Adventure for 4 to 8 characters, levels 2 to 3.

Dragons of Torment



One glass staff. One black dragon. One chance.
Beneath the drowned city, a dragon guards mercy.

Open Dungeons RPG is a tool for your imagination.

Dragons of Torment

An Open Dungeons RPG adventure for 4 to 8 characters of levels 2 to 3
All game rules found at OpenDungeons.com

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Introduction

Dragons of Torment is a wilderness journey and a ruin crawl in one. The heroes leave a quiet lake town, cross a land that is falling to an invading army, pass through a haunted forest that tests their names, and finally descend into a drowned city where a black dragon guards the one thing that could heal the land.

The adventure is built for 4 to 8 characters of levels 2 to 3. A balanced party helps: the journey asks for a fighter's endurance, a thief's quiet hands, a wizard's answers and a cleric's faith, even though that faith has gone half-silent here. Eight pre-generated characters are included at the back of this book, ready to play.

The Adventure in Two Sentences

The problem: Three hundred years ago the goddess of mending took her gift back from the Torrenmark, and no wound in this land has closed by magic since. Now a staff that heals has walked out of the swamp, and the Ember Host will burn the whole region to take it.

The resolution: The heroes must carry the Staff of the Pale Thread into the drowned city of Mor Valcath, recover the Leaves of Ilvessa from the dragon Nyxara's hoard, and break the staff against the dragon so that healing returns to the Torrenmark.

How This Adventure Is Organized

The adventure has five parts.

1. **Events** happen at certain times, wherever the heroes are. The first event starts the game. Others follow in order as days pass.
2. **The Torrenmark** holds the wilderness encounters. Each is keyed to an area on the map. When the heroes cross into an area, run its encounter. The three Synod Reaches (areas 13-15) share one encounter on purpose: crossing from one into the next repeats it, so the players never quite know how far they have come.
3. **The Blackmire** covers the swamp ruins over Mor Valcath, the temple of Ilvessa, and the dragon's first appearance.
4. **The Descent** takes the heroes from the ruins down into the great cavern below.
5. **Under-Valcath** is the buried city, the Hob court, the palace and the dragon's lair.

Appendices at the back hold the Staff of the Pale Thread, the Leaves of Ilvessa, a monster reference, random encounter tables, the Lament of the Pale Thread, the Verses of the Sundering and the pre-generated characters.

Reading the Boxes

> Read-aloud text is set apart like this. Read it aloud or paraphrase it when the heroes arrive somewhere or witness something, and reveal only what the characters perceive.

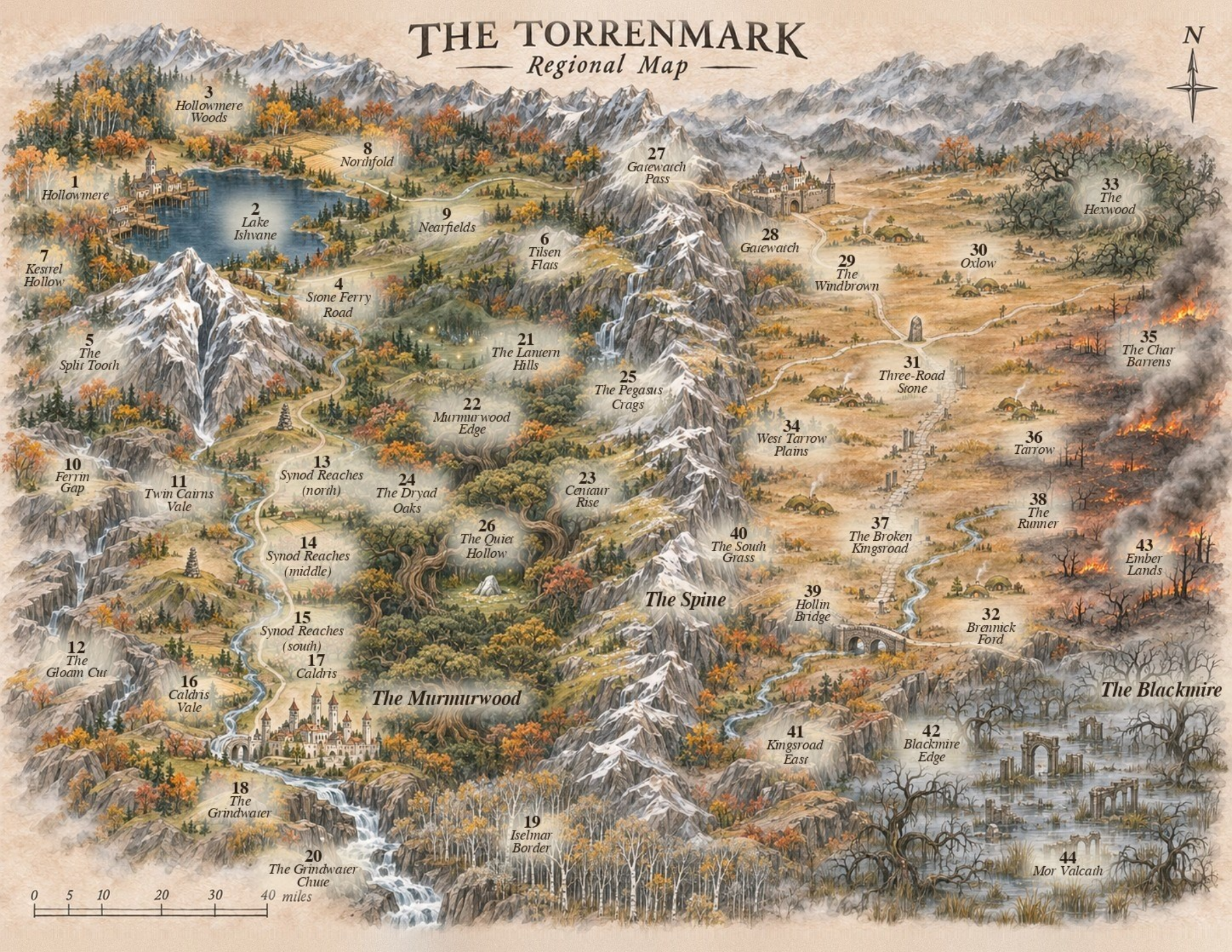
Everything else is for the Dungeon Narrator: what is really going on, what the creatures want, and how the scene can turn.

Creatures and NPCs appear in shaded stat lines. Most come straight from the Monster Trove line; the line marked † beneath one names its book and links to its rules entry on opendungeons.com. Save TN is a creature's base Save Roll target number (16 minus its HP divided by 20, rounded down, never lower than 5), before the caster's level is added. NPCs built with a class and level use the hero rule instead: 16 minus their level.

Treasure appears in framed boxes. A line marked ‡ beneath one names an existing magic item's book and links to its rules entry.

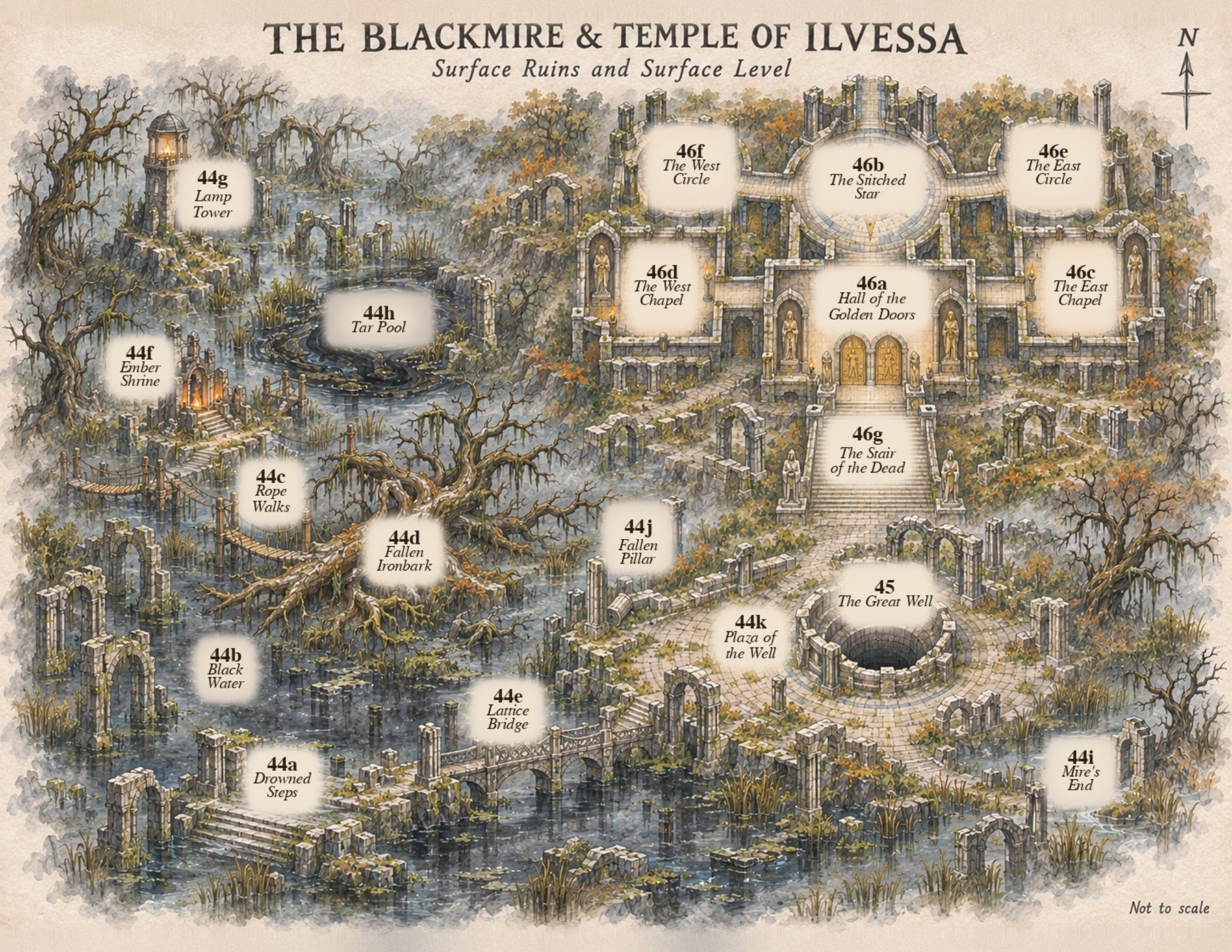
> **Notes**
>
> Gray boxes like this one are left for your own notes - names your table gives to things, rulings you make, and what the heroes did.

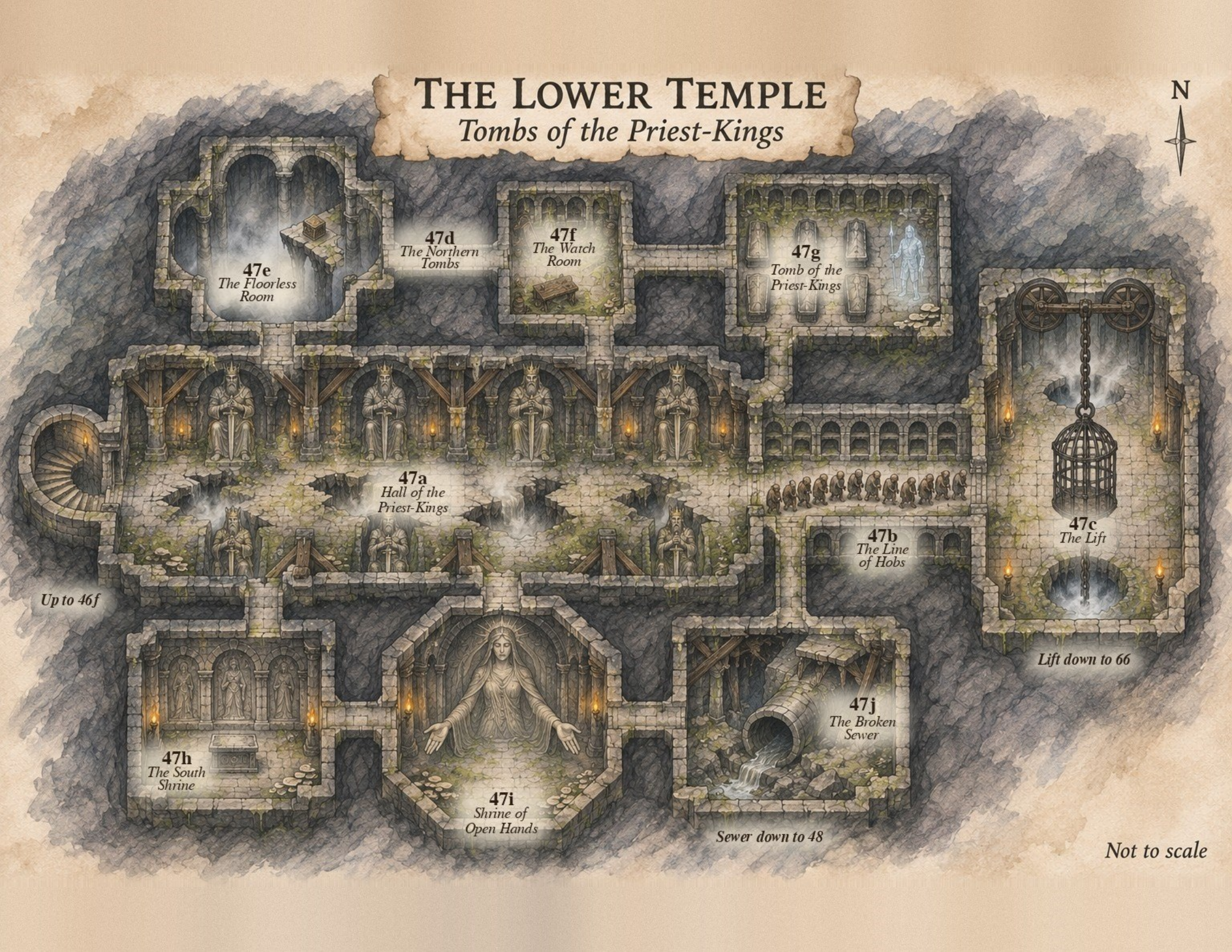


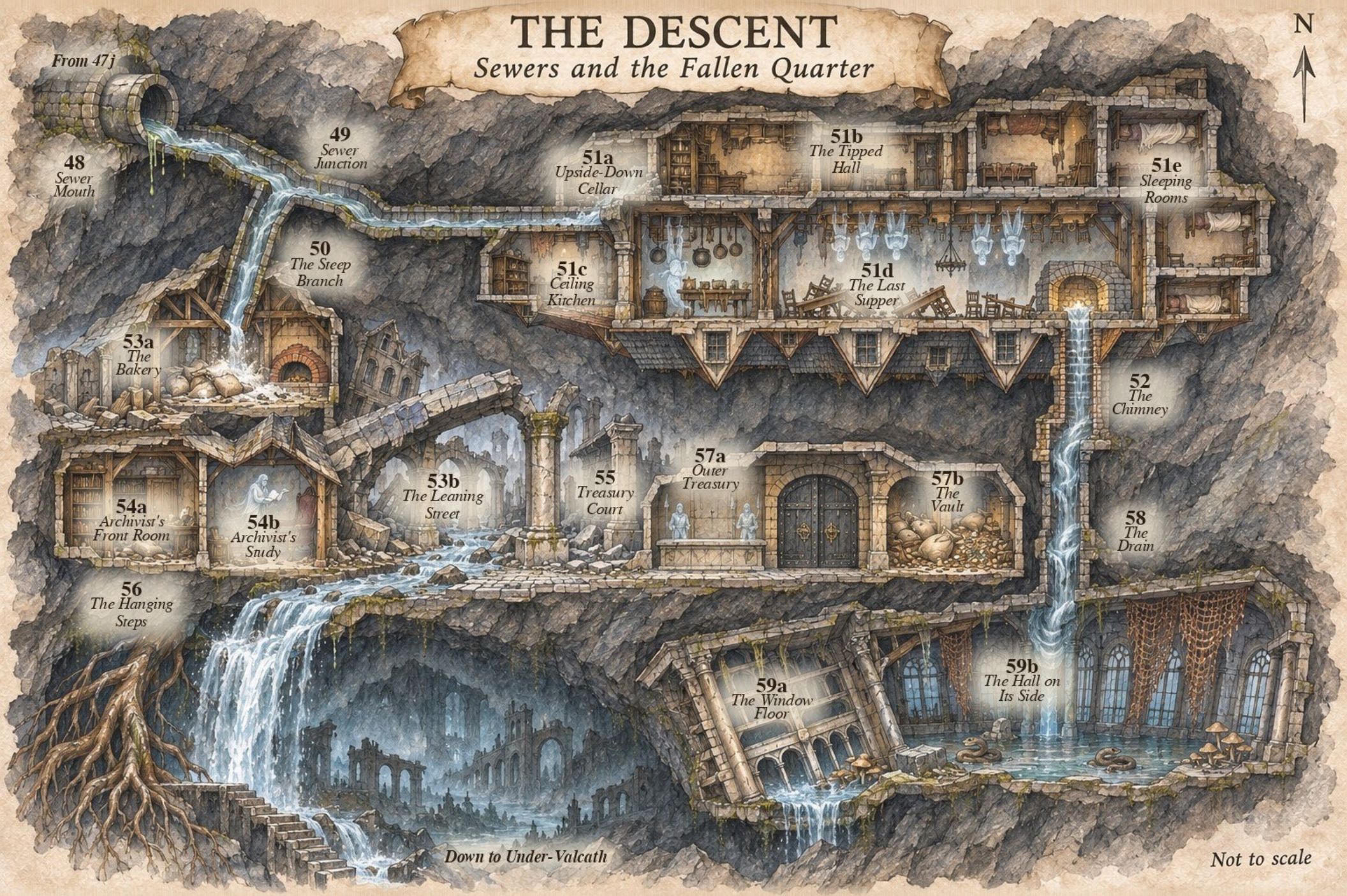

THE TORRENMARK
Regional Map
N
1 Hollowmere
2 Lake Ishvane
3 Hollowmere Woods
4 Stone Ferry Road
5 The Split Tooth
6 Tilsen Flats
7 Kestrel Hollow
8 Northfold
9 Nearfields
10 Ferrin Gap
11 Twin Cairns Vale
12 The Gloam Cut
13 Synod Reaches (north)
14 Synod Reaches (middle)
15 Synod Reaches (south)
16 Caldris Vale
17 Caldris
18 The Grindwater
19 Iselmar Border
20 The Grindwater Chute
21 The Lantern Hills
22 Murmurwood Edge
23 Centaur Rise
24 The Dryad Oaks
25 The Pegasus Crags
26 The Quiet Hollow
27 Gatewatch Pass
28 Gatewatch
29 The Windbrown
30 Oxlow
31 Three-Road Stone
32 Brennick Ford
33 The Hexwood
34 West Tarrow Plains
35 The Char Barrens
36 Tarrow
37 The Broken Kingsroad
38 The Runner
39 Hollin Bridge
40 The South Grass
41 Kingsroad East
42 Blackmire Edge
43 Ember Lands
44 Mor Valcath
The Spine
The Murmurwood
The Blackmire
0 5 10 20 30 40 miles

