

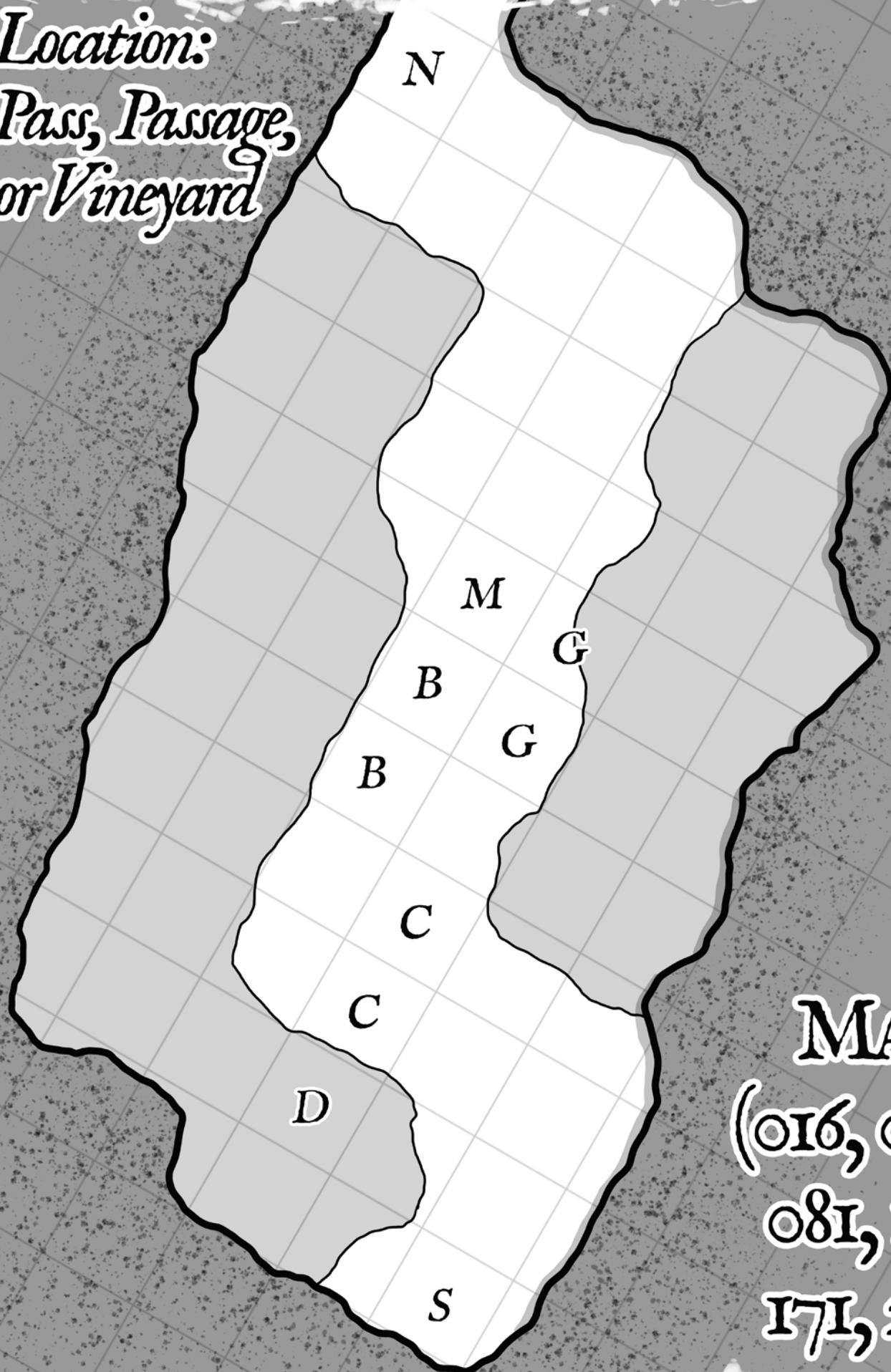
Dragon Hunt!

by David Pulver

DESIGNED FOR USE WITH
**OLD-SCHOOL
ESSENTIALS**



*Location:
Pass, Passage,
or Vineyard*



MAP I
(016, 034,
081, 118,
171, 218)

Dragon Hunt!



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Contents

Map I	ii	Should You Fail	9
Welcome to the Hunt!	2	The Paragraphs	10
Modes of Play	2	Dragon of Beacon Hill	11
Choosing Characters	3	Dragon of the Golden Harp	13
Sir Julian Hawksblood	3	Kuga	15
Kyrie Kaladriel	3	Alberic	17
Vorin Goldemar	3	Týndrmenn	17
Companions	4	The White Serpent	18
Mounts and Pack Animals	4	Map II	18
Playing Other Characters	4	Scorpion-folk	19
Starting Play	5	Azor the Mighty	20
Mapping and Record Keeping	5	Gormagron	23
Plot Words	5	Lilyanu of the Swamp	23
Time and Travel	5	Shadareth the Dracowight	24
Random Encounters	5	Three Peasants	25
Lodging and Settlements	7	Ellie	25
Rumors	7	Giant Wasp	25
Fighting	7	The Dragon of Hook Island	26
Playing Enemies	7	Fishermen	26
Dragons	8	Goblin Leader	26
Draconic Combat	8	Three Hobgoblin Soldiers	26
Claw, Tooth, and Tail	8	Gwysteloch	32
Treasure	9	Phlogiston	37
Thou-Haul for Big Treasure	9	Mountain Dragon	38
Ending the Adventure	9	Map VII	xlv
Experience	9		

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Special thanks to Peggy Pulver for inspiration and
encouragement



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ISBN: 978-1-950368-96-9 (SOFTCOVER); 978-1-950368-97-6 (PDF)

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Dragon Hunt!

When Baron Gwalathar marched off to war with his wizards and soldiers, they'd expected to be back before harvest. Instead, the war dragged on. With the lands left without defenders, the wild dragons sensed weakness, ravaging the realm. The sound of great wings heralded fear and death in the night!

At home in her castle, the young Baroness Tanith Gwalathar put out a call for any remaining heroes to come forth and battle this growing menace. It's time for a **DRAGON HUNT!**

Welcome to the Hunt!

DRAGON HUNT! is a programmed solo adventure played using the **CLASSIC FANTASY** rules from **OLD-SCHOOL ESSENTIALS** (All references are to the **CLASSIC FANTASY RULES TOME 1.4**). You won't need a referee—a system of branching paragraphs directs you from encounter to encounter as you make your choices. You resolve combat or other encounters using the **OLD-SCHOOL ESSENTIALS** rules and the included maps.

MODES OF PLAY

DRAGON HUNT! may be played in the following modes:

► **Solitaire:** A single player controls the entire party and runs them through the adventure. When combat occurs, follow the instructions regarding the foes in each location and play both sides of any encounter. Feel free to give enemies simple strategies while you use better tactics for the party. That being said: You can expect to fight dragons. They employ specific tactics: Read the **Dragons** section carefully before you begin play (or at least before you fight)!

► **Two-Player:** One player plays the party. Upon encountering enemies, the other player acts as referee, controlling the opposition during each fight. If the referee is more experienced, they can help the player with the **OSE** rules or adjudicate situations not covered in the instructions.

► **Multi-Player:** 2–4 players each take one character within the party. Choose one player to act as referee as above, and one as the “caller,” (**RULES TOME, P. 110**) if desired. The caller makes decisions or dice rolls whenever as called for by paragraphs but may opt to ask for advice from the other players first if the situation allows for consultation. During combat, each player plays their own party member as “their” character, with the referee controlling the enemies. Any allies/companions are divided among the players as desired. If any player loses their character, they can take control of companions while they're with the party, or the referee might allow a suitable replacement to join the party in a castle or town.

If playing multiple characters, choose one as the party leader (usually the highest level character). In any situation where it's important that something happens to a single character or a single character makes a decision, the "you" refers to that person.

Don't split the party. This includes leaving a guard to watch over a captured treasure hoard while other party members go fetch bulk transport. This is a conceit of the adventure.

CHOOSING CHARACTERS

You can play with the sample characters described below, or create your own dragon hunters. All are assumed to have fallen on recent hard times, but start with 3d6×50gp in a mix of gems, platinum, gold, and silver as desired.

- **One Hunter:** This is *OLD-SCHOOL ESSENTIALS* on "Hard Mode." Choose your battles and your path carefully. Seek to gather companions: You'll need them!
- **Two Hunters:** Some fights may not be winnable without the right allies!
- **All Three:** This isn't a guaranteed win by any stretch, but is a good way to start off, especially if you're new to the game and how quickly a fight can turn sour.

Sir Julian Hawksblood

A new-made knight (but an old hand at war) from a poor coastal village, Julian visited Castle Gwalathar seeking gold and glory in the baron's service. An unfortunate temporary injury left the young knight shamefully unable to accompany Baron Gwalathar to war; even his squire abandoned him. Now recovered, he found himself one of the few knights left to face the rampaging dragons. He hopes to restore his standing, win the favor of the fair Lady Gwalathar, and perhaps acquire enough gold to set himself up with a proper estate.

9th-level fighter

STR 16 [+2], **DEX** 14 [+1], **INT** 10, **WIS** 12, **CON** 17 [+2], **CHA** 14 [+1].
AC -1 [20], **HD** 9 (50hp), **Att** 1× sword +2 (1d8+4), **THACO** 10 [+9],
MV 60' (20'), **SV** D7 W8 P9 B9 S11 (9), **AL** Lawful, **TT** V.

- **Equipment/Treasure:** Plate mail; shield +1; sword +2; ring of protection 5' radius; potion of speed; longbow; 20 arrows.
- **Alternate Attacks:** **THACO** 10 [+9] with sword +2, **THACO** 13 [+6] with longbow saving throws include +1 from Ring of Protection

Kyrie Kaladriel

Kyrie is an elven ranger, hunter, and bard who has tracked many fell beasts and monsters. After her woodland retreat and all but a few of her possessions were set ablaze by a marauding dragon, she vowed to join the hunt. Despite the nature of her quest, she retains a merry spirit and sense of fun.

8th-level elf

STR 14 [+1], **DEX** 18 [+3], **INT** 13 [+1], **WIS** 12, **CON** 10, **CHA** 13 [+1].
AC 3 [16], **HD** 8 (28hp), **Att** 1× +1 bow (1d6+1) 1× +1 sword (1d8+2), **THACO** 10 [+9], **MV** 90' (30'), **SV** D8 W9 P9 B10 S10 (8), **AL** Lawful.

Spells: Magic missile, protection from evil, read magic, invisibility, levitate, mirror image, haste, lightning bolt, confusion, dimension door.

- **Equipment/Treasure:** Leather armor, +1; longbow +1; potion of healing; sword +1, Light;
- **Alternate Attacks:** **THACO** 10 [+9] with +1 bow, longbow range (5'-70' / 71'-140' / 141'-210'); **THACO** 12 [+7] with sword.

Vorin Goldemar

Vorin is a dwarf warrior from the mountain kingdoms. As a youth, he thrilled to the sagas of mighty dwarven dragon slayers, such as the famous Alberic Longbeard. Inspired by these tales, and a desire for the treasure supposedly found in dragon hoards, Vorin first became an adventurer, and now a dragon hunter, vowing to dull his mighty axe upon their scaly necks. Poor in coin but draped in the finest dwarven magical craftsmanship, he ventures forth to live up to the stories of past dwarven heroes.

9th-level dwarf

STR 16 [+2], **DEX** 13 [+1], **INT** 12, **WIS** 12, **CON** 13 [+1], **CHA** 11.
AC 1 [18], **HD** 9 (50hp), **Att** 1× battle axe (1d8+3) 1× crossbow (1d6), **THACO** 11 [+8], **MV** 60' (20'), **SV** D4 W5 P6 B7 S8 (9), **AL** Lawful.

- **Equipment/Treasure:** Chainmail, +3; dwarven battle axe, +1; crossbow; crossbow bolts (17); crossbow bolts, +2 (3); **potion of fire resistance.** Vorin's axe is magically balanced to be used by dwarves.
- **THACO** includes +3 for **STR** and battle axe; **THACO** 13 [+6] with crossbow, crossbow range (5'-80' / 81'-160' / 161'-240'), takes one round to reload

Companions

While your main character or party caller is the “you” referred to in the story, taking the lead and making all saving throws unless noted, you may bring or acquire companions on your adventure, and will meet some potential companions during the course of play. If so, record their stats for convenience.

- ▶ Companions stick with you unless you abandon them. Control them like your own characters: They fight with you in combat and travel along with you. If an instruction says a class ability provides an advantage, your companions’ abilities count and provide that advantage.
- ▶ You can voluntarily abandon a live companion at any town, castle, or village.
- ▶ Companions receive an *equal* share of the value of treasure you liberate from dragons or other foes. You can keep magic items yourself or distribute them as desired.
- ▶ If you have badly injured companions who are slowing you down, or that you no longer wish to divide treasure with, you can opt to leave them behind at a *village, castle, or town*. Until then, you must pay their lodging unless specifically noted. If you leave them behind, they won’t rejoin your party again. *Exception:* If you left a companion to recover from injuries in Castle Gwalathar you need not pay upkeep and may retrieve them after they recuperate.
- ▶ You cannot betray a companion to steal their stuff unless the text says otherwise.
- ▶ If a companion *dies* you keep their treasure and equipment until you reach the nearest *village, castle, or town*, after which it’s assumed you make arrangements to send it to their next of kin and/or use it to give them a proper funeral. The same applies if your characters are killed and a companion “promoted” to your place.

In a fight in which your main characters are incapacitated—but not killed—and you have companions left, feel free to continue the combat. If your companions win, they can provide treatment using healing spells, potions, or protect you until you recover consciousness and can continue.

Mounts and Pack Animals

The characters available could easily have acquired mounts and/or pack animals in their prior career, even if they’re a bit tight in the wallet right now. It would be reasonable to allow a single mount plus a pack animal to each character, consistent with their profession and stature. Dwarves might prefer to walk, though a mule for a pack animal would be agreeable to them. Fighters and elves are the most likely to ride a war horse; militant clerics might as well, though they cannot use a lance. Riding horses can represent either mounts or pack animals.

You may purchase *additional* mounts at any village, town, or castle...but only Castle Gwalathar sells war horses.

Playing Other Characters

The sample characters assume roughly 300,000 XP; this produces 8th–10th-level characters (except for halflings, who have long since hit their level cap ... sorry, but for this adventure, they’re probably just *hors d’oeuvres*).

You can also play with your own would-be dragon slayers of similar capability. Use appropriate existing characters or create new ones with a motive for hunting dragons or seeking gold and start playing—assign reasonable adventuring gear, and **approximately 4 magic items of modest capability**.

This adventure is focused on fighting rather than stealth: Bringing non-combatants to the mix increases the challenge. Ensure some degree of capability to do damage at range: dragons *fly*.

If taking more than three characters, numbers can count for more than levels—though facing a dragon’s breath weapon with a passel of 2nd-level characters is probably what dragons call “toasting mini-marshmallows” (in draconic). For troupe play, consider 6th–7th-level characters (55,000 XP) for four characters, and subtract a level for each additional character in the group.

For added challenge: See how few Hit Dice of characters you need to win the day! Playing around with the mix of abilities through character selection should provide for good replay experience.



STARTING PLAY

DRAGON HUNT! is organized into a series of numbered instructions or “paragraphs” (although many instructions are several paragraphs long). To begin, go to instruction [001] and read it. These set the scene for what your party experiences, much like a referee describing the situation. Instructions say what your character encounters and sometimes calls for a decision between multiple options. Choose which one to take before reading the next instruction. Don’t read instructions to which you haven’t been directed!

Mapping and Record Keeping

As you act as your own referee, you’ll need to maintain your own character sheets and those of any companions you accumulate. Note the stats of any foes you’re about to fight! Keep careful track of money, possessions (especially magical consumables!), current hit points, and so on.

Maintain a record of paragraph instructions you have already read and played through. If you decide to stop playing and resume later, do so from the last paragraph you reached. Whenever you defeat enemies—excluding random encounters—keep track of whom you defeated, so that if you return to that place you don’t repeat the fight. If you don’t defeat the creature and flee (sorry, “execute a strategic withdrawal”), assume they heal **1d6hp** per day, and any special abilities recharge.

There is no time limit to the adventure: It’s up to you how much time you spend hunting. You can opt to give up or continue until you’ve rid the land of its scaly foes.

Plot Words

A paragraph may say to record a plot word (written in **BOLD SMALL CAPS**). You may encounter a situation where, if you have that **PLOT WORD**, it may trigger special events for the encounter. Collecting them also determines experience points (XP).

Time and Travel

Keep track of time in **days**. Except during combat, don’t worry about smaller increments. Some paragraphs have **Travel** options. Picking the options means you leave that place and spend **about a day** traveling to the chosen destination. Keep track of time! Travel instructions show the approximate compass direction, the name of the destination, and paragraph you go next:

Travel north to Berkswood village [83] or east to the Three Brothers Inn [15].

Over long distances, foot or mounted travel is at the same speed.

Rest Stop: After you spend a day traveling you *must* find lodging for the night.

Rations: Each day spent traveling or camped outdoors uses up rations. If you’re out of rations, you may forage or hunt (**RULES TOME, P. 120**). You can buy rations to eat while camping at any village, town, castle, or inn. Each 7 days of supplies is 15gp (iron rations, never spoils) or 5gp (unpreserved food; lasts 1 week).

Water. Don’t worry about water *unless you’re in the desert*: You’ll need a half-gallon of water per day for a human, and five gallons per day (!) for each mount. Water is heavy: each gallon (8 pints) weighs roughly 80 coins. Also assume it can be had at an oasis or desert settlement at the same cost as wine: 5sp per pint (4gp per gallon).

Starving and Dehydration: After a day without food or water, make a **Constitution** check. On a failure, you’re –1 to attack rolls and your movement rate becomes as if you’re carrying treasure (if you’re already carrying treasure, move a step down on the “Armor Worn” table instead. Roll each subsequent *week* without food, or each *day* without water; penalties for repeated failed rolls are *cumulative*. A day spent eating, drinking, and resting removes a level of the penalty.

Random Encounters

If you opt to travel, check for a random encounter before you look at the destination paragraph you chose. Roll 1d6: a 6 is an encounter. Use the **Overland Encounters** table to determine what you face. If traveling or camping in a region described as “desert” or “desert oasis” you must roll on the **Desert Encounters** table. Resolve the encounter as detailed in the tables; special rules for brigands, raiders, and nomads are noted below. If you are attacked, place your character in the middle of a map representing a road or trail. Attackers start at one of the road/trail ends. If you survive, continue to your destination paragraph.

If fighting unintelligent animals, such as wolves, you can try and communicate if you have *speak to animals* or an equivalent ability. You can try and intimidate as well, at –4 (–2 if you’re waving lit torches). Make a **MONSTER REACTION ROLL** (**RULES TOME, P. 125**), and the encounter ends peacefully on a 9 or higher.

Brigands and Raiders: If you encounter brigands, desert raiders, or nomads you don’t want to pay off, don’t wish to fight, or if you are fighting and losing, you may surrender. If you do, they strip you of all your equipment (save clothing) and leave you bound on the field. It takes an extra day to struggle free of your bonds. Tired, bruised, and hungry, you can resume your journey to the destination, or turn back. You can pick up a club but are otherwise unarmed and penniless.

Hiring Nomads: If you pay desert nomads or raiders their tribute plus an additional 5sp/day (1gp/day for raiders), two offer to join you as mercenary companions. They leave if you stop paying them or choose any travel directions that do not involve “desert” or “desert oasis.”

Overland Encounters

1d6

Roll

Statistics

- 1 *An angry bear attacks! **AC** 6 [13], **HD** 4 (18hp), **Att** 2× claw (1d3), or 1× bite (1d6), **THACo** 16 [+3], **MV** 120' (40'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (2), **ML** 7, **AL** Neutral, **XP** 75. Bear hug: If a victim is hit by both claw attacks in the same round, the bear hugs for an extra 2d8 automatic damage.*
- 2 *Three brigands appear and attempt to rob you! **AC** 6 [13], **HD** 1 (4hp), **Att** 1× shortbow or shortsword (1d6), **THACo** 19 [0], **MV** 120' (40'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (1), **ML** 8, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 10. Leather armor, shield, short sword and short bow w/ 20 arrows each.*
- 3 *Heavy rain or snow! Add an extra day to travel time (and check for another encounter).*
- 4 *Four hobgoblins brigands or raiders attack. **AC** 6 [13], **HD** 1+1 (5hp), **Att** 1× sword or battle axe (1d8), **THACo** 18 [+1], **MV** 90' (30'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (1), **ML** 8, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 15, **TT** V. Equipment/Treasure: Leather armor Quick: +1 **AC** for **DEX**.*
- 5 *Two starving wolves decide you look tasty. **AC** 7 [12], **HD** 2+2 (11hp), **Att** 1× bite (1d6), **THACo** 17 [+2], **MV** 180' (60'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (2), **ML** 0, **AL** Neutral, **XP** 25.*
- 6 *A traveling apothecary offers to sell you potions at cut-rate prices. If you accept and cannot cast detect magic, **roll 1d6** when you drink it, and you bought a fake on a roll of 1–2. If he's caught selling you a fake...he'll avoid you in the future (this becomes no encounter). **AC** 9 [10], **HD** 1/2 (2hp), **Att** 1× hand axe (1d6), **THACo** 20 [–1], **MV** 120' (40'), **SV** D14 W15 P16 B17 S18 (0), **ML** 6, **AL** Neutral, **XP** 5, **TT** V. Equipment/Treasure: 9ep Has Wares. Claims to have 1d3 potions (Roll 1d20: [1–9]Potion of Healing (300gp), [10–13] Levitation (700gp), [14–17] Invisibility (700gp), [18–19] Gaseous Form (1,500gp), [20] Poison (1,400gp))*

Desert Encounters

1d6

Roll

Statistics

- 1 *A hungry lion attacks! **AC** 6 [13], **HD** 5 (22hp), **Att** 2× claw (1d4+1) and 1× bite (1d10), **THACo** 15 [+4], **MV** 150' (50'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (3), **ML** 9, **AL** Neutral, **XP** 175. Pursuit: Always pursue prey that flees. Hungry: This lion is on the verge of starving, will attack any likely food source. Attacks mounts before people! Inquisitive: May follow PCs out of curiosity.*
- 2 *Giant Scorpion emerges from behind a sand dune to attack! **AC** 2 [17], **HD** 4* (18hp), **Att** 2× claw (1d10); 1× sting (1d4 + poison), **THACo** 16 [+3], **MV** 150' (50'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (2), **ML** 11, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 125, **TT** V. Aggressive: Normally attack on sight. Poison: Causes death (**save versus poison**). Grab and sting: +2 bonus to sting attack, if a claw hits.*
- 3 *A fierce sandstorm blows up! Add an extra day to travel time.*
- 4 *Encounter four robed desert nomads who say you are trespassing on their tribal lands. They demand tribute of 50gp (in goods or treasure) or will attack. (See also Hiring Nomads). **AC** 7 [12], **HD** 1+2 (9hp), **Att** 1× lance (1d6), or 1× short bow (1d6), **THACo** 18 [+1], **MV** 120' (40'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (2), **ML** 8, **AL** Neutral, **XP** 15, **TT** V. Equipment/Treasure: Leather armor, lance, short bow, 20 arrows. **TT** R. Mounted on camels.*
- 5 *Desert Raiders As Desert Nomads, but these are fierce raiders who will attack immediately; they can't be bought off. **AC** 4 [15], **HD** 3 (14hp), **Att** 1× lance (1d6) 1× short bow (1d6), **THACo** 17 [+2], **MV** 120' (40'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (3), **ML** 10, **AL** Neutral, **XP** 35, **TT** V. Equipment/Treasure: Chain mail, lance, shield, short bow. Strapped buckler: Allows shield use while riding or using a bow. Mounted on warhorses*
- 6 *Why did it have to be snakes? A snake slithers out from behind a rock and attacks from 10' away (a random character if you have more than one): **AC** 6 [13], **HD** 2* (9hp), **Att** 1× bite (1d4 + poison), **THACo** 18 [+1], **MV** 90' (30'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (1), **ML** 7, **AL** Neutral, **XP** 25, **TT** V. Infravision: 60'. (Pits in the head allow heat sense.) Initiative: Always gains initiative (no roll), due to special senses. Poison: Causes death (**save versus poison**).*

Lodging, Villages, Towns, Inns

If you visit a village or town, you can stay at their inn. Each has a lodging fee for food and shelter for one person or mount. Some inns stand alone on major roads, without a village.

