A HEROIC TIER ADVENTURE

# KEEP ON THE BORDERLANDS Chapter 2 of 5: A Season of Serpents™



AN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTERS OF 1ST 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 5: Entrance Cave and Encounter 2-5: Foul Flow. 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 playtime 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 5	125 XP
Session 6	110 XP
Session 7	135 XP
Minor Quest: Find the Serpent's Eye	20 XP
Session 8	135 XP

If the characters succeed at all the encounters and complete all quests, each should earn 525 XP by the end of Chapter 2.

Leveling Up: By the end of Chapter 2, the characters have earned enough experience to make it to 2nd level. Players should level up their characters in-between sessions when they've reached 1,000 XP earned. All characters will be level 2 at the beginning of Chapter 3 (covered in the next adventure packet).

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.

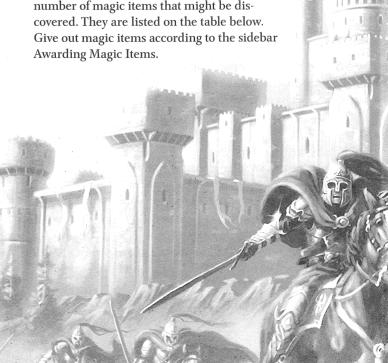
Majority Rules: If some element of the adventure plot hinges on the adventurers making a decision in a previous session, and the group is different during the current session, simply find out how the decision went down for that group. Go with the majority, and if it's an even split, side with the most 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.



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

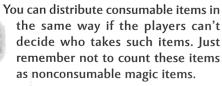
Location
Encounter 2-5
Encounter 2-5
Encounter 2-7
Encounter 2-7
Encounter 2-7
Encounter 2-7
Encounter 2-8

\* These rewards exceed normal treasure intentionally. The characters have to discover them or receive them as a reward for specific behavior.

### 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.





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.

G J. SPEARING

3

## ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

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.

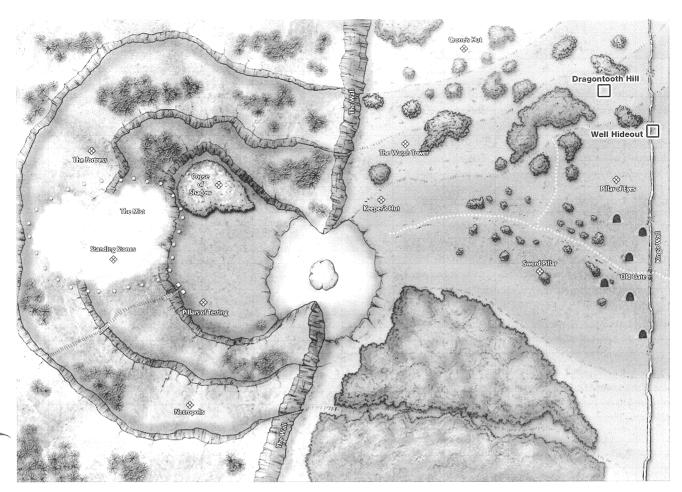
## The Banker

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 sentience 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.

RAZYREI

## 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 2.

### 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 2: Into the Dragontooth

Finally, Ronnik's hunters have chased their quarry to ground and played right into Benwick's nefarious plan. Luckily for the characters, Benwick has it out for a newly formed cult of Tiamat that's trying to muscle influence in with the local lizardfolk.

Kobolds and other cultists, such as a young dragon, have recently taken up residence in the old fortress of Dragontooth Hill. All believe Ronnik to be their leader and financier. None know that they, like their soon-to-be attackers, are Benwick's dupes.

## Session 5: Entrance Cave

Benwick's troubleshooters approach Dragontooth Hill from the south, where a stream flows out of the old place's only obvious entrance. They quickly learn how resourceful kobolds are with magic and allied creatures. Can the invaders be as resourceful in this challenging environment? **Session 5: Entrance Cave** starts on page 8, and **Encounter 2-5: Foul Flow** is found on page 12.

## Session 6: Old Shrine

The kobolds are setting up shop in the hill's old lab area. A sigil on the floor grants fiery power, but control of it is uncertain. Quick thinking and esoteric skill might allow the characters can turn the tables on the kobolds and one of their leaders **Session 6: Old Shrine** starts on page 8, and **Encounter 2-6: Strong Fire** is found on page 14.

## Session 7: Dragon Aerie

The new cult's secret waits at the upper reaches of Dragontooth Hill's inner structure to greet the invaders coolly. A copper dragon wyrmling and its guardians put up tough resistance. If the characters prevail, they recover the Serpent's Eye. They also learn that their patron, Benwick, is about to be murdered while trading for herbs with local lizardfolk. Session 7: Dragon Aerie starts on page 8, and Encounter 2-7: Cold Finish is found on page 16.

## Session 8: Saving Benwick

The party has to rush to a place where Benwick usually meets lizardfolk traders to prevent Benwick's demise at the hands of the "villain," Ronnik. A confused Ronnik refuses to go down easily, and he has the help of allies who believe him to be the leader of the cult of Tiamat. Session 8: Saving Benwick starts on page 9, and Encounter 2-8: Swamp Stones is found on page 18.

## Resting

Although the characters can take short rests between sessions, they cannot take an extended rest inside the dungeon. When they find out about the plot to kill Benwick, they have only a few hours to rescue the friar, and an extended rest is sure to doom him.

# ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTERS

Chapter 2 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 2-6 (level 1 encounter), you might subtract a kobold quickblade.

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 2-6, you might add another kobold quickblade.



## CONTINUING THE ADVENTURE

The adventure included here is the second of 5 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 adventure.

# Chapter 2: Into Dragontooth

On Ronnik's trail, the heroes are ready to beard the "villain" in his lair, engaging in a traditional Dungeons & Dragons dungeon crawl. Still, Ronnik seems one step ahead. In the end, Benwick's troubleshooters are forced to rush to their patron's rescue.

# Session 5: Entrance Cave

At the start of the session, make sure each adventurer has had the chance to take an extended rest. Then read the following text.