THE BLACKMIRE & TEMPLE OF ILVESSA

Surface Ruins and Surface Level

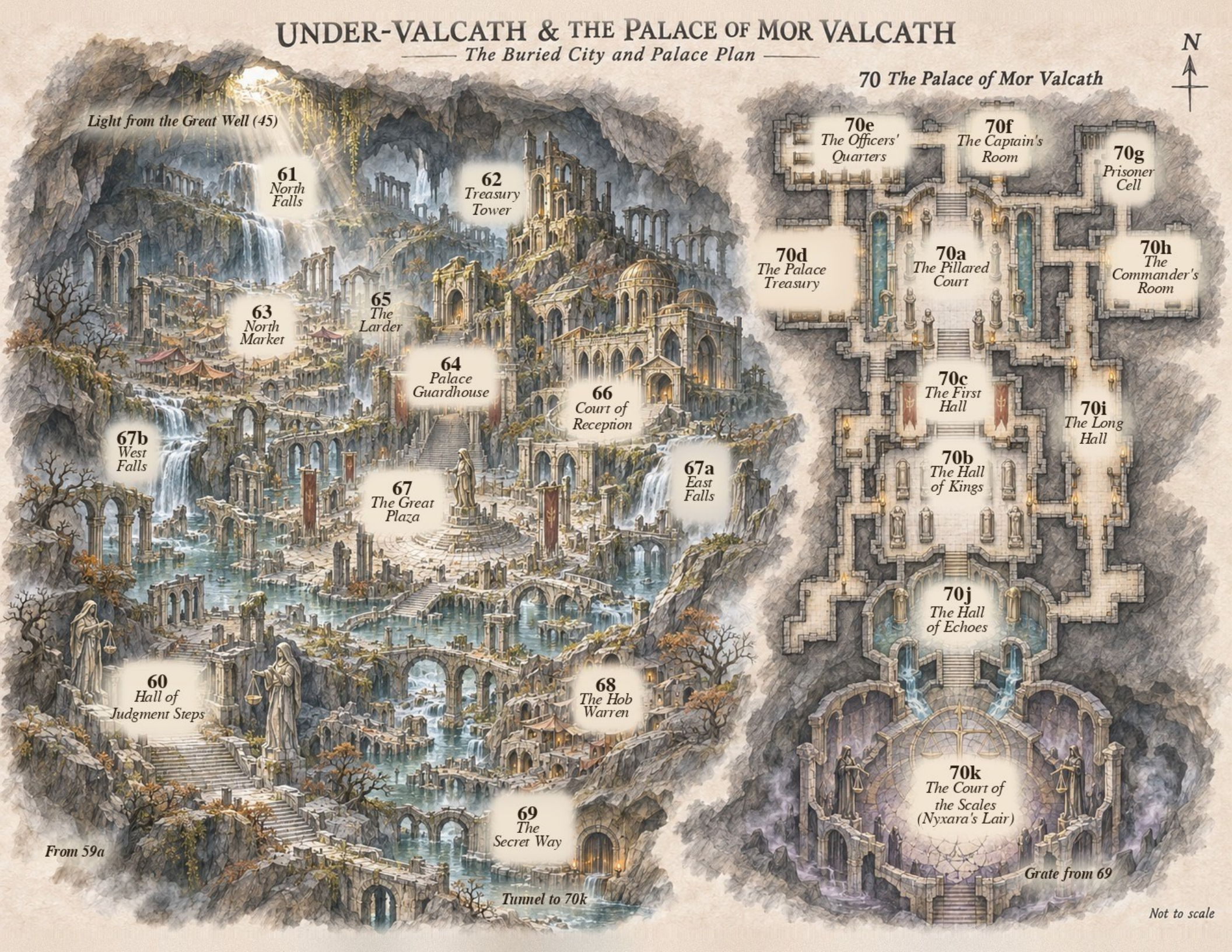



The Lower Temple
Tombs of the Priest-Kings
N
47e
The Floorless Room
47d
The Northern Tombs
47f
The Watch Room
47g
Tomb of the Priest-Kings
47a
Hall of the Priest-Kings
47b
The Line of Hobs
47c
The Lift
Up to 46f
Lift down to 66
47h
The South Shrine
47i
Shrine of Open Hands
47j
The Broken Sewer
Sewer down to 48
Not to scale


THE DESCENT
Sewers and the Fallen Quarter
N
From 47j
48
Sewer Mouth
49
Sewer Junction
50
The Steep Branch
51a
Upside-Down Cellar
51b
The Tipped Hall
51c
Ceiling Kitchen
51d
The Last Supper
51e
Sleeping Rooms
52
The Chimney
53a
The Bakery
53b
The Leaning Street
54a
Archivist's Front Room
54b
Archivist's Study
55
Treasury Court
56
The Hanging Steps
57a
Outer Treasury
57b
The Vault
58
The Drain
59a
The Window Floor
59b
The Hall on Its Side
Down to Under-Valcath
Not to scale

UNDER-VALCATH & THE PALACE OF MOR VALCATH

The Buried City and Palace Plan



Background

The Fall of Mor Valcath

Three centuries ago the Torrenmark was the heart of the kingdom of Valcath, and its capital, Mor Valcath, stood on a terraced bluff above a fertile plain. The city was famous for one thing above all: its great temple to Ilvessa, the Stitched Star, goddess of mending. In those days her priests could close any wound, cure any fever and, on the holiest nights, call a soul back to its body.

The priest-kings of Valcath grew proud of that gift, and then greedy with it. They declared that Ilvessa's healing belonged to the crown. Mending was sold by the coin, rationed by rank, and refused to the poor. When plague came out of the east, the priest-kings sealed the temple doors and healed only the households that could pay. The commoners died in the streets beneath the temple steps.

Ilvessa answered. In a single night the plain sank and the sea rushed in over it, and the bluff split beneath Mor Valcath, which slid into a vast cavern beneath the earth. Rivers poured in after it. Where the city had stood, the Blackmire grew: a black-water swamp of iron-barked trees over the drowned city. The sunken plain to the east became the Sundermere. Valcathi scholars call that night the Sundering.

The Hush

The goddess did not only break the city. She withdrew her gift from the whole land. From the night of the Sundering to this day, no magical healing has worked anywhere in the Torrenmark. Clerics still pray, and their gods still answer every other prayer, but a healing spell spoken here simply goes nowhere. Potions of healing taste like stale water. The people call this the Hush.

Three hundred years is a long time. Nobody alive remembers magical healing in the Torrenmark, and most folk believe it is a traveler's lie, like dragons. A broken leg means a limp for life. A deep cut means a fever and a prayer that comes back empty. Healers here are bone-setters, herb-wives and midwives, and they are very good at their work because they must be.

The Staff of the Pale Thread

When Mor Valcath fell, Ilvessa left one thing behind in her temple: a staff of milk-white glass with a single silver thread wound through its core. It lay in the statue's hands for three hundred years, until a lost soldier named Corvin Dray, who had fallen into the ruins below and crawled

his way back up, stumbled into the temple, fevered and dying, and the statue placed it in his hands.

Corvin remembers almost nothing of how he got out of the Blackmire. He came home to the plains village of Tarrow carrying the staff and raving about a black well, a kind woman of stone and wings in the dark. His sister Maren, the village midwife, nursed him. When she touched the staff to a burned child, the burn closed. The village headman, terrified of what that meant, called it witchcraft and drove the pair out. They have been wandering ever since, trying to understand what they carry.

The Ember Host

The Staff has not gone unnoticed. In the burned country to the east and south, Archpriest Malvorn Ashcrowne, called the Ember Regent, has raised an army: the Ember Host. Its ranks are soot-masked human zealots called the Ember-sworn, goblin warbands bought with plunder, hired swords, and a handful of Ember Adepts who wield fire and sleep-magic for the Regent.

Ashcrowne learned what lies in the drowned city long before anyone else did. In the dragon Nyxara's hoard deep under the Blackmire rest the Leaves of Ilvessa: twelve bronze pages that hold the rites of mending. If those pages are taken back from the dragon and the Staff of the Pale Thread is given back to the goddess, the Hush ends, and a land that can heal again is a land that can fight back. So the Regent struck a bargain with Nyxara. She guards the Leaves in the dark, and he feeds her the treasure of every village he burns.

When the staff left the Blackmire, Ashcrowne's spies spread across the Torrenmark to find it. His armies wait on the eastern plains for one reason: they fear the staff returning to the temple while they march elsewhere. They will not wait much longer.

The Dragon

Dragons in the Torrenmark are nursery tales. Nobody has seen one in living memory, and when travelers mention them, people laugh. Nyxara the Tarwing is very real. She is young as dragons go, cruel, and bored, and she has lined her lair beneath the old palace of Mor Valcath with three centuries of Valcathi treasure and the bones of everything that came looking for it.

The players should begin the adventure believing two things about this land: magical healing does not exist here, and dragons do not exist anywhere. Both beliefs should break at the table. Do not tell the players about Nyxara. Let the rumors, the tracks and the hatchlings do the work until she rises out of the well in area 44k.

Running the Hush

The Hush is the heart of this adventure. It is what makes the Staff of the Pale Thread worth an army.

What stops working inside the Torrenmark:

- Every cleric spell whose purpose is to restore hit points or close wounds, including Mend Wound, Minor Renewal, Renew Life and Litany of Renewal. The spell is cast and the slot is spent, but nothing happens. The cleric feels the prayer go out and come back empty.
- Potions, tonics, scrolls, wands and other magic items that restore hit points, such as a Potion of Healing, Potion of Minor Healing, Heartleaf Tonic, Vigorwell Phial or Scroll of Vital Mending. They do nothing.
- Any divine ability that restores hit points, such as the cleric's Anoint the Faithful blessing of the wounded.

What still works:

- Every other cleric spell. Clerics still have their full daily spells, Turn Undead, Divine Ward, Blessing, Sanctify and every other ability that does not heal.
- Ordinary rest, healer's kits, a fighter's Second Wind and Battlefield Medicine. These are grit and bandages, not magic.
- Temporary HP, Save rerolls and effects that prevent damage rather than repair it, such as Sacred Authority.
- The Staff of the Pale Thread, which heals because its power comes from Ilvessa herself.
- Healing inside the Murmurwood (areas 22, 23, 24 and 26). The forest is older than the Sundering, and the Hush does not reach under its branches. The Warden of the Wood's healing works there.

Clerics brought into the Torrenmark from elsewhere lose their healing the moment they cross its border, and they know it at once.

The DN decides any edge case. When you rule, rule once, write it in a note box, and stay consistent.

Starting the Adventure

The Heroes

The heroes have known one another for years. Three autumns ago they parted company at the Salt Kettle Inn in Hollowmere, each to go out into the wider world and seek one thing the Torrenmark does not have: a healer who can mend by prayer. They swore to meet again at the Salt Kettle on the first frost of the third year. This is that night.

None of them found what they were looking for. Clerics in far lands heal freely, but every one of them lost the power the moment they came near the Torrenmark, and none could say why.

If your players use the pre-generated characters at the back of this book, have each player read their character's background aloud at the start of the first session. The one exception is Maren Ashby: a player who chooses her reads her background when she appears in Event 2, which then happens on the road right after Event 1 (see Event 2). If players bring their own characters, they can still have made that promise at the Salt Kettle, or they can be strangers who share the road on the same night.

Party Size and Difficulty

The encounters are written for a party of six characters at level 3. For any other party, use the scaling charts in Appendix 8: Scaling Encounters. They change the number of foes in each fight, never their stats.

Leveling During the Adventure

Characters do not level up in the middle of an adventure. If the heroes finish this adventure, they have earned their time to train.

Events

Events happen at set times rather than in set places. They can happen wherever the heroes are unless the event says otherwise. Event 1 begins the adventure. The rest follow in order. If the heroes are underground when an event comes due, they see its signs the next time they come up into the open air.

Event 1: The Road Home - Begin Here - the adventure begins

The heroes begin on a rocky outcrop above the road to Hollowmere, in area 4 on Map 1 (Stone Ferry Road), with Hollowmere (area 1) a short walk west, at sunset, on the first frost of the third year. Read the following:

> Cold air comes up the slope smelling of pine resin and lake water. Below you the valley holds its breath at the end of the day. Pines climb the far ridges in dark ranks, broken by stands of yellow aspen, and the high peaks to the east have already gone blue with evening. Somewhere down there, past the next two bends of the road, the lamps of Hollowmere are being lit on the old stone piers.
>
> You have each walked a long way to be here. Three years ago you made a promise at the Salt Kettle: go out, find a healer whose prayers can close a wound, and bring them home. Three years, a great many roads, and every one of you is coming back empty-handed.
>
> The Torrenmark has not changed. People here still set bones and pray, and the prayers still come back empty. It has been that way for three hundred years. Nobody here expects otherwise.
>
> The road below is quiet. Tonight there will be a fire, and beer, and stories that are better than the truth.

Let the heroes walk down to the road and talk for a moment. If the players are using the pre-generated characters, this is a good time for each to read their background aloud. Then run the following:

> The brush beside the road crackles. Shapes pour out of the trees on both sides: small, quick, grinning figures in mismatched leather, rusty blades held low. They spread into a loose ring around you and stop a good distance off, just beyond the reach of a sword.
>
> Hooves clop up out of the ditch. A mule labors onto the road under the weight of a fat, sweating rider in a dented breastplate two sizes too small. A soot-black sash crosses his chest. He squints at you, wipes his nose on his glove, and shouts:

> "By order of the Ember Regent! Hand over the white staff, the glass one, and you can keep your teeth!"

> **Overseer Muckle Tarr (Half-Goblin Overseer)** - HP 22, AC 13, DR 1, Attacks 1, Attack 1d8+1 (morningstar); Saves Quick +2, Tough +1, Mind +0, Size Small, Alignment Impartial Vile (Schemer), Intelligence Average (8-10), Save TN 15; Special Attack: Bellow and Point - instead of attacking, Muckle screams at his goblins; one goblin of his choice may move and attack at once. Special Defense: Knows When to Leave - the moment Muckle is hit, or the moment half his goblins fall, he wheels the mule around and flees into the woods. His mule is faster than the heroes on foot.
>
> **8 Goblins** - HP 9 each, AC 12, DR 0, Attacks 1, Attack 1d6 (rusty blade, +1 to hit); Saves Quick +2, Tough +0, Mind +0, Size Small, Alignment Impartial Vile (Schemer), Intelligence Below Average (5-7), Save TN 16; Special Attack: Pocket Sand - one creature within 5 ft makes a Quick save or is blinded until the end of its next turn. Special Defense: Small Exits. If offered food, safe passage or useful gossip before blood is drawn, a goblin makes a Mind save; on a success it bargains instead of fighting.

† **Goblin:** existing creature; Monster Trove: Old Fears and Hungry Things, entry "Goblin". Rules entry

Muckle does not wait for an answer. Whatever the heroes say, he yells "Get the staff and bring it to me!" and hangs back on his mule behind the goblins, screaming orders (Bellow and Point). The moment he is hit, or half his goblins fall, he hauls the mule around and kicks it into the trees. If Skerrit is among the heroes, Muckle recognizes him, goes purple, and pretends he has not.

The heroes do not have the staff. At most, one of them has heard a rumor of it (see Skerrit in Appendix 7). That does not matter to the goblins, who have been told to rough up every armed group on the road at night and search their packs.

Captured goblins know very little: an overseer with a black sash paid them in copper to search travelers on the Hollowmere road for "a white glass staff, tall as a man, with a silver thread in it." They have heard that the overseer works for "the Regent," who lives "east, past the burned lands, where the smoke comes from." A goblin that bargains will offer this freely in exchange for being allowed to run.

Muckle Tarr turns up again later in the adventure if you like. He is a coward and a bully, and he makes a good recurring nuisance.

When the fight is over, the heroes are on the road just east of Hollowmere, in area 4. Hollowmere (area 1) is a short walk west.

Event 2: The Lament

If a player has chosen Maren Ashby, skip the roll: this event happens on the road as soon as Event 1 ends, so that player is not left waiting. Otherwise, roll 1d4. The result is how many encounter areas the heroes cross after the game begins before this event happens. It can happen in Hollowmere itself, at the Salt Kettle, or on the road.

> Someone nearby begins to sing. The voice belongs to a weathered woman in a plainswoman's quilted coat, seated on a mounting stone by the road (or on a bench by the fire, if this happens indoors), her hands folded in her lap. She is not young, and she is not trying to be pretty about it. She sings the way people sing at a graveside. Beside her, a gaunt man with a soldier's bearing and a soldier's scars stands holding a tall staff wrapped in sacking. He does not sing. He watches the road, or the door.
>
> The song is about a soldier who walked into a swamp and came back with something in his hands.

The words to the Lament of the Pale Thread are in Appendix 5. If Maren Ashby is played by a player, have that player read the lyrics aloud, or sing them if they are game. Otherwise, read or paraphrase them yourself.

The singer is Maren Ashby, midwife of Tarrow. The silent man is her brother, Corvin Dray, and the thing in the sacking is the Staff of the Pale Thread.

If any hero present has taken damage since the adventure began, something extraordinary happens as the song ends. The sacking slips from the staff on its own. The staff tips out of Corvin's hand, falls across the wounded hero, and glows a soft milky white. The wound closes. Use the healing rules for the staff in Appendix 1. Everyone watching goes very quiet. Outside Tarrow, nobody in the Torrenmark has seen this in living memory.

If nobody is hurt, Maren simply finishes the song, stands, and lifts the staff out of the sacking to look at it in the evening light, as if hoping it will tell her something.

Maren and Corvin are wary. People have called them witches and thrown stones. If the heroes are kind, they talk. Maren wants to know what the staff is and who made it; Corvin wants to know why the black-sashed men are hunting it. Neither has an answer. Corvin remembers only fragments: a black swamp, a well that breathed, a stone woman who was kind to him, and wings in the dark.

If Maren is a player character, her player takes her over now and reads her background. Corvin is always an NPC. If no player takes Maren, she follows Corvin and stays an NPC for the whole adventure.

If the heroes do nothing to join them, Maren and Corvin collect their things, nod politely and leave. They may be met again in Event 3.

Maren Ashby (NPC or Player Character) - Human Cleric, level 3, HP 24, AC 11, DR 1 (leather), Attack 1d4+1 (cudgel); STR 11, DEX 12, CON 13, INT 12, WIS 17, CHA 14, Save TN 13; The Staff of the Pale Thread is hers to use; on the road, Corvin carries it for her, wrapped in sacking. See her full character sheet in Appendix 7. Like every cleric in the Torrenmark, her healing prayers go nowhere; only the staff mends.

Corvin Dray (NPC) - Human Fighter, level 3, HP 36 (currently 29), AC 12, DR 2 (hide), Attack 1d8+3 (longsword); STR 16, DEX 13, CON 15, INT 10, WIS 9, CHA 8, Save TN 13; Alignment Orderly Kind. A quiet, haunted man who sleeps badly and wakes shouting. He will die for his sister without hesitation. Apart from the Ember Host, he is the only person who has been inside Mor Valcath and come back out, and he remembers almost none of it. When he sees a place he has been before, he remembers it, and the DN should tell the players so.