Camping: If you can't afford an inn, or there isn't one, you can camp, but this is not as restful: you heal a single hit point per night of rest. Roll an additional 1d6, with a roll of 6 indicating another **Overland** or **Desert** Encounter, as appropriate.

Villages: Buy or resell common goods costing *less than* 10gp (those on **RULES TOME, P. 40**) plus arrows, daggers, hand axes, or spears.

Towns: Buy or resell *any* non-magic goods or weapons.

Castle Gwalathar: At the capital of the barony you can buy and sell pretty much anything for which you can find a price and a buyer, even sell captured dragons. The castle is the only place where militant characters might find trained war horses for casual sale.

Healing and Rest: You recover 1d3hp per day while lodging. You may use potions if you have them at any time. On a roll of 1 on 1d6 at a village, or 1–2 in a town, a cleric is available to cast *cure light wounds* on one injured character for a small donation to the local priesthood of 3d6×25gp. A bargain, really.

Inconvenient Wealth: You can change silver, copper, or other loot to more portable currency (including gems or letters of credit) at any *town* or *castle* (but not *villages*). You may also leave treasure in the hands of a money changer or banker at any town, or in the care of Baroness Gwalathar for safekeeping.

RUMORS

From time to time, in camp or in a town, village, or other settlement, the inhabitants may pass on juicy bits of information; sometimes keyed off of having certain plot words.

For example:

*If you have the plot words **BOOK**, **KIND**, or **SCUM**, go to [001].*

or

*If you do not have the plot word **MYRA**, go to [013].*

If the having (or not having) the right plot words leaves you with nowhere to go, you do not gather any rumors at this location. Proceed to the **Travel** options. If you later return to the same paragraph and do have the right words ... you may follow the instructions and proceed to the indicated paragraphs.

FIGHTING

Paragraphs may say to set up a map according to a particular diagram in the adventure and begin combat. *All* maps—even the outdoor ones—are scaled at 5' grid and use letters or shading to mark starting points of characters or obstacles. (Some markings or letters aren't used in every encounter.) You may need to place markers, draw on the map, or otherwise indicate features such as rough going or walls. Your starting point and the locations of allied and enemy figures are specified by letters on the map.

Resolve fights with **OSE** rules. Win or lose, the instructions indicate what happens next, perhaps allowing you to search for loot, rescue a captive, or, if your party is eliminated, end the adventure.

Sometimes an option to retreat is explicit. To keep things playable and contained to the scenario, fight to the finish.

Try to keep fights on the tactical map, but given how far a dragon can fly even in encounter-scale time, allow space beyond the map the dragon can use for aerial maneuvering.

For battles involving narrow spaces, assume one character can fit per 5' square unpenalized. Polearms and spears strike over or through allies; missile weapons fire through allies at –2.

Playing Enemies

If playing solitaire, you play both sides. When you take control of opposing figures, play them in a logical fashion based on the instructions. Where no specific instructions are given, assume the following:

- ▶ Foes fight to the death and do not retreat or surrender.
- ▶ Opponents attack whomever is closest of you or any allies, and try to kill you with their best ready weapon.
- ▶ Spellcasters usually take time to cast one or more defensive or "buffing" spells, then use whatever offensive spells they possess, favoring those that don't require closing to melee range. If they have a "buffing" spell such as *shield* or *protection from evil* that could conceivably be cast before hostilities commence, assume they have done so.
- ▶ Missile-armed foes shoot from a distance as long as possible, only switching to melee attacks once engaged (changing weapons if necessary).
- ▶ If an opponent has a magical weapon, they'll be using it unless there's a better option.
- ▶ Dragons use appropriate tactics for their capabilities (see **Draconic Combat**).
- ▶ If you can't decide between two sensible tactics, roll a die.
- ▶ If you have companions, it's all right to "cheat" a bit and have the monsters focus on slaying your companions rather than your main character. You need all the help you can get!

DRAGONS

As a dragon hunter, you expect to meet some dragons, right? Experienced adventurers presumably got that way by fighting cannily (or not at all) to achieve their exalted status as *living* high-level characters ... as opposed to those remembered only in stories and tales by skald and bard.

You still up for this? Yes? You sure? Good. Continue.

Draconic Combat

The following is a condensed and modified reprisal of the information found in *RULES TOME*, pp. 164–165.

- **Attack pattern:** A dragon always attacks first with its breath weapon, then either breathes again or makes melee attacks (equal chance of either).
- Remember: dragons *fly*. A dragon takes to the skies if it has space to do so, using its breath weapon and spellcasting to deal damage from afar. They may fly in (movement segment), slash and bite (melee segment), and then fly out again the following round. Once a dragon engages in melee in a given round, it is vulnerable to melee attacks until the following movement segment.
- **Behavior:** This is a *dragon hunt*. The dragons encountered fight to the death once battle is joined, and rapidly figure out that the adventurers before them are not there for tea and crumpets. Attempts to flatter a dragon into departing the region peacefully can either be ignored, or if adjudicated to be successful, result in earning XP for the dragon but not being able to collect its treasure.
- **Breath weapon:** Can be used up to **three times per day**. All caught in the area suffer damage equal to the dragon's current hit points (**save versus breath** for half). The extent and shape of a breath weapon is listed in each monster's stat block in a form convenient for a square-grid combat map. A dragon's breath weapon is best employed where it can impact many targets at once.
- **Energy immunity:** Unharmed by their own breath weapon or lesser versions thereof. Automatically save versus similar attack forms. (For example, a red dragon is immune to flaming oil and suffers half damage from *fire ball* spells.)
- **Sleeping:** For the purposes of **DRAGON HUNT!**, dragons are never randomly found sleeping. Sorry.
- **Spellcasting:** If a dragon can cast spells, it's noted in the writeup for that particular encounter. A dragon can *cast* spells while flying, but not *maintain concentration* on a spell that requires such.
- **Subduing:** Will surrender if reduced to 0hp by non-lethal attacks (see *SUBDUING* under *OTHER COMBAT ISSUES*

in the *RULES TOME*, p. 132), admitting that it has been defeated. (Subdual damage does not reduce the damage done by the breath weapon.) A subdued dragon will attempt to escape or attack its captors, if the opportunity presents itself or if given a suicidal command. A subdued dragon may be sold *only* at Castle Gwalathar for 100gp per **HD** of the dragon, per hp remaining (an 8 **HD** dragon is worth **800gp per hp** when sold at market). The journey requires overland travel (and attendant random encounter checks) back to the castle. Treasure left behind is subject to the chance of other parties stealing your loot! (Use *GET IT LATER* from Thou-Haul for Big Treasure)

Claw, Tooth, and Tail

This adventure doesn't feature much fighting in close-quarters likely to be initiated by the characters: Grappling a dragon is ill-advised. That doesn't apply in reverse! Dragons of 5 **HD** or more can easily carry the weight of a humanoid or two in their talons or mouth. Dragons may also knock targets around with their tails.

Grappling and Shoving: The attacker must be in the same 5' square as the target. Make a melee attack against the foe's **AC** adding the best of **STR** or **DEX** bonuses if you have any. If successful, choose *one* of the following results:

- **Shove** a similarly sized foe 5' away in the direction of your choosing.
- **Move yourself** 5' away, breaking contact as you do so.
- **Grab** your foe: A dragon may do their usual melee damage for the attack as well (claws or teeth) as securing the grapple. A grabbed foe is -2 to **AC** and **MV** 0.

Some special conditions apply when dragons grapple:

- **Carry Off:** A dragon may grapple up to two characters and carry them away. The dragon's flying **MV** is reduced to 3/4 its normal value—usually 180' (60')—when so burdened. A dragon must fly into the target's square during the movement phase, seize the victim with an attack, and then may fly off during movement sequence in the *next* round.

► **Bomb's Away!** It would be horribly unfair for a dragon to seize a PC, fly up a few hundred feet, and drop them to smash on the ground below at 1d6 per 10' fallen. Alas, this is part of the dragon-hunting life. To break the dragon's grip before it takes off, you or your friends must make a successful melee or grappling attack (as above) against the creature. After that ... you might wish you were playing an edition with *feather fall*.

► **Dragon Sumo:** Dragons can get *big*. When they **shove**, humanoid foes go flying. For dragons of 4 **HD** or more, roll on the **Shove Distance** table and a successful shove knocks a foe that many 5' squares in a direction of the dragon's choosing.

Shove Distance	
HD	Distance
<4	1
4-5+	1d2
6-7+	1d3
8-9+	1d4
10+	1d4+1

TREASURE

If you defeat an opponent, you can take possession of their treasure, weapons, armor, and equipment. Make notes on your record sheets to show who is carrying it, and adjust your stats accordingly, including **MV**.

Thou-Haul for Big Treasure

Dragons are renowned for their treasure hoards, piled high with more coin than a person can carry. Hauling it out is its own challenge: See the *TREASURE ENCUMBRANCE IN COINS* table (**RULES TOME, P. 113**).

It's presumed each "travel" destination is roughly a day away for *unencumbered* individuals. If hauling treasure, assume if base movement rate is 60' (20') or more, travel between locations still takes a day; *double* travel time if movement is less than 60' (20').

But how to get your nobly gotten gains back to a secure location?

- **Haul It Yourself:** Especially plausible if the party is mounted.
- **Hired Help:** Assume that hiring wagon-drivers, guards, and paying well enough to guarantee their loyalty and silence costs $2d4 \times 10\%$ of the value of the treasure hauled out. Subtract **Charisma** bonuses from the die roll, so **CHA** 18 rolls $(2d4 - 2) \times 10\%$, minimum 10%; low **Charisma** adds to the roll. Irrascible gits have to pay more to get good help.
- **Get it Later:** Any treasure left at the site of the hoard might be discovered and carried off. **Roll 1d6** for each day treasure is left unaccompanied. If a 1 appears on any die...someone made off with the loot! Better take the good stuff with you if you can...

ENDING THE ADVENTURE

DRAGON HUNT ends when your characters die, opt to end their quest, encounter certain "end game" events, save the land from the draconic menace. Periodically you should report your successes to the Baroness at Castle Gwalathar. This is also when you should check your **PLOT WORDS** to see if they have earned you experience points!

Do award experience points for killing or defeating monsters based on their XP, plus treasure spent, donated, or hauled back to the castle. Also use the totals given for **PLOT WORDS** below.

Experience

Whenever you return to Castle Gwalathar [047] you should track experience points. This is based on **PLOT WORDS**. Suggested experience awards:

If you acquired a *new* **PLOT WORD** since your last visit, it is worth:

- 1,250 experience *each* for **BOOK, CUP, HOB, KIND, or SCUM**.
- 5,000 experience *each* for **GRAVE, DWARF, INN, MYRA, TRAIL, VESP, or WEB**.
- 15,000 experience *each* for **FREDA, HISS, HOOK, LIGHT, or NERA**.
- 25,000 experience *each* for **GORM or WIGHT**.

Should You Fail

If your characters are killed, one option is to replay the adventure from scratch—as if the first foray never happened. Keep trying until you win, or win bigger!

An option suitable for ongoing campaigns is to create other dragon hunters or promote a surviving companion to character status. If you have a companion with you, they can take over immediately without a break in the adventure. In the event of a total party kill, new characters can enter play at the closest village or town you visited prior to where you met your demise. Explain this however you'd like: Perhaps you've been sending them letters!



The Paragraphs

001 Last year a war began in the west. The local baron loyally answered his liege-lord's call, mustering knights, wizards, and men-at-arms. He marched off to war, leaving only a token force to keep an eye on the restive mountain goblins and desert nomads.

There are now rumors that the war has gone badly; it's said the baron's men are fighting in a distant land, a dark lord may yet again be on the rise, and no one knows the day of their return. Sensing the weakness of the border marches, the long-quiescent predatory dragons of the wastelands are now stirring. Dragonslayers are needed. You stand ready to answer the call.

Roll 1d6 to see where you begin your hunt. On a **1–3** you arrive at the court of Castle Gwalathar [047]; on a **4–6** you got off a ship at the seaport of Morvoren [068].

002 You harden your heart; your quest calls you forward. You have neither the time nor money to spare on the tears of luckless peasants. There are dragons to slay! Go to [083].

003 Sorry: it's no illusion. It's a red dragon. An intensely *irritated*, chaotic red dragon. Go back to [012] and keep fighting.

004 The dragon hasn't noticed you. It launches itself into the air with a few beats of its mighty wings and soon vanishes over the eastern horizon. Record plot word **OUT**.

With the dragon out of the way, if you wish to explore the statue's interior, now's your chance. To enter the front doors, go to [117]. If you'd rather leave the vicinity of the giant statue immediately, without exploring, go to [038] and choose a travel direction.

005 "Good to know," the old dwarf grunts. "Shadreth is a wight as well, so most normal weapons are likely useless against it. Only spells or enchanted blades harm its deathless flesh." Go to [065].

006 The Abbey of Cador is a lonely church overlooking the western sea. The Blue Monks of Cador welcome travelers and provide lodging for them. If you need medical help one of the Blue Monks is a devoted and skilled cleric. He treats you for free, with one *cure serious wounds* and two *cure light wounds* spells available. They also have 1d4 **potions of healing** available, which they will part with for a "donation" of 250gp each.

Lodging: "Free" (but a 5sp/night "donation" is expected; if you buy any potions lodging really *is* free).

Rumors: A century ago, the Abbey of Cador was far grander, but invading Sea Reavers from across the ocean sacked it. Eventually, the people of the land rallied and by the gods' grace, the Sea Reavers were slain or driven away.

If you have the plot word **BOOK** go to [168].

Travel: North to the coastal village of Branok [128], east to the village of Mador's Mill [177], or south to the coastal village of Locryn [083].

007 Go to [174] *unless* you have the plot word **VESP** or **INN**; if you do, go to [191].

008 Arthek is a farming village known for its beehives.

Lodging: Honeypaw Inn (10sp/night).

Rumors: Several dwarves live in Bokhara; a dragon attacked the village of Edern.

Travel: West to the village of Mador's Mill [177], north to the town of Nahraven [023], east to the hill village of Bokhara [124], or south to the highland village of Edern [079].

009 The Rampart Mountains run north-south, separating the fertile western lands from the dry eastern desert. The narrow passes, winding mountain roads, and hazardous goat tracks are often blocked by snow or avalanches; with a lot of steep climbing, you find a route. Go to [210] *unless* you have plot word **PASS**; if you do, go to [176].

010 Tamaz is a town on the edge of the eastern desert. Many inhabitants are of nomad blood, and there's a lively horse and camel trade. It has a dark underbelly: there are many orcs, half orcs, and desert raiders about, and it hosts a cruel slave market.

Lodging: The House of the Golden Sun (10sp/night).

Rumors: A huge golden dragon dwells in the desert to the east. **Roll 1d6** on arriving in town; on a **5–6**, go to [185].

Travel: North to the village of Bokhara [124], east into the Red Desert [031], or west to the village of Edern [079].

011 The trapped creature, recognizable as a wyvern, cries out and pleads for its life: "Don't let the spider eat me! Save me, and I'll tell you how to find magic, yes, yes, yes!"

The gigantic spider makes its displeasure known: It *also* can talk! "This lying little fly belongs to me," it tells you. "It has no magic! Go find your own prey, or become mine!"

If you won't heed its warning, the earth spider isn't interested in anything else you have to say. It rears up on its legs, baring fangs dripping nasty venom. It is clearly prepared to jump down and attack!

To fight the earth spider, go to [046]. If you leave the wyvern to its fate, go to [095].

012 You're fighting a young red dragon:

Dragon of Beacon Hill

AC 2 [17], **HD** 7** (31hp), **Att** [2× claw (1d4+1), 1× bite (2d10)] or breath, **THACO** 13 [+6], **MV** 90' (30') / 240' (80') flying, **SV** D8 W9 P10 B10 S12 (7), **ML** 7, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 1250.

► **Breath weapon:** 80' long cone of fire. Cone is 5' wide to 10'; 10' wide to 25'; 15' to 40'; 20' wide to 55'; 25' wide to 70'; 30' wide to 80'.

It targets lightly armored foes first, especially anyone who even *looks* like a wizard. For some reason, it doesn't take to the skies like it normally would. It alternates breath weapon with melee attacks until it's dead, or the breath weapon runs out.

If Ellie remains tied to the tree, the dragon won't waste time attacking her. She can be cut free by anyone adjacent to her with a successful melee attack by a sharp weapon vs. **AC 10** [9]. If freed, she retreats to the edge of the map as far from the dragon as possible.

If you suspect the dragon might be an illusion or phantasmal force on Azor's part, and hit it with a melee attack, or cast *dispel magic*, *detect magic*, *know alignment*, *dispel magic* or a similar ability, go to [003].

If you win the fight in six rounds or fewer, go to [089]. If the fight has lasted for seven or more rounds, go to [090].

013 After resting, you can return to the village. Go to [121].

014 The chagrined village elders reward you with a purse of 100gp for putting an end to the miscreant mage. Go to [079].

015 A grieving Astrid thanks you for your kindness and invites you to stay for the funeral. A few days later, when her husband is laid to rest, you journey on. Record the plot word **KIND** and go to [083].

016 A crunching noise alerts you to your quarry: it's a medium-sized dragon with iridescent-looking pale skin! Busily devouring a scrawny mountain goat, it reassesses and quickly decides that adventurer would be tastier. It roars in challenge, and attacks!

Refer to **MAP I** [034]. You set up within one or two squares of N. The dragon faces you, with its head in square M. Go to [206], roll initiative, and fight!

017 From the monolithic statue's front entrance, a cloud of steam billows forth. A great crimson-scaled dragon roars out from within! It is an adult red dragon, its body easily 30' long.

Its saucer-sized eyes burn like hot coals, and it bellows again as it spots you!

Refer to **MAP II** [074] again. Place the dragon so it is facing toward H, with its head at D and its rearmost 5' square at T. There's nowhere to run in the desert! To fight the dragon, go to [101]. To stand your ground and attempt conversation with it, go to [043].

018 A bold fisherman offers to take you straight to Hook Island on his boat, the *Samara*. He looks nervous but claims he's unafraid. He lost a cousin to whatever's behind the sinkings and wants revenge.

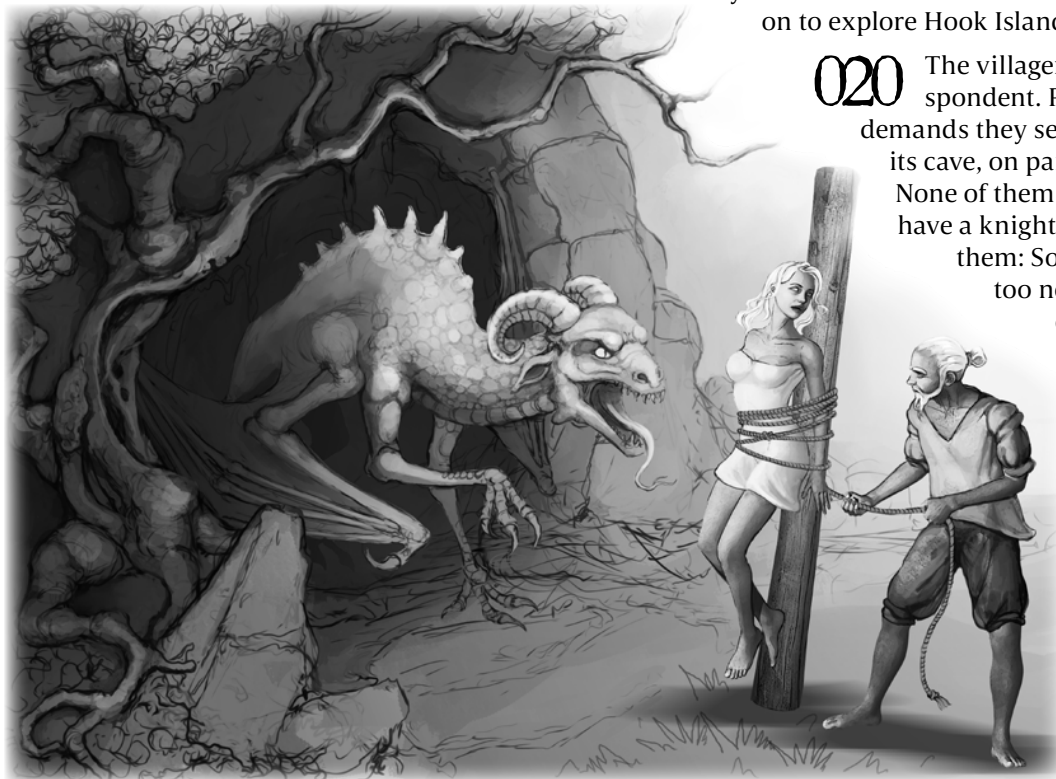
Go to [141].

019 The dragon resumes the fight, having wasted one round in the process. It won't retreat again!

If you slay it, record plot word **HOOK**. Then go to [166] if you wish to sail back to Branok, or [182] if you'd rather sail on to explore Hook Island.

020 The villagers are ashamed and despondent. Periodically, a local dragon demands they send a fair maiden or youth to its cave, on pain of destroying the village. None of them are heroes, and they no longer have a knight nor a village wizard to aid them: So-called adventurers have been too nervous to help them. With no other choice, they reluctantly complied, choosing the dragon's sacrifice through a grim lottery.

Go to [134] if interested in helping; otherwise, return to [079].



021 The Wormwood is a highland forest, in the shadow of the northern mountains.

If you already have *both* plot words **HOB** and **PHLOG**, go to [145]. If you have just one of those **PLOT WORDS**, go to [163] if it's **HOB** or [208] if it's **PHLOG**.

If you have *neither* of these **PLOT WORDS**, Roll 1d6, adding +1 if you have a thief or an elf in the party. On a 1–2 go to [097], on a 3–4 go to [208]; on a 5+ go to [163].

022 After you withdraw, you hear a horrific scream, then a disturbing slurping sound. Record plot word **Gnos** and go to [080].

023 This is Nahraven, a prosperous town on the banks of the Shabrang river. Merchants risk the perilous passes in the Rampart Mountains to trade with nomads in the eastern deserts, or travel north through the forests and hills to visit the rich goblins of Shad Sharrivar.

Lodging: Several inns (averaging 15sp/night).

Rumors: Dragons have been sighted in the Rampart Mountains to the east. Also, if you *lack* plot word **SMITH**, go to [227].

Travel: North to the forests of Mehrak Narvan [102], east through the pass in the Rampart Mountains [009], west to the castle of Gwalathar [047], or south to the village of Arthek [008].

024 He vanishes into the rain, perhaps to meet his doom. The scowling innkeeper, his hands full tending Thorkin, suggests you've overstayed your welcome. If the dwarf fails, it might be best to make oneself scarce anyway. Go to [124] and select a travel direction. Note plot word **RUN**.

025 On the western horizon you sight land. A sailor says it's Hook Island. The fishermen notice your interest, offering to take you there for 10gp, as long as they don't have to go ashore themselves. If you pay them, go to [077]. If you'd rather sail back to Branok as planned, go to [162].

026 You watch as the frightened girl, Ellie, struggles hopelessly against the ropes. From the darkened cave, you hear another hiss, then a rumbling snort and a whiff of brimstone.

The three cowardly peasants drop their weapons and flee into the woods, while Ellie closes her eyes and begins to pray for a swift death.