You awaken early to clear skies and head northwest, away from the King's Wall. The ominous wall of the Chaos Scar looms to the west, but you have another destination. Soon enough, a crooked, rocky hill comes into view. Your path leads against the current of a brisk stream, which you discover flows from a waterfall. The water spills out of the mouth of a dark, elevated cave in Dragontooth Hill. A short climb is required to get into the cave.

The cliff is 20 feet high. Climbing to the top requires 6 squares of movement and a DC 15 Athletics check. At the top, on the eastern side of the waterfall, a coiled of knotted rope is nailed into the rock. The rope is long enough to reach the bottom of the cliff and requires 6 squares of movement and a DC 5 Athletics check to climb to the top.

**Stealth:** Due to the roar of the water, if the characters attempt to be stealthy, they gain a +5 bonus to Stealth checks until they enter the cave. Even if the characters fail to be quiet, the monsters wait. Once the characters reach the top, go to **Encounter 2-5: Foul Flow** (page 12).

# Session 6: Old Shrine

After a short rest in the entrance chamber of Dragontooth Hill, the adventurers must scale the inner waterfall to continue. Like the outer cliff, the ledge is 20 feet high (DC 15 Athletics check to climb). At the top, on the eastern side of the waterfall, one end of a coiled rope is nailed into the rock. The hemp (DC 5 Athletics check to climb) looks new and long enough to reach the bottom of the cliff.

When the characters reach the top ledge, read the following text.

Flickering orange light illuminates the ledge from a carved archway to the east. Fires must illuminate the room there. Squeaking voices chatter beyond the doorway.

Over the sound of the waterfalls, the characters can barely make out a few mundane phrases in Draconic. The voices sound like kobolds. Once the characters enter the area, you can have the players place their miniatures in the starting area and then go to **Encounter 2-6: Strong Fire** (page 14).

# Session 7: Dragon Aerie

After a short rest, the characters can use the lift (if available) or the spiral stairway to ascend to the next area.

**Lift:** No chance of stealth exists if the lift is used. Characters that use the noisy lift hear the creatures above preparing for battle (scraping furniture, drawn weapons, growls) only on a successful DC 19 Perception check. On a failure, the kobolds gain surprise when the heroes reach the upper floor.

Spiral Stairway: The adventurers can try to sneak up the dark spiral staircase. If a sneaking character's Stealth check is 23 or lower, though, a magic warding ritual detects them and shouts out, "Greetings, unknown creatures!" A character can notice the ward with a DC 19 Perception check and can disable it with a DC 19 Thievery check. Failure by 5 or more causes the alarm to go off. If the warning goes off, the characters and the monsters are not surprised at the start of combat.

When the characters arrive upstairs, go to Encounter 2-7: Cold Finish (page 16).

## Wrapping Up Dragontooth Hill

Through either conversation or investigation, the party learns Ronnik "insidious plans."

Captives: Mox or the humanoids can confirm Ronnik was at Dragontooth Hill this morning, but he left a while ago. They divulge that the banker used a magical ritual to contact his lizardfolk allies, planning to ambush and murder Benwick this very day. The friar trades for herbs with local lizardfolk on a predictable schedule at a usual place—the end of an old road near the swamp, where older dolmens stand. The captives can indicate the meeting place on the characters' map, since they are supposed to join Ronnik there later.

**Documents:** One of the tables on the upper floor of Dragontooth Hill holds maps and plans. These documents reveal the same plot that the captives (if any) do, as well as the old road/dolmen meeting location. The papers also sketch out Ronnik's plan to finance the refitting of Dragontooth Hill as a small fortress for Tiamat. One letter indicates that he has established relations with a small kobold tribe, the Burning Scales. The adventurers just defeated several of these kobolds at Dragontooth Hill.

**Serpent's Eye:** The characters have recovered a large, polished tiger-eye jewel with the symbol of Avandra on one side and the symbol of Zehir on the other. They each receive 20 XP for completing a minor quest, but must wait until they give or refuse to give Benwick the jewel to receive any treasure for the accomplishment.

**Moving On:** Once the characters decide to leave Dragontooth Hill—either using the zip line or by backtracking—the session is over. They're ready to rescue Benwick in the chapter finale.

# Session 8: Saving Benwick

Benwick's plan is coming together. With the help of the heroes, he has set up Ferdinand Ronnik perfectly. A doppelganger posing as Ronnik performs a ritual to instruct the cult's lizardfolk allies to meet in a clearing near the swamp. There, Benwick will stage a specially prepared scene.

## Final Race

The characters rush from Dragontooth Hill to save their patron, Benwick. At the start of the session, read the following text.

Armed with your map, you rush across the countryside, out of the Chaos Scar, and beyond the King's Wall. You quickly find the old road you're looking for and follow it north toward the swamp. The trees close in as the land descends and becomes marshier.

Your haste pays off. Approaching the lòcation, you hear furious yelling and Benwick's cries for help.

The adventurers have no time for stealth, for as soon as they near the clearing, they hear Benwick's cries for help.

When the adventurers enter the area, go to Encounter 2-8: Swamp Stones (page 18).

## Concluding the Adventure

Once the final battle is over, a few loose ends remain.

## Benwick, Gordi, and Sal

Benwick survives, of course, and he's extremely grateful, continuing to play the part of the jolly friar. In truth, he has come to value the adventurers and prefers to remain an ally, for now. Keep potential enemies close, and all that.

Gordi and Sal survive, too. "Regaining consciousness" shortly after the battle ends. They pretend to be grateful survivors. Gordi volunteers to carry packs and perform similar menial tasks for the heroes.

## Ferdinand Ronnik

If Ronnik dies, Benwick expresses grief that it had to come to that, but relief that it's over. If Ronnik survives, he remains crazed for the duration of the trip back to Restwell Keep. Benwick volunteers to take him to the authorities to recount the adventurer's heroic exploits and ensure that Ronnik ends up in Drysdale's dungeons for what he's done. Of course, he denies everything right up until he's hanged in the public square a few days later.

Citizens of the outer bailey treat the characters like saviors for ridding the keep of "that snake, Ronnik." The heroes might enjoy occasional discounts in the shops (never the inn) and a few free drinks at The Stumbling Giant.