Event 3: Seen Again

If the heroes did not join Maren and Corvin in Event 2, they can still meet them. Roll 1d6 every game day, adding 1 for each day the heroes have not met them. On a 6 or higher, the heroes see the pair on the road ahead, or by a fire at dusk. Maren and Corvin wait, watch, and give the heroes a fair chance to come and talk.

The adventure needs the staff with the party. If the heroes still have not joined the pair by the time they reach Caldris (area 17), the Murmurwood (area 22) or Gatewatch (area 28), Maren and Corvin find them there instead: hunted, out of places to run, and asking for help.

Event 4: The Verses of the Sundering

On one night when the heroes are camped, your choice which, someone at the fire tells the old story of how Mor Valcath fell. Hand around the Verses of the Sundering from Appendix 6. Have each player read one verse aloud, in order, until the poem is done. If Maren or Corvin are with the party, it is Maren who knows the verses best; Corvin listens with his eyes closed.

Event 5: Cold From the East

On the fourth morning after the adventure begins, a dry, ashy wind starts blowing out of the east. It smells faintly of burned grass. Animals are restless. Birds are flying west.

Event 6: Smoke on Three Horizons

During the fifth game day, columns of smoke rise to the north, east and south of the heroes. By afternoon the sun is a dull copper coin behind them.

Event 7: The Host Marches

Just after dusk on the fifth game day, the Ember Host stops waiting. From that moment, every 4 game hours, one more encounter area falls under its control. Treat a fallen area as Ember Lands (area 43). Until then the Host holds only the Ember Lands themselves, with pickets at Hollin Bridge (area 39) and in the South Grass (area 40); those two areas are guarded lines, not fallen ground.

To fall, an area must either border area 43 at the start, or border an area that fell in the previous 4 hours. Spread the advance so that the safe ground keeps shrinking toward the Blackmire and Mor Valcath (area 44). The heroes should feel the army closing behind them like a door.

If the heroes are in an area when it falls, they see the front ranks of the Host coming over the horizon - soot-masked lines of Ember-sworn, goblin outriders and wagons - at the pace of a steady march. They have time to run, and the easiest direction is always toward the Blackmire.

Two regions cannot fall at this time: the elf kingdom of Iselmar (area 19) and the Murmurwood with the Pegasus Crags above it (areas 22-26). Those are older stories, and the Host is not yet strong enough to tell them.



The Torrenmark

Map 1: The Torrenmark is printed full page at the front of this book, just before the Background.

The Torrenmark is a broken bowl of country hemmed in by mountains and split down the middle by the Spine. In the northwest lie the lake, the pine valleys and the town of Hollowmere. From there the farm reaches of the Mending Synod run south down a long river valley to their capital, Caldris. East of the Synod's valley, between it and the Spine, lies the ancient Murmurwood, and south of the wood, beyond the Grindwater gorge, the birch forests of the elf kingdom of Iselmar. East of the Spine, the grass plains of the Tarrow-folk run south toward the Blackmire, where Mor Valcath lies drowned beneath the swamp.

Wilderness Travel

The encounter areas are large regions, each marked by its number on Map 1; the Map Key below lists which areas connect to which. Treat each area like a huge dungeon room: when the heroes cross into an area, run its encounter at once. The three Synod Reaches (areas 13-15) share one encounter. Each time the heroes cross from one of them into another, run it again.

Check for random encounters as the terrain table in Appendix 4 directs.

Map Key

Use this table with Map 1 to check which areas connect to which, especially when the Ember Host advances in Event 7.

Name	Terrain	Area	Connects To
Hollowmere	Town	1	2, 3, 4, 7
Lake Ishvane	Lake shore	2	1, 3, 4, 8, 9
Hollowmere Woods	Forest	3	1, 2, 7, 8
Stone Ferry Road	Forest road	4	1, 2, 5, 9, 13, 21
The Split Tooth	Mountains	5	4, 7, 10, 11, 13
Tilsen Flats	Valley	6	9, 21, 25, 27
Kestrel Hollow	Forest	7	1, 3, 5
Northfold	Farmland	8	2, 3, 9

Name	Terrain	Area	Connects To
Nearfields	Farmland	9	2, 4, 6, 8
Ferrin Gap	Canyon	10	5, 11, 12
Twin Cairns Vale	Hills	11	5, 10, 12, 13, 14
The Gloam Cut	Canyon	12	10, 11, 16
Synod Reaches (north)	Farmland	13	4, 5, 11, 14, 22, 24
Synod Reaches (middle)	Farmland	14	11, 13, 15, 24
Synod Reaches (south)	Farmland	15	14, 16, 17
Caldris Vale	Plains	16	12, 15, 17, 18
Caldris	City	17	15, 16, 18
The Grindwater	River	18	16, 17, 19, 20, 24
Iselmar Border	Forest	19	18, 20, 24
The Grindwater Chute	River gorge	20	18, 19
The Lantern Hills	Hills	21	4, 6, 22, 25
Murmurwood Edge	Haunted forest	22	13, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26
Centaur Rise	Haunted forest	23	22, 25, 26
The Dryad Oaks	Haunted forest	24	13, 14, 18, 19, 22, 26
The Pegasus Crags	Mountains	25	6, 21, 22, 23
The Quiet Hollow	Haunted forest	26	22, 23, 24
Gatewatch Pass	Mountains	27	6, 28
Gatewatch	Town	28	27, 29
The Windbrown	Plains	29	28, 30, 31, 34
Oxlow	Village	30	29, 31, 33
Three-Road Stone	Plains	31	29, 30, 34, 36, 37
Brennick Ford	Village	32	37, 38, 39, 42, 43
The Hexwood	Forest	33	30, 35
West Tarrow Plains	Plains	34	29, 31, 37, 40
The Char Barrens	Burned plains	35	33, 36, 43
Tarrow	Village	36	31, 35, 37, 38, 43

Name	Terrain	Area	Connects To
The Broken Kingsroad	Plains	37	31, 32, 34, 36, 38, 39, 40
The Runner	Plains	38	32, 36, 37, 43
Hollin Bridge	River	39	32, 37, 40, 41
The South Grass	Plains	40	34, 37, 39, 41
Kingsroad East	Hill canyons	41	39, 40, 42
Blackmire Edge	Swamp	42	32, 41, 43, 44
Ember Lands	Burned plains	43	32, 35, 36, 38, 42
Mor Valcath	Swamp ruins	44	42

The Spine Mountains separate the western valleys from the eastern plains. The only road through is Gatewatch Pass (area 27) in the north. At the south end of the Spine, the elves of Iselmar let no one pass. The heroes can also cross by air if the Warden of the Wood summons pegasi in area 26; the pegasi land them at Blackmire Edge (area 42). On the eastern side, the canyons of Kingsroad East (area 41) cut through low hills from the plains down to the Blackmire.

Townsfolk and Common Folk

Use these numbers for ordinary people the heroes meet: villagers, refugees, farmers and travelers.

> **Common Folk** - HP 4, AC 10, DR -1, Attacks 1, Attack 1d4 (knife, tool or fist); Saves Quick +0, Tough +0, Mind +0, Size Medium, Intelligence Average (8-10), Save TN 16; Alignment varies. Most are frightened, tired and trying to get somewhere safe.

1. Hollowmere

> Hollowmere stands half on land and half on the water. Its oldest houses sit on great stone piers that marched out into Lake Ishvane long before anyone living was born; newer houses perch on tarred timber stilts between them, joined by plank walks and rope bridges. Lamps hang from every post. The smell of smoked fish and woodsmoke drifts over everything, and the lake laps gently at the pilings below.

About 500 people live in Hollowmere, not counting the farms around the shore. The town fishes, farms the shore fields and trades salt fish over the mountains. It has no lord. A council of pier-wardens settles disputes, and the town pays a yearly tithe to the Mending Synod in

Caldris, three days' ride south, which in return sends a mendicant priest to bless the boats every spring.

Every service the heroes would expect from a town this size is available at fair prices. Ordinary coin is used here: copper, silver, gold and platinum.

The town has one sign of the Hush everywhere you look: limps, missing fingers, crooked arms set badly years ago. Nobody remarks on it. It is simply how people are.

1A. The Salt Kettle Inn

> The Salt Kettle sits at the end of the longest pier, a low building of black timber and old stone with a great copper kettle hanging over its door, green with age. Warm light and noise spill out of the shutters. Up the steps, through the door, and the smell of fish stew and pipe smoke wraps around you like a blanket.
>
> Nothing here has changed. The same scarred tables, the same fire, the same bad painting of a storm over the lake. An old man is telling a story by the hearth to a ring of children. A young woman with flour on her sleeves is running the bar with a ladle in one hand and a tally slate in the other. She sees you, stops, and laughs out loud.

The young woman is Petra Vell. Three years ago her father, Odran Vell, ran the Salt Kettle. Last winter Odran fell through the ice of the lake road and broke his hip. It never healed straight, as nothing in the Torrenmark does. He now sits in a padded chair by the kitchen door and shouts advice while Petra does all the work.

> **Petra Vell (Innkeeper) and Odran Vell (Her Father)** - Petra: HP 10, AC 11, DR -1, Attack 1d4 (ladle, surprisingly hard); Odran: HP 6, AC 9, DR -1, Attack 1d4 (walking stick); cannot stand without help; Both Impartial Kind. Use Common Folk stats for the five or six other patrons.

The patrons talk in low voices tonight. Any of them the heroes approach is friendly half the time (roll 1d6; on 1-3 they talk). Roll 1d8 or choose from the Salt Kettle Rumors.

1d8	Who	What They Say
1	Odran Vell, from his chair	"A staff that heals? Hah. And I'm the King of Valcath. If it's real, it was made in the Blackmire by something that wants paying back."
2	A fisherman at the bar	"Men in black sashes came through four days back, asking every boat about a glass staff. Didn't buy a drink. Didn't smile. Didn't like them."
3	A woman by the window	"A Synod rider came through yesterday. Said whoever has the white staff, or knows of it, should ride for Caldris and see the Synod at once. Not me. I've got nets to mend."

1d8	Who	What They Say
4	The old storyteller	"I've told stories by this fire for sixty years and I'll tell you one more for free. There's a staff, and it wants to go home. Home is down in the dark under the Blackmire. You'll see it before the moon is full, and you'll wish you hadn't."
5	A girl helping Petra	"I bet it came out of the Murmurwood. People who go in there come out not knowing their own names. Or they don't come out."
6	A boy by the fire	"I saw the lantern fox up on the Split Tooth! White as milk, tail glowing like a candle. My gran says if you follow it, it takes you where you need to go, not where you want to go."
7	A Gatewatch trader	"They say there's smoke in the east, over Tarrow way. Lots of smoke. My cousin in Gatewatch says it's grass fires. My cousin is an idiot."
8	A tired mendicant of the Synod	"The Synod says the mending will return when the faithful are worthy. I've been worthy for forty years. My knees would like a word with the gods."

If Event 2 has not yet happened when the heroes reach the Salt Kettle, it can happen here, with Maren singing by the fire for her supper.

2. Lake Ishvane

> The lake lies still and dark under the autumn sky, deep enough that the water looks black even at noon. Pines crowd its western and southern shores. To the north and east, a patchwork of stubble fields climbs toward the mountains. Far out, a lone fishing boat rides at anchor, its sail furled.

3. Hollowmere Woods

> Tall pines stand close together here, their lower branches long dead and silver. The forest floor is soft with needles, and the light comes down in pale shafts. A woodpecker hammers somewhere above. The air smells of resin and wet earth.

4. Stone Ferry Road

> The road runs down from the lake to the old stone ferry landing, where a cable ferry once crossed the Hollow Run. The ferry is long gone; a narrow stone bridge of later make crosses the water now, its rails worn smooth by three centuries of hands. Past the bridge the road

splits, one branch following the river south toward the Synod farmlands, the other bending east into green hills.

The road is not as empty as it looks. Six Ember-sworn scouts lie hidden in the pines near the fork, under cut branches and heaps of needles, waiting for a horn from their captain, whose party is working the roads beyond the hills in area 6. They are so well hidden that a hero would have to climb a tree to have any chance of seeing them. Even then, the hero must succeed on a Wisdom Chance Roll against TN 17 to spot them.

If any scout is spotted, all of them attack, blowing a horn and shouting the Host's battle cry: "Ash for the Regent!"

The horn is not a call for help. It is a warning to the captain in area 6 that the hunt is on. The scouts fight to the death, trying to cut the heroes off from Hollowmere.

6 Ember-sworn Scouts (Bandit) - HP 8 each, AC 12, DR 0, Attacks 1, Attack 1d6+1 (shortbow or blade); Saves Quick +2, Tough +0, Mind +1, Size Medium, Alignment Wild Vile (Reaver), Intelligence Average (8-10), Save TN 16; Special Attack: Hidden Shot - piercing, ranged 60 ft, +2 to hit, 1d6+1. From concealment before the scout is located, the shot deals an extra 1d4 damage; after it attacks, its position is revealed. Special Defense: Unlike ordinary bandits, Ember-sworn do not flee or surrender. They are zealots.

† **Bandit:** existing creature; Monster Trove for Early Adventurers, entry "Bandit". Rules entry

All Ember-sworn wear soot-black masks of oiled cloth and a black sash. Each carries a small iron brand shaped like a crown of flame.

5. The Split Tooth

The road climbs through flaming aspens, red and gold against the gray rock. A cold wind ruffles your hair. To the south, the snow-capped crown of the Split Tooth rises above the valley - a single peak cloven from summit to roots, as if someone had driven an axe into the mountain and left it there.

While the heroes cross this area, there is a 30% chance that one of them, chosen at random, glimpses the Lantern Fox. If enemies are chasing the heroes into this area, the chance rises to 80%.

The Lantern Fox - HP 60, AC 20, DR 0, Attacks 0, Attack none; Saves Quick +6, Tough +2, Mind +5, Size Small, Alignment Orderly Kind (Guardian), Intelligence High (13-14), Save TN 13; Special Attack: none. The fox never attacks. Special Defense: The Lantern Fox cannot be caught. It is always just ahead.

If the fox is seen, it trots out of the aspens well ahead of the party: a small white fox whose tail glows with a steady candle-flame light. It looks back once, then sets off up the mountain. It

stays just ahead of the heroes, a pale flicker through the brush, never more than a bowshot away and never closer, until it has led them through the great cleft in the Split Tooth and down the far side, across the river at a hidden ford in the Synod Reaches (area 13), and to the first black trunks of the Murmurwood (area 22). There it bounds away at full speed into the trees.

If the heroes harm or kill the Lantern Fox, its light goes out and its body is gone. For the next 7 days, every hero who struck it suffers -1 to all Save Rolls. Animals shy from them. Maren, if present, will not speak to them for a day.

6. Tilsen Flats

> A wide mountain valley opens around you. Pine and aspen blaze on the slopes to the north and south. Far to the west, the dark water of Lake Ishvane glimmers. Eastward, the valley climbs and narrows toward the gray wall of the Spine.
>
> Down the valley road, a group of hunched figures is hauling a heavy two-wheeled cart westward. They lean into the traces together, swaying in step. Their robes are thick and gray and hooded, the dull gray of the Mending Synod's mendicants.

The figures are 1d10 x 100 feet away when the heroes first see them, and they see the heroes at the same moment. If the heroes do not approach, one of the robed figures points in their direction, and another walks slowly toward them.

These are Ember-sworn disguised as Synod mendicants. Hoods and gray masks of cloth hide their faces. Heavy gloves cover their hands and their sashes are hidden under the robes. Sharp-eyed heroes may notice that they are bundled up a little too much for an autumn afternoon, and that they walk in step like soldiers.

When the others have gathered by the heroes, their leader speaks: "Peace of the mending to you, travelers. Forgive an old priest his questions. Days ago a holy relic was stolen from us: a staff of white glass. One of our brothers lies in the cart with the coughing fever, and only the relic can save him. Have you heard anything of a white staff?"

The cart holds a bound and gagged Tarrow-folk farmer, not a sick monk. If the heroes look, they see him.

If the heroes claim to know nothing, the leader thanks them and signals his brothers to step aside. If the heroes admit to having seen or heard of the staff, the leader's voice tightens: Where? When? Who held it? If the heroes reveal that they have the staff, or if Maren or Corvin are with them, the leader tears off his hood, shouts "Ash for the Regent!", and the disguised Ember-sworn attack.

On their first turn, the Ember-sworn are slowed by their robes and can only move half their normal distance. Each round, each one has a 1 in 4 chance of spending its turn tearing off its robe instead of attacking.

The Ember-sworn try to drive the heroes back west toward the lake. The leader blows a horn. If the scouts in area 4 are still alive, they hear it from across the hills and come running, but they arrive only after 1d4+2 turns. If the fight is still going, both groups close in. All of them fight to the death to take the staff.

The farmer in the cart is Hobbe Lanner of Brennick Ford. If rescued, he tells the heroes that the Host has been taking people from the eastern villages for weeks, and that his village of Brennick Ford (area 32) is next.

> **Brother Cindrel, Ember Adept (Disguised Leader)** - Human Wizard, level 3, HP 15, AC 11, DR 0, Attacks 1, Attack 1d4 (dagger); Saves Quick +1, Tough +0, Mind +2, Size Medium, Alignment Orderly Vile (Tyrant), Intelligence Exceptional (15-16), Save TN 13; Spells (each once per day; targets add 3 to their Save TN): Mystic Bolt, Lethargic, Rootbind, Binding Threads, Searing Lances. Special Defense: Cindrel uses Lethargic early, then Binding Threads to pin the strongest-looking fighter.
>
> **6 Ember-sworn (Soldier)** - HP 14 each, AC 14, DR 2, Attacks 1, Attack 1d8+2 (spear); Saves Quick +1, Tough +3, Mind +2, Size Medium, Alignment Orderly Vile (Tyrant), Intelligence Average (8-10), Save TN 16; Special Attack: Formation Thrust - piercing, melee 10 ft, +2 to hit, 1d8+2. With an allied Ember-sworn within 5 ft, the attack gains +1 to hit and pushes the target 5 ft on a failed Tough save. Special Defense: Closed Line - while adjacent to another Ember-sworn, +1 AC and +1 Mind. Splitting the line by 10 ft or more, or forcing them onto broken ground, removes both bonuses.

† Soldier: existing creature; Monster Trove for Early Adventurers, entry "Soldier". Rules entry

7. Kestrel Hollow

> Trails lead deeper into the trees, but something about this hollow is wrong. The woods look the same as any other, yet the air is heavy and still. No birds call. Even the insects are quiet.

Booted tracks crossed this hollow a few days ago. Following them leads the heroes to an old campsite in a clearing.

> The camp smells of old smoke and something worse. Blackened bones lie in the cold fire pit. The grass around it has been trampled flat, and a broken spear lies half buried in the leaves.

Searching the camp turns up a heavy bronze ring-torc, the kind worn around the neck, set with four amber stones (worth 50 gp each). Engraved on the inside are the words: "Ostric Vane, Torch-Warden of Tarrow."