From amid the cave, two red eyes become visible, then a draconic snout, followed by the rest of the reptilian terror. It is a red dragon, perhaps 20' long!

Refer to **MAP III** [156] to set up: dark shaded squares are solid tree trunks, and impassible. Light shaded squares are thick bush; anyone attacking in or out is –2 **DX**, and each 5' square counts as 10' of movement. The stars adjacent to N are the mouth of the dragon's cave. Place your figures on or adjacent to S, facing toward N. Ellie is at E, bound to the adjacent tree trunk, facing the dragon. Place the dragon

facing you, with one of its rear squares on or adjacent to the cave entrance at N. After setup, return from [156] and go to [012].

027 Record plot word **INN**. Three victims can still be saved. Go to [147] unless you have the plot word **VESP**; if you do, go to [085] instead.

028 Too bad: They charge! Go to [122]; your foes get initiative on the first round.

029 He notices your lack of enthusiasm for his quest. "Aye, I likely go to my doom," he agrees. "A dragon is bad enough. An undead dragon? Only a fool would face it. I can't ask you to slay the deathless worm, but would you come with me to help my little Freda? The dragon wants vengeance against me, first and foremost. So while I distract the dragon, perhaps you can slip around behind and save my daughter?"

If you accept, go to [065]. If not, go to [024].

030 "You may have heard I trapped the dragon Shadreth the Black with explosives and left it to starve in Baron Rykenzar's mines, aye? Well, after I collected my pay, I moved on. That was a lucky break for me, as I wasn't there when Rykenzar's wizard used transmutation spells and opened the mine. He was careful; he took my advice and waited a full two months for the dragon to starve. And the dragon was dead all right! Trapped like a rat, Shadreth had battered and clawed at the rock and died as no dragon wanted to: a slow and shameful death of hunger."

"Trouble is, he didn't stay dead. I've heard he's risen as an undead. If it's true, I've heard the worm is on my trail. I've been staying clear of the mountain country and doing most of my work down south. Until recently, I thought I'd given him the slip. But then I heard..."

There's a thumping on the door of the inn. Go to [154].

031 The Red Desert is an empty waste traveled only by hardy desert nomads and a few rare merchant caravans. Occasional watering holes and cacti allow a subsistence existence for a few resilient desert animals. There is nothing to the east or south but endless sands.

Lodging: Camping.

Rumors: The deserts to the north are full of scorpions. A passing nomad tells you that long ago, an ancient cult worshiped them, but their temple fell to a great dragon.

Travel: West to the town of Tamaz [010] or north to the desert Oasis of Jahrom [082].

032 Some villagers want to hire you, but others shout that they can't anger the dragon! The majority just hang their heads, ashamed at having submitted to its demands, but afraid to risk its ire by hiring a dragon slayer. After much angst and shouting, you are asked to leave.



Dragon of the Golden Harp

Summoned Blue Dragon

AC 3 [16], **HD** 6** (27hp), **Att** [2× claw (1d4), 1× bite (2d8)] or breath, **THACO** 14 [+5], **MV** 90' (30') / 240' (80'), **SV** D10 W11 P12 B13 S14 (6), **ML** 9, **AL** Neutral, **XP** 725, **TT** V.

If you have plot word **GWYS** go to [113]; otherwise, return to [158].

036 Hastily snatching up the lighter and more valuable items you can spot, you head for the exit.

The jewelry and obviously magical sword make easy targets; a character with a small sack or backpack can fill it with 5d4×10ep; large sacks with 5d6×20ep. Examination of the jewelry reveals their value: 3× 500gp, 5× 800gp, and 12× 1,200gp. The sword is a **short sword +1, Energy Drain** (see **RULES**

TOME, P. 267).

Travel: North to the desert Oasis of Kholovar [067] or south to the desert Oasis of Jahrom [082].

037 One of the peasants draws a small axe, and steps in front of the girl, face grim. “Don’t interfere, stranger,” he says. “This be village business.”

There is a sudden hissing noise from the cave, like a giant teakettle!

“Forget them,” the other peasants shout. “The dragon’s coming! Run, or we’re all dead!”

Go to [026].

038 You’re in the desert waste called the Scorpion Sands (and you’ve noticed plentiful examples under rocks already).

From atop a sand dune, you can see a monolithic structure, a huge four-legged statue of some kind. It is at least 50’ tall, in the shadow of a rocky cliff. If you’ve not previously investigated it and wish to, go to [091]; otherwise camp or travel.

Lodging: Camping.

Travel: North to the desert Oasis of Kholovar [067] or south to the desert Oasis of Jahrom [082].

039 A blonde girl approaches you in the inn. She appears to be 13–14 years old. She’s dressed in expensive but functional travel clothes and a feathered cap.

Her name is Myra, and she wants you to hunt a dragon—but not kill him!

She offers to treat you to a fine meal if you’ll hear her out. Her accent and tough-looking retainer hovering in the shadows suggest a slumming gentlewoman.

To consider her quest, go to [086]. If you turn Myra down, go to [052].

As you do so, a little boy—the brother of the girl who was taken—begs you “please kill the dragon and save big sister Ellie,” and offers two copper pieces, all he has, before his father cuffs him and drags him indoors. To accept, go to [055]; to leave them, go to [094].

033 “Dragon hunters, eh?” the goblin sneers. “More likely poachers or spies! I should hang you for trespassing in Lord Rykenzar’s wood...but I’ve heard rumors of dragons of late, so maybe you’re telling the truth. Very well. If you pay the passage toll of 25gp each, you can be on your way.” He looks at you expectantly, ready for trouble.

To pay up, go to [042]. If you refuse to submit to the goblin captain’s extortion, or try to talk him down, go to [028]. To fight or insult him, go to [122].

034 Go to **MAP I**, found on the book’s inside cover. It depicts pass, passage, and vineyard locations at 5’-square scale. The instructions in the paragraph you came from explains which letters or symbols are significant for setup; ignore the others. Set up as instructed and return to the paragraph you came from.

035 You find the cloak and harp, and among the cast-aside weapons—her silver sword is two-handed for a human—and a longbow seemingly made of dragon-bone. Experimentation reveals the bow is enchanted a+1 **bow, +2 vs dragons**, while the Crimson Cloak acts as a **Ring of Fire Resistance**!

The Golden Harp is unique: It plays by itself during battle or on command (and allow even an unqualified player to take a job as a minstrel)! When a figure plucks its strings themselves, they realize why its owner was dubbed Drakesinger. The harp whispers that it can summon a 6HD blue dragon if the user is an elf, magic-user, or at least a 10th-level thief. To cast it, the harp must be ready (as a 2-handed weapon). Furthermore, maintaining the dragon requires concentration. The dragon is the harp’s spirit: if ever killed, the item is broken.

040 Clambering into the tomb, you step carefully around half-rotted timbers, and examine the contents of the funeral vessel.

Lying in the craft is the mailed and helmeted corpse of some forgotten lord or Sea Reaver, a naked broadsword lying on his breast. Beside him lies a woman in a long dress, wearing a golden tiara. A small pile of swords, axes, goblets, rings, and coins are heaped about their feet. In the shadows at the rear of the vessel are two big wooden chests, one open with a heap of silver inside, the other shut—and hunched near them, the curled-up body of a peasant farmer, neck purple with bruises, eyes wide open in death. A discarded axe is next to him.

As you examine the treasure you perhaps recall tales of barrow wights who rose from their tomb. If you have **Hear Noises** as a class ability, roll it; even if you fail, make a **Wisdom** check. If you succeed on either, go to [189]. If you fail, go to [072].

041 He wilts under interrogation. Confronted by evidence of his crimes, Azor admits to running a con on several “villages of idiots” over the last few weeks. He finds a poorly defended village, conjures up a dragon, scares or kills a few villagers, and then has it drag his latest victim off. Once he accumulated sufficient “merchandise” he planned to use contacts with the Thieves’ Guild to sell them to nomad slavers in the south.

Victorious, you return to the village; go to [121].

042 They take your money and escort you out of the forest. Record plot word **HOB**. Pick one of these travel directions; as you have a guide, there’s no need to roll for an encounter.

The goblin also proffers a friendly warning: A few weeks ago, a dragon disturbed a nest of giant wasps in the eastern part of Wormwood. Giant wasps are scary when aroused—the forest patrols try to stay out of their way! But the dragon obliterated the wasps’ nest; the surviving wasps seek a new home. If you see them, watch out!

Travel: East to Shad Sharrivar [105], west to Enid’s Corner [007], or south to the village of Treeve [052].

043 The dragon is awake. “Well, well, well,” the dragon says, his voice a rumble of thunder. “You vermin dare interrupt my mental symposium upon the astral plane? Well, so be it! I, Gormagrond, grow hungry; my supper has delivered itself. Truly I am like unto a god, for my smallest wishes become manifest!” His eyes glow like molten gold. “But perhaps I will be merciful! Drop your weapons, insects, and prostrate yourself before me!” If you refuse, go to [101] to fight or run. To surrender, go to [078].

044 The wyvern, Gwysteloch, is grateful for the timely rescue. She’s pursuing rumored enchanted items but got hungry. She dived to pounce on a fat rabbit, and flew into the web!

The items Gwysteloch seeks are two legendary magic items: the Crimson Cloak and Golden Harp of Estarian Drakesinger. Gwysteloch says Estarian was a wizard-bard who disappeared while adventuring in this region many years ago, having been ensnared by a deadly serpent.

His crimson cloak supposedly protected against dragon fire, while his magic golden harp with silver strings could play itself. “I can’t wear a cloak,” the wyvern says disingenuously, “but I like music.”

Go to [063] *unless* you already have plot word **SONG**; then go to [115].

045 Inside the old pirate fort’s ruins you find the dragon waiting, lurking in its great hall. This space is decorated with a tattered pirate flag; behind the dragon you can see a small pile of glittering gold and silver coins, along with other loot.

The dragon’s gaze is hard and angry; she’ll fight ferociously to defend her lair!

You face her on **MAP IV**; refer to [188]. Place the dragon so one of its squares occupies a shaded pile at T, facing toward D; you can start within two squares of D.

Solid black squares are fort walls (impassable). Light gray squares are piles of bones, rusty blades, and treasure (treat difficult terrain—move costs double—for humanoid creatures; no effect on the dragon!). The fort’s interior is 12’ high.

Refer to [119] for this dragon’s statistics, minus any hits already suffered if you fought her before on the water. If a day has passed, her breath weapon is recharged; also, if you waited before returning for a rematch, injuries recovered at **1d6hp per day**.

If you defeat the dragon, go to [199].

046 You encountered the wyvern and giant earth spider in the forest. Use **MAP III** [156] to set up. Dark-shaded squares are solid tree trunks, impassable. Light-shaded squares are spider webbing. The earth spider occupies the three A squares, facing N. The wyvern occupies the two G squares, facing E. Place your own figures in any starred 5’ square or an adjacent N, facing S.

Time to fight! If you came from [053] you have initiative on the first round. Otherwise, roll it!

To protect its meal (or make a new one of you!) the earth spider attacks relentlessly; it can move through its own webbing without penalty.

The wyvern is already entangled; to free it, or anyone else caught, refer to **Webs**, below.

If you free the wyvern during the combat, it allies with you against the earth spider; refer to [161] for wyvern statistics, then return here.

If you defeat the earth spider, go to [138].

If it wins, it devours you and the wyvern. **The End**.

You don't have to fight to the death. If you retreat off any map edge, you can leave the combat; record plot word **GNOS**. If the wyvern remained trapped when you escaped, go to [080], but if you free it, and have it accompany your retreat, go to [044] instead.

Kuga

Earth Spiders are rare, intelligent talking giant spiders. Their legs end in sharp talons, and their long fangs drip with poison.

AC 6 [13], **HD** 6* (26hp), **Att** 1× bite (2d6 + poison), **THACO** 14 [+5], **MV** 60' (20') / 120' (40') in webs, **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (3), **ML** 10, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 500, **TT** V.

► **Intelligent:** Speaks Common.

► **Webs:** Entering or moving while in an enwebbed region web requires a **save versus paralysis** to avoid being trapped. Webs have 26hp, and are attacked at **AC** 10 [9]. Trapped figures are at -10 to hit (!) and do half damage. Each failed attack increases the hit penalty by -2, eventually binding the victim to immobility.

047 This is Castle Gwalathar, capital of the barony. The baron is fighting in a distant war. Baroness Tanith Gwalathar holds the castle with her small retinue of guards.

Lodging: Adventurers may lodge here free for up to two days—indefinitely if they make a **Charisma** check at -4, or are injured. Only make the **Charisma** check once, unless you've returned with a new **PLOT WORD**!

Rumors: Generations ago, Tanith's ancestor Garth Blacksword joined with the wizard-bard Estarian and the ranger Signy Strongbow to fight the dragon Gormagrond. It fled over the Rampart Mountains into the eastern deserts. Now that dragons have arisen again, the baroness wonders if there are heroes of their caliber who might end the draconic scourge?

Each time you return to Castle Gwalathar with a **new PLOT WORD**, report to the baroness and check your **PLOT WORDS** for **Experience**. If you attained the three plot words **GORM**, **HOOK**, and **WIGHT**, and at least two of **HISS**, **LIGHT**, **TRAIL**, or **VESP** check [234].

Travel: North to the frontier village of Treeve [052], east to the market town of Nahraven [023], south to the village of Mador's Mill [177], or west to the seaside village of Branok [128].

048 Perhaps it won't expect a frontal attack by veteran hunters! Through the falling rain you spot your adversary: a cadaverous dragon, some 25' long, coiled around an old stone well on a low mound in the shadow of the standing stones. Its tattered, bony wings are folded behind its back. Its tail lashes back and forth. An aura of deathly cold surrounds it, and its blue eyes glitter like shards of ice. From broken teeth in its reptilian head, a forked tongue flickers. Its voice is a cold echo: "Welcome, hunters, to your deaths!"

From within the depths of the well, you hear a faint cry: a child's voice. "Help me!"

"Freda!" cries Alberic. The dragon laughs wickedly. Go to [167].

049 The giant wasps are stronger than they look. In a few short hops, they carry you into the inn, which is their lair, and lay eggs upon you. In several hours, before your paralysis wears off, they hatch monster grubs. They slowly suck your bodily fluids as they burrow into your stomach. Your demise fuels their transformation into giant wasp pupae. **The End.**

050 The huge doors smash open as the elder dragon charges into the great hall, eager to protect his hoard from burglars!

Refer to **MAP V** at [209] to set up the battle. Place a dragon with his head at H and rear at N, facing toward E. You may set up in or adjacent any lightly shaded squares. These represent the pile of treasure and bones; treat them as bad footing (treat 5' as 10' for movement allowance) for humanoid-sized figures and smaller, but not for larger figures like the dragon. The black squares are impassable walls or pillars. The ceiling is 60' high; the dragon can fly here.

To fight the dragon, go to [101]. To stand your ground and converse with it, go to [043].

051 You're in the mouth of a winding passage, about 12' wide and 60' long, which leads deeper into the great statue. At the far end you glimpse a sarcophagus with a scorpion symbol emblazoned upon it, but in front of it stand two 7' tall bronze statues. Like the giant statue you're exploring, they depict scorpion-human hybrids: These are a male and female with stern faces, armed with swords and shields.

To proceed down the passage, go to [081]. To leave the statue, go to [230].



052 Treeve is a farming village surrounded by woods. **Lodging:** The Sword & Plowshare (8sp/night). If you stay here, and have the plot word **MYRA**, nothing happens; if you have **PHLOG** (but not **MYRA**), turn to [142], otherwise go to [039].

Rumors: The woods north and east are disputed borderlands, claimed by both Gwalathar and the goblins of Shad Sharrivar.

Travel: North to Wormwood forest [021], east to Mehrak Narvan [102], west to the port town of Morvoren [068], or south to Castle Gwalathar [047].

053 Go to [046]; you get initiative on the first combat round.

054 Revealing yourself as a dragonslayer, you order them to release the girl!

Roll 1d6, adding **Charisma** modifiers. If one of you is in **heavy armor**, also add 1; these peasants are impressed if you look like a knight! On a 4 or less, go to [037]; on a 5+ go to [116].

055 You hurry down a forest trail to Beacon Hill, two miles from the village. As you reach a clearing near the hill, you hear harsh voices, and a girl's quiet sobbing. Go to [093].

056 You maneuver carefully into position behind the standing stones, flanking the dragon.

Refer to **MAP VI** [216] and set up the figures: Alberic is at A, facing S. Shadreth's head is at S, facing A; his body occupies the adjacent starred squares. You and any companions other than Alberic set up in the starred squares on or adjacent B, facing toward S. After the figures are set up, go to [112].

057 The sheds and small vineyard appear deserted. You find a dropped basket filled with succulent grapes, a broken spear, and a torn peasant's cloak.

Roll 1d6. On a 1–3 go to [219]; on a 4–6, go to [171].

058 As his strength fails, Azor drops his staff (if he's still holding it) and begs for mercy! If you grant it, he surrenders; go to [075]. Otherwise, fight on: Return to [084], but next round you win initiative automatically, and his dropped staff is on the ground in his 5' square.

059 It instantly freezes you into suspended animation (no saving throw)! If there are other members in your party, they can remove it; return to the paragraph you came from. You can sell the crown in any *castle* or *town* for 5,000gp.

Otherwise, you're trapped here forever. **The End.**

060 The evil dragon laughs: "Ha, ha, ha! The dwarf is dead, and by now his spawn has drowned. Too late, fools, my vengeance is complete!" Go to [100].

061 At the great statue's rear, near the broken stinger, is a secret stone door. You spot no traps. Enter [230] or go back [091].

062 You flatter the dragon, inquiring why such a majestic being as itself attacks poor fishermen?

"I don't know about *attacking* fishermen," it replies with haughty disdain. "If you must know, I was pregnant. I grew tired of wild pigs and developed a craving for fish. Well, of course diving into the ocean to fish seemed a dreadful bother, but these little human boats were loaded down with catch! Some silly humans even abandoned ship at the mere sight of me and let themselves get eaten by sharks or drowned. Others were rather impolite when I asked for their fish; I expect their next incarnations shall know better."

The dragon boasts it recently laid three eggs ("dragon reproduction is far more efficient than that of lesser mammalian species") and so probably will be too busy with them to eat more fish or fishermen. "They have so *little* treasure," she laments.

If you accept the dragon promise, you may sail back to shore [166]; record plot word **SEA**. If you'd rather not have it raising a brood, and want to fight anyway, go to [201].

063 The wyvern has a proposition: "We could look for the Golden Harp and Crimson Cloak together? There may be monsters, most probably, but I can help you fight them. Whoever survives keeps the stuff, yes, yes, or if we all do, we splits it?" To join forces with Gwysteloch, go to [099]. If you disdain a wyvern's company, go to [136].

064 The villagers are astounded to see you return alive. After getting over their surprise at your tale, they offer you a reward of 100gp (all they can spare). If you saved Ellie, she is especially grateful; you get the idea she won't easily forgive her relatives and the other villagers for trying to feed her to a dragon. You can stay at the village inn free of charge as long as you need to rest and recover from injuries. Record plot word **LIGHT**; when ready to leave, go to [079] and pick a travel direction.

065 "Driven by its rage, that undead worm seeks to force me into battle, to punish me and mine," Alberic says. "I pray to the gods that Freda be still alive, but regardless, I must end this...or die trying." He laughs grimly. "I'll test my axe against his bony neck."

"Let's go. If you're fool enough to aid me, we have to cross the moors before moonrise. We have a dragon to slay."

You cross the soggy moor, making for Voden's Well. Heavy rain continues to fall, soaking your clothes. "The gods didn't just send this weather to plague us," Alberic grumbles. "No, this is the great worm's cunning. Most dragons dislike rain, being creatures of air and fire, but Shadreth is a cold, dead thing. I am sure he's weather-wise and chose a rain-swept night like this one to face me on purpose. He remembers how I bested him before. My arquebus and explosives are useless in this rain."

As you march, Alberic talks with you to determine your abilities and familiarizes you with his own. For this quest, add Alberic to your party as a companion. Record his statistics:

Alberic

This gray-bearded dwarf is a former dragon-hunting hero who is on the verge of retirement, perpetually seeking “one last job” to provide for young daughter Freda (raised by cousin Thorokin after her mother’s death).

7th-level dwarf

STR 14 [+1], **DEX** 17 [+2], **INT** 9, **WIS** 11, **CON** 14 [+1], **CHA** 9.

AC 3 [16], **HD** 7 (41hp), **Att** 1× **dwarven 2H great-hammer** +2 (1d8+3), or 1× **hand axe** +1 (1d6+2), or 1× **arquebus** +1 (2d8+1), **THACO** 11 [+8], **MV** 90' (30'), **SV** D4 W5 P6 B7 S8 (7), **AL** Lawful, **TT** V.

► **Equipment/Treasure:** **Leather armor +2, two-handed great-hammer +2** (1d8+2; Blunt, Melee, Slow, Two-Handed, **THACO** 11 [+8]), **hand axe +1** (**THACO** 12), **arquebus +1** (Missile 5'–80' / 81'–160' / 161'–240'; Reload (×3), Slow, Two-handed, **THACO** 11 [+8])

After you record his stats, go to [157].

066 Madstone Moor is open grassland. Visible in the center of the moor is a great circle of standing stones of wildly varying sizes and shapes. A colony of týndrmenn is presently camped nearby, defacing the stones and each other by painting them with bizarre glyphs.

Týndrmenn

These “lost people” are unruly humanoids sized between dwarves and halflings. They are semi-nomadic foragers who tend to live in or near the woods. They tend to be quarrelsome, none too bright, and mercurial in temperament. Whatever they value, it’s not a traditional love of metal and magic.

AC 9 [10], **HD** 1/2 (2hp), **Att** 1× club (1d4), **THACO** 20 [–1], **MV** 120' (40'), **SV** D14 W15 P16 B17 S18 (0), **ML** 6, **AL** Neutral, **XP** 5, **TT** Q.

Lodging: Týndrmenn camp (–1d6×5gp in theft per day).

Rumors: The týndrmenn insist that if you dance naked beneath the Mad Stones for a year and a day, in your next life you’ll be reincarnated as a dragon, giant scorpion, or an octopus, depending on your horoscope sign. One also says a passing wyvern told it about seeking a singing treasure guarded by a hungry snake girl. Or was it a singing snake guarding a hungry girl? All the same with enough mushrooms!

Travel: North to the forest of Derowen [080], east to the village of Edern [079], or west to the seaside village of Locryn [083]. To retire to join the týndrmenn dance, go to [235].

067 The Oasis of Kholovar, a cluster of palm trees around a spring, is a welcome sight in the desert. Scores of tents are pitched around it, and many goats and camels are grazing here.

Lodging: 3d12sp/night (gifts for nomads).

Rumors: The nomads tell tales around their campfires. Here is one: Long ago, a fierce warrior tribe dominated the deserts. Its god-empresses were revered as reincarnations of their goddess, the Scorpion Queen. When the empire eventually collapsed into infighting, the last scorpion queen was buried with her golden crown in a desert shrine guarded by the few remaining cultists. Then came their final doom: Drawn by rumors of treasure, or fleeing other foes, the dragon Gormagron flew out of the west.

He devoured the remaining cultists and seized the shrine as its lair! Even today he prowls the desert wastes, slaughtering men or beasts who cross him. Since then, he has sired offspring who still ravage the land.

Travel: North to the White Desert [070], west to the Badlands of Kwo [137], or south to the Scorpion Sands [038].

068 Morvoren is a prosperous port town noted for its fishing fleet, succulent shellfish, and occasional pearl diving.

Lodging: The Sea Maid inn (10sp/night).

Rumors: A few years ago the Lord Mayor of Morvoren’s youngest daughter, Myra, was given a dragon egg for her birthday. The dragon hunter had captured it from a dragon’s lair in the Wormwood—the gloomy borderland forest, north of Treeve and east of Enid’s Corner. It hatched, and she raised the dragon as a pet, teaching it to hunt. Of late the dragon has grown big enough to cause trouble, attacking horses, falcons, and dogs, and, it is said, badly shocking two of the household’s servants.