## The Serpent's Eye

Benwick offers each character a 75 gp reward for recovering the jewel. He says that for now, the gem should remain with Chendera at the temple of Avandra for safe-keeping. If the characters ask about the symbol of Zehir on the jewel, he tells them that a cult of Zehir stole the gem from the temple of Avandra in Fallcrest and placed the symbol on it. Much later, Ronnik stole the gem from the cult and "selfishly refused to return it."

The friar requests that the characters, after a wellearned rest, speak to Gorn Hammerfell, captain of the watch. Benwick believes that Gorn has a problem that the Serpent's Eye and the adventurers can help solve. Benwick says he'd like to see the Serpent's Eye do some good before it's returned to Fallcrest.

If the party refuses to give up the gem, they do not receive Benwick's reward and quickly discover that no one wants the gem because of the symbol of Zehir on it. Chendera eventually comes to the party and asks for it on behalf of Avandra, offering 40 gp to each character for turning it over.

AVID GRIFFITE

Encounter 2-5: Foul Flow

Encounter 2-6:
Strong Fire



## ENCOUNTER 2-5: FOUL FLOW

Encounter Level 2 (625 XP)

## Setup

Kobold ooze talker (K)

3 squelching oozes (O)

4 acid cap mushrooms hazards

The monsters start the encounter out of line of sight. Don't reveal them.

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

Though the cave seemed dark from outside, a dim blue light pervades, issuing from an unknown source. A rope lies coiled to the east at the top of the cliff.

A second waterfall roars to the rear of the cavern. Water flows through the cave's center where a few flat rocks protrude from it. Mixed with the scent of fresh water and earth is a slight odor of decay.

A short distance from the entrance, illuminated by the light from outside, a rope dangles from the ceiling. A piton holds it fast. The cavern's denizens appear to use the rope to traverse the stream.

**Spotting Danger:** A character with line of sight to an ooze can spot the creature by succeeding on a DC 22 Perception check.

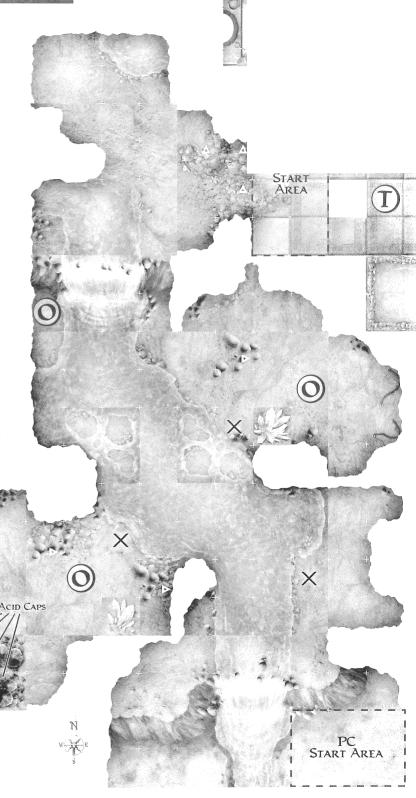
Rope Swings: Secure ropes hang down from the ceiling in the places marked "X" on the map. A character in one of these squares gains a +5 bonus to Athletics checks to jump and is considered to have a running start. The characters, depending on position, light, and line of sight, might be able to see the other ropes hanging within the cavern.

## **Tactics**

Squelching oozes instinctively conceal themselves when inactive; they begin the encounter hidden. The oozes react when the first character enters their line of sight (bline)

enters their line of sight (blindsight), remaining still until then. Once they sense prey, they attack until slain.

The kobold starts off lounging behind the mushrooms, out of line of sight until she acts. She waits until the oozes enter combat before attacking and prefers cover to moving out into the open. The kobold might flee out of the cave.



## Features of the Area

Illumination: The cavern is illuminated with bright light due to the outside light, the braziers, and the crystals.

Armor Square: A character that moves adjacent to this square can see deeper water here (5 feet). Shiny objects and apparently undamaged armor are mixed with bones and corroded items under the swirling current.

Boulders/Rubble: Rocky squares marked with triangles are difficult terrain.

Ceiling: 15 feet above ground level.

**Crystals:** Squares containing these glowing rocks are difficult terrain. Characters can harvest the crystals, which provide 10 squares of bright light for 4 hours after they're collected.

Ledges: These rises are 20 feet high. Climbing up or down requires a DC 15 Athletics check and 5 squares of movement. Falling from them into water counts as a 10-foot fall instead of a 20-foot fall. Both cliffs have ropes coiled at the top on the eastern side of the stream.

**Pools:** The pools are shallow, forming difficult terrain. The water is acrid.

Prisoner Chains: New chains with manacles are fastened to the cave wall here. Signs of acid damage and blood mar them.

**Stream:** The stream is shallow and difficult terrain. A creature without a swim speed that ends its turn in the water must succeed on a DC 8 Athletics check or be pushed 2 square toward the entrance. The water is fresh.

Stream Rocks: These flat surfaces are slippery but safe.

Treasure: The Armor Square contains a level 5 suit of magic armor and gems and jewelry worth 70 gp.

### **4 Acid Cap Mushrooms** Terrain

Level 1 Minion Hazard XP 25 each

**Detect** Dungeoneering DC 12

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

AC 15, Fortitude 13, Reflex 10, Will -

Immune acid, poison, psychic, forced movement, all conditions, ongoing damage

### **Oversized Fungi**

Squares with acid cap mushrooms are difficult terrain.

## **‡ Caustic Spores** (acid) **♦ At-Will**

Trigger: A creature enters the mushroom's square while on

Attack (Free Action): Melee 0 (triggering creature); +4 vs. Fortitude. Hit: 5 acid damage.

Miss: 2 acid damage.

### **Kobold Ooze Talker (K)**

Small natural humanoid (reptile)

**Level 3 Artillery** XP 150

HP 36: Bloodied 18

Initiative +3 Perception +2

Darkvision

AC 13, Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 12 Speed 6

Resist 5 acid

( Caustic Dagger (acid, weapon) ◆ At-Will

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

Hit: 1d4 + 2 damage plus 1d4 + 3 acid damage.