Tarrow-folk heroes, Maren or Corvin recognize the torc at once. Torch-wardens are the chosen protectors of a Tarrow village, and the torc is forged closed around the warden's neck on the day of their oath. Only death takes it off. Ostric was the warden of Tarrow. Maren knew him well, and his death is the first sign that Tarrow itself may be gone. Ostric had followed Maren and Corvin west to warn them that the Host was hunting them. The Host's scouts caught up with him here first.

8. Northfold

> A sea of grain sweeps across the northern flats. The stalks hang heavy and gold, ready for the scythe. Yet there is nobody here to cut them. Not a single worker, not a single cart.

The few farmhouses here have been abandoned in a hurry, doors left open and pots still on the hearth. Each turn the heroes search, they have a 20% chance of finding signs of a fight in a field or farmyard: trampled grain, a broken pitchfork, dark stains in the dirt. Booted tracks and the prints of heavy wagons surround each site. Heroes who have already met the Ember-sworn recognize their boots 60% of the time.

All the tracks lead east, toward Gatewatch Pass (area 27), the plains beyond it, and, far beyond those, the Char Barrens (area 35).

9. Nearfields

> Here, farmers and their hired hands work through fields of barley. The grain falls in long gold rows before their scythes, and children follow behind, binding sheaves.

> **10-20 Farmers (Common Folk)** - HP 4 each, AC 10, DR -1, Attack 1d4 (scythe or sickle)

The workers are nervous. They will talk with the heroes only 20% of the time, and even then only to say: "Good luck on your road. We want no trouble." One time in five, one of them adds: "We don't know what's happening. People have been going missing from the farms at night. Whole families, gone. So we don't talk to strangers. What in the gods' names is happening to this country?"

10. Ferrin Gap

> Granite walls rise on both sides of a narrow canyon floor. A cold wind whistles down between the cliffs, and your footsteps echo back at you.

11. Twin Cairns Vale

> Two great cairns of piled stone stand on hilltops to either side of the road, each taller than a house and furred with moss. Between them a green mountain valley opens out, full of the sound of running water and birdsong.

The cairns are Valcathi waymarkers from before the Sundering. Each has a flat stone near its top carved with a twelve-pointed star, the sign of Ilvessa. A hero who climbs either cairn (Strength Chance Roll, TN 12) can see far to the south, where the white bell towers of Caldris rise, and to the east, across the river, a vast dark smudge of forest. That is the Murmurwood.

12. The Gloam Cut

> Sheer granite cliffs climb so high overhead that they seem to have no tops. The canyon floor below is narrow but well traveled and clear. It is dim here even at midday; only for one hour around noon does sunlight reach the bottom of the cut.

13-15. The Synod Reaches

> Green farmland stretches between the mountain walls in a long, broad valley. Farmhouses and orchards dot the land, and many well-used lanes run south to join a central road.

Each turn the heroes travel here, there is a 15% chance that they meet a farm family heading south with everything they own piled in a dogcart. On the main road, the chance rises to 30% in area 13 and 70% in area 14. In area 15, a family can always be found trudging south down the main road.

> **2-20 Refugees (Common Folk)** - HP 4 each (1-9 for children and the elderly), AC 10, DR -1, Attack 1d4.

The refugees are only interested in the road ahead, and stop to talk only 20% of the time. If they do, they have a story: "See the smoke over the hills there? Devils, they were. Fire-masked devils, come out of the east three nights ago. They burned the Callow farm with the Callows still inside. Now we're going to Caldris. The Synod will protect us. They have to."

16. Caldris Vale

> Dust hangs over the highway that runs down the middle of the plain. A slow river of people shuffles and limps south along it, toward the distant white bell towers of Caldris.

Refugees stagger south, sometimes squabbling over food. All are too tired or frightened to talk to the heroes. The fields along the road are deserted. Each turn there is a 10% chance that a fight breaks out on the roadside, as 2d10 refugees brawl over who gets to strip an orchard or dig up a field of turnips.

Each game hour there is a 25% chance that a patrol of Synod Wardens rides past. Half the time they are riding away from Caldris.

Warden-Captain Aldis Rook - Human Fighter, level 4, HP 48, AC 12, DR 3 (chainmail), Attack 1d8+2 (longsword); Saves Quick +1, Tough +2, Mind +1, Alignment Orderly Kind (Guardian), Save TN 12; A hard, honest woman who has stopped believing the Synod but has not stopped doing her job.

10 Synod Wardens (Guard) - HP 12 each, AC 14, DR 1, Attacks 1, Attack 1d8+1 (mace or spear); Saves Quick +1, Tough +2, Mind +2, Size Medium, Alignment Orderly Impartial (Arbiter), Intelligence Average (8-10), Save TN 16; Special Attack: Shield Press - bludgeoning, melee 5 ft, +2 to hit, 1d8+1. On a failed Quick save the target is pushed 5 ft. Special Defense: Call the Watch - a Warden may spend a turn blowing a horn; more Wardens arrive in 1d6 rounds if any are near.

† **Guard:** existing creature; Monster Trove for Early Adventurers, entry "Guard". Rules entry

The heroes have a 30% chance of getting the Warden-Captain to stop and talk. If they do, she shakes her head and says: "Madness, all of it. We ride up and down this line of beggars trying to keep order, and it can't be done. Where are they all running to? There's no road out of Caldris except into Iselmar or the Murmurwood. Iselmar has closed its border, and nobody walks into the Murmurwood and comes out the same."

Then she studies them. "While I'm asking - have you heard anything of a white glass staff?"

If the heroes admit that they have seen or heard of the staff, Captain Rook has them pulled up onto horses behind her Wardens and escorts them directly to the Synod Hall in Caldris (area 17b). She is polite about it. She is not asking.

17. Caldris

Read this when the heroes approach the city:

> Seven white bell towers rise from the foothills of the southern mountains, each crowned with a bronze bell that catches the sun. They stand in a ring around the narrow streets and tiled roofs of Caldris. A long line of refugees chokes the road leading to the main gate.

Read this once the heroes are inside the gate:

> The bases of the bell towers are buried under a crowd of people. Every street is jammed with frightened refugees, milling and weeping and shouting for news under the calm white stone of the towers.

Caldris is the seat of the Mending Synod, the priesthood that rules the southern Torrenmark. The Synod teaches that the Hush is a test of faith and that Ilvessa's mending will return when the people are worthy. It has taught this for three hundred years. Every spring it sends mendicants to bless the boats and fields of the Torrenmark, and every autumn it collects the tithe.

Caldris is not large. Inside the ring of bell towers it is barely a mile across, three counting the houses outside the low wall. In ordinary times about 5,000 people live here. Now there are three times that many. Most services are available, but the city's only smith works for the Synod and will not take outside work.

Two places may interest the heroes: the Cracked Bell tavern (17a) and the Synod Hall (17b).

> **2-20 Refugees (Common Folk)** - HP 4 each, AC 10, DR -1, Attack 1d4.

The refugees are close to panic, and full of terrible stories about the east. Only 1 in 20 has actually seen the Ember Host clearly; the rest repeat wild tales of fire-devils, man-eating goblins and a black shape in the night sky. None of them are any help. All they want is safe passage south.

On every corner, Synod Wardens are trying to keep the peace and failing. Each turn there is a 20% chance that they leap in to break up a fight, and a 40% chance they are helping someone find a lost child or a place to sleep. Their most important orders, though, are to find the bearer of the white staff and bring that person to the Synod Hall as fast as they can. They have been told the staff may be the city's only hope.

> **10 Synod Wardens (Guard)** - HP 12 each, AC 14, DR 1, Attack 1d8+1, Save TN 16.

17A. THE CRACKED BELL

> The tavern is packed shoulder to shoulder with people trying to forget why they came to Caldris. It is hot inside despite the cold night, and strangely quiet; everyone is wrapped in their own thoughts. Only three people seem less sunk than the rest: a broad man in a sheepskin coat, a tall, lean woman in forester's green and brown, and a gray-haired woman in an old leather jerkin with a patch over one eye. They are moving through the crowd, finding seats for the old and clearing space for mothers with babies.

> **2-20 Refugees (Common Folk)** - HP 4 each, AC 10, DR -1, Attack 1d4.

The heroes can strike up a conversation with the three helpers.

The man in the sheepskin coat: "I should leave tonight. The Synod says we're safe here, but they've got no power. Where are their miracles? Three hundred years they've been promising the mending comes back. How can they speak for a goddess who doesn't answer?"

The forester: "The Wardens are combing the city for someone carrying a glass staff. Why? Could a staff save us from what's coming over the hills?"

The woman with the eye patch: "Every road south is blocked. Iselmar's closed its border; the elves turn everyone back at the river. You can go into the Murmurwood through the southern passes, but I've never heard of anyone coming out right. That leaves the Grindwater, between the wood and the elf lands. That's a bad road. Not a happy choice."

17B. The Synod Hall

> At the center of the city, a great domed hall rises between the seven bell towers, its walls white and its doors bronze. Wardens in gray surcoats ring the building shoulder to shoulder, holding back the crowd that presses toward the doors.

The heroes cannot get into the Synod Hall without passing the Wardens.

> **100 Synod Wardens (Guard)** - HP 12 each, AC 14, DR 1, Attack 1d8+1, Save TN 16.

The Wardens let no one through except those with news of the white staff. Those who bring such news are studied for a long moment, then ushered inside before the Synod.

> A long, cool hall stretches away under a white dome, its ceiling held up by rows of slender pillars. At the far end, nine high-backed chairs stand in a half circle on a polished floor. In each chair sits an old man or woman in gray robes trimmed with silver thread, a silver twelve-pointed star hanging at each throat.

> **First Mender Halvard Ost** - Human Cleric, level 7, HP 56, AC 10, DR 0, Attack 1d6 (staff); Saves Quick +0, Tough +1, Mind +3, Alignment Orderly Impartial (Arbiter), Save TN 9.
>
> **8 Synod Elders** - Human Clerics, level 5, HP 40, 38, 31, 35, 40, 27, 24, 26, AC 10, DR 0, Attack 1d6 (staff), Save TN 11.

The Synod Hall is large and grand: 150 feet long, 50 feet wide and 30 feet tall under the dome. The elders are desperate for news of the staff. Riders from the Ember Host have brought them an offer: hand the white staff over to the Host, and the Host will spare Caldris. The Synod's prayers for guidance have come back empty, as healing prayers always do here. They have no army worth the name. The staff is the only thing they have left to bargain with.

The elders ask the heroes for their news. If the heroes have the staff and say so, the elders beg to be allowed to hold it. If the heroes refuse, the elders plead with them to give it up to the Host, as the Host demands.

The staff has other ideas. Any elder who touches it is struck by a crack of white light for 3d6 radiant damage. Roll 1d8 to see which elder reaches for it first; it is beneath the First Mender's dignity to rise from his chair.

If this happens, the hall erupts. The First Mender declares the staff a cursed thing and commands the heroes to carry it out of Caldris at once and never bring it back, for the sake of the city.

The Synod elders are not wicked. They are frightened old people who have preached a promise for their whole lives and have just watched it strike one of them down. The staff rejects them because the Synod has spent three centuries selling hope by the coin, as the priest-kings of

Valcath once sold healing. Maren understands this instantly if she is present, and may say so in the hall, which does not help.

Whatever the Synod says, the heroes are now pointed at the Blackmire. Every road leads there.

18. The Grindwater

> Below Caldris, the river from the Synod valley is joined by the slow, dark Murmur flowing out of the Murmurwood and by cold streams from the canyons. Together they become the Grindwater, a churning torrent that roars between steep banks and turns south toward a gorge. To the northeast, a path follows the Murmur into the shadow of enormous trees. To the southeast, the tall, pale trunks of the Iselmar birch forest march away into the distance.

The heroes can cross the river easily at a few shallow fords the locals know. Anywhere else, the Grindwater cannot be crossed without a raft.

A hero who tries to wade or swim across makes a Strength Chance Roll against TN 14. On a success, the hero gets back to the bank they started from. On a failure, the current sweeps them 100 feet downstream, tumbling and choking, and they take 1d8 bludgeoning damage. They must roll again, and keep rolling until they succeed or drop to 0 HP and drown. Nobody can be swept all the way across to the far bank.

The heroes can build a raft from the riverside timber. It takes 1d4 hours for every person the raft is meant to carry, so a raft for six takes 6d4 hours.

The river is safe for rafts here. If the heroes let their raft float downstream, it carries them into the Grindwater Chute (area 20).

19. Iselmar Border

> Slim gray birches grow in tight clusters, their trunks only a few feet apart. Beyond them, the forest darkens and thickens into deeper shadow.

After the heroes have spent more than an hour in this area, elves step out of the trees on every side and surround them.

> **15 Thornwood Wardens of Iselmar** - Elves, HP 17 each, AC 14, DR 1 (leather), Attacks 1, Attack 1d8 (longsword) or 1d8 (longbow, 100 ft); Saves Quick +4, Tough +1, Mind +2, Size Medium, Alignment Orderly Kind (Guardian), Intelligence Bright (11-12), Save TN 16; Special Defense: Twilight Sight - outdoors at night they see as if it were day.

The elves' bows are drawn and their swords are out, but they do not attack. Their leader, a silver-haired elf named Thessarin, calls on the heroes to lay down their weapons. The

Wardens have orders to take the heroes to the edge of the Murmurwood at the Dryad Oaks (area 24), for a purpose they do not fully understand.

If the heroes fight, they fight the whole elven host, one unit every game hour, each unit the same as the first. The elves keep coming, wave after wave, defending their home with cold fury, and they fight to the death. They do not chase the heroes past the northern edge of their land.

If asked why they have orders to take strangers to the Murmurwood, Thessarin answers: "We have seen signs of a terrible darkness rising in the east. Caldris and all the Synod lands will fall unless something extraordinary happens. A shining traveler passed through our forest some days ago and told us that you would come. We do not know the traveler's name. We were told to take you to the edge of the Murmurwood, and we are doing so."

If Sefiran Vael, the exiled elf wizard among the pre-generated characters, is in the party, Thessarin knows him. That conversation is cold and short, and Sefiran's player should be told that Thessarin is the one who voted for his exile.

20. The Grindwater Chute

> The Grindwater narrows here and plunges between two towering bluffs, a white, roaring chute of foam and black rock. The noise is so loud you have to shout.

Whoever steers a raft through the Chute makes both a Strength Chance Roll and a Dexterity Chance Roll each turn, both against TN 13. If the pilot fails either, the raft shatters on a rock and everyone aboard is thrown into the rapids, closer to the east bank. Use the swimming rules from area 18 to see whether each hero reaches the rocks on the east side. Heroes who reach the east bank find goat paths climbing the cliff into the birch forest of Iselmar (area 19).

A raft moves 2 miles per turn through the Chute. A raft that survives three turns comes out onto slow water at the southern edge of the birch forest (area 19), where the elves find the heroes as described there.

21. The Lantern Hills

> A hidden valley of soft green hills lies between the Stone Ferry Road and the wall of the Spine. Groves of aspen, still green this late in the year, shiver in the wind. The valley floor is carpeted in tall soft grass. At night, faint lights drift among the trees like lanterns carried by people who are never there. To the south, the hills slope down into the dimness of a much older wood.

The drifting lights are harmless: the oldest edge of the Murmurwood's magic, leaking out into the hills. Heroes who camp here sleep deeply and wake with no bad dreams. They also notice, with a jolt, that their small cuts and bruises from the day have faded a little overnight. It is a sign that the Hush has limits.

22. Murmurwood Edge

> The canopy thickens overhead. The sunlight dapples, dims, and then goes out altogether. The trunks here are twisted and knotted, their bark almost black, furred with pale moss. Ahead lie deeper and deeper shadows.

Anyone who enters the Murmurwood (areas 22, 23, 24 and 26) falls under its charm. When a hero leaves the wood, they cannot describe what they saw or did there, though their memories are perfectly clear to themselves. They simply cannot make the words come.

Remember that the Hush does not reach under these trees. Healing magic, including healing spells and potions the heroes may have been carrying uselessly, works normally in the Murmurwood. Do not tell the players this; let them discover it.

If the heroes press on, read the following:

> Between the twisted trunks, pale shapes are moving. They drift close, then away. It is hard to see their size or shape through the trees. Then a voice speaks out of the dark, very near, and very old:
>
> "Who walks under the Murmur? Name yourselves."

Unless the heroes turn back, the spirits ask each of them for their name. If any hero gives a false name, the Sentinels of the Murmur attack. If at any time before or during a fight the heroes give their true names, or show the Staff of the Pale Thread, the spirits stop at once and let them pass.

> **6 Sentinels of the Murmur (Garrison Ghosts)** - HP 10 each, AC 11, DR 0, Attacks 1, Attack 1d6 (spectral spear, necrotic, +3 to hit; DR does not reduce); Saves Quick +2, Tough +0, Mind +1, Size Medium, Alignment Orderly Impartial (Arbiter), Intelligence Average (8-10), Save TN 16; Special Defense: Immune to physical damage. Divine and holy magic deals double damage to them. Night Vision 60 ft; they feel the living within 60 ft.

† **Garrison Ghosts:** existing creature; Monster Trove for Early Adventurers, entry "Garrison Ghosts". Rules entry

When the spirits let the heroes pass, their leader says: "The Warden of the Wood awaits you. You are expected." The pale shapes part to make way, all but one, which leads the heroes half a mile down a deer path to the Quiet Hollow (area 26).

If the heroes ask their guide about the spirits, it answers: "Long ago, before the world broke, we were sworn to keep this wood whole. That was our oath. When the city fell, we failed to keep it from the wood's edge. So we keep watch here, for as long as there is anything to keep."

23. Centaur Rise

> "Halt!"

> A man's broad chest and shoulders suddenly rise above a head-high bush. He looks down at you from well above your heads, a spear poised in one muscled hand. "You are surrounded. Come with me to the Warden of the Wood, or be judged here by my spear and those of my kin."

6 Centaurs - HP 35 each, AC 14, DR 0, Attacks 2, Attack 1d4+1, 1d4+1; Saves Quick +2, Tough +1, Mind +2, Size Large, Alignment Orderly Kind (Guardian), Intelligence Bright (11-12), Save TN 15; Special Attack: Hoof Stomp - 10 ft, Quick save or 1d6+2 bludgeoning, cooldown 2 rounds. Special Defense: Sure-footed. Ignores nonmagical difficult terrain.

† **Centaur:** existing creature; Monster Trove for Early Adventures, entry "Centaur". Rules entry

If the heroes resist, the centaurs fight to the death. Otherwise, they take the heroes' weapons, sling the heroes onto their backs and carry them to the Quiet Hollow (area 26). They hand the weapons back there, once the Warden has spoken.

The centaurs will not say anything to the heroes until they have seen the Warden of the Wood. To every question they answer: "The Warden will answer all things."

24. The Dryad Oaks

> Enormous, deep-rooted oaks tower overhead. Grass and brush still grow under them, littered with acorns and twigs, but you cannot see more than a few feet into the wood in any direction.

Unless another creature of the wood is escorting the heroes, the dryads let themselves be seen after the heroes have traveled more than a quarter mile into the area. The heroes glimpse them only for moments: long-haired women whispering to one another in low, sweet voices. They make no attempt to speak to the heroes and vanish if approached. If a forest creature is escorting the heroes, they do not see the dryads at all.

