).

### MINOR ACTIONS

#### Flickering Flame ♦ At-Will

Effect: The elemental shifts 1 square.

Str 10 (+0) Dex 19 (+4) Wis 13 (+1)

Con 11 (+0) Int 5 (-3) Cha 6 (-2)

Alignment unaligned Languages understands Primordial

## ENCOUNTER 1-4: WELL WATCH

### Encounter Level 1 (550 XP)

#### Setup

Kobold dragonshield (D)  
Kobold slinger (S)  
2 kobold quickblades (Q)  
5 kobold tunnelers (T)

After the players place their miniatures, read:  
*The well looks as weathered as the surrounding ruins. You can also see a new wooden frame has been erected above the well, and a rope is tied to this frame. An old bucket has been cast aside nearby, and a coil of unused rope lies beside it.*

*Also, not far from the well is a portion of wall that looks odd.*

If the adventurers look down the well, they discover that it is dry. The characters can also inspect the wall more closely (have them move their miniatures up to the section marked "Weak Wall" on the tactical map). A character that succeeds on DC 12 Dungeoneering check discovers that the wall has been recently weakened using tools.

In the mean time, the kobolds stealthily approach the party, taking advantage of the shadows and remaining hidden. A character that has a passive Perception of 19 or higher hears the kobolds coming. If a character detects the kobolds, place them as indicated on the tactical map. If the heroes do not detect the kobolds, move each kobold up to 6 squares, keeping them near the walls. Place the dragonshield next to the weak wall. It attempts to collapse the wall on nearby characters, initiating combat. A character that succeeded on the Dungeoneering check gets a +2 bonus to Reflex against the wall's attack.

#### Weak Wall

Single-Use Terrain

*The wall section has been undermined; a solid push will topple it.*

#### Standard Action

**Requirement:** The creature collapsing the wall must be adjacent to it.

**Check:** Athletics DC 15

**Success:** Make the following attack.

**Target:** Each creature in a close blast 2, treating one of the weak wall's squares as the blast's origin square

**Attack:** +4 vs. Reflex

**Hit:** 1d8 + 3 damage, and the target is pushed up to 2 squares and knocked prone.

**Miss:** Half damage, and the target is pushed 1 square.

**Effect:** The blast's area becomes difficult terrain. The wall's squares remain blocking terrain, though.

#### Tactics

Unless they've already done so, the quickblades and dragonshield try to push the wall over on the characters if it's possible to catch two or more enemies within the area. Make checks for the kobolds when they push the wall. If they fail, the adventurers understand their intent and can turn the tables on the kobolds. Otherwise, the kobolds attack normally, trying to avoid being cornered.

The kobolds are all cultists of Tiamat and fight to the death. Near the end of combat, though, one of the kobolds instructs another one to run to Dragontooth Hill to warn Ronnik and the others.

#### Features of the Area

**Illumination:** The area is dark.

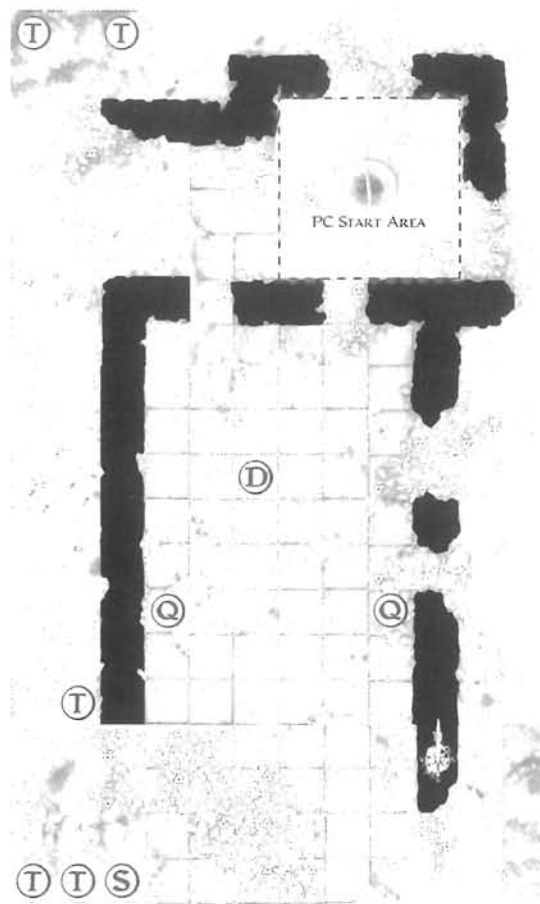
**Boulders:** The boulders are blocking terrain and require a DC 8 Athletics check to climb.