(→) Ooze Orb (acid) ◆ At-Will

Attack: Ranged 15 (one creature); +7 vs. Fortitude Hit: 2d6 + 4 acid damage.

### - ∜ Ooze Whisper ◆ Encounter

Attack: Area burst 1 within 10 (enemies in the burst); +7 vs. Reflex. Hit: Ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends).

Effect: One ally in the burst can make a basic attack as a free action.

### Shifty ♦ At-Will

Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.

### Scathing Maneuver ◆ At-Will

Trigger: An attack that deals acid damage hits the kobold. Effect (Immediate Interrupt): The kobold shifts up to 3 squares.

### Skills Stealth +8

Str 9 (+0)

Dex 15 (+3) Int 9 (+0)

Wis 12 (+2)

Con 12 (+2)

Cha 17 (+4)

Languages Common, Draconic Alignment evil Equipment bone breastplate, dagger, bone mask

### 3 Squelching Oozes (O) Small natural beast (blind, ooze)

Level 2 Skirmisher

HP 41; Bloodied 20

XP 125 each Initiative +5

AC 16, Fortitude 15, Reflex 14, Will 13

Perception +2

Speed 5, climb 3, swim 3

Blind, blindsight 10

Immune blinded, gaze effects; Resist 5 acid

### Ooze

While squeezing, the ooze moves at full speed rather than half speed, it doesn't take the -5 penalty to attack rolls, and it doesn't grant combat advantage for squeezing.

### ( ↓ ) Slam (acid) ◆ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC Hit: 2d6 + 3 acid damage.

### Slippery ♦ At-Will

Effect: The ooze shifts up to 2 squares, or 1 square while swimming.

### Triggered Actions

### Squelching Stench F Encounter

Trigger: The ooze takes damage during its turn.

Attack (Immediate Reaction): Close burst 1 (creatures in the burst); +5 vs. Fortitude

Hit: The ooze pushes the target up to 2 squares.

### Skills Stealth +12

Str 11 (+1)

Dex 15 (+3)

Wis 12 (+2)

Con 17 (+4)

Int 1 (-4)

Cha 1 (-4)

Alignment unaligned

Languages

## ENCOUNTER 2–6: STRONG FIRE

## Encounter Level 1 (550 XP)

## Setup

Kobold wyrmpriest (W) 3 kobold quickblades (Q) 4 kobold tunnelers (T)

The kobolds can see the entrance to their chamber clearly, so it is impossible for the characters to surprise them.

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

This cavern is walled and paved in cut stone. Draconic runes are carved in the floor.

Four pillars surround a raised stone dais upon which a red runic symbol is carved. Small motes of fire dance on its arcane lines.

Past the symbol and pillars are two doorways; orange, flickering light shows through them. In between the doors, a huge platform for a lift bears a hand-operated crank. The far side of the lift opens to another area beyond it.

A few kobolds move about, involving themselves in various tasks. At your approach, their eyes go wide and they begin chattering in Draconic.

## **Tactics**

The quickblades and tunnelers keep enemies away from the wyrmpriest. As soon as the wyrmpriest enters the main chamber, he cries, "Ixenstrix!" and displays a clay symbol of Tiamat. The wyrmpriest has control of the fire rune during its first turn. After that, refer to the "Ixenstrix!" section below.

If the fight goes badly, the wyrmpriest or another kobold orders one of their kin to escape up the lift or the stairs to warn "Moxulhar and the others" about the intruders.

## Ixenstrix!

When the wyrmpriest yells this phrase, which means "strong fire" in Draconic, all the kobolds begin to chant the word. As they do, the runic symbol and the fires glow brighter.

A character trained in Arcana can tell the wyrmpriest and his followers are controlling the rune. He or she also knows that control can be wrested from them through skilled use of Arcana and a similar chant.

At the start of each round, the wyrmpriest and one adventurer make an opposed Arcana check (mark this event on the initiative chart). The kobold wyrmpriest gains a +1 bonus to the check per living kobold in the room. The adventurer performing the check gains a +1 bonus to the check for each other adventurer chanting "ixenstrix."

Whoever succeeds on the Arcana check gains control of the runic symbol until the start of the next round. The creature that controls the symbol can make the Fire Rune attack (see below).

### Fire Rune

At Will Terrain

The flame burns cheerily and safely in its brazier, fireplace, or other container . . . until it lashes out abruptly.

Minor Action (1/round)

**Target:** One creature within 5 squares of a source of fire, such as the fireplace or a brazier.

**Attack:** +4 vs. Reflex **Hit:** 2d4 fire damage.

# Features of the Area

Illumination: Fires brightly light the area.

**Architecture:** A character that succeeds on a DC 12 History check can discern that the architecture is aged but clearly dragonborn in style.

**Braziers:** These furnishings are visibly bolted to the floor and cannot be knocked over. A creature that is forced to move into a square containing a brazier takes 1d6 fire damage.

**Cells:** The iron bars on these small rooms are latched, but not locked.

**Crates:** These casks and crates of supplies are difficult terrain. They contain food that looks to have been stolen.

**Fireplace:** A creature that is forced to move into a square containing the fireplace takes 1d6 fire damage.

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

**Lift:** The platform is on this level. Using the crank is a standard action. It causes the lift to noisily ascend into the area of the next encounter. The

**Pool:** The pool is shallow, forming difficult terrain. The water is warm.

**Rune:** The squares containing the rune are harmless.

**Spiral Stair:** These stairs lead up to the area of **Encounter 2-7:** Cold Finish (page 16).

## Conclusion

A captured kobold can identify Ronnik as its patron. If a character succeeds on a DC 12 Intimidate check against a captured kobold, it describes the creatures and the contents of the area above.

Any kobold that escapes up the lift joins **Encounter 2-7: Cold Finish** (page 16).

### 3 Kobold Quickblades (Q) Level 1 Skirmisher Small natural humanoid (reptile) XP 100 each

HP 29: Bloodied 14

Initiative +5

AC 15, Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 12 Speed 6

Perception +1 Darkvision Speed 6

(+) 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.