1-6 Dryads - HP 22 each, AC 11, DR 0, Attacks 1, Attack 1d6+1; Saves Quick +2, Tough +2, Mind +2, Size Medium, Alignment Impartial Impartial (Wanderer), Intelligence Average (8-10), Save TN 15; Special Attack: Thorn Spray - 30 ft, Quick save or 1d4+1 piercing, cooldown 3 rounds. Special Defense: Nature Bond - once per day, shunts up to half the damage it would take into nearby plants.

† **Dryad:** existing creature; Monster Trove for Early Adventures, entry "Dryad". Rules entry

The Warden of the Wood gives the dryads their home and protection, and they guard the wood in return. They whisper to each other whenever they see intruders, and the whispers travel to the Warden faster than any messenger.

25. The Pegasus Crags

> Steep, craggy canyons climb among the high peaks. Clouds race over small blue-green mountain meadows, and the wind smells of snow.

Each turn, the heroes have a 15% chance of meeting pegasi grazing in one of the meadows. The pegasi are calm and pay the heroes no mind. They are so gentle that the heroes can mount them.

> **1-12 Pegasi** - HP 37 each, AC 14, DR 0, Attacks 1, Attack 2d6+2; Saves Quick +2, Tough +1, Mind +2, Size Large, Alignment Orderly Impartial (Arbiter), Intelligence Average (8-10), Save TN 15; Special Attack: Wing Strike - Quick save or 1d8+2 bludgeoning, cooldown 2 rounds.

† **Pegasus:** existing creature; Monster Trove for Early Adventures, entry "Pegasus". Rules entry

Once the heroes are mounted, the pegasi leap into the sky. In the air they fly straight to the Quiet Hollow (area 26), whatever the heroes try to make them do. A hero who threatens a pegasus is bucked once in midair and must make a Dexterity Chance Roll against TN 13 or fall.

26. The Quiet Hollow

> The dense oak wood opens suddenly into a glade. Soft green grass carpets a gentle hill, and at its top a shelf of white rock juts out over the slope. On that rock stands a unicorn, its head high, its coat pale as frost. It is the most beautiful thing you have ever seen, and there is a deep sadness in its eyes.

If the heroes approach the rock, the unicorn speaks to them. It can call the creatures of the wood to its aid if the heroes are foolish enough to attack it.

> **The Warden of the Wood (Unicorn)** - HP 105, AC 16, DR 0, Attacks 2, Attack 2d6+4 (horn), 1d8+4 (hooves); Saves Quick +4, Tough +3, Mind +4, Size Large, Alignment Wild Kind (Liberator), Intelligence High (13-14), Save TN 11; Special Attack: Healing Touch - restores 3d8 HP to a wounded creature it touches, cooldown 2 rounds. Glade Step - steps from any tree in the wood to any other. Special Defense: Magic Resistance (+2 to saves against spells). Immune to poison and charm; its presence lifts minor curses.

† **Unicorn:** existing creature; Monster Trove for Seasoned Adventurers, entry "Unicorn". Rules entry

As the heroes come near, the unicorn speaks: "I am the Warden of the Wood. You walk under my trees. I grant you passage, and the help of every creature that lives here, for as long as you remain within my borders." From that moment until the heroes leave the Murmurwood, no creature of the wood attacks them unless they attack first.

The Warden heals any hero who is wounded, using its Healing Touch as often as it can. This is the first time the heroes see anything other than the staff close a wound outright. The Warden

says only: "The silence your land suffers is not the silence of the gods. It is the silence of one goddess who was wronged. My wood is older than her anger."

At a moment of your choosing, the Warden tells the heroes this:

"Some days ago, a shining traveler came to this hollow. Her robes were the color of moonlight, and there was a line of silver stitches across her palm, as if her hand had once been cut and mended. She knew you were coming. She left a message for the one who carries the white staff. These were her words:

'Fly over the Spine. Within two days you must stand in Mor Valcath. If you are worthy, the gift that was taken from the land will be given back.'

Those were her very words. The gift that was taken from the land."

The Warden knows nothing more about this. It does know that a great evil is coming that will soon break the peace of its wood, and it says so.

If the heroes ask the Warden for help, it calls the pegasi. The great winged horses, one for each hero, circle silently overhead and land as lightly as falling leaves in the grass. They let the heroes mount, then sweep up into the air, their wings hissing on the wind, and rise over the glade. Looking back, the heroes see the Warden standing proud on its white rock. It calls after them: "The gift waits for you. Carry the peace of this wood in your hearts. Soon, it may live nowhere else."

The pegasi fly the heroes east, over the Spine Mountains, and set them down at Blackmire Edge (area 42) at dawn. Heroes flying out of the Murmurwood fall under its charm as they leave (see area 22). The flight is long and the wind is lulling: each hero makes a Tough save each turn of the flight or falls asleep in the saddle. Sleeping heroes do not fall; the pegasi will not let them. They simply wake up over the Blackmire with no idea how long they were out.

If the heroes are foolish enough to attack the Warden of the Wood, it calls at once for the creatures of the forest. Roll immediately on the Murmurwood encounter table in Appendix 4. From then until the heroes leave the wood, every creature they meet attacks on sight. If the heroes are leaving the wood, the creatures only try to chase them out.

27. Gatewatch Pass

> Bright leaves drift down from the trees onto the canyon floor. The old road runs peacefully between the mountain spires, worn into ruts by centuries of wagon wheels.

28. Gatewatch

> Smoke rises lazily from the chimneys of Gatewatch. Snug stone houses and shops crowd the floor of the pass where it opens toward the eastern plains. The smell of baking bread sweetens the cold wind, and somewhere a smith is hammering.

Gatewatch is a toll town at the eastern mouth of the pass, much like Hollowmere but built on solid ground and walled with stone. Its townsfolk have heard talk of an army in the east and refuse to believe it; they laugh off all such talk as fireside nonsense. The guards on the wall know better. "Dragons in the chimney" is what they call stories about things that do not exist.

> **10 Gatewatch Guards (Guard)** - HP 11, 10, 6, 9, 7, 8, 8, 12, 9, 10, AC 14, DR 1, Attack 1d8+1, Save TN 16.

The Gatewatch Guards escort the heroes through the town but will not let them stay the night. They will talk, but they are uneasy about strangers and say so.

If the heroes kill guards and try to force their way in, the whole town turns out and drives them away, and from then on Gatewatch gives them no help or information of any kind.

80% of the time, one of the guards will talk with the heroes. If one does, he says: "We don't know what's on the way, but we know it's coming. Our scouts have seen great fires on the plains to the east. People have gone missing from the outlying farms this last week. But we're ready. Six hundred of us, behind a stone wall, with the pass at our backs. Who could stand against that?"

He believes it completely.

What the guards do not know is that the Host has been coming through their gate for weeks. Its spies and raiders pass in twos and threes, dressed as Synod mendicants and traders, paying the toll like anyone else, and its wagons roll through at night past toll-keepers who have been well paid not to look under the canvas.

29. The Windbrown

> Grass plains roll away for miles east of the mountains, brown and gold in the autumn, bending in long waves under a wind that has suddenly turned cold.

30. Oxlow

> A cold wind moans through the silent village of Oxlow. Its round, turf-roofed houses stand open to the weather.

Signs of a hurried flight are everywhere: food jars half emptied, meals left on tables, a child's carved horse dropped in the mud. A hero with any tracking skill, or a successful Wisdom Chance Roll against TN 14, finds the villagers' tracks heading straight south toward the Broken

Kingsroad (area 37) and the Runner (area 38). They did not get far; Edric Fenn (area 38) can tell the heroes what became of them.

31. Three-Road Stone

> In the middle of the rolling plain, three roads meet. Where they cross, a single standing stone points the way to Oxlow, to Brennick Ford and to Tarrow. Cold wind swirls around it, and a single hawk turns overhead.

The ground around the stone is churned and trampled. A hero who has met the Ember-sworn before has a 30% chance of recognizing their boot prints among the others. The Ember-sworn tracks lead east toward Tarrow (area 36).

32. Brennick Ford

> Thin smoke rises from the chimneys of Brennick Ford, a village of turf houses gathered around a stone ford over a shallow river. As you come closer, several men from the village start walking toward you, slowly, carrying spears.

> **10 Brennick Militia (villagers; Guard stats with spears and no shields)** - HP 11, 10, 3, 6, 2, 8, 8, 9, 4, 5, AC 12, DR 1, Attack 1d6 (spear), Save TN 16.

The militia walk the heroes through the village but do not let them stay. They are frightened for their families and do not trust strangers.

If the heroes kill the militia and try to enter the village, everyone drives them out and gives them no help or information.

80% of the time, one of the militia will talk. If so: "We don't know what's coming, but it's coming. Men in black masks took the Lanner family off their farm a week ago. Tarrow's gone quiet - nobody's come from there in ten days. We sent two lads to look. They haven't come back either."

If the heroes rescued Hobbe Lanner in area 6 and he is with them, the whole village takes them in, feeds them, and gives them a warm place to sleep for a night.

33. The Hexwood

> The forest darkens and closes in beside an ancient trail. A cold, dry stillness hangs in the air. The trees here are bent and knotted, their branches grown into strange shapes. Everything seems to be watching you.

A Valcathi sorcerer died here on the night of the Sundering, fleeing the city with his stolen books. Nothing remains of him but his bitterness, soaked into the trees. Heroes who camp in

the Hexwood dream of a man in burning robes screaming at a sky that will not answer. They wake unrested: anyone who sleeps here does not recover HP from that night's rest.

At the heart of the wood, under the roots of the most twisted tree, the sorcerer's bones lie with an iron book-box. A Strength Chance Roll against TN 14 pulls it free. Inside, wrapped in rotted oilcloth, is a Scroll of Detect Magic and a Scroll of Web, both still usable.

34. West Tarrow Plains

> A chill, biting wind cuts across the flatlands. It carries the sharp smell of burning grass from the east.

35. The Char Barrens

> The grass turns to burned stubble underfoot. For miles the plains are scorched black. The ashy taste of burned earth hangs in the air. The ground has been trampled everywhere by heavy boots and the wheels of heavy wagons.

A hero who has met the Ember-sworn before can identify their boots here 80% of the time. That hero also has a 20% chance to notice that the tracks first go south, and then come back north again.

36. Tarrow

Read this as the heroes enter the village:

> Wind stirs the cold ash of old fires in the middle of the village. Crows wheel over the turf houses and drop down among them, one by one. Everything else is still.
>
> Tarrow is empty. The round houses of the Tarrow-folk stand open and dark. In the center of the village, the great timber meeting hall has been burned to its frame, but its heavy oak door still stands in its charred posts.
>
> Three bodies hang from the crossbeam over the door, by their ankles, black with old smoke. They wear soot masks and black sashes. They are Ember-sworn.
>
> Burned deep into the door with a hot iron, the letters still sharp, is a message.

The heroes can tell easily that the villagers left in a rush, and that the tracks lead south, toward the Broken Kingsroad.

Burned into the door are these words: "These three had the thief and his sister in their hands on the Kingsroad, and let them walk away. In the Host, mercy is the only crime. Ash for the Regent. - Malvorn Ashcrowne."

Maren and Corvin are devastated by Tarrow. This was their home. Maren goes looking through the houses for anyone left alive and finds no one. Corvin stands in front of the door for a long time. Then he takes down the three bodies and burns them properly, because, he says, someone should.

If Maren is a player character, tell her player privately that her own house is untouched, and that her kitchen table has been set for two, as if someone expected her back. Senna Holt (area 67b) set it the night before the Host came.

37. The Broken Kingsroad

> The broken paving stones of an ancient road cut through the brown plains, running north and south. Grass and thistles grow between the stones.

Any close look at the road reveals many footprints. A great number of people and some heavy creatures moved south along this road a few days ago.

38. The Runner

Read this when the heroes enter the area:

> A lone figure, barely clothed, comes scrambling over a rise ahead of you. A man, exhausted by the look of him, running on nothing. Behind him, three shapes lope steadily, tirelessly, in pursuit: two men in black masks, and a gray wolf the size of a pony. The men are laughing and calling to him, in no hurry, waiting for him to fall.

The man is 500 feet away when the encounter starts. The grass is three to four feet tall and can easily hide the heroes. The man can run another 550 feet before he collapses. His hunters, intent on their prey, do not notice the heroes until they are within 50 feet, and do not notice them at all if the heroes hide.

> **2 Ember-sworn Hunters (Raider)** - HP 14 each, AC 13, DR 1, Attacks 1, Attack 1d8+2; Saves Quick +2, Tough +2, Mind +0, Size Medium, Alignment Wild Vile (Reaver), Intelligence Average (8-10), Save TN 16; Special Attack: Shield Rush - +3 to hit, 1d8+2; if the hunter moved 15 ft first, the target makes a Tough save or is pushed 10 ft and drops one unsecured object.

† **Raider:** existing creature; Monster Trove for Early Adventurers, entry "Raider". Rules entry

> **1 Warg** - HP 28, AC 13, DR 0, Attacks 1, Attack 2d6+2 (bite, +3 to hit); Saves Quick +2, Tough +2, Mind -1, Size Large, Alignment Wild Vile (Reaver), Intelligence Low (2-4), Save TN 15.

† **Warg:** existing creature; Monster Trove: Things Others Swore They Saw, entry "Warg". Rules entry

The hunters see the heroes as a real threat. If they notice the heroes, they give up on the runner and attack.

Edric Fenn, the Runner - Human Fighter, level 2, HP 24 (currently 5), AC 12, DR -1, Attack 1d4 (fists); STR 15, DEX 14, CON 14, INT 10, WIS 12, CHA 13, Alignment Orderly Kind (Guardian)

If the heroes save him, the runner can speak, gasping for breath:

"I'm Edric Fenn. From Oxlow. They've got all of us - Oxlow, Tarrow, everyone - chained in a slave train going south. This morning the men of my village held a council in the chains. They chose me to break loose and run for Brennick Ford for help, while the rest of them rose up against the guards to cover me. I don't know if they're alive.

"There's an army to the south. A huge one. I heard the guards talking about a second army waiting to come down on the Synod lands from the north. They're holding back, all of them, because they're afraid of a white staff coming back to Mor Valcath while they're off marching somewhere else. I don't know why. I don't know what it does."

His voice cracks. "Don't go south. There's nothing south but chains. If you can find that staff, take it to the drowned city. It's all we've got."

If the heroes heal his wounds with the staff, Edric stares at his closed cuts for a long moment, then swears to follow whoever carries it to the end of the world. He has no equipment at all.

39. Hollin Bridge

Read this when the heroes enter the area:

> Far ahead, an ancient stone bridge arches over the torrent of the Hollin River. Dark shapes crouch at its north end. Many more are camped at its south end.

When the heroes come within 300 feet of the bridge, they see that the shapes are Ember-sworn guards: 4 on the north side and 10-20 on the south.

4 Ember-sworn Bridge Guards (Soldier) - HP 14, 8, 11, 11, AC 14, DR 2, Attack 1d8+2 (spear), Save TN 16; Formation Thrust and Closed Line as in area 6.

10-20 (1d10+10) Ember-sworn Reserves (Soldier) - HP 14 each, AC 14, DR 2, Attack 1d8+2, Save TN 16.

The guards have orders from the Regent himself: no more prisoners. They kill anyone who comes near. That is all they know.

If the heroes come down the river on a raft, the guards leap from the bridge onto it, capsizing it and spilling heroes and soldiers alike into the river. Use the swimming rules from area 18.

Only the north-side guards may chase anyone north of the river. The reserves may chase anyone south of it.

40. The South Grass

> Tall grass grows along the eastern foot of the Spine, and it bends strangely against the wind. Now and then the point of a spear or the gleam of a helmet flickers in the grass to the south, toward the canyons. The cold autumn sky is overcast.

If the heroes move south toward Kingsroad East, they meet the southern army of the Ember Host, one unit per game hour. The number of units is endless.

> **10-20 (1d10+10) Ember-sworn (Soldier), One Unit** - HP 14 each, AC 14, DR 2, Attack 1d8+2, Save TN 16.

These Ember-sworn have orders to ignore anything north of the Hollin and to kill anything that comes south toward the canyons. They know nothing else.

41. Kingsroad East

> Here in the canyons of the low eastern hills, a lonely ancient road lies broken and forgotten. Yet the grass and weeds between its stones have been trampled flat. A cold wind dives down the canyon walls.

A hero with tracking skill, or a successful Wisdom Chance Roll against TN 14, notices bare human footprints of plains people mixed with heavier, booted tracks. A hero who has met the Ember-sworn before has a 30% chance of identifying the boots as theirs.

42. Blackmire Edge

> A forest of black-barked trees stretches east as far as you can see. Their trunks are as gray-black as old iron, and their roots claw out of the mud like the fingers of buried hands. Under the canopy, the streams that run down out of the hills spread out into a spongy swamp. Still black water rings islands of soggy ground. The country reaches away into the swamp and its darkness.

The black trees are ironbarks. Their wood is so hard that axes bounce off it.

Each turn, there is a 15% chance that the ground the heroes are walking on dead-ends, and the party must cross 1d4+5 feet of open water to reach the next stretch of firm ground. Whenever a hero goes into the water here, roll 1d6; on a 1-3, roll on the Blackmire table (Table 4) in Appendix 4.

If Corvin is with the party, he begins to sweat and shake as they enter the Blackmire. He remembers this place. He does not remember it well.

43. Ember Lands

> The light of a thousand campfires flickers on the burned plains in the distance. Closer, a handful of figures squat around their own fire.

> **Ember Sergeant Vosk (Ember Adept)** - Human Wizard, level 3, HP 15, AC 11, DR 0 (padded, under a soot cloak), Attack 1d4 (dagger); Saves Quick +1, Tough +1, Mind +2, Alignment Orderly Vile (Tyrant), Save TN 13; Spells (each once per day; targets add 3 to their Save TN): Mystic Bolt, Beguile, Mage Shielding, Veil of Obscurity, Searing Lances.
>
> **2 Ember-sworn Guards (Soldier)** - HP 12, 6, AC 14, DR 2, Attack 1d8+2, Save TN 16.
>
> **6 Goblins** - HP 9, 9, 9, 9, 6, 7, AC 12, DR 0, Attack 1d6, Save TN 16.

† **Goblin:** existing creature; Monster Trove: Old Fears and Hungry Things, entry "Goblin". Rules entry

A hero who can move silently to within 30 feet of the fire hears them talking. The sergeant is complaining:

"We could roll over these Synod sheep tomorrow. So why are we sitting here? Because old Ashcrowne wants his precious glass stick in his own hands first. He's got that black-winged beast of his sitting on the old hoard down in the hole, doing nothing, when we could use her out here. A dragon, and he's got her minding a pile of bronze pages."

If the heroes go past this camp, they meet the bulk of the Ember Host, one unit per game hour. The number of units is endless.

> **10-20 (1d10+10) Ember-sworn (Soldier), One Unit** - HP 14 each, AC 14, DR 2, Attack 1d8+2, Save TN 16.