Sailors are worried: Several fishing boats in the south have been lost. Some fear dragons!

No one’s heard much from Enid’s Corner lately.

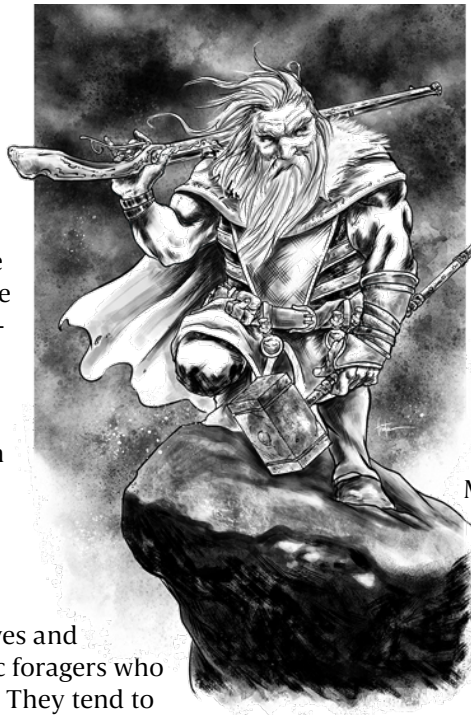
Travel: North to the hamlet of Enid’s Corner [007], east to the village of Treeve [052], south to the coastal village of Branok [128].

069 You’ve defeated an elder dragon! Record plot word **GORM**. To enter the great statue, now or after a rest to recover, go to [117]. (If you rest, use the rules for **camping** in a desert.) Otherwise, go to [038] and choose a travel direction.

070 The White Desert is an arid wasteland of sand dunes, crossed by the occasional caravan or nomad band.

Lodging: Camping.

Travel: West to Mount Jamavand [125], or south to the Oasis of Kholovar [067].



071 “Look, you don’t want to mess with me,” Azor says. “I’m connected with the Thieves’ Guild, I am! But we don’t have to kill each other; this is business, see? I sucker the villagers into sending me girls, and then slavers down in Tamaz town buy them off me for 2,000gp each. Good deal, right?”

“So tell you what: I’ll cut you in for a 50–50 split. Just return to that silly village and tell those yokels the scary dragon drove you off, and now it’s *really* angry. It wants another couple of maidens next week, or it will torch the village church! That village still has a few lovelies left it can bear to part with—the barmaid at the inn, maybe?”

To take this scumbag’s offer, go to [106]. To spit in his eye and fight him, go to [084].

072 From behind the other side of the vessel slithers a giant white snake! It rears up, longer than your own body, hissing in anger that you disturbed its rest. You see it looks pained: There’s an oozing wound on its head.

If you came from [189], roll initiative! If here directly from [040], the snake surprised you: It gets a free round to act.

Refer to **MAP VII** [224]. It depicts the burial chamber and the ship. The deck is 3’ off the ground (treat partial squares as being on the ship). The only way in or out is the entrance 5’ square at E. You set up anywhere within two squares of E. The snake’s at M. Except for squares in or adjacent E, this chamber is *dark*; you’ll need lit torches or other light to avoid darkness penalties. The snake *can* see in the dark! If you slay it, go to [129].

The White Serpent of the Pale Cliffs

The serpent has an obvious axe wound on its head.

AC 6 [13], **HD** 5* (19hp), **Att** 1× bite (1d4 + constriction), **THACO** 15 [+4], **MV** 90’ (30’), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (3), **ML** 8, **AL** Neutral, **XP** 300, **TT** V.

► **Treasure:** 63sp.

► **Constriction:** When a bite attack is successful, the python wraps around the victim (grappling them to immobility) and begins to squeeze, inflicting 2d4 automatic damage immediately and on each subsequent round.

► **Infravision:** 60’. (Pits in the head allow heat sense.)

073 As you rest in the village, the elders debate what to do with Azor. Some seem worried that sending him off to stand trial in the baroness’ court may lead to embarrassing questions about the village’s agreeing to sacrifice its youth to a dragon.

While the meeting is in progress, a representative of the regional Wizards’ Guild arrives from Nahraven! This sorceress apologizes for the actions of their wizard and promises a new mage with excellent references will be dispatched to the village soon. They’ll deal with Azor: For egregious violations of the Guild’s code of conduct, he’s sentenced to be chained beneath the Guild tower and his life-force drained to provide power for beneficial magic for seven years.

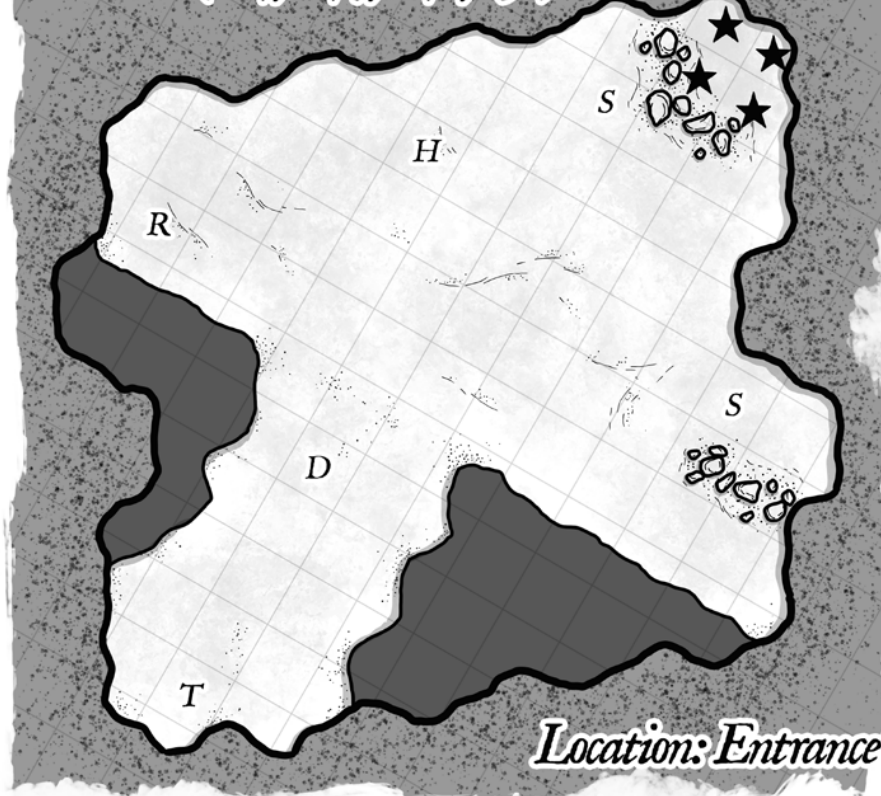
The sorceress offers the village 4,000gp in compensation for the miscreant mage’s actions. After a (very) short debate, the council agrees, accepting her suggestion. 500gp goes to you as a reward for dealing with Azor, plus another 500gp—a fortune in this small village!—to the wronged Ellie. Go to [079].

074 **MAP II** is to the left. It depicts the statue location at 5’-square scale. The paragraph you came from explains those letters or symbols significant for setup; ignore others. Set up as instructed, note terrain effects below, and return whence you came.

Black squares on this map are impassable walls of the giant statue. Rubble symbols are rough ground, which count double for movement, but provide +3 to **AC** against missile attacks as they provide significant cover.

075 You’ve defeated the wizard Azor! His chamber is outfitted with a stool, a rickety bed, and a washbasin. In his cave you find a sack of 2,200gp, a spare robe, an iron cage, comfortable bedding, and a 10-day ration supply. You may also loot his body.

MAP II (071, 074, 076, 139)



If you slew him, go to [013]. If he surrendered, or you knocked him out and then revived him afterward, go to [041].

076 The dragon launches itself into the air, then circles. Like a hunting hawk stooping on a rabbit, it plummets toward your hiding place!

Refer to **MAP III** [156]. You set up within two squares of the boulders at S. The dragon's head's at H, his rearmost 5' square at R. Go to [101] and fight; the dragon gets initiative on the first round.

077 Your boat approaches the beach on Hook Island, when a dark shape rises out of the shallows near the water's edge and flies in your direction. Yes, it's a dragon!

It has green, blue, and shimmering gold scales and is about 25' long! The sailors aboard are cursing their ill luck: They'd hoped not to meet it on the open waters.

To wait until the dragon comes into shouting distance and try negotiating, go to [196]. If you'd rather fight, go to [205].

078 Tough luck: the dragon already *said* it was hungry! It eats you, but mercifully doesn't play with its food first. **The End.**

079 This is the small village of Edern, in hill country notable for its many sheep farms. You observe that several barns and houses suffered recent fire damage but have been repaired.

Lodging: The Battered Dwarf (12sp/night).

Rumors: Go to [020] *unless* you have the plot word **SCUM**, **SLINK**, or **LIGHT**.

Travel: West across the plain of Madstone Moor [066], north to Arthek village [008], or east to the town of Tamaz [010].

080 Derowen is a dense, overgrown forest of black oaks located in a river valley. Few dwell here. The few foresters and woodcutters you meet on its fringes say it has an evil reputation.

Lodging: Camping.

Rumors: Go to [103] *unless* you have any of these plot words: **GNOS**, **WEB**, or **GWYS**.

Travel: North to the village of Mador's Mill [177], south through the woods to Madstone Moor [066], or east where the river drains into a foul-smelling swamp [158].

081 The twin statues' eyes glow crimson and they come to life! These creatures have a human head, arms, and torso, but the body, legs, pincers, and stinger of a giant scorpion.

"Sister, these unbelievers defile the resting place of Nera-karet, the Scorpion Queen," the scorpion-man intones.

"Brother, they will not defile it for long!" the scorpion-woman replies.

They move to attack!
Roll initiative.

You are fighting two scorpion-folk statues in the secret passage. For setup, refer to **MAP I** [034].

Shaded areas are solid stone; the sarcophagus (3' off the ground) is at C, with the animated statues at B and G. You start anywhere within two squares of N (the door into the passage).



Scorpion-folk

AC 2 [17], **HD** 4* (18hp), [**Att** 2× claw (1d10)
1× sword (1d8)] or 2× grab and sting (1d4 +
poison), **THACO** 16 [+3], **MV** 150' (50'), **SV** D12

W13 P14 B15 S16 (2), **ML** 11, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 125, **TT** V.

- **Equipment:** Sword.
- **Aggressive:** Normally attack on sight.
- **Poison:** Causes death (**save versus poison**).
- **Grab and sting:** +2 bonus to sting attack for *each* claw that hits.

If you escape through the door at N, go to [230]. If you defeat them, go to [123].

082 A welcome sight amid the sand dunes is the green Oasis of Jahrom. Nestled within is a walled caravanserai, a compound containing an inn, a well, and storehouses. It offers hospitality to nomads and caravans that cross the trackless wastes.

Lodging: Tents at the nomad camp.

Rumors: Arriving at the caravanserai you see signs of trouble: a building knocked down, burned palm trees, a damaged wall, and several fresh graves. The locals blame the devastation on the great dragon of the Scorpion Sands, the horrid Gormagrand. It was preying upon their goat herds, and some (dead) fool had the temerity to shoot arrows at it. Some beg you not to disturb the dragon and invite its wrath; others cry out for vengeance!

Travel: North to the Scorpion Sands [038], south to the Red Desert [031], or west to the village of Bokhara [124].



Azor the Mighty

7th-level magic user

STR 12, **DEX** 10, **INT** 16 [+2], **WIS** 9, **CON** 17 [+2], **CHA** 17 [+1].

AC 9 [10], **HD** 7* (35hp), **Att** 1× staff of striking (2d6), **THACO** 17 [+2], **MV** 120' (40'), **SV** D11 W12 P11 B14 S12 (7), **AL** Chaotic, **TT** V, **XP** 850.

- **Raiment:** Wears (fake) dragonskin robes, a (fake) dragon hatchling skull adorns his staff. He's a poseur, but an impressive one.
- **Spells:** **1st** Cause fear, magic missile (3 missiles), shield, **2nd** blinding flash, mirror image, **3rd** conjure monster, fire ball, **4th** charm monster.
- **Equipment/Treasure:** Staff of Striking, Ring of Fire Resistance, 80pp, 2 pieces of jewelry (1,100gp and 900gp). Azor's spellbook naturally includes the spells listed above.
- **Staff of Striking:** Has 12 remaining charges; Azor does not know this.
- **Unique Spells:** Azor has created or discovered several spells:
 - » *Cause fear (1st-level):* a magic-user equivalent to the cleric's spell: **save versus spells** or flee for 2 turns
 - » *Blinding flash (2nd-level):* All creatures in front of the caster (including allies) must **save versus spells** or be **blinded**. Blinded victims save each round; once they save they may act normally. Blinded creatures may not attack. Creatures with no eyes or alternate modes of vision (infravision, vibration sense, etc) are unaffected.
 - » *Conjure Monster (3rd-level):* Creates or summons a creature of **HD** equal to the caster's level. The creature lasts for **1 turn** and then disappears. Is not inherently friendly to the caster; Azor controls the Dragon of Beacon Hill with *charm monster*.

083 Locryn is a prosperous coastal village with a harbor full of fishing vessels and many sheep farms just inland. The Pale Cliffs, a line of steep chalk hills, overlooks the southwestern sea.

Lodging: The Sea Monkey (10sp/night).

Rumor: A farm boy claimed to have seen a dragon in a cave near the Pale Cliffs. If you'd like to investigate (and haven't before) go to [195].

Travel: North to the abbey of Cador [006] or east across desolate Madstone Moor [066].

084 "Fools, you are facing Azor," the young wizard intones. "Azor the Mighty! You may have defeated my draconic pawn, but now face my arcane power unleashed!"

Azor raises his staff and starts to chant. Roll initiative! Use **Map I**; shaded squares are impassible; Azor's at M; your party starts within 2 squares of S.

It's time for brute force! Azor leads off having already cast *conjure monster*, *charm monster*, and *shield*. He enters combat with *blinding flash*, then *fire ball*, finally *mirror image* as a diversion. Depending on who's left, he will then either use *magic missile* to kill, or *cause fear* on the strongest remaining melee foe. After that, it's time for melee with his **staff of striking**.

If you slay or incapacitate Azor, go to [075]. If Azor ends his round with **less than 10hp** left and your side is still able to fight, go to [058].

20 Dragon Hunt!

085 It doesn't look like any more of the creatures are in the vicinity. With your help, three of the paralyzed victims—the fat man, the boy, and the girl—recover from their paralysis in a few hours, perhaps helped by the local wine. They are traumatized by their ordeal, but grateful that you spared them from a terrible death. Alas, the others don't make it.

The innkeeper is Brand. The youth is Sam, a stable boy. The girl is the barmaid, Tabitha, the innkeeper's daughter. The dead include Tabitha's cousin and several customers. Fortunately, their mother was away at a nearby town visiting a married daughter.

They had heard scary rumors of giant wasp attacks on forest travelers, but no one had believed they were a threat here until it was too late. The innkeeper, as he closes up and plans to join his relatives in a nearby village, gives you three bottles (1 lb./each) of his finest vintage as a reward (and they are *very* good bottles of wine)! You can enjoy them, or sell them in a town at 25gp *each*. Go to [191].

086 She is Myra of Morvoren, daughter of the mayor. Myra was given a dragon egg by her father, the lord mayor. Surprisingly enough, it hatched. She adopted the baby dragon, which soon grew to become her best friend.

“His name is Phlogiston, Phlog for short. He was kidnapped! He’s like a little brother to me,” she explains. “But when Phlog grew, Mother became afraid he might set the house on fire or eat someone (not that Phlog would)! He’s a very good dragon, unless someone scares me, which is why he ate Sir Rupert’s nasty dog and electrocuted my bully cousin Trent. But Mother just *wouldn’t listen*, and one night she had her foresters nab Phlog and leave him in Wormwood forest. Where his egg was found.”

Myra says that if you help her track down Phlog she will reward you handsomely. Wormwood lies several days north. “I’d go, but my bodyguard Nyssa says I can’t.”

“The woods are a nasty borderland,” amplifies the lurking Nyssa. “No place for milord’s heir.”

Myra stamps her foot. “It’s not fair!” Myra offers to pay 500gp if you return Phlogiston (alive) to her. “I’ll be very grateful! Someday I’ll be Lady of Morvoren...”

It’s up to you if you’ll decide to search for her dragon (which would require traveling to Wormwood), ignore Myra’s request, or just keep an eye open. Return to [\[052\]](#).

087 You attempt to sneak into position behind the standing stones to flank the dragon, but its keen senses detect you before you reach your objective.

Refer to [MAP VI \[216\]](#) and set up the figures: Alberic is at A, facing S. Shadareth’s head is at S, facing A; his body occupies the adjacent starred squares. You and any other companions, besides Alberic, set up within two squares of C, facing as desired S. After the figures are set up, go to [\[112\]](#) and roll initiative.

088 The dragon flies off toward the island; record plot word **SEA**. If you’d like to sail on to Hook Island in pursuit, go to [\[182\]](#). If you’re not up to further fighting, or content with having taught the worm a lesson by wounding and driving it off, go to [\[173\]](#).

089 You’ve slain the dragon—but a moment later, its corpse disappears! It must have been a magical summoning!

To explore the hill cave, go to [\[127\]](#). If you saved Ellie and prefer to just take her back to the village, go to [\[064\]](#).

090 At the start of the seventh round, the dragon you were fighting suddenly stops fighting, shudders, and winks out of existence. It was real enough, but must have been summoned from somewhere or a magical conjuring.

If you want to enter the cave immediately, go to [\[127\]](#). If you’d rather take Ellie and leave, go to [\[064\]](#).

091 The ruin is a giant stone statue of a crouching hybrid monster half-buried in the sands. It’s 50’ tall and 150’ long, weathered by time and blasted by the desert winds. The desert colossus has a woman’s face,

folded arms, and upper torso merged with the lower body of a monstrous scorpion. The tail stinger has broken off, however, and lies partly covered by sand. There is a great bronze door, big enough for a wagon or a dragon, in front of the statue at its base.

To enter the great door, go to [\[126\]](#). If you prefer to scout around the statue, perhaps seeking another entrance you have not yet found, go to [\[098\]](#). To camp out in cover behind some rocks or sand dunes and see if anything enters or leaves go to [\[111\]](#).

To retreat, go to [\[038\]](#) and pick a travel direction.

092 You hear a low rumbling noise from the front of the giant statue, and a hiss. It sounds like something huge is about to emerge from the great doors.

To confront whatever is coming, go to [\[139\]](#). If you’d rather hide, go to [\[107\]](#).

093 Before you lies a clearing, facing a dark cave mouth at the base of the hill. Two men, local peasants by their garb, are binding a girl to a lone pine pole that stands about 10 yards from the cave; the girl has long, almost pure white hair, and is wearing a white dress and a garland of flowers. She appears to be about 16 or 17 years old and looks very scared.

A third man, a bit older, half-heartedly tries to comfort her.

“I don’t want to die,” the girl sobs. “Please, uncle...”

“Be brave, Ellie,” the older man says. “It will all be over soon, my child... I’m so sorry it had to be you. But thanks to your sacrifice, your mother, your little brothers and aunt and cousins, and everyone else in the village, will live. And you’ll go straight to the afterlife to take comfort in the palm of the gods!”

“Enough of that!” says another man, his voice frightened. “We have to go *now*!”

To rush in now to rescue Ellie, go to [\[037\]](#). To lie in wait, concealed by the woods, until the men leave, then act, go to [\[026\]](#). If you wish to confront these villagers and try to convince them to let Ellie go, while you defeat their dragon, go to [\[054\]](#).

094 The hapless villagers sink deeper into despondency as you leave them to their fate. One curses you, but the others shush him. “Dragon hunters? That’s just stories. What can anyone do against an adult dragon?” If you reconsider and decide to help, go to [\[055\]](#). Otherwise, record plot word **SLINK**, return to [\[079\]](#), and pick a travel direction.

095 “A wise choice,” hisses the earth spider. As you back off, it moves like lightning, zipping over to the struggling wyvern. It sinks fangs into the beast’s long neck. The wyvern tries to free its tail to return the favor, but fails; it spasms, then goes still, as the potent venom strikes. Record plot word **GNOS** and go to **[022]**.

096 Half a minute later, you emerge into a clearing, surrounded by tall trees.

Spanning the clearing, stretched between two trees, is a great spider web that glitters in the sunlight. Struggling helplessly in the web is a two-legged dragon-like creature the size of a pony! Dangling above it is another creature: a monstrous man-sized spider-thing descending toward her on a strand of webbing. Like the wyvern, the spider-creature is also a hybrid, possessing a bloated bottle-green arachnid body from which emerges a goblin-like face.

If you wish to attack one or both creatures go to **[053]**. To stand your ground or talk to them, go to **[011]**. If you retreat and leave them to their struggle, go to **[022]**.

097 In the woods you find a dead man dangling from a tree branch, apparently the victim of a hanging. By his garb he looks like a human ranger or forester. If you wish, you can bury him. Afterward, you continue on through the woods. **Roll 1d6**. On a **1–3**, go to **[208]**; on a **4–6**, go to **[145]**.

098 You carefully search the exterior of the great statue. Dwarves can **Detect Construction Tricks** with a 2-in-6 chance. If you succeed go to **[061]**. If you fail, go to **[120]**.

099 Gwysteloch tells you she has heard the harp and cloak of the Drakesinger may be kept in a sacred grove “in the swamps to the east. And the grove may have its own guardian. We must be careful, yes?”

Add the wyvern as a companion and record plot word **GWYS**. If you haven’t recorded her stats already, go to **[161]** for Gwysteloch’s abilities. Then go to **[080]**.

100 Suddenly, it stops. Given un-life only by its desire for vengeance, there is nothing left! The diabolic light of its eyes goes out. It collapses into a pile of bones and dust. Go to **[187]**.

101 You are battling the elder dragon Gormagrond. He is powerful, but proud and arrogant, won’t retreat, and fights to the death. Preferably yours. He targets wizards and elves first, being old and wily enough to know how powerful their spells can be. If facing several foes, his priority is anyone who uses spells, then any sort of ranged weapon, and finally anyone using a lance from horseback. He’s been hurt by such powerful attacks before and dislikes them immensely. If facing enemies that have no obvious ranged attacks, Gormagrond takes to the air, using his breath to attack from just out of reach.

You can’t outrun him. If you slay or incapacitate Gormagrond, record plot word **GORM**. If you have plot word **OUT** go to **[190]**; otherwise go to **[069]** if you defeated him outdoors, or **[190]** if in his lair.



Gormagron

11 HD red dragon

AC -1 [20], **HD** 11** (52hp), **Att** [2× claw (1d8), 1× bite (4d8)] breath, **THACO** 11 [+8], **MV** 90' (30') / 240' (80') flying, **SV** D6 W7 P8 B8 S10 (11), **ML** 10, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 2,700, **TT** V.

- **Spells:** 1st *charm person*, *protection from evil*, *sleep* 2nd *detect invisible*, *invisibility*, *mirror image* 3rd *fire ball*, *haste*, *protection from normal missiles*.
- **Breath weapon:** 90' long cone of fire. Cone is 5' wide to 10'; 10' wide to 30'; 15' to 45'; 20' wide to 60'; 25' wide to 80'; 30' wide to 90'.
- **Languages:** Speaks Common and Draconic
- **Sleeping:** Nope.

102 Mehrak Narvan is hilly forest containing a few scattered hamlets. A small keep manned by rangers watches the border between the Barony of Gwalathar and its neighbors.

Lodging: The Forest House (10sp/night).

Rumors: Travelers passing through the Badlands of Kwo have been attacked by brigands or desert nomads...or worse. Several weeks ago, rangers say they stumbled on a group lying by the road: They were stone dead, the very life sucked out of their bodies!