### Fleet Feet ♦ At-Will

Effect: The kobold shifts up to 3 squares.

### Shifty ♦ At-Will

Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.

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

Str 8 (-1)

Dex 17 (+3)

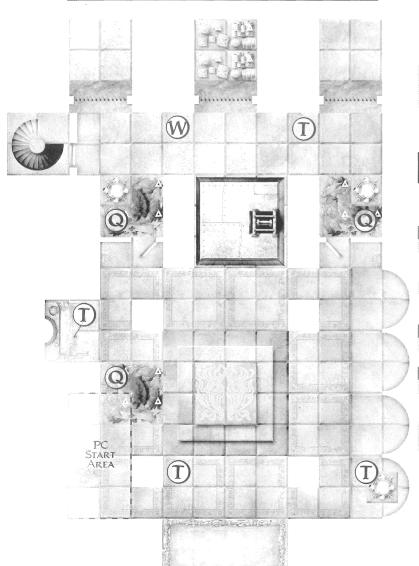
Wis 13 (+1)

Con 13 (+1)

Int 9 (-1)

Cha 10 (+0) Languages Common, Draconic

Alignment evil Equipment leather armor, light shield, short sword



### Level 3 Artillery (Leader) **Kobold Wyrmpriest (W)** XP 150 Small natural humanoid (reptile)

HP 36; Bloodied 18 AC 15, Fortitude 14, Reflex 15, Will 16

Initiative +3 Perception +4 Darkvision

( ↓ ) Chilling Spear (cold, weapon) ◆ At-Will Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC Hit: 1d8 damage plus 1d6 + 4 cold damage.

(₹) Ice Orb (cold) ◆ At-Will

Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +8 vs. Reflex Hit: 2d6 + 4 cold damage.

### Incite Faith ♦ Recharge :: , ::

Effect: Close burst 5 (one kobold ally in the burst). The target can shift 1 square and use a basic attack. If it hits, it gains 5 temporary hit points and all other kobold allies within the area can shift 1 square.

### Shifty ♦ At-Will

Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.

### 

Trigger: The kobold is bloodied by a melee attack or is bloodied and takes damage from a melee attack.

Attack (Immediate Reaction): Close blast 3 (creatures in the blast); +8 vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d6 + 2 cold damage, and the target is pushed up to 2 squares. Miss: Half damage.

### Skills Arcana +7, Stealth +8

Str 9 (+0) Dex 15 (+3) Con 12 (+2) Int 12 (+2)

Wis 17 (+4) Cha 12 (+2)

Alignment evil

Languages Common, Draconic

Equipment robes, spear, bone mask

### 4 Kobold Tunnelers (T) **Level 1 Minion Skirmisher** XP 25 each

Small natural humanoid (reptile)

Initiative +5

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. AC 15, Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 12 Speed 6

Perception +1 Darkvision

### (↓) 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.

### 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

## ENCOUNTER 2-7: COLD FINISH

## Encounter Level 2 (675 XP)

## Setup

Moxulhar, copper dragon wyrmling (C) 1 dragonborn mercenary (D) 2 kobold dragonshields (K)

If the characters come up the stairs, have the players place their miniatures in the starting area. Otherwise, have them start on the lift.

## When the party enters the area, read:

Other than the fire braziers that light this large room, daylight pours in through large double doors that are open to an outdoor balcony at the top of a broad staircase. The room contains new and out-of-place furnishings—such as a cage and a card table—and lots of unopened supplies. The inhabitants clearly arrived recently.

Two armored, shield-bearing kobolds and a leather-clad, axewielding dragonborn look ready for a fight.

The wyrmling crouches in the shadows of its area when it hears approaching creatures, so it has a chance to start out hidden.

## If a character has a passive Perception of 17 or higher, also read:

You also notice a copper dragon the size of a hunting hound crouching in the corner, trying to escape notice.

## **Tactics**

The kobolds engage the characters to allow the dragon and dragonborn freer movement. All monsters are aggressive and bold in battle.

The dragon is a chatty combatant (see "Roleplaying the Dragon" below), and once bloodied, she can be made to surrender with a successful DC 12 Intimidate check. Alternatively, a character that succeeds on a DC 19 Diplomacy check can persuade her to aid the characters against the dragonborn and the kobolds.

When an attack reduces her to 24 hit points or fewer, she admits defeat and asks for mercy. She offers to disclose "much that is hidden."

None of the humanoids surrender, claiming to fight for Tiamat and to protect their patron, Ronnik. The dragonborn might attack the dragon for surrendering, but use this response for drama only. The characters should decide Moxulhar's fate.

## Roleplaying the Dragon

Moxulhar, the copper dragon, sees the fight as fun. The dragon is precocious, so feel free to play up her personality. She comments on the damage dealt, complains when hurt, and makes various observations, such as:

"I wonder if that would make Tiamat proud?"

"Ferdinand won't be happy with you at all."

"I'm a ferocious dragon."

"I wonder what you taste like under that metal?"

She banters with willing enemies. Once defeated, the dragon is appeasing and respectful of the adventurer's skill. She doesn't want to die.

If given a chance to converse, Moxulhar seems an okay sort. She tells the characters that they can call her "Mox." Mox is a young dragon, eager to prove her strength. The cult attracted her with offerings of service, shelter, and treasure, including the Serpent's Eye. Mox is willing to promise not to fall in with evil again if set free. She might even decide to turn to heroics if properly influenced.

## Conclusion

After the battle concludes, refer back to "Wrapping Up Dragontooth Hill" on page 9 for how to set things up for the final encounter of the chapter.

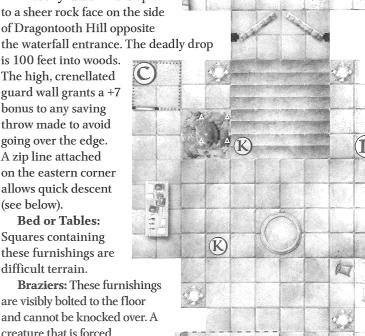
## Features of the Area

Illumination: Fires and daylight brightly light the area. Balcony: This area is open

of Dragontooth Hill opposite the waterfall entrance. The deadly drop is 100 feet into woods. The high, crenellated guard wall grants a +7 bonus to any saving throw made to avoid going over the edge. A zip line attached on the eastern corner allows quick descent (see below).