44. Mor Valcath

When the heroes reach the drowned city, they begin at area 44a in the next part of this book.



The Blackmire

Map 2: The Blackmire and the Temple of Ilvessa is printed full page at the front of this book, just before the Background.

The swamp over Mor Valcath is all that remains of the bluff where the old kingdom's capital once stood. The ironbark trees grow out of the drowned upper city; their roots wrap broken towers and toppled statues. The Ember Host keeps a camp in the ruins, and the Hob-folk of Under-Valcath are worked like mules on the great lift that runs down into the cavern. Nyxara the Tarwing comes and goes through the old temple well.

Ruin encounters. Check for random encounters once every 3 turns in the swamp ruins, using the Blackmire table in Appendix 4.

Light. The canopy is so thick that it is always twilight under the trees. At night it is pitch dark.

Time. Remember the Warden's message: the heroes have two days, counted from the moment the Warden gave it, to stand in Mor Valcath. The DN may choose what happens if they are late. The simplest answer is that the Ember Host reaches the Blackmire behind them, and the ruins fill with soldiers.

44a. The Drowned Steps

> The exposed roots of the ironbarks twist into mud and black water. Vines, ferns and hanging moss block your view beyond a few feet in any direction. The ground is soaked and spongy and gives under your boots. Everything is in shadow; the sun shows only the faintest glimmer through the canopy far above.
>
> Underfoot, under the mud, you can feel stone. Steps. Wide, shallow steps, climbing toward the heart of the swamp.

Every round, there is a 1 in 6 chance that some ruined thing pokes out of the undergrowth: a broken pillar, a cracked urn, a stone face staring up out of the water.

Many people passed through here in the last three or four hours. The heroes find booted tracks and the bare prints of small feet. A hero who has met the Ember-sworn before has a 20% chance to recognize the boots. The small, bare prints are the Hobs' (see area 46e).

44b. Black Water

> Green scum lies over the black swamp water. Sour, metallic smells float up from it, and bubbles rise slowly through the scum and pop.

The water's depth is unpredictable: roll 1d6 for its depth in feet every 30 feet the heroes travel through it. Whenever anyone goes into the water, for any reason, roll 1d6. On a 1-3, roll on the Blackmire table (Table 4) in Appendix 4 to see what rises out of the murk to attack.

44c. Rope Walks

> Thick ropes of twisted vine stretch between two islands of firm ground like a spider's web, each end knotted around the trunks of ironbark trees. Slimy moss covers the ropes. Below them, the water is very still.

These makeshift bridges are surprisingly sturdy. A hero must make a Dexterity Chance Roll against TN 15 to cross without trouble. On a failure, the hero falls into the water and disturbs something that lives there. Use the same procedure as in area 44b.

44d. The Fallen Ironbark

> The ground slopes down into thick swamp water. Here, a giant ironbark has fallen, and its trunk bridges the water to another stretch of firm ground. Thick green moss drapes the log like a blanket.

Hidden behind the trees and bushes, only 15 to 20 feet away, six of the Host wait in ambush: two Ember Adepts and four Ember-sworn. Four are on the heroes' side of the water, and two (one Adept and one Ember-sworn) are on the far side.

They intend to capture the heroes and take them back to their camp (area 44f) for questioning. They open with Binding Threads, trying to tangle the heroes against the trees. Then the Adepts put heroes to sleep with Lethargic, one or two at a time. They take all captives to the camp at 44f and hold them there.

If the ambushers lose more than half their number, they retreat toward 44f.

This group knows about the staff. They know that it is very powerful, that it was stolen from these ruins, and that it is the one thing the Regent fears could spoil his plans.

> **2 Ember Adepts** - Human Wizards, level 3, HP 15, 12, AC 11, DR 0, Attack 1d4 (dagger), Save TN 13; Spells (each once per day; targets add 3 to their Save TN): Lethargic, Binding Threads, Rootbind, Mystic Bolt.
>
> **4 Ember-sworn (Soldier)** - HP 14, 18, 12, 16, AC 14, DR 2, Attack 1d8+2 (spear), Save TN 16; Formation Thrust and Closed Line as in area 6.

† **Soldier:** existing creature; Monster Trove for Early Adventurers, entry "Soldier". Rules entry

44e. The Lattice Bridge

> Among drooping vines and moss, a bridge spans two islands of firm ground. Its stone lattice, carved to look like twining stems and leaves, is broken in many places. Two hooded figures stand at the north end of the bridge, leaning on spears.

2 Ember-sworn Guards (Soldier) - HP 12, 8, AC 14, DR 2, Attack 1d8+2, Save TN 16.

44f. The Ember Shrine

> A small stone shrine stands at the top of a short flight of broken steps, its doorway glowing red with candlelight. Around it, among the ruins and the dripping trees, the Host has thrown up rough shacks and lean-tos on a patch of old flagstones. A bonfire burns at the foot of the steps.
>
> Inside the shrine, under the half-shell of a fallen dome, hangs a great bronze bell, green with age and taller than a man, from a beam of black wood. Beneath it, on a heap of scorched stone, stands an iron brazier wrought in the shape of a crown of flames, and in the brazier something is burning that sends up a thick black smoke.

This is the Host's forward camp. The Ember-sworn attack any intruder who is not escorted by their own. If the heroes are prisoners, their gear is dumped in one of the six shacks, chosen at random, and the heroes are thrown into a pit-cage: a hole in the flagstones covered by a lid of lashed ironbark staves.

The bell is a Valcathi temple bell, from the days when Mor Valcath rang its bells for every healing done in the temple. The Ember-sworn are terrified of it. The Synod rings bells; the Ember-sworn have been taught that bells call down the wrath of the gods who abandoned the land. If a hero manages to reach the bell unnoticed and ring it, even once, the deep bronze voice rolls out over the swamp and the Ember-sworn panic, fleeing screaming into the trees for 1d6 turns.

But the beam is rotten. Every time the bell is rung, there is a 30% chance that the beam breaks and the bell crashes down onto the brazier, scattering burning coals across the shrine and down the steps. Anyone standing under the bell must make a Quick save or take 2d6 bludgeoning damage, and anyone caught in the scattered fire takes 1d6 fire damage each round they fail a Quick save to get clear.

The pit-cage is guarded by one Ember-sworn day and night. Each daylight hour there is a 10% chance the guard falls asleep beside the cage; after sundown, the chance is 30% each hour. A fighter's Mighty Heave, or a successful Strength Chance Roll against TN 16, breaks the lid open.

Brother-Captain Hadric Sull (Ember Adept) - Human Wizard, level 4, HP 20, AC 11, DR 0, Attack 1d4 (dagger), Save TN 12; Saves Quick +1, Tough +1, Mind +3, Alignment Orderly Vile (Tyrant), Intelligence High (13-14); Spells (each once per day; targets add 4 to their Save TN): Mystic Bolt, Beguile, Mage Shielding, Rootbind, Binding Threads, Veil of Obscurity, Searing Lances.

7 Ember-sworn (Soldier) - HP 8, 8, 9, 5, 11, 10, 3, AC 14, DR 2, Attack 1d8+2, Save TN 16.

Brother-Captain Sull runs the camp and leads the Host's prayers before the burning crown. He orders that prisoners be held for three days, until "the Tarwing" comes up the well to look them over.

If the heroes have the staff, he tells them: "That glass stick is the greatest danger to the Regent that we know of." If they do not, he asks them if they know where it is. Either way, he tells them: "Now that you're here, I do hope you last longer than the Tarrow folk did."

44g. The Lamp Tower

A slender tower, crumbling but still lovely, rises out of the swamp water. Fine carved stonework still glints through the vines that cover its walls. At the very top, a lamp still burns behind panes of old glass.

It is sad to see what the Sundering left behind: the capital of a kingdom gone silent and rotting. The tower's wooden floors and beams have long since rotted away, but a carved stone stair spirals up the inside to a stone platform at the top. The lamp at the top burns without oil and has burned since the Sundering; nobody knows who keeps it lit. From there the heroes can see over the whole swamp. A cluster of ruins, with a great dark ring of stone at its center, lies to the southeast. That is the Plaza of the Well (area 44k).

44h. The Tar Pool

A pool of thick black water lies among the towering trees. Not even the ironbarks grow in it. Its surface is still and oily, like tar.

Five leathery eggshells lie on the shore, all of them cracked open. Each is about two feet long.

Dragon hatchlings, Nyxara's brood, lurk under the black water. They surge up to attack if the heroes disturb the surface of the pool. They are small and stupid, and very, very hungry.

If the heroes have not yet seen the dragon, the hatchlings are the first proof that something in the old stories is true.

5 Tarlings (use Feral Serpent stats) - HP 16 each, AC 13, DR 1, Attacks 1, Attack 1d6+1 (bite); Saves Quick +1, Tough +2, Mind -2, Size Medium, Alignment Wild Vile (Reaver), Intelligence Low (2-4), Save TN 16; Special Attack: Acid Spit (in place of Thorn Lash) - 30 ft, Quick save or 1d4+1 acid, cooldown 3 rounds. Special Defense: Bristled Hide - on a missed close-quarters strike, the attacker takes 1 piercing damage from the hatchling's spiny scales.

† **Feral Serpent:** existing creature; Monster Trove for Early Adventures, entry "Feral Serpent". Rules entry

44I. Mire's End

The soggy floor of the swamp suddenly ends at the edge of a cliff a thousand feet high. Water from the Blackmire trickles and drips down the stone to a crashing shore far below. The wide gray water of the Sundermere stretches away to the eastern horizon, covering what was once the fertile plain of Valcath.

The cliff and the Sundermere lie just past the southeastern edge of Map 2.

44J. The Fallen Pillar

An enormous carved pillar lies beside its broken base. Fine, spidery letters cover its surface. The pillar bridges two islands of firm ground divided by swamp water.

The heroes have only a 15% base chance to read the old Valcathi letters. A wizard, or any hero with a language or lore ability, can add 20%. The words read:

Here Mor Valcath keeps the mending

Ilvessa gives with open hand

What is given freely stays

What is sold runs out like sand

This is a clue, and a warning. The temple's original oath was that mending must be given freely. The priest-kings broke that oath, and the Sundering followed. The Hobs of Under-Valcath live by the same rule in their own way: they will do anything for a gift and nothing for a wage.

44K. The Plaza of the Well

Coming out of the jungle, a broad cobbled street runs north and south among the ruins. Another road branches off to the west. The fluted columns and carved faces of the buildings here sag wearily under moss. A large cobbled courtyard opens to the east among crumbling walls and broken arches. In its center, inside a low ring of old stonework, a huge round well plunges down into the earth. Vapor rises from it.

> North of the well, a single building still stands whole, though time and weather have worn its walls smooth. A broad stair lined with stone figures climbs to its doors, and its doors are gold.

The heroes may climb the Stair of the Dead (area 46g) to the building to the north, which takes them to area 46a.

The building to the north is the Temple of Ilvessa, goddess of mending. The only entrance to the windowless temple is through its front doors, a pair of solid gold doors each weighing as much as a cart. They hang on counterweighted hinges and swing open like ordinary doors. Whoever enters the temple arrives in area 46a.

A dark and terrible stillness surrounds the well. Heroes who look into it see nothing but blackness. Warm, foul air rushes up out of it. Then, suddenly, an enormous black shape bursts out of the well and unfolds its great leathery wings. The dragon has arrived.

> The air from the well stops. Then something comes up out of it with a sound like a sail cracking in a gale: a long black neck, a head like a horned spearhead, and wings that open and open until they shadow the whole plaza. Black water and swamp slime stream off the dragon's scales. Her eyes are yellow, and they look straight at you.
>
> Every story your grandmother told you was true.

> **Nyxara the Tarwing (Young Black Dragon)** - HP 85, AC 15, DR 1, Attacks 2, Attack 1d10+3 (bite), 1d8+3 (claws); Saves Quick +3, Tough +3, Mind +1, Size Large, Alignment Wild Vile (Reaver), Intelligence Below Average (5-7), Save TN 12; Special Attack: Acid Breath - acid, 40-ft line, Tough save, 4d6 acid (half on a successful save), cooldown 3 rounds. Bite - piercing, melee 5 ft, +2 to hit. Claws - slashing, melee 5 ft. Special Defense: Immune to acid. Flies fast. Night Vision 60 ft and keen smell.

† **Young Black Dragon:** existing creature; Monster Trove for Seasoned Adventurers, entry "Young Black Dragon". Rules entry

A dragon is not a story. Nobody in the Torrenmark believes in dragons. The first time each hero sees Nyxara, that hero makes a Mind save. On a failure, the hero's mind simply refuses what it is seeing, and they lose their next turn, frozen.

Nyxara's first appearance. Nyxara is not here to fight to the death. She is here to see who has come into her city, and to hurt them. On her first turn she climbs into the air above the plaza and circles for a better angle. On her next turn she makes a pass and uses her Acid Breath on the largest group of heroes she can line up. While the breath recovers, she swoops low and attacks a single hero with bite and claws, then climbs out of reach of swords. When her breath is ready again she uses it a second time.

After her second breath, or as soon as she has lost 30 HP, whichever comes first, she decides she has seen enough. She folds her wings, drops like a stone down the well, and is gone. Deep below she pulls out of her dive and returns to her lair (area 70k).

If the heroes have the staff and Nyxara sees it, her eyes narrow and she hisses a single word in a voice like boiling water: "Thief."

Keep careful track of Nyxara's HP. She does not heal before the final fight. A dragon's wounds close only over weeks of deep sleep, and the heroes will not give her weeks.

After this encounter, the heroes may explore the well, as described in area 45.

45. The Great Well

> The shaft drops into darkness. Foul air rises from it, warm and wet. Steam and the thick smell of rot make it hard to see the bottom.

The well's masonry shaft drops 100 feet, then opens into the roof of an enormous cavern under the swamp. On the cavern floor, some 800 feet below the mouth of the shaft, lies the shattered city of Mor Valcath. Most of the old capital slid into this cavern on the night of the Sundering, and the part down there is the best preserved. The well comes out high above the northern end of the buried city, near the North Falls (area 61).

The well is a road only for things that fly. A hero who climbs down the shaft reaches its bottom at 100 feet and finds nothing but open air and a sheer 700-foot drop to the ruins below. The heroes need another way down. There are several: the lift in the lower temple (area 47c), the broken sewer (area 47j) and the falls (area 56).

The Temple of Ilvessa

46a. Hall of the Golden Doors

> Doors of tarnished gold close off each end of a long hall. Pale blue arches rise thirty feet overhead to form a vaulted ceiling. A second pair of stained golden doors stand shut at the far end.

These doors are also solid gold, each heavier than a cart. They swing on balanced hinges and open as easily as ordinary doors.

46b. The Stitched Star

> The golden doors open into the temple's heart. A great dome rises high above a floor of delicate tiles. It feels as if time has stopped in this room.
>
> In the center of the circular chamber stands a statue of polished white stone, more graceful than anything you have seen made by hands: a woman in flowing robes, her hair loose around her shoulders. At her throat hangs a pendant shaped like a twelve-pointed star. Her two hands are held out in front of her, cupped, as if offering water. Across the palm of her right hand runs a line of tiny carved stitches, as though her hand was once cut open and sewn closed.
>
> Her face is full of hope and full of sorrow, both at once. The room is warm, and it feels like being forgiven.

The statue is the likeness of Ilvessa, the Stitched Star. Her power still fills this chamber. Through this statue, Ilvessa reveals to the heroes their purpose and the nature of their quest. The statue can also recharge the Staff of the Pale Thread.

If Maren, or any cleric, brings the Staff of the Pale Thread into this room, the statue's eyes open, and the goddess speaks to the cleric who holds the staff. If no cleric is present, she speaks to whoever carries the staff.

Ilvessa is far beyond stats. This is a divine effect; no spell or ability can override or interrupt it.

> "Child of the Torrenmark. I did not turn my face from your people. Your kings turned my gift into a coin, and sold it, and let the poor die beneath my doors. So I took the gift back, until it could be given freely again.
>
> "Three hundred years is a long time to wait. Long enough. Now the land is about to face its worst hour. It will need mending more than it ever has.

> "To give the gift back, you will need my words. Far beneath this temple lie the Leaves of Ilvessa: twelve pages of bronze that hold every rite of mending I ever taught. Without them, no priest in this land will ever call on my power again. You must recover them.
>
> "Your road will not be easy. The Leaves lie in the hoard of the dragon. So I charge the staff that you carry: hold it boldly and do not waver, and you will prevail. And when you have the Leaves, do not keep them. Healing that is hoarded is healing lost. Carry them out into the world."
>
> The statue's hands are cupped, as if waiting for something long and thin to be laid across them.

If any hero lays the staff across the statue's cupped hands, the staff glows brilliantly and is fully recharged. See Appendix 1.

The last words of the goddess are a seed for the next adventure. The heroes may not understand them yet. Let them wonder.

46c. The East Chapel

> Rows of marble benches fill the room, dull under a greenish film. Nobody has sat here in a very long time.

46d. The West Chapel

> The marble benches here are coated in the same thin green film. Across the room, three figures are hunched over a stone altar, studying something by candlelight. Their soot-black masks turn toward you as they spring up to attack.

In their haste, the soldiers leave what they were reading lying on the altar.

> **3 Ember-sworn (Soldier)** - HP 8, 8, 12, AC 14, DR 2, Attack 1d8+2, Save TN 16.

† **Soldier:** existing creature; Monster Trove for Early Adventurers, entry "Soldier". Rules entry

The paper on the altar is a Scroll of Burning Hands, looted from somewhere in the ruins. The Ember-sworn could not read it, and were arguing about whether to burn it.

The heroes can capture these soldiers if they bring them below half their HP. The prisoners know the way down into the cavern through the well, which is only useful to things that fly, and the way down by the lift at 47c. They also know that the dragon's lair is in the old palace (area 70k), and that "the Hob king" has a back way into it, though they do not know where.

46e. The East Circle

> A domed ceiling soars high over this round room. Fungus creeps down every wall, covering old paintings faded past recognizing. On the far side, five small, stocky figures are scraping at

> the wall with stubby fingers and bits of broken pot, chipping away flakes of paint and something that glitters underneath.

> **5 Hobs of Under-Valcath (Hob)** - HP 30, 22, 18, 25, 20, AC 13, DR 0, Attacks 1, Attack 1d8+3 (tool or fist); Saves Quick +3, Tough +1, Mind +4, Size Small, Alignment Impartial Kind (Mediator), Intelligence Average (8-10), Save TN 15; Special Attack: Work Undone - one crafted, carried or fastened nonmagical object within 30 ft comes apart, unless its holder makes a Quick save. Buckles split, straps unravel, bowstrings slip. Special Defense: Gift, Not Wage - food or clothing freely given ends Work Undone for the encounter. Calling the gift payment insults the Hob and restores the ability at once.

† **Hob:** existing creature; Monster Trove: Old Fears and Hungry Things, entry "Hob". Rules entry

The Hobs of Under-Valcath were the household spirits of the old city: the small, stubborn folk who did the night chores in every Valcathi home. They sank with the city and have lived in the cavern ever since, keeping house for a city with no one left in it. When the Ember Host came, it put them to work as laborers, hauling and digging and riding the lift. The Hobs hate it. Not the work. Being paid for it in scraps, like servants.