Travel: North to the goblin mountains of Shad Sharrivar [105], east to the Badlands of Kwo [137], west to Treeve village [052], or south to Nah-raven town [023].

103 As you travel through the woods, you hear a flapping of wings to the east, as if a great bird is flying through the forest. The noise breaks off, and you hear a piercing scream! To turn back, record plot word **Gnos** and return to [080]. To press on, go to [096].

104 You're fighting Lilyanu in the glade. Use **MAP III** [156] to set up. Dark-shaded squares are solid tree trunks, impassible. Light-shaded squares are marshy, with knee-high water (if moving afoot, each 5' square counts as two). Lilyanu occupies your choice of any two adjacent L squares, facing S. The grave and cloak are at G. The harp hangs from a tree branch at H. Place your own figures in any starred squares on or adjacent S, facing L.

If you win, take the plot word **Hiss** and go to [035]. Exception: if you don't win in three rounds, check [178] on the fourth round!

Lilyanu of the Swamp

7 HD snake-woman

AC 5 [14], **HD** 7** (31hp), **Att** 1× 2H sword (1d10+1), or 1× crushing coils (1d8 + constriction), or 1× spit venom (1d8 + blinding), **THACO** 13 [+5], **MV** 90' (30'), **SV** D8 W9 P10 B10 S12 (7), **ML** 11, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 1,250, **TT** V.

- **Equipment:** Silver two-handed sword +1, shield.
- **Constriction:** When a coil attack is successful, Lilyanu wraps her tail around the victim squeezes, inflicting 2d4 automatic damage immediately and on each subsequent round.
- **Poison:** Causes blindness (**save versus poison**), new save every 1d8 days

105 Shad Sharrivar is a prosperous walled town in the highlands by an emerald lake. Most inhabitants are goblins and hobgoblins; its ruler is Lord Rykenzar, a goblin noble. Much of Shad Sharrivar's wealth comes from a gold mine on Mount Jamavand.

Lodging: The Eagle's Nest (10sp/night).

Rumors: Lord Rykenzar has his troubles. Several weeks ago, the Mines of Jamavand were seized by a wicked dragon. After several bloody attempts to extract it from the tunnels failed, Rykenzar hired a dragon hunter, Alberic the Dwarf, to slay him.

Unfortunately, the dwarf bungled the job: somehow the dragon didn't stay dead.

Witnesses say it's now a horrible revenant seeking revenge! Rykenzar believes this mad "dracowight" is now pursuing its slayer, but he

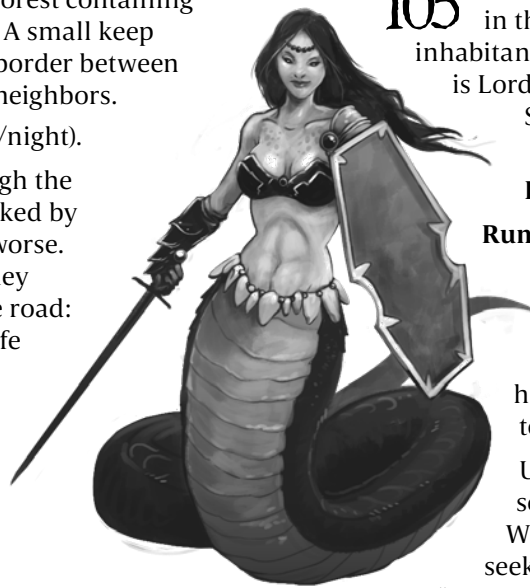
is concerned that after it kills Alberic it will come after him! He's promised a reward to any who destroys the monster.

If you have plot word **WIGHT** and *don't* have plot word **Cup**, check [225].

Travel: West to Wormwood Forest [021], east to the mines of Mount Jamavand [125], or south to the forests of Mehrak Narvan [102].

106 If you have Ellie with you, Azor trades you 500gp for her and your silence (also paying off any villagers who are with you).

You return to Edern village with a fabricated story about your heroic battle that drove off the dragon (alas, too late to save poor Ellie). The grateful villages reward you with 100gp. Record plot word **Scum**; go to [079].



107 The front door of the statue slams open! Steam billows forth, and a great crimson-scaled dragon emerges from within! It is a monstrous creature, at least 30' long.

You're behind cover, but the dragon sniffs the air. Will he guess where you're hiding...or catch your scent?

Your leader should make a **Wisdom** check, at -2 for each animal or dwarf with you. Add +1 for each thief or halfling, and +3 for each character already under magical concealment (elven cloak and boots, invisibility, etc.).

If you succeed, go to [004]. If you fail, go to [076].

108 As you sort through the treasure, you hear an angry roar from the front doors. It appears the dragon returned sooner than expected! You're confronting the dragon as it reenters its treasure hall. Go to [050].

109 "Sgrazh," the young wizard curses. "You defeated my conjuration. Guess it's easier dealing with stupid peasants than adventurers, huh? Bit tiring controlling a dragon, but an illusion wouldn't cut it, you know." To talk to him, go to [071]. To fight, go to [084].

110 Near a clear mountain pool, you stumble on a pile of fresh dragon dung! Recent claw tracks are a half-day old. From the size, a small dragon stopped here to drink.

Dragon dung sells for 30gp/ounce. You estimate there's a pound here, which is worth 480gp to the right magical researcher, if you can get to a town within three days, before it spoils. It's worth nothing at a village. Record plot word **PASS** and go to [176].

111 Hope you brought enough food and water: The desert sun is fierce! Use the **Camping** rules. Additionally, every day you camp here, **Roll 1d6**. On a 1-2, nothing happens. On a roll of 3-5, check for a random encounter. On a 6, go to [092].

112 You are fighting Shadreth the Dracowight with the aid of Alberic (treat him as a companion).

The cadaverous dragon hovers in the air. Tattered, bony wings beat, seemingly too slow to keep it airborne, yet somehow it manages to fly. An aura of cold surrounds it, and its blue eyes glitter like shards of ice. From broken teeth, a forked tongue flickers. Even from here, you can smell its fetid breath.

"Prepare to suffer as I have suffered," it hisses, and attacks.

Shadreth the Dracowight

Undead Dragon

AC 3 [16], **HD** 9*** (41hp), **Att** [2× claw (1d4), 1× bite (2d8) and energy drain] or breath, **THACO** 12 [+7], **MV** 90' (30') / 240' (80') flying, **SV** D8 W9 P10 B10 S12 (9), **ML** 12, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 3,000, **TT** V.

- **Undead:** Make no noise, until they attack. Immune to effects that affect living creatures (e.g. poison). Immune to mind-affecting or mind-reading spells (e.g. charm, hold, sleep).
- **Mundane damage immunity:** Only harmed by silver weapons or magic.
- **Breath weapon:** 80' long cone of cold. Cone is 5' wide to 10'; 10' wide to 25'; 15' to 40'; 20' wide to 55'; 25' wide to 70'; 30' wide to 80'.
- **Energy drain:** A successfully hit target permanently loses one experience level (or Hit Die). This incurs a loss of one Hit Die of hit points, as well as all other benefits due to the drained level (e.g. spells, saving throws, etc.). A character's XP is reduced to halfway between the former and new levels. A person drained of all levels becomes a wight in 1d4 days, under the control of the wight that killed them.
- **Spells:** 1st detect magic, magic missile, protection from evil.
- **Languages:** Speaks Common and Draconic.
- **Tactics:** Shadreth prefers to fight while flying but lands if it seems tactically advantageous. He attacks Alberic if he can see him, afterwards goes after the nearest foes.

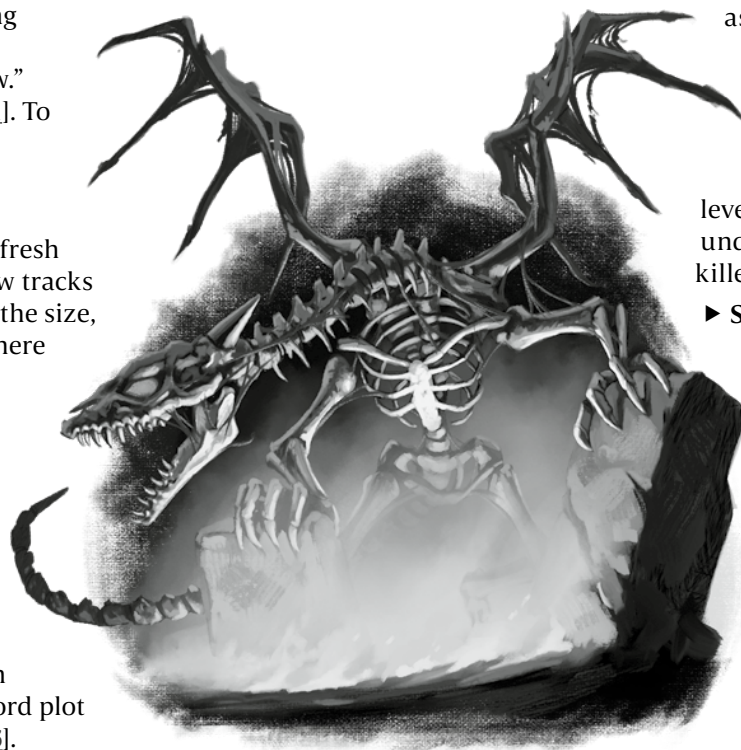
If you defeat Shadreth within three rounds, you should be able to easily rescue Freda; go to [221]. If you defeat the dragon, but took

4+ rounds, go to [207]. Exception: If you are still fighting after four rounds and Alberic has died, go to [060].

113 If Gwysteloch is neither dead nor otherwise incapacitated, she wants the harp! If you give it to her, she'll remain your companion. Otherwise, she fights you to the death to claim it (use the same battle map you fought Lilyanu on [104], with Gwysteloch starting 1d6 squares away from you). If you win, or let her have it, avoiding a fight, go to [158].

114 You don't see any more flyers in the area. To search the inn, go to [184]. Otherwise, go to [181].

115 The wyvern sniffs, looks closely at you, and then says: "I see you have the Harp of the Dragon



Singer! My luck has been terrible; if I had known that, I wouldn't have come looking for it in these woods, no, no, no!"

"But thank you for rescuing me. I'll try to repay you for saving me with some advice."

"If you have the harp, you know about the swamp. North are stuck-up humans, very boring, no magic! South is lots of grass and crazy týndrmenn, but go west from there and see the sea! Tasty fish and pirate gold! If you go east instead of west you'll find nasty humans, then hot sands, with crawly things with tails like mine! Scorpions, yes?" Go to [136].

116 You try to sway the villagers to release Ellie: Dragons should be fought, not appeased!

From the darkened cave, you hear a rumbling snort. Two red eyes are visible, and then a draconic snout emerges, followed by the rest of the reptilian terror. It appears to be a small red dragon!

As you confidently face the dragon, the villagers, inspired by your words and example, find their own store of courage. Ashamed, Ellie's uncle rushes to untie her, begging her forgiveness.

The **three peasants** ready their weapons and stand beside you, to face the monster they dreaded. Ellie looks gratefully at you, blinks away tears, and prays for your victory. For this encounter only, the peasants and Ellie fight as your companions.

Refer to **MAP III [156]** to set up: dark shaded squares are solid tree trunks, impassible. Light shaded squares are 6' high bushes (-2 to hit and **AC** inside the bushes, counts as 10' of movement to enter or leave). Star squares adjacent N are the mouth of the dragon's cave. Place your figures (Ellie, the three peasants, your own characters) in any E, G, or L squares, facing toward N. Place the dragon with one of its rear squares on or adjacent the cave entrance at N, facing toward S. After setup, return from [156] and go to [012], and face the dragon!

Three Peasants

AC 9 [10], **HD** 1/2 (2hp), **Att** 1× hand axe (1d6), **THACO** 20 [-1], **MV** 120' (40'), **SV** D14 W15 P16 B17 S18 (0), **ML** 6, **AL** Neutral, **XP** 5, **TT** V.

► **Equipment/Treasure:** Hand axe, 17cp.

Ellie

Fairest maid of the village. Will fight with a weapon if offered one usable by a thief.

1st-level thief

STR 8 [-1], **DEX** 12, **INT** 10, **WIS** 11, **CON** 12, **CHA** 18 [+2].

AC 9 [10], **HD** 1 (2hp), **Att** 1× barehanded (1d4-1) or weapon, **THACO** 21 [-2], **MV** 120' (40'), **SV** D13 W14 P13 B16 S15 (1), **AL** Neutral, **XP** 5.

Equipment/Treasure: None

117 The great bronze doors are unlocked, and squeak open into a wide entry hall. On the floor are several black, charred smudges and husks that must have once been non-human corpses: perhaps the stains left by scorpions that were long ago torn to bits or fried by dragon's fire. Mixed with these are human bones.

Beyond the hall is a chamber supported by heavy pillars, carved to resemble date palms. Heaped in the center is a glittering trove of arms, coins, and other treasure!

If you have plot word **GORM** go to [190]; if you have the plot word **OUT** go to [150].

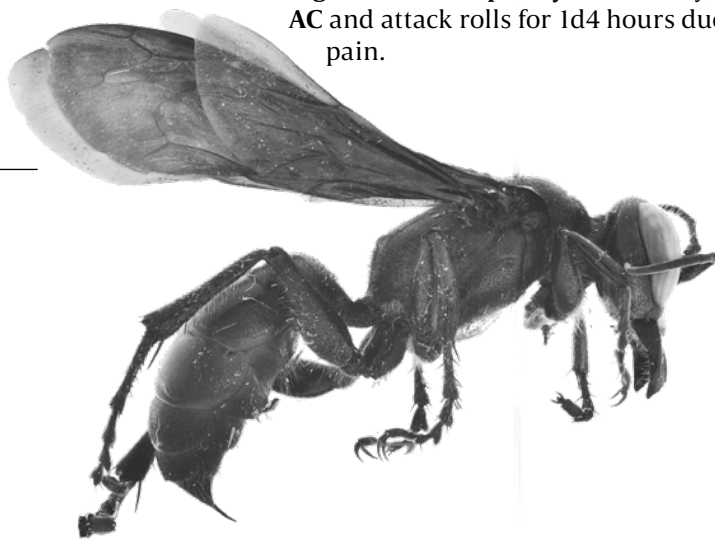
118 You're being attacked by giant wasps, bigger than any you've seen before! They have powerful jaws, a nasty stinger, winged black and yellow striped bodies, and multiple insectoid legs ending in hooked claws. They're 7' long, aggressive, and too fast to outrun. If they kill or paralyze the entire party, go to [049]. If you win, go to [131].

Giant Wasp

These are aggressive females, eager to lay eggs and find food to feed their larvae; male giant wasps are less aggressive, usually feeding on fruit.

AC 7 [12], **HD** 3* (9hp), **Att** 1× sting (1d6 + paralysis), **THACO** 17 [+2], **MV** 150' (50') flying, **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (2), **ML** 9, **AL** Neutral, **XP** 50, **TT** None.

► **Sting:** Save versus paralysis each day; -3 to **AC** and attack rolls for 1d4 hours due to pain.



119 Return to wherever you came from after recording statistics.

The Dragon of Hook Island

8 HD sea dragon

AC 1 [18], **HD** 8** (36hp), **Att** 1× bite (3d8) or breath, **THACO** 12 [+7], **MV** 180' (60') swimming / 180' (60') gliding, **SV** D8 W9 P10 B11 S12 (8), **ML** 7, **AL** Neutral, **XP** 1750, **TT** V.

► **Breath weapon:** Poison spittle, 100' range, 20' diameter around impact point. **Save versus breath** or die. (Poison is harmless after 1 round).

Gliding: Leap out of the water and glide for up to 6 rounds.

Equipment/Treasure: 21,000sp.

If you're fighting her on the ship, three fishermen, two with axes, one with a spear, join you as companions.

Fishermen

AC 9 [10], **HD** 1/2 (2hp), **Att** 1× hand axe or spear(1d6), **THACO** 20 [-1], **MV** 120' (40'), **SV** D14 W15 P16 B17 S18 (0), **ML** 6, **AL** Neutral, **XP** 5, **TT** V.

► **Equipment/Treasure:** 8sp

120 After spending time circling the statue, you don't find any obvious way in besides the front door.
Roll 1d6. On a 1–4, return to [091]. On a 5–6, go to [092].

121 The villagers are surprised to see you return alive and shocked and humiliated by the news that they were duped by the wizard.

If you saved Ellie, she is especially grateful, though you get the idea she will not easily forgive her relatives and the other villagers for offering to sacrifice her to a dragon.

You can stay at the village inn free of charge for as long as you need to rest and recover from injuries. Record plot word **LIGHT**.

If you returned Azor alive to face justice, go to [073]. If you've killed him, go to [014].

122 You're fighting a goblin patrol. Set up on opposite sides of a combat map. They have these statistics:

Goblin Leader

AC 4 [15], **HD** 2+1 (9hp), **Att** 1× **short sword +1** (1d6+1), or 1× short bow (1d6), **THACO** 16 [+3], **MV** 90' (30'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (2), **ML** 10, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 25, **TT** V.

Equipment/Treasure: Leather armor, shield, **short sword +1**, short bow.

Quick: +2 **AC** for Dexterity. **THACO** 15 [+4] with bow.

Three Hobgoblin Soldiers

AC 5 [14], **HD** 1+1 (5hp), **Att** 1× spear (1d6), or 1× short sword (1d6), **THACO** 18 [+1], **MV** 90' (30'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (1), **ML** 10, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 15, **TT** V.

► **Equipment/Treasure:** Leather armor+shield

► **Quick:** +1 **AC** and missile attacks (**THACO** 17 [+2]) for **DEX**. May throw spears and then attack with swords.

They fight fiercely. If you slay them, record plot word **HOB** and go to [133].

123 You examine the sarcophagus: heavy wood carved with scorpion and solar disk symbols. To pry it open go to [135]. To exit the chamber, go to [230].

124 The highland village of Bokhara is located in the southern foothills of the Rampart Mountains. Bokhara boasts a mixed population of humans and dwarves (the latter often working copper mines in the hills). White-robed desert nomads and hardy hill folk are occasionally seen in the village visiting Bokhara's lively bazaar.

Lodging: The Red Axe (10sp/night).

Rumors: If you have the plot word **ABE**, erase it and go to [130]; if not, go to [215] *unless* you have the plot word **WIGHT** or **RUN**. Otherwise, no rumors.



Travel: North to the Rampart Mountains [009], east to the desert oasis of Jahrom [082], south to the town of Tamaz [010], or west to the village of Arthek [008].

125 Mount Jamavand is famous for its gold mine. To reach it requires ascending a steep mountain road and crossing a rickety rope bridge over a gorge. The grim village around the mine is run by goblin overseers managing brutish hobgoblin guards and miners. It looks like the mining village suffered some recent damage.

Lodging: Miner's shacks (5sp/night). *Very uncomfortable.* Make a **Constitution** check; if you fail you're at -2 to hit and **AC** until you get *proper* rest!

Rumors: Several weeks ago, Mount Jamavand was assailed by a fierce dragon, Shadreth the Black. He broke the bridge, killed the miners, and occupied the mine, slaying all who entered. The goblin lord Rykenzar, who owned the mine, hired a dragon hunter, Alberic the Dwarf. He used dwarvish mining-craft to seal Shadreth inside the mine, leaving it to starve to death.

Or so he thought! When the mines were reopened weeks later, the deceased dragon emerged in the form of an undead monster! After wreaking further slaughter, this crazed dracowight left the mines, perhaps flying off to seek vengeance on the dwarf responsible for its slow and ignoble death. The goblins are wary, afraid the horror might return; they've heard the Lord of Shad Sharrivar offers a reward for its destruction.

Travel: West to the goblin town of Shad Sharrivar [105], east to the White Desert [070], or south through the Badlands of Kwo [137].

126 The doors lead into a great vaulted chamber supported by heavy pillars carved to resemble date palms. Curled up in the center of the chamber, atop a pile of bones and treasure, is a great crimson dragon, its scales shimmering almost golden. Its body is at least 30' long. The dragon is clearly awake, his molten eyes gazing at you while steam billows from his nostrils.

Refer to **MAP V** [209]. Set up on any 5' square within one 5' square of the entrance at N, facing E. Put the dragon on the map: it's head is at H, its body filling remaining shaded squares: a pile of treasure and bones he uses as a bed. For anyone except the dragon, treat as bad footing (-2 to hit and **AC**, movement costs double). Black squares are solid pillars and impassable. The only exits are at N and D. The ceiling's 60' high; the dragon can fly here.

After setup, go to [043].

127 You enter the cave. It soon widens into a dark, dank chamber filled with stalagmites, with a shadowy passage to the east.

From out of the passage steps a young man, wearing a red and black robe trimmed with mink, holding a staff tipped with a topaz gem. He wears stylish shoes with gold buckles and has a gold amulet around his neck. From his scowl, he's rather annoyed with you.

If you brought Ellie or any of the peasants with you, go to [132]. Otherwise go to [109].

128 Branok is a fishing village on the shore of the western sea.

Lodging: The Crossbones Inn (8sp/night).

Rumor: The western sea has always been dangerous. Branok's inn is named in memory of the Sea Reavers who once harried these shores, but today's fishermen face other perils. Go to [213] unless you have any of these plot words: **ABE**, **SEA**, **HOOK**.

Travel: North to the seaport of Morvoren [068], east to the castle of Gwalathar [047], or south to the Abbey of Cadon [006].

129 You've killed the white serpent! Doubtless it climbed into the burial mound when the rains opened up a sinkhole.

One of the bodies in the ship is recent: likely the farmer Drogo. Within the mound you find the pile of grave goods and treasure—and curled up inside the largest chest, a frightened little boy: It is young Wart! "We tried to get the treasure, but the big snake came of a hole. Father hid me here so it couldn't get me." He blinks back tears. "Papa..."

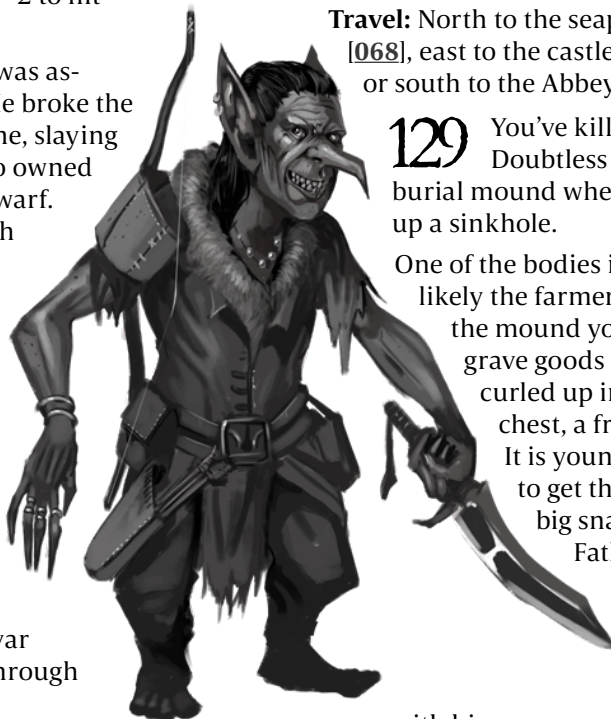
Alas, Drogo's skill with his axe was unequal to his bravery.

Record plot word **GRAVE**. After comforting the grieving Wart, you can examine the treasure of the mound. This is a burial mound of the Sea Reavers, so these grave goods are likely plunder they took. Take whatever you want without shame, and leave the rest.

In the ship burial you find 600ep, 2,000gp, 400pp, 1× golden torc (700gp), and two golden and bejeweled cups (1300gp each). You also find a **sword +1**, along with a few other weapons and bits of armor are too rusted to be worth anything. There's also a large leather-bound book without a title, illustrated with allegorical illuminations and devotional writings and prayers in an archaic language.

As for the book, if you can cast Read Languages or are a scholar of ancient writings, go to [175]. If you aren't a scholar yourself, then take note of this paragraph number: You can look it up should you consult one later. Until you dispose of the book, record the plot word **BOOK**.