**Rubble:** The rocky squares are difficult terrain, as indicated by the triangles on the tactical map.

**Trees:** Forested squares are difficult terrain.

**Walls:** These sections of blocking terrain are 20 feet high (DC 15 Athletics check to climb).

**Well:** The well is dry and 10 feet deep. A creature forced to move into a square containing the wall can fall into it. Climbing out requires 5 squares of movement and a DC 10 Athletics check.



<b>Kobold Dragonshield (D)</b>	<b>Level 2 Soldier</b>
Small natural humanoid (reptile)	XP 125
HP 36; Bloodied 18	Initiative +4
AC 18, Fortitude 14, Reflex 13, Will 13	Perception +2
Speed 5	Darkvision

#### STANDARD ACTIONS

##### ⬇ Short Sword (weapon) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC

Hit: 1d6 + 6 damage.

Effect: The kobold marks the target until the end of the kobold's next turn.

##### ⬇ Dirty Tactics (weapon) ♦ Encounter

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +5 vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d6 + 7 damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of the kobold's next turn.

Miss: Half damage, and the target is slowed until the end of the kobold's next turn.

#### MINOR ACTIONS

##### Shifty ♦ At-Will

Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.

#### TRIGGERED ACTIONS

##### Dragonshield Tactics ♦ At-Will

Trigger: An enemy adjacent to the kobold shifts or an enemy moves to a square adjacent to the kobold.

Effect (Immediate Reaction): The kobold shifts 1 square.

Skills Athletics +8, Stealth +7, Thievery +7

Str 14 (+3) Dex 13 (+2) Wis 12 (+2)

Con 12 (+2) Int 9 (+0) Cha 10 (+1)

Alignment evil Languages Common, Draconic

Equipment scale armor, light shield, short sword

<b>Kobold Slinger (S)</b>	<b>Level 1 Artillery</b>
Small natural humanoid (reptile)	XP 100
HP 24; Bloodied 12	Initiative +3
AC 13, Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 12	Perception +1
Speed 6	Darkvision

#### STANDARD ACTIONS

##### ⬇ Dagger (weapon) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC

Hit: 1d4 + 3 damage.

##### ⌘ Sling (weapon) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Ranged 20 (one creature); +8 vs. AC

Hit: 1d6 + 5 damage.

##### ⌘ Special Shot (weapon) ♦ At-Will (3/encounter)

Attack: Ranged 20 (one creature); +8 vs. AC

Hit: 1d6 + 5 damage plus one of the following effects (roll a d6):

1 2 **Stinkpot**: The target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends).

3 4 **Firepot** (fire): The target takes ongoing 2 fire damage (save ends).

5 6 **Gluepot**: The target is immobilized (save ends).

#### MINOR ACTION

##### Shifty ♦ At-Will

Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.

Skills Stealth +8

Str 9 (-1) Dex 17 (+3) Wis 12 (+1)

Con 12 (+1) Int 9 (-1) Cha 10 (+0)

Alignment evil Languages Common, Draconic

Equipment leather armor, dagger, sling, 20 sling bullets, 3 rounds of special shot

<b>2 Kobold Quickblades (Q)</b>	<b>Level 1 Skirmisher</b>
Small natural humanoid (reptile)	XP 100 each
HP 29; Bloodied 14	Initiative +5
AC 15, Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 12	Perception +1
Speed 6	Darkvision

#### STANDARD ACTIONS

##### ⬇ Short Sword (weapon) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC

Hit: 1d6 + 3 damage. The attack deals 2 extra damage per square the kobold has shifted since the start of its turn.

#### MOVE ACTIONS

##### Fleet Feet ♦ At-Will

Effect: The kobold shifts up to 3 squares.

#### MINOR ACTIONS

##### Shifty ♦ At-Will

Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.