**Bed or Tables:** Squares containing these furnishings are difficult terrain.

Braziers: These furnishings are visibly bolted to the floor and cannot be knocked over. A creature that is forced



to move into a square containing a brazier takes 1d6 fire

Cage: This unlocked cage was obviously brought from outside.

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

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

Furniture: Squares containing furniture are difficult terrain.

Lift Pit: If the lift isn't on this level, its shaft is a 20-foot drop.

**Pool:** The pool is difficult terrain. The water is cold. Spiral Staircase: The spiral stairs ascend 20 feet from the previous level.

Stairs: The staircase rising up to the balcony is gradual, rising 10 feet in total.

Treasure: The cage holds a small hoard: the Serpent's Eye (see page 9), a level 4 magic weapon, and a level 3 magic neck item. Hidden under one of the cage's floor cobbles (DC 19 Perception check to find) is a potion of healing (Heroes of the Fallen Lands) and a silver and ruby eye (100 gp). If the characters are running low on healing surges at this point in the adventure, you can modify the potion to instead restore one healing surge when consumed.

**Zip Line:** The line from the balcony is safe. One character at a time can slide down a pulley, over the trees, to a meadow at the base of the hill. The pulley can be winched back up to allow further descents.

### Moxulhar, **Level 3 Elite Controller** Copper Dragon Wyrmling (C) XP 300 Medium natural magical beast (dragon)

HP 96; Bloodied 48 Initiative +2 AC 17, Fortitude 16, Reflex 14, Will 15 Perception +7 Speed 6 (ice walk), fly 6 Darkvision

Resist 5 acid

Saving Throws +2; Action Points 1

( ↓ ) Bite (acid) ◆ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC Hit: 2d8 + 4 acid damage, and the target is slowed until the end of the dragon's next turn. If the target is already slowed, it

is instead immobilized until the end of its next turn.

(+) Claw At-Will

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

Hit: 2d6 + 2 damage, and the dragon can slide the target 1 square.

**↓ Wyrmling Rampage ◆ At-Will** 

Effect: The dragon uses bite against one target, shifts up to 2 squares, and uses claw against a different target.

 ⇔ Breath Weapon (acid) ◆ Recharge when first bloodied Attack: Close blast 4 (creatures in the blast); +6 vs. Fortitude Hit: 2d8 + 7 acid damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).

Miss: Half damage.

Skills Stealth +7, Intimidate +8 Str 17 (+4) Dex 12 (+2) Wis 12 (+2)

Con 16 (+4) Int 10 (+1) Cha 14 (+3)

Alignment unaligned Languages Common, Draconic

Level 2 Skirmisher **Dragonborn Mercenary (D)** Medium natural humanoid XP 125 Initiative +6

HP 38; Bloodied 19 AC 16, Fortitude 13, Reflex 14, Will 14

Perception +2

Speed 6

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.

4) 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.

⇔ 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) Cha 10 (+1)

Con 14 (+3) Int 8 (+0) Alignment unaligned Languages Common, Draconic

Equipment hide armor, battleaxe

Level 2 Soldier 2 Kobold Dragonshields (K) XP 125 each Small natural humanoid (reptile) HP 36; Bloodied 18 Initiative +4 AC 18, Fortitude 14, Reflex 13, Will 13 Perception +2 Darkvision Speed 5

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.

Shifty ♦ At-Will

Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.

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

Dex 13 (+2)

Wis 12 (+2)

Int 9 (+0)

Str 14 (+3)

Alignment evil

Cha 10 (+1)

Con 12 (+2)

Languages Common, Draconic

Equipment scale armor, light shield, short sword



## ENCOUNTER 2–8: SWAMP STONES

## Encounter Level 2 (675 XP)

## Setup

Ferdinand Ronnik (R) Dragonborn mercenary (D) 3 poisonscale savages (P)

When the adventurers arrive in the area, place Benwick (B), Gordi (G), and Sal (S) along with all the other monsters. Then read the following text.

Benwick kneels on one side of the clearing, his hands raised defensively. A dragonborn has its weapon raised, menacing him. Nearby, Benwick's companions, Gordi and Sal, lie motionless on the ground. Above them stands Ronnik, looking around wildly.

Three lizardfolk stand near Ronnik. At your approach, they look expectantly at Ronnik and hiss words at him in Draconic. Ronnik looks around, and before he can answer, the dragonborn glares at the lizardfolk and in Common says "We shall seal our agreement with blood. Come, Ronnik, we shall kill them together and welcome our reptilian brethren into Tiamat's fold."

With that, all four reptilian humanoids turn and attack.

If one of the heroes speaks Draconic, then he or she understands the lizardfolk's words. The lizardfolk asks Ronnik what they should do about the intruders. These lizardfolk have already sworn allegiance to Tiamat's cult through the fake Ronnik. They were expecting to meet with Ronnik in the clearing to seal their agreement.

In reality, the whole scene is carefully crafted by Benwick to have the characters' do his dirty work. Gordi and Sal are feigning unconsciousness, and Ronnik, addled from the drugs administered by Benwick, has just stumbled into the clearing to find Gordi and Sal unconscious. The lizardfolk and dragonborn arrived moments later, expecting a meeting with Ronnik. When they find the bewildered banker standing over Sal and Gordi, the reptilian humanoids assumed that Benwick and the others were enemies of Ronnik and that Ronnik wanted them killed.

The characters' arrival throws the scene into chaos.

## Roleplaying Ferdinand Ronnik

Ronnik doesn't know Benwick is his enemy. Also, he has been drugged with a poison that confuses and enrages him. Play the banker a little crazy. He's severely bewildered, scared, and quick to anger. When attacked, he fights back erratically but with deadly intent.