You should return Wart to his family, and return with Drogo's body as is respectful [186].



130 In the back of the inn, you see an old dwarf wrapped up in a cloak and hood, nursing a tankard of ale. A cowl hides his face, but not his long gray beard. The huge travel bag next to him with an arquebus and a double-bladed axe marks him as the famous dragon hunter Alberic! Upon recognizing you as a fellow hunter, his eyes light up. “Well met, comrade,” he says. You swap war stories; he seems heartened by your deeds. However, you can also tell he’s troubled.

“It is a dragon,” he admits. “Shadreth, of course. The one I left trapped in the goblin mines. Have you heard the stories—that he’s hunting me?”

If you have, go to [\[154\]](#). If not, go to [\[030\]](#).

131 Record plot word **VESP**. If you already have plot word **INN** go to [\[085\]](#). Otherwise, go to [\[114\]](#).

132 The villagers accompanying you identify him: the wizard Azor, a greedy and lecherous young wizard. He was exiled from the post of village wizard last year, after being caught using mind-control magic to manipulate people. Is he the one behind the dragon?

From his expression, it appears Azor knows the game is up—unless he disposes of you!

Go to [\[084\]](#) to attack him, or [\[071\]](#) if you want to see what he has to say for himself

133 You find a purse of 300gp on their leader’s body. Afterward, if you have plot word **PHLOG**, go to [\[145\]](#); if you don’t have this word, **Roll 1d6**: on a 1–3, go to [\[163\]](#); on a 4–6, go to [\[145\]](#).

134 The villagers say an angry dragon flew down from Beacon Hill (in the woods to the north). It was 30’ long, with blood-red scales and crimson eyes. At first it only carried off sheep and cows, but then it started burning farmhouses and killing men. The village militia led by old Squire Belvedere attacked, but it incinerated the squire and scattered the rest. It then announced that for the “sin of having scratched its magnificent hide” it would impose an awful tribute: a fair maiden delivered to its cave on Beacon Hill by next sundown, or it would burn every house and slaughter every family in the valley! Then it flew off.

Cowed, the villagers gave in, holding a lottery to select which family would give up a daughter. Several men are on their way to the dragon’s lair even now, bearing the selected sacrifice with them!

The villagers offer feeble excuses for agreeing to the dragon’s price: their squire slain; their lord away on a foreign war; they have no village wizard. What could they do?

If you’d like to hurry off to the dragon’s cave and save the current sacrifice before the dragon can have her, go to [\[055\]](#). If you’d rather leave the maiden and villagers to their fate, go to [\[094\]](#). If you want to see if there is a reward, go to [\[032\]](#).

135 Inside is the perfectly preserved body of a beautiful young woman. She has black hair worn in countless tightly woven braids and wears a few wisps of

fine silk. A golden crown with many spiked rays (symbolizing a sun?) rests upon her head, and silver earrings shaped like tiny scorpions dangle from her ears. Red and black tattoos (more scorpions!) decorate her arms and legs, while sunburst symbols adorn her belly and forehead.

The woman appears uninjured but is not breathing. If you wish to try and slay her, go to [\[226\]](#). To remove her crown, go to [\[220\]](#) (if you have companions, decide who does so). To close the sarcophagus and leave the chamber, go to [\[230\]](#).

136 “Oh well! I think these woods are too dangerous for me on my own, so I’m going home, home, home!” She then leaps into the air and flies off, soon disappearing over the western hills. Go to [\[080\]](#).

137 The Badlands of Kwo are a maze of arid, dusty canyons in the foothills of the Rampart Mountains. A few caravan tracks wind through the badlands.

Lodging: Camping.

Travel: North up a mountain trail to Mount Jamavand [\[125\]](#), east to the desert Oasis of Kholovar [\[067\]](#), west to Mehrak Narvan [\[102\]](#), or south to the Rampart Mountains [\[009\]](#).

138 Besides the wyvern and the dead spider, tangled in its web are dried husks of several other creatures—a large parrot and a 6’-long snake—but no treasure. Record plot word **WEB**.

If the wyvern survived the fight, if it’s still trapped in the web, go to [\[217\]](#), or [\[044\]](#) if you released it during the combat. If the wyvern died, you may leave; go to [\[080\]](#).

139 Refer to **MAP II** [\[074\]](#). Set up your figures within two squares of H, facing toward D. After setting up, go to [\[017\]](#).

140 The inn’s floor and parts of the wall are covered with a papery substance; it also seals the window shutters. There are signs of a struggle: overturned chairs and broken crockery. In the common room, moans and a wet slurping noise greet you. Occupying the room are what is left of four people.

A stable boy sits helplessly, eyes wide with terror, as a jelly-like egg quivers in his lap, a foot-long white grub slowly emerging from it. The young barmaid lies twitching upon the kitchen table as a foot-long squirming white grub inches across her chest toward her neck. It may be too late for a third man. His eyes are glassy, his mouth is frozen in a soundless scream. A bloated grub has fastened on his bare stomach, pulsating and making sucking sounds as it feasts upon his vitals. A fourth victim, a fat man who might be the innkeeper, slumps paralyzed or motionless in one corner, barely breathing. In a corner lie more withered, juiceless husks.

To fight these grubs to save the victims, go to [\[151\]](#). To retreat and leave the victims to die, go to [\[147\]](#) unless you have the plot word **VESP**; if so, instead go to [\[181\]](#).

141 The weather is good; Hook Island's an hour's sail away. The captain says it was named for its crescent shape. As you approach, you see it's covered with trees. The fishermen guess any dragon lair is on the west side, near a sheltered cove once used by pirates.

If you have plot word **SEA**, go to [045]. Otherwise, **Roll 1d6**; on a 1–3 go to [077]; on a 4–6 go to [182].

142 After you arrive, the innkeeper says someone wishes to see you. Soon afterward, an excited girl runs toward you. Phlogiston gives a happy snuff and shouts "Myra!"

"Phlog!" the girl cries. The teenage gentlewoman, Phlog's human "big sister," embraces her lost dragon. "Oh, Phlog, you're back at last!"

Myra of Morvoren, the youngest daughter of the mayor, thanks you profusely for finding her friend and keeping Phlog safe. She insists on giving you a rich reward: a platinum and gold ring worth 5,000gp and a vial containing two **Deluge Droplets** ("useful if hunting bad dragons," she tells you shyly). Record plot word **MYRA**; go to [052].

► **Deluge Droplets:** Creates an enchanted downpour, almost impossibly dense, lasting 2d6 rounds. The storm covers six 5' squares, starting as a 2×3 rectangle. On the user's turn, they may reshape the six covered squares as long as no square moves more than 5' (which can move the cloud). Dragon fire, lightning bolts, or fireballs cannot pass through the magical downpour!

143 You're a dragon slayer, not a tomb robber! You scramble out of the tomb. In no time, you're breathing the fresh outdoor air again. You may wish to heave a few stones to cover the entrance, as well, to ensure the dead continue to sleep undisturbed.

Thwarted, you return to the village [083]; you can leave the horse for Astrid, or keep it.



144 "That's a problem," Alberic grunts, "but I've a way." The dwarf opens his pack and sorts through a collection of ironmongery. He *just happens* to have a **mace +1**. "Took this from the dragon's own horde," he says. "A gift. Not too fancy, but it gives a fighting chance against a wight, as normal blades won't bite on them; only magic weapons or spells harm their dead flesh." Add it to your character and go to [065].

145 Wormwood Forest is a wild borderland with no settlements, but there are several trails that lead out.

Lodging: Camping.

Travel: East to Shad Sharrivar [105], west to Enid's Corner [007], or south to the village of Treeve [052].

146 There is a large chamber within the mound. Your light reveals the glitter of coins—and the silhouette of a dragon's head! Go to [180].

147 You abandon this horrid nursery for the clean air outside. But as soon as you exit the inn, you hear a loud buzzing above you! Go to [197].

148 Alberic and Freda embrace each other. The old dragon slayer showers you with copious thanks for your valiant aid recovering his daughter.

You can return to the inn to rest and recuperate. Alberic pays your expenses for any time you wish to rest and heal, then throws a riotous party to celebrate—and retire. For real this time. Really. He says he's pushed his luck as far it could possibly go. He's going to take care of Freda. He trusts you'll be a worthy successor as a dragon hunter! "The undead dragon had no treasure," Alberic says, "but you deserve a reward for saving the one whom I value far more than any pile of gold!"

As a parting gift, the retiring dragon slayer offers you a choice of any two of his magic items (for yourself or any of your companions): his enchanted axe, arquebus, warhammer, or leather armor. (Refer to **Alberic's character sheet** again for these statistics). "They served me well," he says. "May they do so for you."

Record plot words **FREDA**, **DWARF**, and **WIGHT**. Go to [124].

149 It seems polite! "Hello," the azure-hued creature says. "My name is Phlogiston. I am very lost! I used to live with my friend Myra. But some men locked me in a cage and took me here. Then they poked me with spears so I ran away. Then I met some goblins that weren't at all friendly either so I hid from them! Now I am lost."

"I want to find my friend Myra. Have you seen her? She is a human girl with golden hair who lives in Morvoren, which is a town. She feeds me herring and spicy peppers, which I like, and sometimes gives me gold, which I have not had much of lately, and miss. Will you help me?"

To attack Phlogiston, go to [202]. If you agree to help the little blue dragon—after all, not all dragons are killers—go to [211]. To ignore it and proceed on your way, go to [145].

150 If you take time to sort through this hoard, go to [193]. To snatch something and leave as fast as possible, go to [036].

151 You're fighting monster grubs in the common room! Refer to **MAP IV** at [188]. Find their stats at [212], then return. The two grubs next to living but paralyzed victims are at L; two grubs next to dead or comatose victims (fallen bodies) are at G. Lightly-shaded areas within the building are tables (3' high). You may set up within two squares of D. Solid black squares are walls (impassable). Entries marked W are blocked by shutters; a successful **Strength** check will force them open if you wish to exit.

If you defeat the grubs go to [027]. If not, they feast on your vital fluids...making it **The End**.

152 You discover a clearing, dominated by a great willow tree. Hanging from a high branch by a leather strap is a small, golden harp. Before the tree, a stone marker stands adjacent to a low grassy mound. Perhaps it is a grave: A bouquet of water lilies decorates it. Draped half-over the stone is a tattered crimson cloak.

The grave, if such it is, is not unguarded. Coiled around the tree trunk is a 20' long, green-scaled serpent! As her head, human arms, and torso come into view from behind the tree, you see she's not a snake, but a snake-woman. She is beautiful in a serpentine way, with golden eyes, pointed ears, a forked tongue, and long green hair. Several human skulls and other bones lie scattered about the tree, as well as a few broken, rusty weapons and helms. She herself carries a silver sword and large shield.

If you address the serpent-woman or stand your ground, go to [183]. To attack immediately or attempt to get the harp or cloak, go to [104]. To flee, go to [158].

153 Vengeance on the dragon is scant comfort for Alberic, having arrived too late to save his loved one. In a broken voice, the dwarf thanks you again for stepping up, but his words ring hollow; you were not able to save Freda.

You return to the inn. After little Freda's funeral (and any others who fell in the battle) the grief-stricken old warrior decides to retire as a dragon slayer, passing the mantle to you. Record plot words **DWARF** and **WIGHT**. Go to [124].

154 Suddenly the door bangs open. A battered dwarf, of middle age with short red hair, staggers in. His clothing is soaked from the heavy rain, but he is shirtless, wrapped in a cloak. There's a blood-soaked bandage around his forehead; more blood drips from his back. He looks around wildly. "Alberic? Is the dwarf Alberic here?" Then he stumbles and nearly collapses inside the door.

Alberic recognizes him and rushes to help him up. "Thor-kin Hammerhand!" he cries. "What happened to you, cousin?"

"The dracowight," the injured dwarf gasps. "Shadreth Witherwing. He attacked our homestead. And he's taken your Freda! Killed everyone else," he said. "Caught me. He left a message for you," he says. Then he topples down and passes out.

You see a message carved into his back, clearly by a talon. It reads:

"Dwarf: To see your spawn Freda alive, face me at the Well of Voden at moonrise tonight. Delay, and she dies slowly."

As the innkeeper calls for a healer to tend to the bleeding Thor-kin, a white-faced Alberic starts packing his gear.

"The dragon Shadreth has my daughter," the old dwarf says, almost to himself. "This is a nightmare. I thought she was safe with Thor-kin. What a fool I am, to leave my work undone! Poor Freda!" He looks around widely. "I must leave immediately. Where are my weapons?"

The innkeeper tells you the Well of Voden is an ancient old stone circle surrounding an abandoned holy well on a low mound on the moors, a mile from the village. If you offer to assist Alberic against Shadreth go to [198]. If you'd rather keep silent, go to [029].

155 Several fishing vessels operating in the rich tuna and lobster fisheries and pearl beds off the coast have vanished. Drifting wreckage has been found, but no survivors.

"It could be the dragon of Hook Island," one of the fishermen says. Hook Island lies an hour's sail from the village. The island is inhabited by wild pigs, and also supported a pirate base. Five years ago, a medium-sized dragon drove out the pirates and occupied the island. The dragon seemed to be content to sit on the pirate's treasure...and eat pigs.

One old salt claims to have seen the dragon himself. Four years ago, a storm blew him a lot closer to the island than he planned to be. He saw it flying over the island, a few hundred yards away, with what looked like a wild boar in its talons. It turned its head and saw his boat but ignored him. He guessed the creature was about 20' long, with green and blue scales.

Some fishermen fear the dragon may have turned nasty. Others argue it hasn't bothered them before: it could be a different sea monster, or even the return of the pirates!

Whether it's a dragon, a sea monster, or pirates, all agree they're nervous about going to sea but must resume sailing soon to feed their families.

To offer your services as a dragon slayer, go to [169].

156 This is **MAP III**. It depicts a grove at 5'-square scale. The paragraph you came from explains which letters or symbols are significant for setup; ignore the others. Set up as instructed, note the terrain effects below, then return where you came from.

157 You reach your destination just before moonrise, moving through the jumbled rocks on the plain. Up ahead lies the ancient stone circle, near an old holy well. Without a doubt the dragon and his hostage are concealed behind one of the monoliths.

"What next?" asks Alberic. "I'm so worried about Freda I can't think straight. It's certain to be waiting for us."

If you would face the monster head on, counting on the combined power of veteran dragon hunters fighting shoulder to shoulder, go to [048].

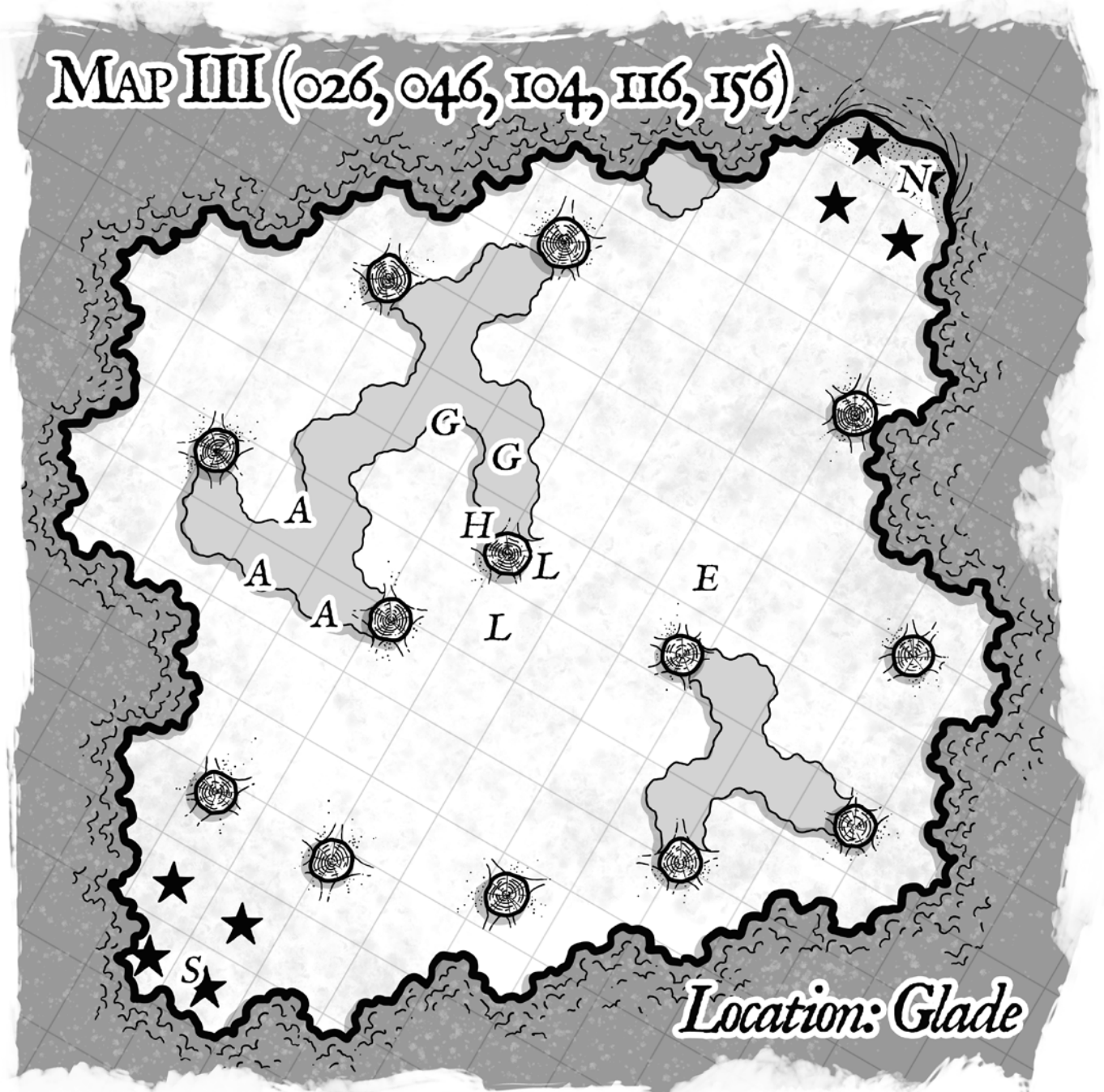
If you'd rather split up and try and circle round the rear to rescue his daughter while Alberic goes in to distract the dragon, go to [200].

158 Lily's Swamp is a fetid wetland on the eastern edge of Derowen forest, filled with slithering snakes and croaking frogs, fed by a slow river that widens into a marsh.

Lodging: Camping.

Rumors: To explore the swamp go to [204] if you have the plot word **Hiss** or [152] if you don't; otherwise, after you camp, you may travel.

Travel: East, north, and south are impassible marsh. If you don't want to stay in the swamp, you can follow the river back west to Derowen forest [080].



159 After making your way carefully down the trail that overlooks the chalk cliffs, you come upon several grassy mounds. You hear a horse's whinny. Through the fog, you make out one mound next to a lightning-struck tree. A bay riding horse with a saddle is tied up nearby. (It is an ordinary riding horse). Beside the mound, you spot a sinkhole a few feet across (a 5'-wide tunnel; a putrid odor rises from within).

Enter the old mound [146], or turn back to the village [083] (with a riding horse, if you wish).

160 You comfort the damp and grieving Freda, telling her how Alberic was a hero who gave his life to save hers. You take her back to the inn, whose folk are relieved at the dragon's destruction. The recovering Thorokin arranges the funeral for the old dwarf (and any others who fell).

It turns out Alberic provided for Freda in his will.

In thanks for having saved her life, and for having fought side by side with her father, Freda insists you choose two of the dwarf's magic items for yourself.

You may take any two of his magic items (arquebus, axe, warhammer, leather armor). (Refer to Alberic's character sheet again for the statistics.)

Record the plot words **FREDA** and **WIGHT**. Go to [124].

161 Record the wyvern's statistics. If you freed Gwysteloch *during* the spider fight, go back to [046] and resume the combat; if you freed her *after* defeating the spider, go to [080].

Gwysteloch dislikes towns and leaves if you decide to lodge in one. (If you stay in a village inn or the castle, she discretely perches on the roof.)

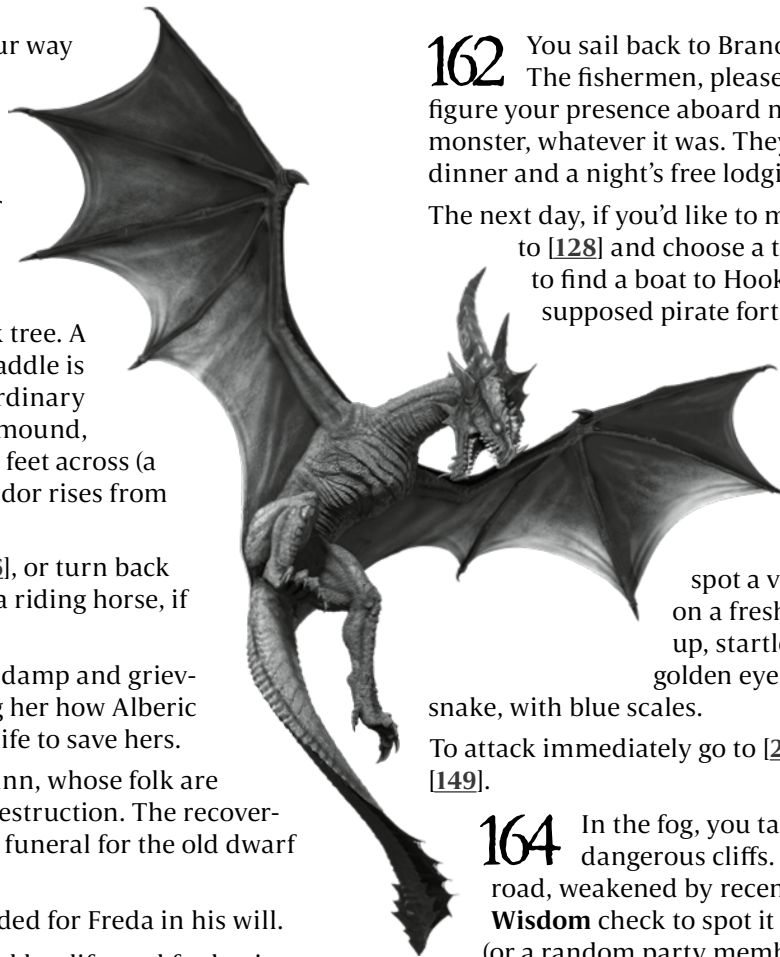
Gwysteloch

7HD Wyvern

AC 3 [16], **HD** 7* (31hp), **Att** 1× bite (2d8), or 1× sting (1d6 + poison), **THACO** 13 [+6], **MV** 90' (30') / 240' (80') flying, **SV** D8 W9 P10 B10 S12 (7), **ML** 9, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 850, **TT** V.

► **Poison:** Causes death (save versus poison)

► **Magical Addiction:** Lusts after magic items the way dragons lust after gold.



162 You sail back to Branok without further trouble. The fishermen, pleased at their substantial catch, figure your presence aboard may have scared off the monster, whatever it was. They treat you to a tasty fish dinner and a night's free lodging.

The next day, if you'd like to move on from the village, go to [128] and choose a travel direction. If you prefer to find a boat to Hook Island to investigate the supposed pirate fort and possible dragon lair, go to [018].

163 As you traverse gloomy Wormwood forest, you smell a whiff of ozone and then hear a crunching noise. Advancing cautiously, you

spot a very small dragon munching on a freshly charred rabbit. It looks up, startled, peering at you with golden eyes. It's 7' long, skinny as a

snake, with blue scales.

To attack immediately go to [202]. To try talking, go to [149].

164 In the fog, you take the wrong path along the dangerous cliffs. A portion of the old cliff side road, weakened by recent rains, gives way! Make a **Wisdom** check to spot it in time. Failure means you (or a random party member, if you have companions) must make a **Dexterity** check to avoid a 30' fall (3d6 damage). Survivors go to [159].