Skills Athletics +4, Stealth +8, Thievery +8

Str 8 (-1) Dex 17 (+3) Wis 13 (+1)

Con 13 (+1) Int 9 (-1) Cha 10 (+0)

Alignment evil Languages Common, Draconic

Equipment leather armor, light shield, short sword

<b>5 Kobold Tunnelers (T)</b>	<b>Level 1 Minion Skirmisher</b>
Small natural humanoid (reptile)	XP 25 each
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	Initiative +5
AC 15, Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 12	Perception +1
Speed 6	Darkvision

#### STANDARD ACTIONS

##### ⬇ Javelin (weapon) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC

Hit: 4 damage.

##### ⌘ Javelin (weapon) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +6 vs. AC

Hit: 4 damage.

#### MINOR ACTIONS

##### Shifty ♦ At-Will

Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.

#### TRIGGERED ACTIONS

##### Narrow Escape ♦ Encounter

Trigger: A close or an area attack hits or misses the kobold.

Effect (Immediate Interrupt): The kobold shifts up to 3 squares.

Str 8 (-1) Dex 16 (+3) Wis 12 (+1)

Con 12 (+1) Int 9 (-1) Cha 10 (+0)

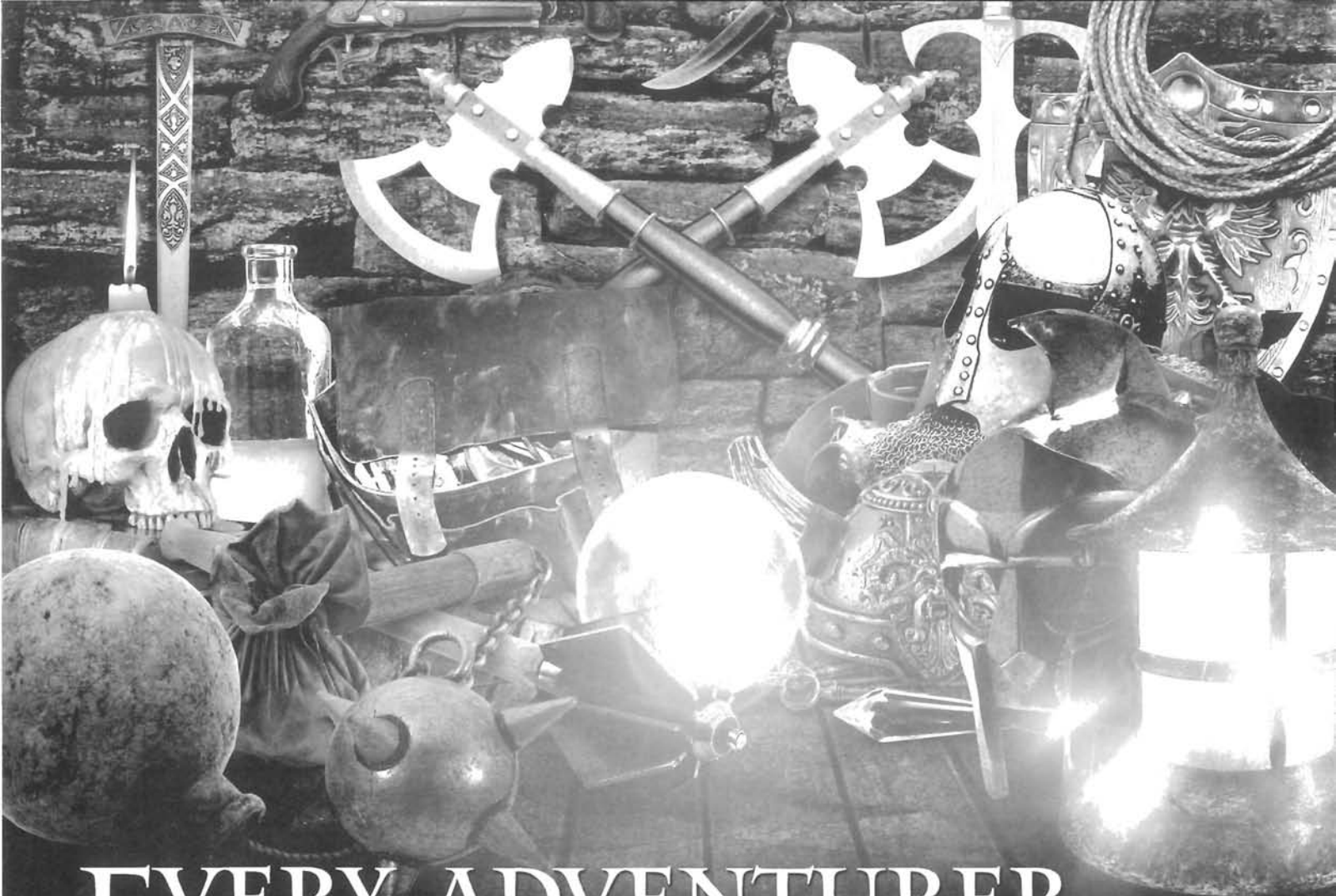
Alignment evil Languages Common, Draconic