These five are too busy scraping to notice the heroes at first. In a thick, old-fashioned accent, their leader is saying: "Scrape, lads, scrape! There's silver under this paint, and old Grumbit down below says he'll take it kindly if we bring him a pretty. Kindly, mind. Not as a wage."

Then they notice the heroes. "It's the Host!" the leader squeaks. All five drop flat, faces to the floor, and whimper: "We meant nothing by it, sirs! Just tidying!"

If the heroes are gentle, or offer the Hobs food, a blanket, a scarf or anything else as a free gift, the Hobs are overjoyed. They draw a crude but accurate map on the floor in charcoal that shows the way down to the cavern city by the lift (47c), the broken sewer (47j) and the falls (56). They add: "Go and see the king. Grumbit the Ninth, King Under the Hill. He'll help you, true as true. Only don't you go paying him."

If the heroes offer the Hobs coin for their help, the Hobs take offense. Their eyes go flat and polite, and the heroes' gear starts falling apart (Work Undone) until the heroes leave.

A hero who cleans the fungus off more of the painting the Hobs were scraping (it takes a few minutes) uncovers a scene of the temple in its glory: priests in white handing out bread and bandages to a crowd at the temple steps, rich and poor together. In the next panel, the same steps are guarded by soldiers, and the poor are being pushed back down them.

46f. The West Circle

> A domed ceiling caps this sixty-foot-tall round room. Vines and moss dangle from great cracks in the roof. Fungus covers the walls. In the center stands an empty pedestal, too tall

> to see the top of from the floor. On the west side, a spiral stair with steps slick with green slime winds down into darkness.

The top of the pedestal holds a wide, shallow hollow where a great offering bowl once sat. The priest-kings set it here to collect the price of every mending; the bowl is long gone. A hero who climbs up to look sees a small carved inscription: "By order of the Crown, every mending has its price."

The spiral stair leads down to the Hall of the Priest-Kings (area 47a).

46g. The Stair of the Dead

> A broad stair of pale stone climbs from the plaza to the golden doors of the temple. Robed stone figures stand along both sides, their faces worn smooth by three centuries of rain, their hands held out in front of them, open and empty.

The statues are the healers of old Mor Valcath, carved in the days when mending was given freely. A hero who looks closely sees that every pair of hands is empty. Heroes who later see the statues of the priest-kings in area 70b, with a coin carved in every palm, may notice the difference.



The Lower Temple

Map 3A: The Lower Temple is printed full page at the front of this book, just before the Background.

The spiral stair from 46f leads down to the lower temple, where the priest-kings of Valcath were buried and where the Host keeps its lift.

47a. Hall of the Priest-Kings

> Dim light rises up through the floor. A vast hall stretches away to the east. Stone priest-kings sit enthroned along both walls, swords across their knees and crowned heads bowed. The ceiling, heavily braced, still stands firm overhead, but below, the floor has fallen away in several places. Hot mist rises through the holes, carrying the smell of decay.

Any dwarf, or anyone succeeding on a Wisdom Chance Roll against TN 12, can tell that this floor is unsafe. The holes open onto a 700-foot drop straight down into the lower ruins of the city.

Anyone heavier than a halfling who comes within 5 feet of a hole's edge has a 65% chance that the floor gives way under them. A hero who falls makes a Quick save to catch the edge; on a failure, they are gone.

Even a hero who reaches the edge safely sees nothing below but foul mist.

47b. The Line of Hobs

> Burial niches line both sides of a long hallway. Wrapped in foul mist, a crowd of small, stocky figures stand in a shuffling line, staring at their feet.

About thirty Hobs wait in line here, worn and silent. Every 3 turns a whip cracks from the east, and half of them shuffle off through the eastern doorway to area 47c. The rest move up. Six turns later, the same fifteen Hobs who went out the east end come back in at the west end and rejoin the line, looking even more tired.

If they notice the heroes, the Hobs only put grubby fingers to their lips: "Shh!" They run if attacked.

A hero who gives any Hob a gift here, even a crust of bread, finds that the whole line knows about it within a minute. From then on, the Hobs will do small favors for the heroes: warning them of guards, leaving doors unlatched, tripping up an Ember-sworn at the right moment.

> **30 Hobs of Under-Valcath (Hob)** - HP 30 each, AC 13, DR 0, Attack 1d8+3, Save TN 15; Work Undone and Gift, Not Wage as in area 46e.

† **Hob:** existing creature; Monster Trove: Old Fears and Hungry Things, entry "Hob". Rules entry

47c. The Lift

> Hot mist rises from two large holes in the floor, one to the north and one to the south. Over the northern hole hangs an enormous cage of black iron bars, as big as a hay wagon, from a heavy chain. The chain runs up over two great wheels bolted to the ceiling, crosses the room, and drops through the middle of the southern hole. Two big figures in soot masks squat beside the cage, one with a coiled whip on his belt.

Each hole is 10 feet across and breaks through the cavern roof, dropping 700 feet to the Court of Reception (area 66).

Every 3 game turns, a gong sounds far below. One of the overseers cracks his whip, and fifteen Hobs from 47b come scurrying into the room and climb into the cage. When it is full, with arms and legs sticking out between the bars and some Hobs hanging off the outside, it slowly sinks, dragging the chain with it. Within 5 rounds, the other cage comes groaning up through the southern hole, full of Ember-sworn.

This is the Host's idea of a lift. The Hobs are the counterweight. The overseers send the Hobs down in one cage to bring their soldiers up in the other.

> **2 Ember-sworn Overseers (Soldier)** - HP 12, 14, AC 14, DR 2, Attack 1d8+2, Save TN 16.

† **Soldier:** existing creature; Monster Trove for Early Adventurers, entry "Soldier". Rules entry

If the heroes attack, the overseers panic and leap into the cage. It starts to sink at once, and the heroes have a chance to jump aboard. However, the heavier the cage, the faster it drops. Warn the players that the cage is falling quickly if more than two heroes try to get on. With more than four aboard, it falls fast enough that everyone takes 2d6 bludgeoning damage when it slams to a stop at the bottom.

When the second cage comes up into the room, it holds Ember-sworn troops.

> **8 Ember-sworn Shock Troops (Soldier)** - HP 16 each, AC 14, DR 2, Attack 1d8+2, Save TN 16.

These are the Host's shock troops, trained to fight to the death. They do what they are told and know nothing except the way from their quarters (area 64g) to their post at the Lattice Bridge (area 44e).

47d. The Northern Tombs

> A narrow passage links the northern rooms. Empty burial niches, their bones long since crumbled to dust, are cut into both of its walls.

47E. The Floorless Room

> An archway opens into a chamber of rounded alcoves, well preserved but for one thing: it has no floor. Mist billows up from the great hole where the floor used to be. Only a small ledge of floor remains, against the east wall. A little box sits at its edge.

The room is about 30 feet across. Reaching the ledge without falling takes a Dexterity Chance Roll against TN 14 along the wall ledge, or a rope and some ingenuity. The box holds five polished garnets (worth 100 gp each).

47F. The Watch Room

> This room has not been touched in centuries. A green film covers everything. Corroded metal fittings lie where a banded table once stood.

The fittings crumble at a touch. The floor is very slick: all creatures fighting here have -3 to hit.

47G. Tomb of the Priest-Kings

> Six stone coffins lie in the room. Thick fungus and slime cover everything. A hollow voice, as if from the bottom of a deep well, calls out to you: "Who enters the tomb of the priest-kings?"

> **The Last Sentry (Garrison Ghost)** - HP 10, AC 11, DR 0, Attacks 1, Attack 1d6 (spectral spear, necrotic, +3 to hit; DR does not reduce); Saves Quick +2, Tough +0, Mind +1, Alignment Orderly Impartial (Arbiter), Save TN 16; Special Defense: Immune to physical damage. Divine and holy magic deals double damage. A returned salute sends a garrison ghost nodding into rest.

† **Garrison Ghosts:** existing creature; Monster Trove for Early Adventurers, entry "Garrison Ghosts". Rules entry

The ghost guards the tombs of the six priest-kings of Valcath, the same kings who sold the mending. He has stood here since the night of the Sundering and cannot leave until he is relieved of duty. He is very, very tired of his watch.

If the heroes speak kindly to him, he tells them his purpose. If anyone tells him that they have come to relieve him, salutes him and takes his post, his oath is released, and he fades away with a sigh of thanks.

In each coffin lies the skeleton of a priest-king, a crown of tarnished silver on its skull (each worth 75 gp). Two of the kings hold swords on their chests, hilt at the breastbone, point at the feet: two fine longswords, each one a Cavalier's Pride.

CAVALIER'S PRIDE

Weapon (longsword); +1 to hit and damage; Damage 1d8; Permanent.

The blade is etched with a crowned twelve-pointed star, the mark of the Valcathi crown. The steel has not rusted in three hundred years.

‡ **Cavalier's Pride:** existing magic item; Magic Items for Early Adventures, entry "Cavalier's Pride". Rules entry

47H. THE SOUTH SHRINE

> This thirty-foot-square room rises twenty feet to a flat ceiling. Carvings cover the walls under a coating of slimy green growth.

47I. THE SHRINE OF OPEN HANDS

> This octagonal room is thirty feet across and rises sixty feet to a domed ceiling. On the back wall is a great carving of the goddess Ilvessa, her stone arms reaching down and out, palms up, as if to receive something. Exits lead north, east and west.

This is a lesser shrine. If the staff is laid in the carving's hands, it regains 1d6 charges, but only once in the whole adventure.

47J. THE BROKEN SEWER

> The ceiling has partly caved in. A round stone tunnel, four feet across, has dropped through the roof and smashed the northeast corner of the room. Its jagged broken end juts out of the rubble on the floor. It looks as if someone could follow the tunnel down into the dark a long way, though there would be no room in there to swing a sword.

If Corvin is with the party, he goes pale. He remembers crawling up this pipe out of the dark below, bleeding and fevered, before he ever found the temple above. The sewer leads down to area 48.

The Descent

Map 3B: The Descent is printed full page at the front of this book, just before the Background.

On the night of the Sundering, part of the city broke away with the bluff and slid only partway down. It hangs on a broad shelf high on the cavern wall, some five hundred feet above the cavern floor. The Descent crosses that shelf, from the sewer to the treasury, and then takes the long way down.

48. The Sewer Mouth

> Moss and green slime coat the walls of the four-foot tunnel. It slopes steeply downward into the dark.

The walls are very slick. Unless a hero has both hands free to brace against the sides, they must make a Dexterity Chance Roll against TN 10 or slide all the way down to area 49.

Those who slide do not slide alone. Five Hobs are climbing up this tunnel, halfway between the junction (area 49) and the top. Any hero who slides down bowls them over and tumbles with them all the way to the bottom. It is more of a slide than a fall, so nobody takes damage.

The Hobs are annoyed about the accident but do not bother the heroes. If no hero slides down, the Hobs back all the way down to area 49 and let the heroes pass.

> **5 Hobs of Under-Valcath (Hob)** - HP 6, 9, 9, 12, 16 (these are tired and thin), AC 13, DR 0, Attack 1d8+3, Save TN 16.

† **Hob:** existing creature; Monster Trove: Old Fears and Hungry Things, entry "Hob". Rules entry

49. Sewer Junction

> The slick tunnel suddenly forks. The main passage keeps sloping steeply on ahead of you, but the side branch drops away even more steeply.

The main passage leads to area 51a. The side branch leads to area 50.

50. The Steep Branch

> Moss and slimy green muck coat this four-foot tube. Water trickles slowly down it.

The steep branch continues down to the bakery at area 53a.

51A. The Upside-Down Cellar

> The sewer pipe breaks through the rock only ten feet above a floor. What is left of this room seems to be upside down. Ceiling beams run across the floor, and the doors hang three feet up the walls, above the beams.

A whole inn slid into the cavern on the night of the Sundering and landed on its roof. The heroes are coming in through its cellar.

A great spider has wandered in looking for food. It attacks the first hero to come down the pipe and fights to the death.

> **1 Titan Spider** - HP 26, AC 14, DR 0, Attacks 1, Attack 1d10+2 (bite); Saves Quick +2, Tough +1, Mind -3, Size Large, Alignment Wild Vile (Reaver), Intelligence Animal (1), Save TN 15; Special Attack: Venom Strike - poison, melee 5 ft, Tough save or 1d8+2 poison damage, cooldown 2 rounds. Special Defense: Climbs walls and ceilings at full speed. Feels anything touching its webs within 60 ft.

† **Titan Spider:** existing creature; Monster Trove for Early Adventures, entry "Titan Spider". Rules entry

51B. The Tipped Hall

> What were once polished floorboards now form the ceiling overhead.

51C. The Ceiling Kitchen

> Pots, pans and spoons lie scattered on what used to be the ceiling. A big wooden table hangs upside down from the floor above your heads.
>
> Three pale cooks in aprons are standing on that floor, upside down, as if nothing were wrong at all, stirring pots that are not there.

These are echoes of the inn's kitchen staff, still at work on the night the world turned over. They are harmless unless attacked. When they see the heroes, they flap their aprons and wave ladles and shout silently, trying to chase these muddy strangers out of their clean kitchen. Heroes who leave are not followed.

If attacked, the cooks scream and dissolve. They reappear the next day, still cooking.

51D. The Last Supper

> Broken tables and chairs lie heaped around the room. Swamp water seeps in through the shutters and pools between the ceiling beams below. A huge fireplace on the far east wall drinks the overflow, which drains away down its chimney.

> Thin music and hollow laughter drift through the hall. Overhead, a crowd of pale figures sit upside down at tables that are no longer there, eating and drinking and laughing at jokes three hundred years old.

These are echoes of the inn's last night, twenty of them. They ignore the heroes unless attacked. If attacked, they scatter and vanish.

A hero who listens carefully to the ghosts' conversation hears a merchant complaining loudly that the temple "wants forty gold for a fever-draught now, forty! My grandmother got hers for a prayer." Then the laughter stops, all at once, and every ghost looks up at the same moment, as if at a sound the heroes cannot hear. A moment later, they are laughing again.

51e. The Sleeping Rooms

> Rotted cots lie in a jumble all over the room. Water seeps in through the shuttered windows, collecting in pools on the floor, and the overflow drains out under the south door.

52. The Chimney

> Water trickles down the inside of the chimney. Loose bricks give handholds on every side.

The chimney drops from the fireplace in 51d. A person could easily climb down it using the loose bricks. Below the inn, the brickwork ends and the chimney becomes a natural shaft in the rock: the Drain (area 58).

53a. The Bakery

> A stone sewer pipe breaks through the ceiling of this shop. Water trickles from it onto the floor and runs out the door to the east. On the floor right below the pipe sit twenty large, rotting sacks.

This shop was once a bakery. Its windows overlook the ruins of a city street, and the roar of rushing water comes from that direction.

If any hero slides down the steep sewer branch (area 50) into this room, they shoot out of the pipe and land in the rotting sacks. The sacks burst in an explosion of white. The hero takes no damage, but is covered from head to foot in ancient flour. Until they wash it off, every creature they meet asks why they are covered in it, and a hero glowing faintly white in the dark cannot surprise anyone.

53b. The Leaning Street

> The buildings that once lined this street have toppled against each other, forming a rough arch of marble slabs over the cobbles. The place is still but tense, like the inside of an empty

cathedral. Doors and broken shop windows gape into the street as if the buildings had burst from the inside.

54A. The Archivist's Front Room

Books line the north wall of this room, their spines blotched with green fungus. The rich, musty smell of rotting paper fills the air.

The books bear titles in old Valcathi: The Rites of Open Hands, A History of the Iron Crown, The Book of Fevers, The Ledger of Mending, Volume IX. The books are so rotted by swamp water that they crumble at a touch.

The Ledger of Mending is just what it sounds like: a record of every healing done in the temple in the last year before the Sundering, with the price paid beside each name. Most of the prices are in gold. Near the end, the names stop and only the prices remain.

54B. The Archivist's Study

A great carved chair sags to one side on a low platform at the west end of the room. Above it, floating in the air, sits the pale, transparent figure of an old man in scholar's robes, a pen still in his hand.

Merrow Quill, the Last Archivist (ghost) - HP 15, AC 12, DR 0, Attacks 0, Attack none; Saves Quick +2, Tough +0, Mind +3, Alignment Orderly Kind (Guardian), Intelligence Exceptional (15-16), Save TN 16; Special Defense: Immune to physical damage. Cannot be harmed by any creature he has answered.

The heroes hear the ghostly figure speak: "I am Merrow Quill, archivist to the temple. On the night the city fell I swore I would answer one more question before I let myself rest. I have been waiting a very long time. Ask, and the answer is yours."

Merrow answers any one question as well as he can, then fades away in peace. He knows a great deal about old Mor Valcath. He knows that the Leaves of Ilvessa lie in the old Court of Judgment beneath the palace (area 70k), and how to get there by the palace or by the old delvers' tunnel under the Delvers' Hall (area 69b). He knows why Ilvessa withdrew her gift. He does not know anything about the Ember Host or the dragon, who came long after his death.

If the heroes ask a question that needs a long answer, he gives it in full. He has had three hundred years to think about how to answer everything.

55. Treasury Court

The street comes out from between arched buildings into a plaza. Huge cracked pillars strain under the rock ceiling far above. Water from the street pours into a fast river that flows west

> across the plaza from the eastern wall toward a steady roar of falling water. Across the river, blackened steel doors stand in the face of a solid, square building.

Anyone trying to wade across the river must make a Strength Chance Roll against TN 15. A hero who fails is swept 10 feet downstream toward the falls (area 56), and must roll again, and again, until they succeed or go over the edge. A hero who goes over the falls is saved only by the deep plunge pool at their foot: they take 4d6 bludgeoning damage and come up in the pool at the bottom of the cavern, beside the West Falls (area 67b).

The steel doors each weigh 1,500 pounds and would be worth a small fortune to a smith on the surface, if anyone could ever carry them out. They hang on balanced hinges and open easily.

56. The Hanging Steps

> Water rushes around stone columns and plunges off the end of a broken stair into a vast cavern. Overhead, mist thickens under a ceiling you can barely see. A single dim shaft of light falls into the great space.
>
> Over five hundred feet below, the ruins of Mor Valcath cover the dim floor of the cavern. The city lies in every state of decay. Some buildings are almost whole; many are nothing but rubble. Several waterfalls pour into the cavern, and many of the streets are rivers, all running south and away into the dark. A huge chain comes down out of the mist above you and disappears into a small courtyard far below.

The roots of the ironbarks above have broken through the cavern roof here and hang down beside the falls in a thick curtain to the cavern floor. They are slippery and wet. A hero who climbs down them must make two Strength Chance Rolls against TN 13, one halfway down and one near the bottom. A fall from the roots lands on rubble, away from the plunge pool, and would deal 20d6 damage, which is to say it would kill anyone in the party, and it would certainly attract attention from below.

At the foot of the roots, the lower flights of the old stair still stand. They lead the last stretch down to the cavern floor beside the West Falls (area 67b).