165 The dragon suddenly remembers it has better things to do. It makes **fighting withdrawals** until it can get clear, then flies off at speed (**Retreat**).

If you resume the attack on the round after it begins its fighting withdrawal, or harass it with missile fire as it flies off, go to [019]. If you let it retreat unmolested, go to [088].

166 You do have someone who can sail the vessel, right? If you lost your fishermen crew and don't have anyone with a history of being able to use sailing vessels (pirate, marine guard, maritime trader, etc) make an **Intelligence** check at -2. If you fail and can't fly, you're lost at sea unless you make a **Strength** check at -3; otherwise, glub, glub, **The End**.

If you avoid that fate, you return to Branok with proof the monster was dealt with.

The Fishers' Guild presents you a pearl worth 500gp (or 2× 100gp pearls if you swam back). Go to [128]; you can lodge in the inn or travel.

167 "Hear that, dragon hunters? Your precious little grub is at the bottom of the well," Shadreth taunts. "Rain has been falling for an hour now. The water is cold, up to her neck. I have sucked away most of her strength; she cannot swim."

Alberic lets fly a profane curse, but the dracowight continues, his whispering voice mocking: "In less than a minute, the well water rises over her head. May she die in darkness, as I died when you trapped me! Unless you slay me first!"

"Oh, wait," the dragon teases. "You cannot slay me! I'm already dead!" The dragon laughs wickedly. "So come at me and die. Let your last memories be the hopeless cries of your drowning child, who you failed to save!" Go to [179].

168 While visiting the abbey, you recall the book you found in the serpent mound. You notice the designs on its cover resemble sacred symbols carved into the walls and altar.

When you inquire with the monks, they are excited: that book is the long-lost *Chronicle of Cador*, written by the founders of their abbey, and looted by Sea Reavers generations ago! The book related many deeds: how the sainted forebears of the Monks of Cador roused the people in times gone by against the beguiling evil of the sinister Scorpion Cult to the east, eventually driving it from the land. It also tells how a pious but handsome monk journeying in the east got lost in a swamp, and met a beautiful snake-woman temptress, Lilyanu the Wicked, but lulled her to sleep with a lengthy sermon and escaped her wiles.

If you still have the *Chronicle of Cador*, you can present this illuminated bible to the monks. They're ecstatic to have this relic returned to them. You may also mention the boy and his father who died finding it; they'll remember him in their prayers.

In gratitude, the abbot blesses you. He presents you with two bottles of sacred ointment, one has the equivalent of two doses of **potion of healing**, the other a **potion of fire resistance**. He prays it will aid you on your quest. Return to [006].

169 Word spreads that a dragon-hunting adventurer has come to the village. You are ushered into a meeting with the local Fishers' Guild, their priest, and village elders.

They agree to offer 100gp to discover what is sinking their vessels; if it's the dragon, pirates, or some other tangible threat, they'll pay another 500gp for stopping it. Of course, there's also the rumored pirate treasure on Hook Island!

One desperate fisherman was considering taking his boat out tomorrow. He's planning to steer clear of the island itself, but if you'd like to "ride along" with him and his small crew and watch out for trouble in the sea or sky, he'd be grateful for the company. If you agree to go with him, go to [194].

If you'd prefer to go directly for Hook Island, where the dragon's lair was supposed to be, the fishermen call for volunteers to sail to you there; go to [018].

170 "Ah, this is rich! The idea a being such as myself might converse with you, little minnows? Whatever for?" The dragon cocks her head. "Although, now that I have laid my eggs, I no longer crave fresh fish, so well-tenderized flesh might be a nice change."

With that, the dragon leaps into battle, attacking you. It has initiative on the first round. Go to [201].

171 As you are returning from the vineyard, you hear a loud whirring buzz in the air. Refer to **MAP I [034]** and set up anywhere within two squares of location M. Two **giant wasps** are at S and N facing you. Go to [118].



172 You follow directions to Farmer Drogo's place, a small but prosperous freehold a mile from the village. Neither Wart, the boy, nor Drogo, his father, are there, but his mother, Astrid, and sister Hildy are home. When you tell them your interest in Wart's dragon, she welcomes you into their house, and offers bread and ale.

Apparently, Wart was bothered that no one believed his story; he told his sister Hildy he'd go off to get proof! After many curses, Wart's father took his trusty axe and set out after him. That was just a few hours ago. Now they're missing, and the fog from the sea is rolling in across the moors.

Astrid says Wart was probably exploring the Pale Cliffs up near Eagle Rock; it's a hill with a standing stone, with an image of an eagle cut into the chalk of the cliffs.

Her daughter chimes in: "They were carved by the kings of old to mark their victory against Sea Reavers!" The little girl looks at you. "Did the dragon eat Wart and papa?"

Astrid just shakes her head. "Shush child! Warriors and dragons! None of that nonsense; look where it got your brother! He should just tend to his goats! There's been no lords or king in these parts for two centuries or more, just us farmers and fishermen!"

Still, Astrid is worried. The fog-shrouded moors are dangerous enough, what with wild beasts and crumbling cliffs damaged by the storms. Her son or husband might have got lost in the fog and fallen off a cliff or worse. Astrid would be grateful for your help in finding her son and husband.

If you'd like to help, go to [192]. If you figure Drogo can find his missing kid on his own, head back to the village [083].

173 The village fishermen aren't thrilled you tangled with the dragon and failed to kill it, but are heartened to know you gave it a bloody nose. Perhaps it will think better of bothering them! The village council rewards you with a small pearl worth 100gp for identifying the threat.

If you'd like to move on, go to [128] and choose a travel direction. If you'd rather take a boat to Hook Island to try and do in the dragon for good, rest at the inn as long as you want (remembering the dragon is also healing!) then go to [018].

174 Enid's Corner is a tiny hamlet nestled in pleasant hill country in the shadow of the northern mountains. On either side of the road are orchards and a small vineyard standing next to a compact inn called the Harp & Dragon.

No dogs bark. No horses whinny. No farmers or peasants can be seen working in the fields or shops. No one comes to greet you.

You can explore the Harp & Dragon inn [184], search the nearby sheds and vineyard [057], or leave.

Travel: East to Wormwood forest [021], or south to the port town of Morvoren [068].

175 You recognize it as a prayer book and chronicle written by a peaceful sect called the Blue Monks, famous for their healing arts. You have heard they may have an abbey in Cadon, somewhere on the coast. You could sell it in a town to a scholar for 500gp (erase plot word **Book** if you do so) or keep it, perhaps to return to the monks, should you encounter them. Return to the paragraph you came from ([129] if you identified it upon finding it).

176 You're visiting the rugged Rampart Mountains.
Lodging: Camping.

Travel: North through a pass to the Badlands of Kwo [137], west following a river valley to the town of Nahraven [023], or south through a pass to the highland village of Bokhara [124].

177 You are at the bustling village of Mador's Mill, by the Swift River. A day's ride from Castle Gwalathar, they have not encountered any dragons, but they are still nervous.

Lodging: The Baron's Arms (10sp/night).

Rumors: A minstrel at the inn starts singing the "ballad of Estarian and the Serpent." Estarian was a great wizard-bard and monster hunter, with a magic harp, but he met a charming snake-monster that was his doom. Catcalls and protests, and a thrown vegetable from the other locals in the bar end her recitation. "We don't sing that song here," a local tells the chagrined bard. "It's bad luck. There's too many folk 'ave gone into the dangerous woods or swamps seeking its truth and never returned. And godly folk shouldn't sing about the sort of sinful things Estarian did," he adds piously.

If you want to toss a coin (1sp or more) to the minstrel and encourage her to finish the song of Estarian anyway go to [233], but you won't be welcome to stay in the inn and must lodge outside! Exception: if you make an **Intelligence** check at -4, you remember the legend yourself; if so, you can go to [233] to recall the legend without having to sleep outside.

Travel: Go north to Castle Gwalathar [047], south to the forest of Derowen [080], west to the good abbey of Cadon [006] or east to the village of Arthek [008].

178 The harp starts to play by itself: Sad, unearthly elven music fills the willow glade in weird accompaniment to your struggle. Return to [104] and fight on.

179 Refer to **MAP VI** [216] for terrain effects and set-up. Position the figures as follows: Alberic is at A, facing S. the dragon Shadareth's head is at S, facing A; his body occupies the adjacent starred squares. You and any other companions set up within two squares of A, facing S. After the figures are set up, go to [112] and roll initiative.

180 You nerve yourself for battle, only to realize the "dragon head" is unmoving. In fact, it's painted wood: the ornately-carved prow of a small ship! In the dark, without a proper torch or lantern, the imaginative boy must have mistaken it for a real dragon's head.

But this hollow mound is the site of an ancient funeral ship! You dimly glimpse at least one cadaver lying in the rotted ship, amid a small heap of coins, weapons, and shields. Other treasure may lie within. You don't see the boy or his father.

If you wish to leave, go to [143]. To call out, or explore the barrow, go to [040].

181 You leave this cursed village. Go to [174] and pick a travel direction.

182 You reach the island without incident. The fishermen stay with their boat, ready to cast off in the event of danger. Near the beach, you discover the ruins of an old fort. If you have the plot word **Hook** go to [199]; otherwise, go [045].

183 "I am Lilyanu of the Swamp, who loved and lost Estarian the Bold in times of old," she hisses. "Despite my devotion, the Drakesinger betrayed me. Now he sleeps beneath my tree. I still love my Estarian: Ever faithful, I guard his grave against those who would steal him—or his treasures!" A bit of spittle drips from her mouth, and the grass smokes where it lands. "You seek my sweet lord's treasures, yes? So many who thought they were worthy or strong enough have done so," Lilyanu hisses, her scaled body slithering forward. "So many whose cracked bones now lie beneath my tree!"

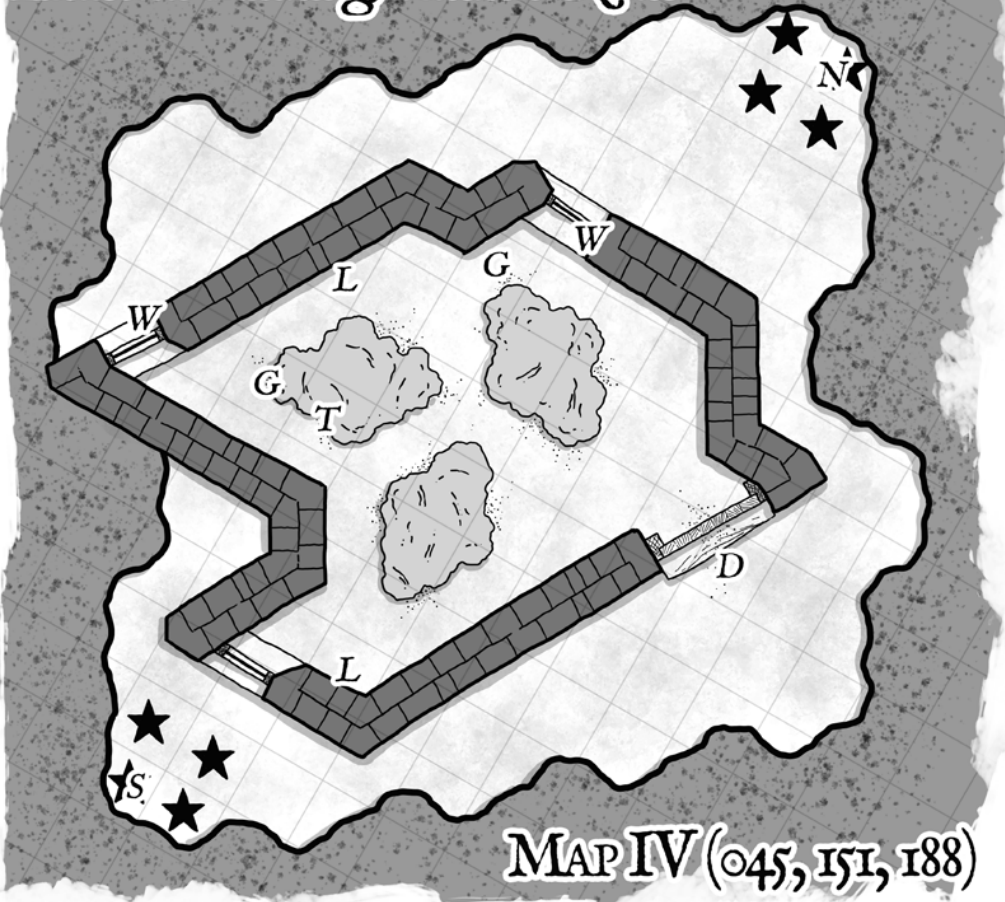
Go to [104].

184 The inn's stable doors are open; the stalls are empty. The common room is another story, a horror story. Go to [140].

185 Thieves and pickpockets work this town! Make a **Dexterity** check (at +4 if you're also a thief). If you fail, half your coin and jewels are stolen! Return to [010].

186 You return a sorrowful Wart to his mother's arms, but Drogo's fate makes this a sad day. You offer the consolation that he died a hero while wounding the white serpent. It would be kind if you granted his widow a half-portion of whatever treasure you recovered from the mound, and his horse, if you returned it. If you do, go to [015]. If not, go to [002].

Location: Building Common Room



187 You destroyed a terrible foe, but it is a Pyrrhic victory, for both Alberic and his daughter perished.

You return to the inn with their bodies. The locals are pleased to hear of the undead dragon's demise, but saddened that so many champions fell.

As a token of respect, you return the weapons and gear of the fallen dwarf to his recuperating kinsman Thorkin. In return, Thorkin insists you take one of Alberic's magic items: pick one of either his magic axe, warhammer, arquebus, or leather armor. (Refer to **Alberic's character sheet** for the statistics). Record plot word **WIGHT**. Go to [124].

188 **MAP IV** depicts a building and its surroundings at 5'-square scale. The paragraph you came from explains which letters or symbols are significant for setup; ignore the others. Set up as instructed then return where you came from.

189 A faint slithering noise from the far side of the burial ship alerts you; go to [072].

190 In the great hall is a dragon hoard: a great heap of weapons, armor, shields, idols, coins, coffers, and amphorae (pottery jars). You can sort through it.

Also scattered in the huge chamber are a great many odd, charred smudges and husks that must have once been non-human corpses; perhaps the exoskeletons of giant scorpions fried by dragon fire or torn apart by its claws. Mixed with these are recognizable bones of goats, camels, horses, and far too many humans.

Many items are decorated with depictions of scorpions or scorpion-human hybrids. Most arms are rusted or broken, but you spot a **mace +1**, **saber +1**, **energy drain (short sword)**, a **shield +1 with a spike** (as +1 dagger, secondary attack at -4 to hit), and a suit of **chainmail +1**. There are also a dozen **seeking javelins** (+1 damage, +3 to hit when thrown), and spilling out of jars and coffers and heaped upon the floor are 1,500gp, 44,000sp, 40,000ep, 3× pieces of jewelry (500gp), 5× piece of jewelry (800gp), 12× pieces of jewelry (1200gp), a **potion of polymorph Self**, and a **potion of treasure finding**.

Unless you have plot word UP (which gives automatic success), each character can attempt to search for secret doors (1-in-6 chance; elves and dwarves have 2-in-6). If anyone succeeds go to [236]. Otherwise, add whatever loot you desire to encumber yourself with (nomads or robbers will doubtless loot anything you left behind!) and leave the statue [038].

191 Enid's Corner is an abandoned hamlet nestled in the foothills of the northern mountains. An inn that once catered to travelers sits derelict.

Lodging: Camping in the ruins.

Travel: East to Wormwood forest [021], or south to the coastal town of Morvoren [068].

192 Following the villagers' directions, you head north and east down the coast, leaving the farmlands. Here the seacoast rises up in steep chalk cliffs: the "Pale Cliffs" locals call them. To the west the ocean breaks against the cliffs; on the east you see grassy moors, open country with gorse bushes, and a few lonely trees. But fog is rolling in. Soon visibility falls to less than 50 yards. **Roll 1d6**. On a 1-3, go to [159]. On a 4-6, go to [164].

193 **Roll 1d6**. On a 1-4, go to [108]; on a 5-6, go to [190].

194 You sail aboard the *Redfin*, a coastal fishing vessel, with three fishermen. The seas are calm and the weather is good; you spend several hours at sea without incident. The fishermen manage to haul a substantial catch aboard their vessel.

Roll 1d6; on a 1-3, go to [025]; on a 4+, go to [214].

195 Your inquiries reveal the so-called dragon was sighted by an excitable 10-year old named Wart, son of Drogo, a farmer. Last week, while chasing a stray goat, Wart returned dirty and bruised. He told friends he'd fallen through a hole in a hill near the Pale Cliffs. Those are chalk bluffs on the coast, three miles out of town. He said he found a cave with a sleeping dragon and treasure! Everyone laughed; his father boxed his ears for telling lies. If there were a dragon it would have troubled the village long ago, right? Most villagers are more concerned with fixing damage from a big storm last month.

To find Wart and ask about his dragon cave, go to [172]. If you think it's just a kid making up stories, return to [083]. To explore the Pale Cliffs without talking to Wart, go to [192].

196 You try to parley, using the mix of flattery and bravado dragons respond to. **Roll 1d6**, adding your interlocutor's **Charisma** bonus, +1 if you speak Draconic, and +1 more if you have a wyvern or dragon in your party. If the total is 6+ go to [062]. Otherwise, go to [170].

197 You hear an angry buzzing from above you! Two man-sized giant wasps are flying at you! Set up on **MAP IV** [188] anywhere outside the building within two squares of location D. Place two **giant wasps** at S and N, facing in your general direction. Go to [118].

198 "Thank you," the old dwarf says. "From the bottom of my heart. You are a true heir to the title of dragon slayer!"

"But do you have any magical weapons?" he asks. If you do, or if you're a magic-user or elf with combat spells, go to [005]. If not, go to [144].

199 Inside the pirate fort's great hall, you find the dragon's lair. The hall is empty, but there's a nest made of a pile of treasure, and a great skull-and-crossbones flag on one wall. With the monster slain, you can help yourself to its hoard:

6,000ep, 20,000gp, 4,000pp, a beautifully detailed seashell made of precious metals and gems (700gp), a necklace heavy with gold and black pearls (1200gp), a braided metal arm cuff, with gemstones placed where the braids cross (1400gp), sea charts worth 100gp at Morvoren, and a **shortsword +1** (cutlass). You also discover three sea dragon eggs (1 lb. each; sell in any *castle* or *town* for 5,000gp each).

Record plot word **Hook** and sail back to the village: go to [166].

200 Using the standing stones as cover, you move as stealthily as possible through the fading light. As you circle around, you hear raised voices: the gruff voice of Alberic the dwarf, and a wicked, mocking laugh that chills your blood, followed by a deranged monologue of pain and rage:

“...So dwarf, your precious little grub is at the bottom of the well... the rain has been falling...she cannot swim... the water will rise over her head. She dies in darkness, as I died!”

It seems the monster left Freda to drown!

Alberic curses and answers the dragon; you can't make out exactly what they're saying, but hopefully the veteran hunter is restraining his fear and stringing Shadreth along with a mix of insults and flattery to buy time to get you into position.

Sounds like you need to hurry! Every character and companion must make a **Dexterity** check. If you *all* succeed, go to [056]. If *even one of you* fails, go to [087].

201 You're fighting the dragon of Hook Island at sea! Check [119] for its statistics. Return here and refer to **MAP VII** [224]

Shaded squares depict your fishing vessel, a small ship. The surrounding open terrain is water (at least 60' deep). The deck is 3' up; treat partial ship squares as full ones. The dragon starts with its rear-most 5' square at D, its head pointed directly at the vessel; your characters are anywhere on the ship. The wind is calm and the sail furled; the vessel isn't moving fast enough to matter.

You're fighting aboard a rocking ship: If you were an acrobat, pirate, marine soldier, or otherwise have experience with fighting on an uncertain surface, battle on. Otherwise you're at -2 to attack and **Dexterity** rolls due to the unfamiliar movement.

Start the fight and roll initiative (unless otherwise directed). It tries to stand off a few squares over the water and breathe at you until its breath is exhausted, then it closes and attack. It knows humans in armor can't swim well, and tries to knock people into the water with its tail or by forcing a retreat. If you fall down in a 5' square that is part-water, make a **Dexterity** check (still at -2!) to avoid falling overboard.

If the dragon drops to 12hp or fewer but is conscious, check its morale. On a successful roll, continue the fight; go to [165] on a failure. If you slay it, record plot word **Hook**, then go to [166] if you'd like to return to Branok or [182] to continue on to explore Hook Island.

202 Best to kill a little snake before it becomes a big one! Set up on opposite entry squares on a combat map; see [203] for his statistics and return here.

With an angry hiss, the young dragon breathes lightning at your least-armored party member first (it's gunning for spellcasters ... it's an *intelligent* dragon)!

If you kill him and have plot word **HOB**, go to [145]. If you *don't* have that **PLOT WORD**, Roll 1d6; on a 1-3 go to [208] on a 4-6 go to [145].

203 Record his stats; return where you came from ([202] or [211]).

Phlogiston

4 **HD** Blue Dragon Hatchling

AC 5 [14], **HD** 4** (18hp), **Att** [2x claw (1d4), 1x bite (2d8)] or breath, **THACO** 16 [+3], **MV** 60' (20') / 150' (50'), **SV** D10 W11 P12 B13 S14 (4), **ML** 6, **AL** Neutral, **XP** 175.

► **Spells:** 1st protection from evil, sleep 2nd ESP

► **Breath Weapon:** 50' long line of lightning, 5' wide to 50'.

► **Languages:** Speaks common and draconic.

204 You spend a day getting soggy and being tormented by black flies and mosquitoes, but discover nothing else of interest here. Return to [158] and camp in the swamp.

205 The aerial dragon is presently 240' away, but closing fast. Check [119] for its statistics, making a note of them, and then return here.

It is flying 30' above the waves and closing at 80' per round. The dragon will thus take three turns before it reaches the boat, unless you stop it first.

Engage it with missile attacks or long-range spells if you have any. If it gets within 100' of the boat, it will spit poison (once). If it closes to within 30' or so, go to [201] and continue the fight. Otherwise, if the dragon drops to 12hp or fewer, check its morale. It keeps fighting on a success; go to [165] if it fails.

If you slay or incapacitate the dragon while it is still distant, it drops into the sea, vanishing from view! Record plot word **Hook** and go to [166] if you wish to return to Branok, or [182] if you'd rather explore Hook Island.



206 You're fighting a white dragon on the mountain trail. Record plot word **PASS**. The gray squares mark a drop of 100' to the ground below! If you fall and can't fly, you take 10d6 damage and have to climb out. The dragon may do his best to try and force you back or knock you off (beware his tail!)

Squares adjacent to a gray 5' square are covered with gravel with poor footing. If in such a cliff edge 5' square and you get knocked down or forced back make a **Dexterity** check or fall (taking 10d6).

If you win, record plot word **TRAIL** and either search for its lair [222], or continue through the mountains [176].

Mountain Dragon

6HD white dragon

AC 3 16, **HD** 6** (27hp), **Att** [2× claw (1d4), 1× bite (2d8)] or breath, **THACO** 14 [+5], **MV** 90' (30') / 240' (80') flying, **SV** D10 W11 P12 B13 S14 (6), **ML** 8, **AL** Neutral, **XP** 725, **TT** V.

► **Breath:** 80' long cone of cold. Cone is 5' wide to 10'; 10' wide to 25'; 15' to 40'; 20' wide to 55'; 25' wide to 70'; 30' wide to 80'.

207 You defeated the dragon, but, sadly, when you pull little Freda from the well, she has drowned. *Or has she?*

If a survivor in your party has *raise dead* or *water breathing*, they can magic her back to the land of the living. Otherwise, to try to resuscitate her old-school style, one character must make an **Intelligence** check, while Freda must **save versus death**. If she can be revived, go to [148] if Alberic is also alive, or [160] if only Freda survived. Otherwise, Freda is dead; proceed to [153] if Alberic is alive, or [187] if he perished as well.