If accused of the crimes in this adventure, he denies everything, but does so badly, saying something such as, "I don't know you, and I don't know what you're talking about! You attacked me, dog!" A threat of punishment might illicit a statement such as, "Who are you to accuse me? I'll see you left for the crows!" Accusations of Tiamat worship might garner a response such as, "I'm a banker, not a priest, you fool!"

Ronnik, being somewhat vain, does admit to being a thief and stealing the Serpent's Eye in his day, which might not help the situation. "What are you then? Lackeys of Zehir come to steal my jewel? It's quite safe right where it is." Ronnik believes the jewel is in his strongbox and doesn't realize that Sal (disguised as Ronnik) brought it to Dragontooth Hill. Revelations to the contrary enrage Ronnik, who attacks anyone he thinks might have the Serpent's Eye. A character that has a passive Insight of 19 or higher or that makes a DC 19 Insight check or Heal check can discern that the banker is under some fell influence that is either magical or alchemical.

## **Tactics**

The lizardfolk and dragonborn clash with the heroes toe to toe, although only the dragonborn tries to defend Ronnik.

If Ronnik doesn't have cause to attack the adventurers during the first round, then the dragonborn calls out to him during the second round: "What are you waiting for—slay them! They are here to kill us." When then dragonborn says this, it spurs Ronnik to act, even though he remains bewildered by the situation. He can charge one of the adventurers or make a melee basic attack as an immediate reaction.

## Benwick

Benwick stumbles over to "help" Gordi and Sal. Then he cowers, playing the part of the frightened friar. If the adventurers are having a hard time in the battle, have Benwick spend his turns moving (speed 6) adjacent to an adventurer and allowing that character to use his or her second wind if the character has not yet used it.

## Features of the Area

Illumination: Bright light.

**Boulders:** These 5-foot high rocks are blocking terrain and require a DC 8 Athletics check to climb.

**Dolmens:** These squares are difficult terrain.

Obelisk: This square is difficult terrain.

**Ponds:** These squares are difficult terrain.

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

Level 4 Skirmisher Ferdinand Ronnik (R) Medium natural humanoid, human HP 54; Bloodied 27 Initiative +6 Perception +1

AC 18, Fortitude 15, Reflex 17, Will 16 Speed 6

( I Short Sword (weapon) ◆ At-Will Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +9 vs. AC

Hit: 2d6 + 4 damage, or 3d6 + 4 with combat advantage.

+ Sly Switch (weapon) ◆ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +9 vs. AC Hit: 2d6 + 4 damage, or 3d6 + 4 with combat advantage. Effect: Ronnik shifts up to 2 squares, and an ally can shift up to 2 squares to occupy the square Ronnik vacated.

**‡** Counter Step (weapon) **♦** Recharge when first bloodied

Trigger: An enemy hits Ronnik with a melee attack power. Attack (Immediate Reaction): Melee 1 (triggering enemy); +9 vs. AC

Hit: 2d6 + 4 damage.

Effect: Ronnik shifts up to 3 squares.

Skills Athletics +7, Stealth +11, Thievery +11

Str 11 (+2) Con 14 (+4)

Dex 18 (+6) Int 12 (+3)

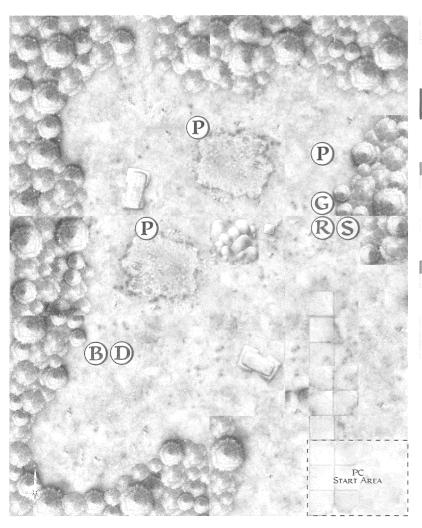
Wis 9 (+1)

Alignment unaligned

Cha 16 (+5)

Languages Common

Equipment leather armor, short sword



Level 2 Skirmisher Dragonborn Mercenary (D) Initiative +6

HP 38: Bloodied 19 AC 16, Fortitude 13, Reflex 14, Will 14 Speed 6

Perception +2

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.

ANDARD 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.

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

3 Poisonscale Savages (P)

Level 2 Brute

HP 45: Bloodied 22

Initiative +3

AC 14, Fortitude 15, Reflex 13, Will 12

Perception +2

Speed 6 (swamp walk)

(↓) Greatclub (weapon) ◆ At-Will

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

Hit: 2d4 + 4 damage, and the target is knocked prone.

(3) Javelin (poison, weapon) At-Will

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

Hit: 1d6 + 4 damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).

‡ Poison Tail (poison) 

♠ At-Will (1/round)

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

Hit: Ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).

Skills Athletics +9, Stealth +8

Str 17 (+4)

Dex 14 (+3)

Wis 12 (+2)

Con 15 (+3)

Int 8 (+0)

Cha 8 (+0)