Equipment leather armor, 3 javelins

## Conclusion

Any captured kobold is easy to intimidate. Otherwise, one takes to bragging before it expires. The creature tells the characters that Ronnik is the cult's patron, which it believes to be true. It also mocks the characters for coming to the false hideout instead of Dragontooth Hill. The characters can now tie Ronnik to Tiamat and complete a minor quest (20 XP each).





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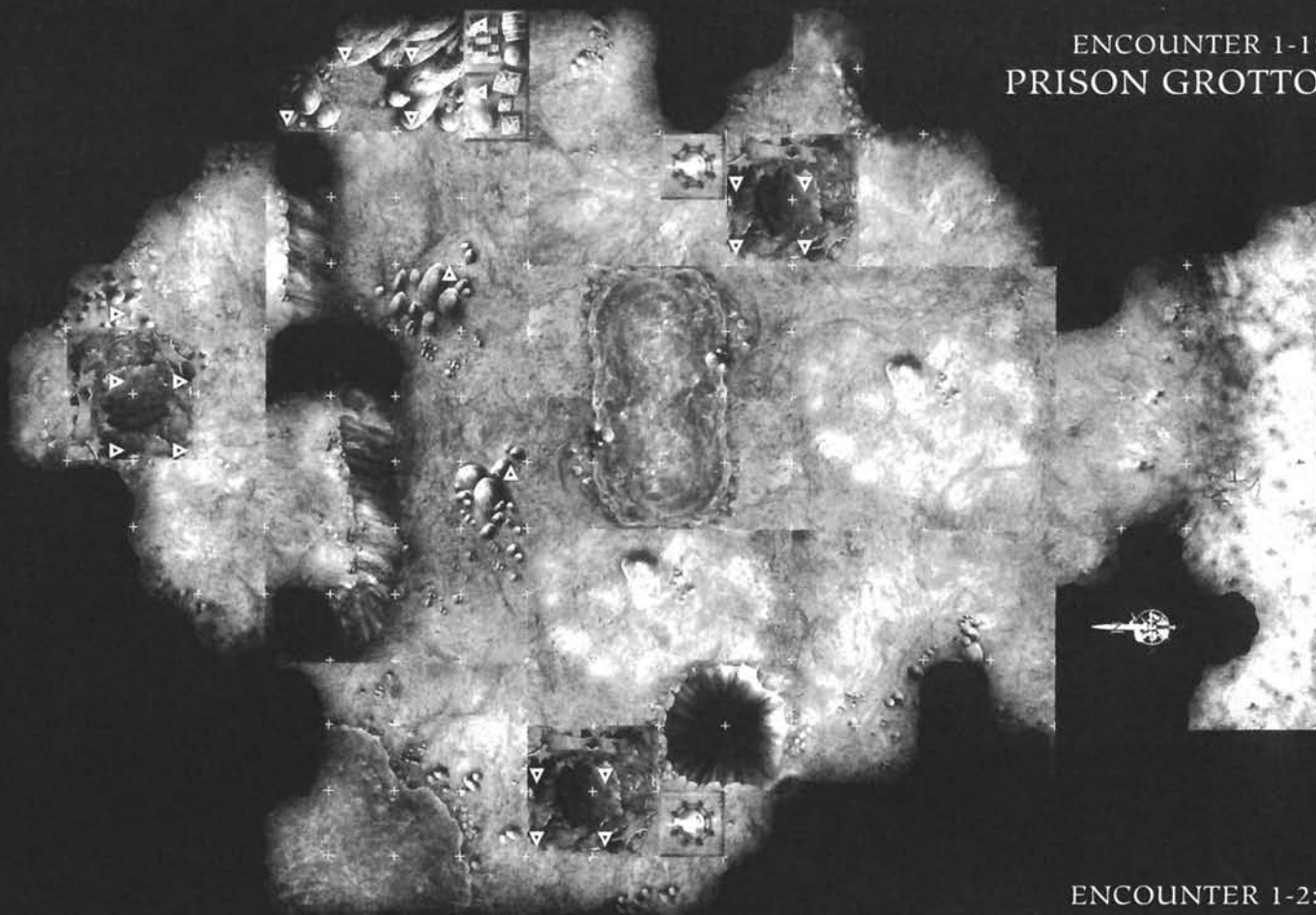
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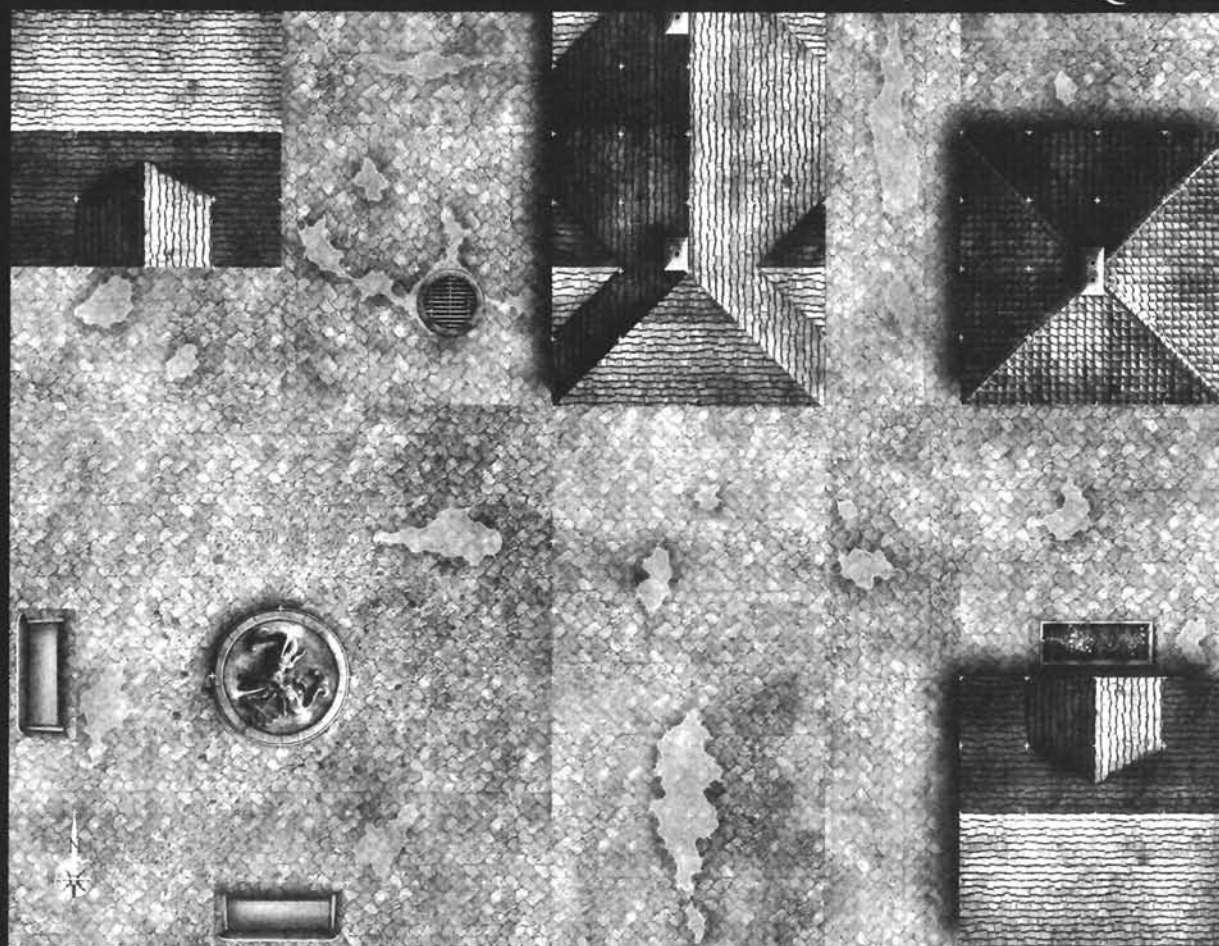
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ENCOUNTER 1-1:  
PRISON GROTTO



ENCOUNTER 1-2:  
FOUNTAIN SQUARE







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