208 From out of the trees emerge a goblin and three hobgoblins. The goblin is carrying a bow and a rapier, while his subordinates are armed with spears and shields. Their shields and surcoats are emblazoned with a green snake on a black field. They look like soldiers!

The goblin shouts a challenge at you, using Goblin tongue. If one of you speak that language and wish to parley with them, go to [033]. If you'd rather stand your ground or retreat, go to [028]. To fight them, go to [122].



209 **MAP V** depicts the interior of the great statue at 5'-square scale. The paragraph you came from explains which letters or symbols are significant for setup; ignore the others. Set up as instructed, and then return where you came from.

210 You are in the Rampart Mountains. The air is thin and cold, and the mountain road is narrow and treacherous; several fallen boulders that you clamber over suggest avalanches are not uncommon.

The party's tracker or leader should make an **Intelligence** check. If successful go to [016]; on a failure, to [218].

211 He joins you as a companion (until you find his friend); go to [203] to record his statistics. He is a loyal ally and has no problem helping you fight other bad dragons as long as he gets a small share of the treasure. Record plot word **PHLOG**. If he's slain as your companion, erase the **PLOT WORD**. Go to [021].

212 Monster Grub

AC 9 [10], **HD** 1 (5hp), **Att** 1× bite (1d2), **THACO** 19 [+0], **MV** 30' (10'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (1), **ML** 12, **AL** Neutral, **XP** 10, **TT** None.

213 One of the people at the inn introduces himself. He's a stocky, scarred dwarf, with iron-gray hair and a long beard. He wears a brown hooded cloak over leather armor. A big travel pack bulges with weapons and other gear, including a warhammer, axe, and arquebus.

After learning you are a fellow dragon-hunter, his eyes light up. "Well met, comrade," he says. "Good ale, they have here. And their herring pie is scrumptious." He introduces himself as Alberic, and offers to buy you drinks and supper, and share gossip.

After listening to your own tales and nodding approvingly, Alberic tells you "I have a job you might be interested in, from the local fishermen's guild. I'm recovering from my injuries I got up north, or I'd have taken it on."

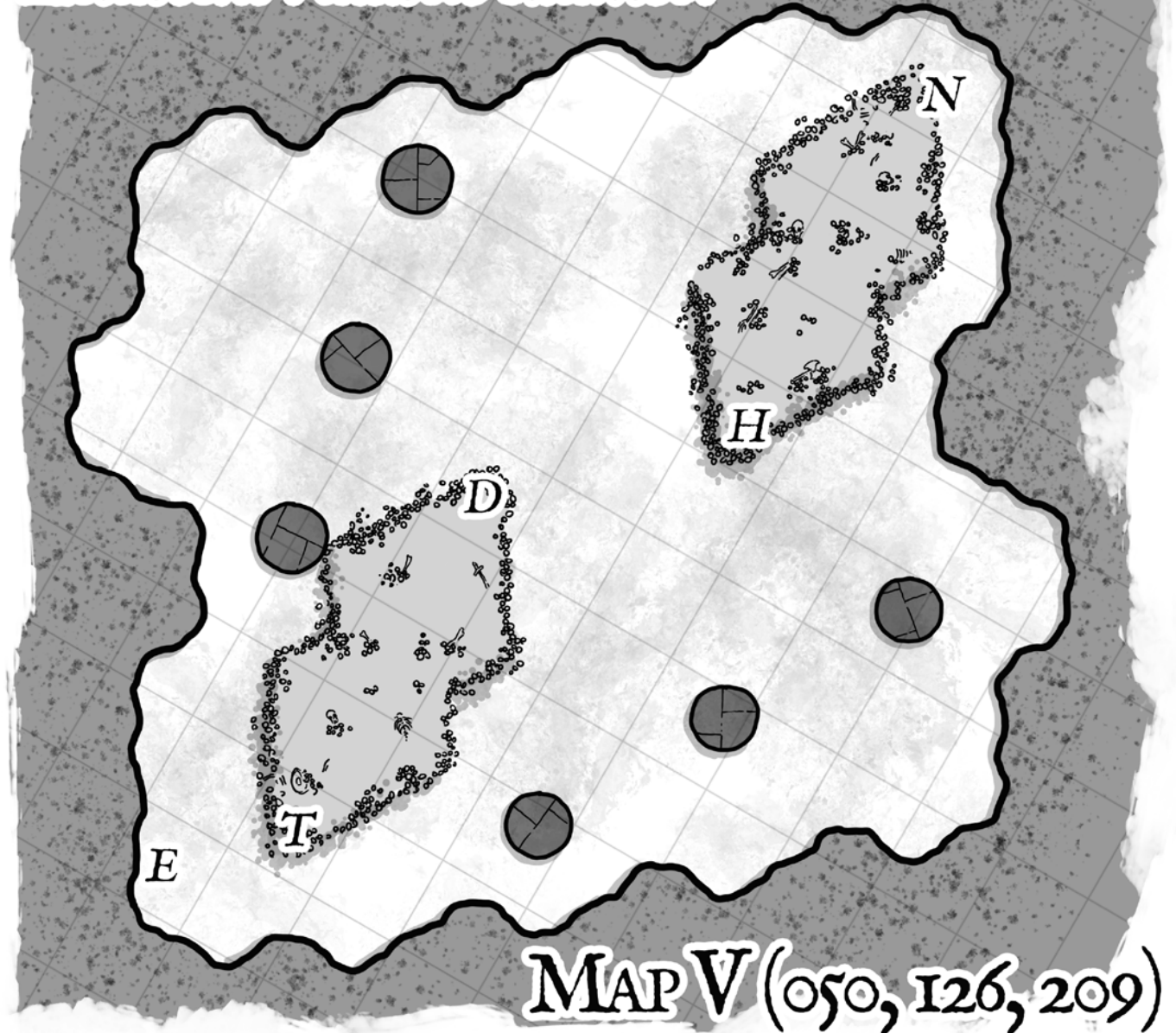
Record plot word **ABE**. Go to [155] if you're interested; otherwise, return to [128].

214 The fishermen have loaded a full catch aboard the boat when suddenly a lookout cries out. From out of the clouds, a dark winged shape stoops: It's a dragon!

It has blue-green scales and seems to be about 25' long: an adult sea dragon. There's no chance to outrun it; the fishermen curse their ill luck and turn to you.

If you want to wait until the dragon arrives and try a parley, go to [196]. To fight, go to [205].

Location: Vaulted Chamber



215 A few days ago, several villagers saw a huge, dark winged shape silhouetted against the moon. It came out of the north and flew southward. Those it passed over felt a strange chill. Return to [124].

216 MAP VI is on the next page, and depicts the stone circle at 5'-square scale.

Dark rectangles are standing stones (equivalent to wall squares, and providing total cover if you can get behind one). Light shaded squares represent higher ground, 5' higher than the clear terrain. The well is the circle at W. It is 20' deep. The paragraph you came from explains which other letters or symbols are significant for setup; ignore the others.

After setting up your map return where you came from.

217 The wyvern trapped in the web says her name is Gwysteloch, and asks you to help her free of the webbing. "Free me, and I'll help you, yes, yes! I can show you pretty magic!"

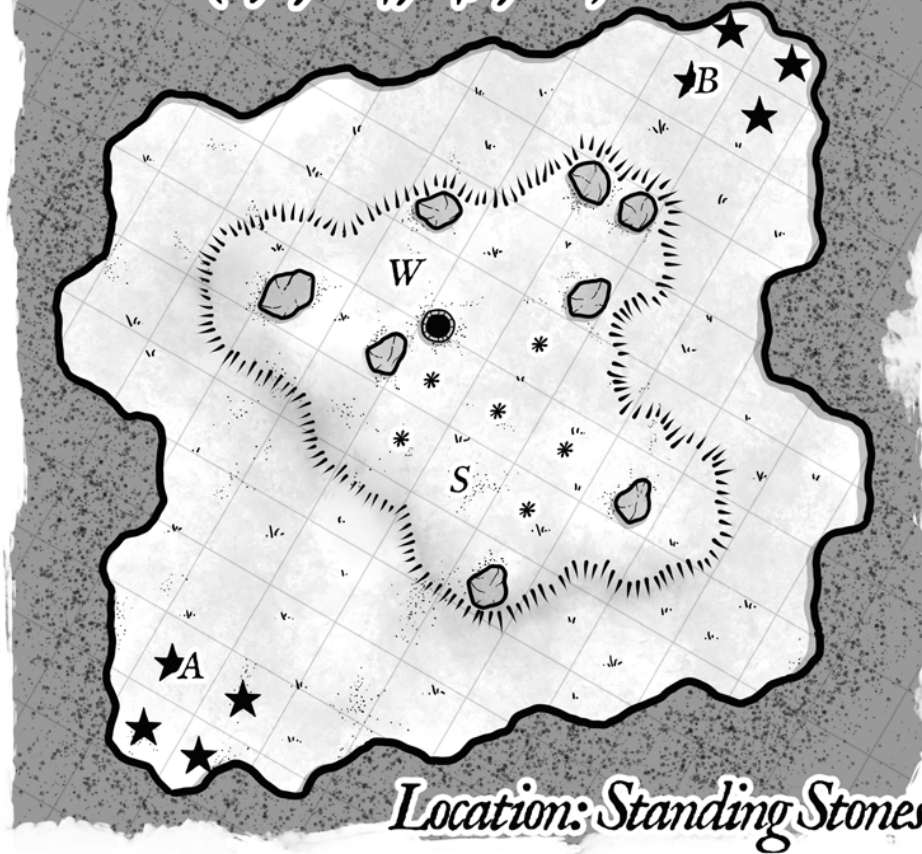
You can slay the wyvern while it's still trapped, or leave it and travel elsewhere; if so, go to [080]. If you free Gwysteloch, go to [044].

218 Edging along a dangerous narrow trail, you hear a sudden rush of wings. Diving out of the rising sun is a shrieking white dragon.

Refer to MAP I [034]. You set up within one or two squares of square M. The dragon is flying and facing you, with its head in square D. Go to [206] and fight.

Due to its surprise assault, the dragon gets initiative on the first round.

MAP VI (056, 087, 179, 216)



Location: Standing Stones

219 You don't find anything else, and return to the vicinity of the inn. Go back to [174].

220 You take no harm removing it, and the woman stirs and starts to breathe! Her eyelids open; her eyes are a piercing green. She yawns, notices you, and struggles to her feet.

"I am Nerakaret, God-Empress and Princess of Scorpions," she says imperiously, tossing her hair. "Who are you? Where are my priests, my maidens, and guards?"

To attack her, go to [229]. To flee, go to [230]. If you wish to tell Nerakaret the truth, that her desert empire has vanished under the sands of time, her priests and servants long dead after her own temple tomb was overrun by a dragon, go to [232].

221 Go to [148] if Alberic is also alive, or [160] if he died but Freda lived.

222 You don't discover a lair; perhaps the dragon was just passing through the region? But you do uncover a place where it may have stopped for a while. Go to [110].

223 Nerakaret agrees to join your party as a companion, eager for adventure and a chance to see the new world, and win fortune and glory. While she had little use for the Scorpion Cult as such, she had friends among her servants and handmaidens, who perished when dragons destroyed the temple, and she is eager for payback.

She says you can keep her crown, to sell it if you wish. She enjoys talking about religion and philosophy, being uncertain about her place in the world. Her "holy amulet" lets her command scorpions. Go to [228], record her statistics and plot word **NERA**, then go to [230].

224 Go to **MAP VII**, which depicts a ship and its surroundings at 5'-square scale. The paragraph you came from explains which other letters or symbols are significant for setup; ignore the others. After setting up your map return where you came from.

225 The dour Rykenzar is pleased to learn of your part in his foe's demise. He toasts your health before his court, gifting you his gold cup worth 2,000gp. It is enchanted with *continual light* and *neutralize poison*. "My companion in sleepless nights, when I brooded the worm might return," he remarks. "I no longer need it." Record plot word **CUP**; go to [105].

226 You slay her. If you or a companion wish to try on

her crown, decide who will do so and go to [059]; if you might do so later, record this number and check there when you do so.

A search of the chamber reveals no other secret doors. To leave, go to [230].

227 In town you meet a talented elvish weaponsmith, who lost their cousin to a dragon's rage. The smith is finishing up the forging of a dragon-slaying weapon. Are you worthy of it?

If you have acquired one or more of the plot words: **GORM**, **WIGHT**, or **SEA**, the armorer has heard tales of your deeds and deems you a fit recipient. If so, the smith presents you a finely made **warhammer +1, +3 vs dragons**. Record plot word **SMITH**. If not, the smith will await the arrival of a true champion worthy of their masterwork. You can return here once you meet these qualities. Return to [023].



228 *Nerakaret* God-empress of the Scorpion Cult

7th-level "fighter"

STR 9, **DEX** 13 [+1], **INT** 15 [+1], **WIS** 16 [+2], **CON** 11, **CHA** 18 [+2].
AC 6 [13], **HD** 7* (38hp), **Att** 1× sword, **THACO** 12 [+7], **MV** 120' (30'), **SV** D3 W5 P7 B8 S7 (13), **AL** Neutral?

► **Equipment/Treasure:** **Robe of the Desert** (+2 AC, 1/10 water use in desert, no effects of heat and sun, improved saving throws), Scorpion saber (+1 **shortsword**; if damage rolled is a 1, victim must **save versus poison** or die), Amulet (Earrings) of Scorpion Control, **dagger** +2, victims **save versus paralysis** or be turned to stone, **bow**, +1 **damage**, +3 to **hit**.

► **Totally Not a Sequel:** Nerakaret presents as a 7th-level fighter; she's actually a rather high-level cleric of an ancient scorpion cult that doesn't forbid the use of sharp weapons. But that's another story...

229 She fights back. Use the same map that you fought the scorpion-folk; she's standing by the sarcophagus; set up in any of her front squares, or up to two squares away. See [228] for her statistics; roll initiative. If you slay her, take her equipment and leave [230].

230 You're in a small antechamber near the rear of the great statue. From here, follow a corridor deeper into the statue [051], or climb stairs to a hatch in the ceiling and record plot word **UP**. [237], or take a stone door to the outside [238].

231 Two people sit hunched over a sheaf of papers. You see maps, small lead figures, and small polyhedrons scattered on the ground.

One looks up, his goatee beard and short-cropped hair both speckled with gray. "How in the dragon's name did you get here? Go back to the paragraph you came from!"

232 A brilliant smile lights up her face. "Really? That is wonderful news!"

Nerakaret looks under the sarcophagus. Pressing a loose stone, she opens a hidden alcove and removes a black silk desert robe and sandals, a bow, saber, and dagger with a stone hilt. As she dresses, she explains how she came to be empress.

As a little girl, she was taken from her family—spice merchants in Tamaz—by the priests of the Scorpion Cult. Apparently she, and several other children, were said to have all been conceived on the day the last mortal reincarnation of their great goddess perished. After several harsh tests involving live scorpions, she

was the only survivor.

Nerakaret was groomed as god-empress, general, and ruler, but as time went on, she realized it was just a scam. She was a puppet, a tool of various factions. As the fading empire weakened, some sought a holy war, which she never wanted. She stopped listening to her advisors and tried to express her own wishes, but they turned against her. As many believed it sacrilege to slay her, the cabal used the cursed crown to place her into suspended animation, thawing her out as needed. But then the dragon must have come...

"So I was empress, but a doll and prisoner," she said. "Thanks to you, now I am free! But what should I do? All I know is dust!"

If you wish to offer to take Nerakaret as a companion on your hunt, at least until you reach civilization, go to [223]. To leave her here to wander amongst the ruins, go to [230].

233 The true story? "In days of yore, Estarian was a wizard-bard, with a voice like an angel and looks to match. He had a magic cloak dyed crimson with phoenix blood and a golden harp he'd taken from a dragon who loved music. But he and his party were lost in a devil-swamp. They fell to the last survivor of the legendary serpent folk, monsters who had come to these shores as the demon-gods of the evil Sea Reavers.

Now, Estarian's betrothed was the half-elf ranger Signy Strongbow, whose deadly arrows had brought down many foes. She sought him through many perils, until she came

upon him in a glade in the swamp. Not as captive, but in the snake-monster's embrace. Signy was enraged and in her anger shot both lovers with her arrows. While Estarian was slain, it didn't stop the monster, who crushed Signy in her coils. Only her halfling torchbearer escaped. The poets say the monster wept poison tears over Estarian's death, and kept his Golden Harp and Crimson Cloak as keepsakes in her lair. Where is that? Somewhere in the dark forests or swamps to the west...

Go to [177].

234 You are invited to the court of baroness Gwalathar. She arranges a feast in your honor.

"You have inspired us with your valor and your deeds," the baroness declares, "and the bards will sing of your victories. My people no longer live in fear of the great worms."

"It is just a token to honor your bravery, but I pray you accept this gift, which belonged to my grandfather Garth Blacksword. Like you, he never gave up."

Her gift is a magic dragonhide belt with a gold buckle formed in the image of a lion. Once per day, the Belt of the Last Gasp takes any effect that does hit points of damage (not, for example poison or being turned to stone) that would reduce the character to 0hp or lower and stops it at 1hp. If this happens, **roll 1d6**; the lion buckle breaks on a roll of 5–6, rendering the item useless. Otherwise, it recharges at dawn.

She also presents you and any companions with gold rings worth 1,500gp each.

During the celebration, you're offered a job as an officer in her castle guard and your companions as sergeants of her guard. It is up to you whether to accept the positions, or to continue your life as a wandering adventurer.

If you acquired Nerakaret as a companion and she's still with you, go to [239]. Otherwise, it's **The End**.

235 Clearly the stress of dragon hunting has gotten to you: You are becoming mad as a týndrmen! If you return to your senses, mark off a day and go to [066] and pick a travel option. Otherwise you and any companions foolish enough to remain with you eventually succumb to madness (there's probably something in the fungi they're feeding you) and soon are mentally indistinguishable from a týndrmen. **The End**.

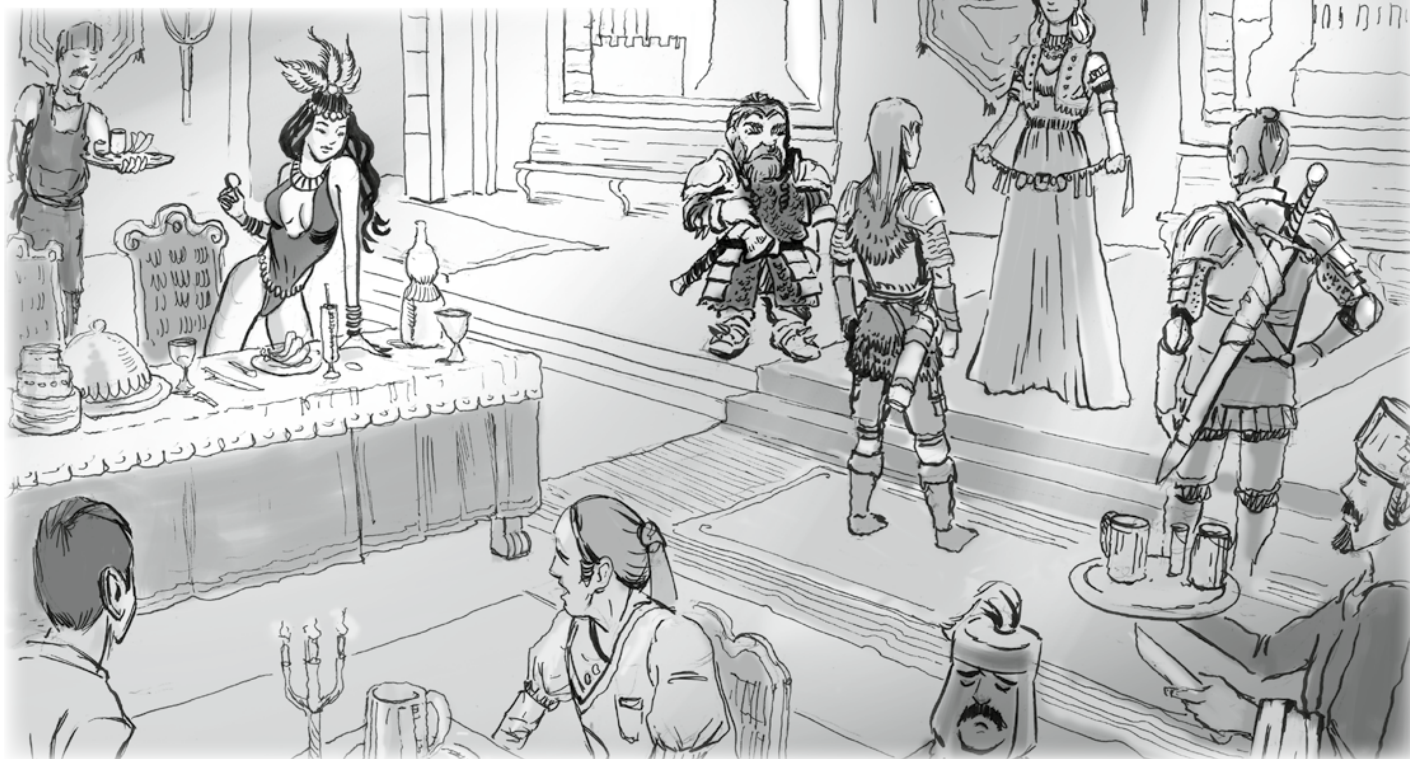
236 A concealed trap door in the floor opens after pressing a decorative facade on a pillar. A dark stairway leads down! To explore, go to [230]. Otherwise, return to [190].

237 You emerge from a hidden trap door into a vaulted chamber holding a glittering pile of treasure! If you have plot word **GORM** go to [190]; otherwise record plot word **OUT** and go to [150].

238 You exit the statue from a secret back door. To reenter, go to [061]; otherwise, go to [091].

239 At the reception, you catch the baroness looking puzzled as she eyes Nerakaret. She turns to you. "Your southern friend is very beautiful," she remarks. "But for a moment, her profile reminded me of an old coin," the baroness says. "One from the old dark scorpion empire?" She shudders. "It was an evil time."

Nerakaret overhears, and smiles winningly. "Why thank you, baroness" she says. "Nice castle you have here. I really like it." You feel a faint chill, but perhaps it's your imagination. You return to the party; for now, your dragon hunt is over. **The End**.



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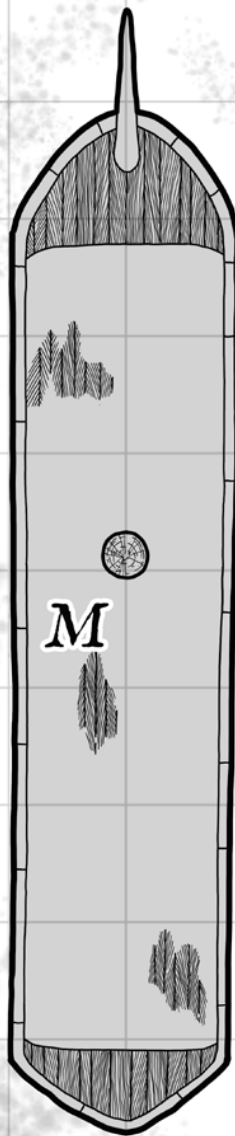
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*Location:
Sea or
Burial
Chamber*

Map VII



D

E

S

MAP VII
(072, 201, 224)



Scaly Problems

Baron Gwalathar's armies marched off to war. Without its defenders, the dragons of the wild sensed weakness, ravaging the realm.

The young Baroness Tanith calls for heroes: It's time for a dragon hunt!

Dragon Hunt is a programmed adventure for three high-level characters. It would take a truly mighty-thewed hero to tackle it alone!

For 44 action-packed pages, the heroes track and fight some of the baddest monsters the **OSR** has to offer.

Featuring an entirely new realm, the Barony of Gwalathar. Explore many villages, castles, towns, and trek through the wilderness, looking for dragons.

So many dragons.



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