Alignment unaligned

Languages Draconic

Equipment greatclub, 2 javelins



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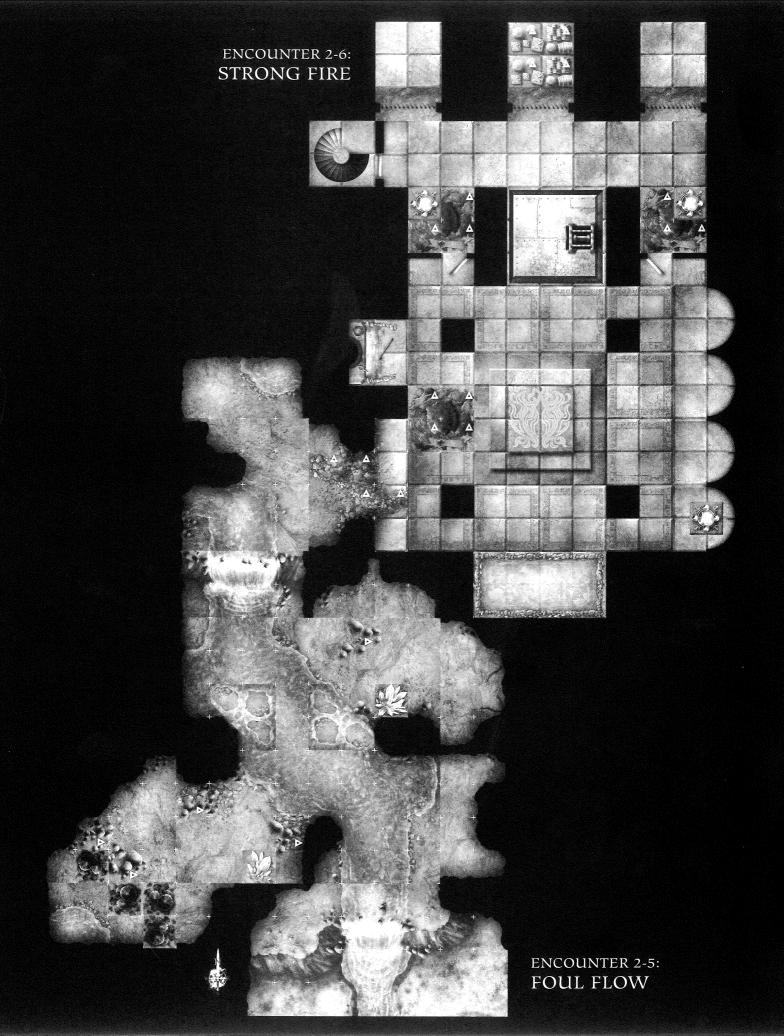
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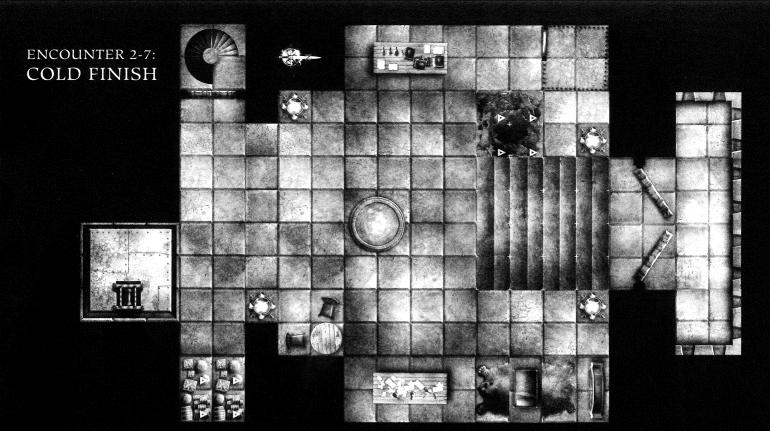
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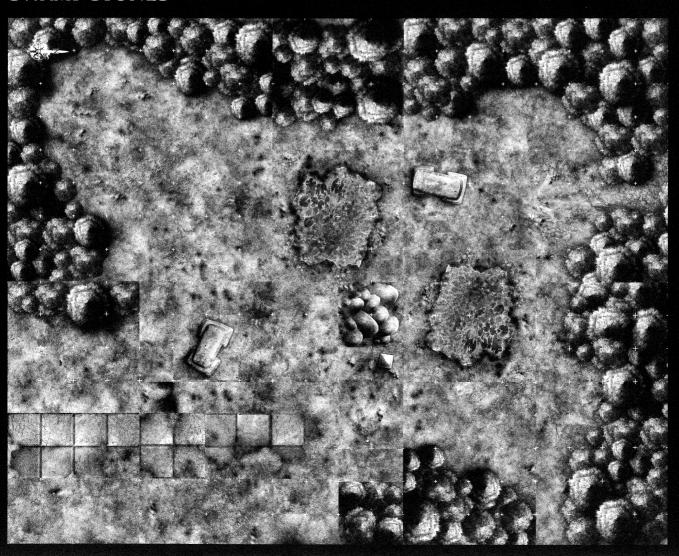
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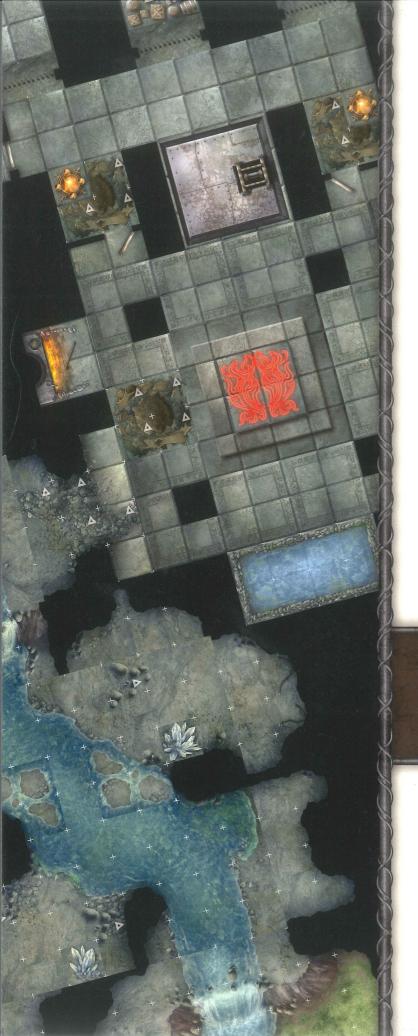
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ENCOUNTER 2-8: SWAMP STONES







# DANGER LURKS AT DRAGONTOOTH HILL

Ronnik, the object of your pursuit, has made his way to an old fortress atop Dragontooth Hill, where he no doubt has allies and formidable defenses. Can your group defeat him and his scaly allies and accomplish your task for your new patron Benwick?

Keep on the Borderlands: A Season of Serpents™ (Chapter 2) is an adventure designed for five characters of 1st level for the fall and winter 2010-11 season of the D&D Encounters™ official play program. This Dungeons & Dragons® adventure includes a full-color battle map, ready-to-play encounters, and DM information on the D&D Encounters official play program.



For use with these Dungeons & Dragons Essentials™ products:

Dungeons & Dragons® Fantasy Roleplaying Game

Heroes of the Fallen Lands™

Rules Compendium™

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