When the first hero has climbed about 100 feet down the roots, they hear something coming up toward them: grunting, muttering, a curse or two in an old-fashioned accent. More Hobs, climbing up to take their turn as counterweights on the lift.

> **8 Hobs of Under-Valcath (Hob)** - HP 30 each, AC 13, DR 0, Attack 1d8+3, Save TN 15.

The Hobs grumble, climb back down out of the way, and let the heroes go by.

57A. The Outer Treasury

> A long counter of chipped, dusty marble divides the room from east to west. Against the south wall, two ghostly soldiers stand at attention, weapons drawn. Behind the counter stands another ghostly figure, long-faced and thin-lipped. As you come in he speaks: "So, Tollan Brask, at last! You're the last one in, you know. Pay the tithe."

> **The Tithe-Clerk (ghost)** - HP 18, AC 12, DR 0, Attacks 0, Attack none, Save TN 16; Immune to physical damage.
>
> **2 Treasury Guards (Garrison Ghosts)** - HP 9, 11, AC 11, DR 0, Attack 1d6 (spectral spear, necrotic, +3 to hit; DR does not reduce), Save TN 16; Immune to physical damage. Divine and holy magic deals double damage.

† **Garrison Ghosts:** existing creature; Monster Trove for Early Adventurers, entry "Garrison Ghosts". Rules entry

The counter has a three-foot gap at its east end and stands about four feet high. The ghosts hover around it and demand that the heroes pay Tollan Brask's temple tithe: 500 clay marks, the old copper-backed tokens of Valcath. The clerk will take no other money. If he is paid, he is released from his duty, and he and the guards fade away.

If the heroes have no clay marks, the clerk orders his guards to cut them down for impersonating Tollan Brask. There are 30,000 clay marks lying around in the palace treasury at area 70d, if the heroes have found it. Clever heroes may also try to argue with the clerk. He is a bureaucrat, and he can be talked into almost anything with the right form filled out, but never into letting an unpaid tithe go.

If Maren is present, she may point out that Ilvessa's temple was never supposed to charge for mending at all. If she does, the clerk stares at her for a long moment, then very slowly tears up his ledger, and he and the guards fade away. This only works if a player thinks of it.

57B. The Vault

> Hundreds of rotting sacks fill the room. Clay tokens spill from their split sides. Three skeletons lie half buried in the tokens, two of them still clutching shovels, grinning up at you. Two alcoves are set in the east wall, with moss-covered words carved above each.

The heroes have a 30% chance to read the inscriptions. The northern one reads "Coffers," the southern one "Tithes." Both alcoves are permanent magic doorways to the ruins of the Treasury Tower (area 62). The tokens are worthless, apart from paying a certain ghost.

58. The Drain

> The chimney bricks give way to raw rock. The shaft narrows to a yard across and drops straight down, slick and black. Water from every crack swirls down its sides. It is cold in here, and the noise of the water is deafening.

The shaft drops 60 feet and opens in the ceiling of a great hall lying on its side (area 59b), above a pool of standing water. A hero without a rope must make a Dexterity Chance Roll against TN 14 or fall, taking 2d6 bludgeoning damage as they plunge into the pool.

59a. The Window Floor

> The west end of the hall has broken away and tilted, a whole wing of the building lying at a slant like a sinking ship. What was once its outer wall is now its floor: a grid of tall window frames with no glass left in them. Water pours through the frames and away into darkness below.

The broken wing hangs off the edge of the shelf. Curtains of woven metal threads hang from its window frames, and the Hobs have knotted dozens of them together into a long, swaying ladder that runs down through the broken window grid and on down the cavern wall, nearly five hundred feet. A hero who climbs it must make two Strength Chance Rolls against TN 13, one halfway down and one near the bottom. A hero who fails either roll falls, with the same result as a fall from the roots at area 56. At the bottom, a rubble slope leads down to the Hall of Judgment Steps in Under-Valcath (area 60).

59b. The Hall on Its Side

> A vast hall lies on its side. Its north wall, beamed like a ceiling, was once its roof; its south wall, a great tiled floor. Now the hall's ceiling and floor are both walls of windows. Water pours in from the shaft overhead and pools across the floor. Moss and fungus cover everything. The fungus around the pool seems to be moving.
>
> From the upper windows, curtains of corroded woven metal hang limply toward the floor. At the west end of the hall, the floor tilts away into a broken wing.

> **6 Cave Vipers (Cave Viper Snake)** - HP 12 each, AC 12, DR 0, Attacks 1, Attack 1d4, Save TN 16; Saves Quick +2, Tough +0, Mind -3, Alignment Wild Impartial (Seeker), Intelligence Animal (1); Special Defense: Heat Sense - feels warm-blooded creatures within 20 ft, even in total darkness. Strikes once from hiding, then tries to slip away.

† Cave Viper Snake: existing creature; Monster Trove for Early Adventurers, entry "Cave Viper Snake". Rules entry

The "moving fungus" is the snakes, coiled among it. The metal curtains easily hold a person's weight. Each hero who tries to swing from one curtain to the next must make a Dexterity

Chance Roll against TN 12 or fall to the floor (3d6 bludgeoning damage) and be attacked by the snakes.



Under-Valcath

Map 4: Under-Valcath and the Palace of Mor Valcath is printed full page at the front of this book, just before the Background.

The buried city lies on the floor of the great cavern, 800 feet below the swamp. It is dim here, lit only by a single gray shaft of light that falls through the Great Well near the North Falls, and by the torches of the Host. Waterfalls pour in from the walls. Streets are rivers. Half the buildings lie on their sides.

The Ember Host has a garrison in the old palace guardhouse, and the dragon sleeps in the palace beneath. The Hobs keep house in the old thieves' guildhall across the plaza, as they have done for three hundred years.

Random encounters. Check once every 3 turns, using the Under-Valcath table in Appendix 4.

The heat. It is warm and wet in the cavern, and everything drips. Bowstrings go slack (-1 to hit with bows after the first hour). Torches gutter. Paper rots. Wizards should keep their spellbooks wrapped.

60. The Hall of Judgment Steps

> Only a dim light from far above scatters the darkness of the cavern, shining faintly on ruins that cover the floor. The air is heavy with moisture and heat.
>
> A great stair of pale stone climbs out of the rubble toward the front of an ancient hall built into the cavern wall. Two robed stone judges stand beside the stair, taller than houses, each holding a pair of scales. The finely carved pillars that once stood at the hall's front lie broken among the rubble, which slopes east toward the cobbled streets of the city. Far to the north, the broken crown of an enormous tower still rises above the ruins. Water pours into the cavern from several places high up the walls.

61. North Falls

> Water thunders down from an opening high in the cavern wall. Glinting faintly in the gloom, it tumbles over the rubble and becomes a river running down a cobbled street, rushing out of sight.

62. The Treasury Tower

> A great tower still stands here, cracked from top to bottom, its upper floors open to the cavern and its windows dark. At its foot, inside a ring of broken flagstones, stand two stone

> cubes, each ten feet on a side, untouched by the destruction around them. Each cube has an arched opening in one side. The openings face each other, twenty feet apart.

The cubes are permanent magic doorways. Both lead to the vault of the treasury (area 57b). They bend space so that they look like ordinary arched entrances into the vault.

63. The North Market

> The disaster has ruined what were once beautiful buildings. Rotting awnings still hang over the empty stalls of an old market, and moss-covered rubble hides the neatly laid cobbles. A fast, dark river rushes west through the rubble and stones. There, the street ends suddenly in a chasm. Mist billows up out of the hole, and falling water crashes somewhere far below.

This branch of the river pours out of the cavern here. Heroes trying to cross the fast water within 50 feet of the chasm must make both a Strength and a Dexterity Chance Roll against TN 13 to get across without help. A hero who fails either roll is swept 10 feet toward the whirlpool in the chasm, and must try both rolls again or be swept another 10 feet.

Anyone who falls into the chasm drowns, unless they can breathe water. A hero who can breathe water is carried through miles of drowned tunnels under the cavern and comes out at the foot of the 1,000-foot cliff at Mire's End, floating out into the Sundermere, with a long story to tell and no way back in.

64. The Palace Guardhouse

> The shattered walls of the city lean darkly over the street. Moss and fungus cling to the ruins as if trying to drag them down. A fast river runs south down the middle of the street. Far to the north, a dim shaft of light falls through the mist. To the south lies a great plaza. To the east, one building seems to have held up better than the rest. Dark growth hides the carved letters over its double doors.

The heroes have a good chance (60%) to read the letters, which say: "Wardens of the Crown." This is now the Host's barracks.

64a. The Entry

> Dark stains spot the walls. A ten-foot-wide hallway curves around to a pair of bronze double doors. In front of the doors, moss covers an ancient, faded painting.

The heroes must clean the painting before they can tell that it is a map of the city. Even then, they have only a 30% chance of working out where they are on it.

A hero who does work it out can find the way to the Great Plaza (67), the palace (70a) and the Treasury Tower (62).

64B. North Cell

> Dark stains streak the walls of this twenty-foot-square room. Two sodden wooden doors open east and south.

64C. North Armory

> Ancient bronze weapons hang from broken racks on all the walls. The low ceiling sags on rotting beams, heavy with moisture. In the middle of the room, two masked soldiers are shouting at each other and tugging on a steel sword between them.

> **5 Ember-sworn (Soldier)** - HP 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, AC 14, DR 2, Attack 1d8+2, Save TN 16.

† **Soldier:** existing creature; Monster Trove for Early Adventurers, entry "Soldier". Rules entry

The two in the middle of the room are arguing over who gets a good steel sword they found. Even so, they and their three friends stop squabbling the moment they see the heroes, and attack. They fight to the death.

64D. The Assembly Hall

> The room is dark, but the echo of your footsteps tells you it is large. From somewhere deep in the dark comes a shrill, wet, hiccuping noise.

> **Ember Adept Brannick (Drunk)** - Human Wizard, level 3, HP 15, AC 11, DR 0, Attack 1d4, Save TN 13; Spells: Mystic Bolt, Lethargic, Binding Threads (he is in no state to cast any of them).

The hiccups come from a very drunk Ember Adept sprawled in the northwest corner. He thinks the heroes are fellow Ember-sworn, so they have no trouble getting him to babble.

He is drunk and upset: "The Captain an' me was having a little... celebration, see, when we got a bit too celebrated. Next thing, a whole gang of those stinking Hobs comes in and carries him off. Carries him! Like a sack of turnips! If they tell the wrong people about the real plan, it's all ruined. I'm pretty sure they took him to their guildhall, south of here, past the plaza. I've got to get a rescue together. Just as soon as I've had a little... sleep... off... this..."

He sleeps for at least 3 hours and cannot be woken.

64E. South Cell

> Dark stains streak the walls of this twenty-foot-square room. A green, slimy growth coats the ceiling.

64F. South Armory

> Bronze weapons, green and useless, hang crooked from broken racks.

64G. The Barracks

Moss hangs in the dark corridor. Black alcoves open off both sides of the hall. A rotten smell hangs in the air.

15 Ember-sworn (Soldier), asleep - HP 14 each, AC 14, DR 2, Attack 1d8+2, Save TN 16.

Snores, snorts and mutters rise from the sleeping Ember-sworn in many of the alcoves. They sleep badly. Every hero who comes into this hall must be quiet, and even when trying to be silent, each hero must make a Dexterity Chance Roll against TN 12 (a thief may use Move Silently instead). A single failure wakes them. Once awake, the Ember-sworn have only one thought: kill the intruders.

64H. The Mess Hall

Smoky torches light this big room. Broken tables lie scattered about, and a cold fireplace is built into the east wall. Three tables still standing in the middle of the room are lit by sputtering torches, and around them three masked soldiers are arguing loudly.

3 Ember-sworn (Soldier) - HP 11, 13, 13, AC 14, DR 2, Attack 1d8+2, Save TN 16.

"What are we waiting for?" roars the first. "I'll tell you. The Regent needs that glass stick, see? If he don't have it locked up safe, then the Synod sheep might just get up the nerve to hit back."

The second answers: "If the Regent wants his stick so bad, let him come down here and get it himself! I don't see why it matters. The Tarwing's sitting on the only copy of the mending rites there is. Without those bronze pages, nobody's healing anybody, staff or no staff."

"All we've got to do," says the third, "is wait till those Synod cowards hand the stick over. Then we crush them and take it. What's a few more days of waiting for a little extra safety?"

These soldiers are spoiling for a fight. They fight to the death.

65A. The Larder Office

Three masked soldiers squat in the middle of the room, rolling bone dice on the floor. In the northwest corner lies a small figure tied hand and foot, with a gag over his mouth. His eyes glitter above it, furious.

3 Ember-sworn Veterans (Soldier) - HP 22, 23, 17, AC 14, DR 2, Attack 1d8+2, Save TN 15.

Nim Corrowby, Gnome Tinker - Gnome Thief, level 2, HP 14, AC 12, DR 0, Attack 1d4 (stiletto, if he can find it); STR 9, DEX 16, CON 11, INT 15, WIS 9, CHA 13, Alignment Wild Kind (Liberator)

"What luck," says the biggest soldier, "that this little snack fell right into our laps. We'll dice for him. Winner gets a change of supper."

The prisoner is Nim Corrowby, a gnome tinker, map-collector and incurable explorer, and he is in serious trouble. He came down into the cavern by himself, by rope, because he wanted to see what was at the bottom. He knows nothing about the Host's plans and not much about what they even are. If rescued, he joins the party, and talks the whole time.

Nim has one useful skill: he is very good at the Hob lift (47c, 66). He watched it for two days before he was caught, and he can tell the heroes exactly when it runs and how to ride it without being seen.

65b. The Larder

This thirty-foot-square room has no light of its own. Wicker baskets are stacked against the walls.

Anyone who searches the room carefully notices a glint of metal behind the baskets on the west wall. It is a hidden cache of fine weapons, some soldier's private stash.

Harvester's Blade

Weapon (longsword, two-handed grip); +2 to hit and damage; Damage 1d8; Permanent.

A heavy, curved blade with a hooked back edge, once used by a Valcathi palace guard.

Eagleeye Bow

Weapon (longbow); +2 to hit and damage; Damage 1d8; Permanent.

An elven-made bow of pale wood, with a quiver of 12 ordinary arrows.

‡ **Eagleeye Bow:** existing magic item; Magic Items for Early Adventures, entry "Eagleeye Bow". Rules entry

66. The Court of Reception

A thin shaft of light from far above barely shows a grim, round courtyard forty feet across. Broken cobbled streets run east, west and south from it. Ruined walls lean menacingly over the streets. Against the north wall stands a great bronze gong in a frame of black iron, and beside it a robed figure. A huge iron cage sits in the middle of the courtyard. A chain rises from it and disappears into the mist far above.

1 Ember-sworn Gong-Keeper (Soldier) - HP 16, AC 14, DR 2, Attack 1d8+2, Save TN 16.

Within a few minutes, a squad of eight Ember-sworn marches into the courtyard.

> **8 Ember-sworn (Soldier)** - HP 6, 8, 10, 10, 14, 14, 16, 20, AC 14, DR 2, Attack 1d8+2, Save TN 16.

The squad's leader nods to the gong-keeper, who takes a mallet from his robe and strikes the gong. Moments after the sound rolls through the cavern, the chain overhead pulls tight and the cage begins to rise, eight Ember-sworn scrambling in. A second cage, bristling with small arms and legs, comes down on the other side of the chain and passes the rising one. Within 5 rounds it bumps to a stop in the courtyard. It is full of Hobs, some of whom rode down hanging off the outside.

> **15 Hobs of Under-Valcath (Hob)** - HP 30 each, AC 13, DR 0, Attack 1d8+3, Save TN 15.

† Hob: existing creature; Monster Trove: Old Fears and Hungry Things, entry "Hob". Rules entry

The Hobs wait until the gong-keeper shouts: "Out, you lumps! Out, or else!" Then they pile out of the cage and scatter out of the cavern by way of areas 59b and 58.

The Great Plaza

67. The Great Plaza

> The faint gray glow from the distant well barely reaches this vast plaza, at least 120 feet across. In its center, on a stepped dais, stands the statue of a robed woman, her face worn smooth. Streams from the east and west streets flow into a broad pool, which spills into a river channeled down the south street. The roar of the waterfalls fades to nothing, and the moss-covered ruins around the plaza seem to draw back into the dark, when a low, throaty sound rumbles out of the doorway of one of the southern buildings.
>
> A huge black shape rears up like a snake on the steps of that building. The whole plaza goes still. It feels as if the light and air are fleeing from the spot where it stands.
>
> It is the dragon. A robed Ember Adept kneels before her, and behind him, seven small, dirty figures cower in the moss, keeping their eyes off her glossy scales.

The dragon is speaking in a low, hissing voice to the kneeling Adept.

> **Nyxara the Tarwing (Young Black Dragon)** - HP 85 (minus any damage the heroes did in area 44k), AC 15, DR 1, Attack 1d10+3 (bite), 1d8+3 (claws), Save TN 12; Acid Breath: 40-ft line, Tough save, 4d6 acid, half on a successful save, cooldown 3 rounds.

† **Young Black Dragon:** existing creature; Monster Trove for Seasoned Adventurers, entry "Young Black Dragon". Rules entry

> **Ember Adept Searle (Hob-Master)** - Human Wizard, level 4, HP 20, AC 11, DR 0, Attack 1d4, Save TN 12; Spells (each once per day; targets add 4 to their Save TN): Mystic Bolt, Rootbind, Binding Threads, Searing Lances.
>
> **7 Hobs of Under-Valcath (Hob)** - HP 30 each, AC 13, DR 0, Attack 1d8+3, Save TN 15.

† **Hob:** existing creature; Monster Trove: Old Fears and Hungry Things, entry "Hob". Rules entry

The heroes would be seen long before they could get close enough to hear the dragon. However, the Adept's voice carries all over the plaza when he stands up and turns to shout at the Hobs:

"Listen to me, you lumps! If that prisoner gets out of this cavern, the Tarwing will eat me for breakfast - but not before I eat every last one of you! I want that woman and I want her now!"

He cracks a whip over his head, and the Hobs scatter down every street. The Adept follows one of the search parties, chosen at random.

They are looking for an escaped prisoner: a Tarrow woman hiding at area 67b.

The dragon watches them go, then turns and slides back into the palace through area 70a, toward her lair (area 70k).

67a. East Falls

> Torrents of water batter the rubble, throwing mist into the air, then settle into a stream running west down the street.

67b. West Falls

> A wall of water dives from an opening in the western cavern wall, floods the street, then settles quickly into a stream running east. Thick vines climb the cavern wall beside the falls, up into the mist.

This is where the Descent comes down. The wet vines are very slippery. Heroes must make two Strength Chance Rolls against TN 13 to climb them, once halfway up and once at the top. They lead up to the Treasury Court (area 55). The roots and the old stair of the Hanging Steps (area 56) come down beside them, and the Hob ladder from 59a reaches the floor a little to the south, at the Hall of Judgment Steps (area 60).

> **Senna Holt, Tarrow Survivor** - Human Fighter, level 2, HP 24 (currently 8), AC 12, DR -1, Attack 1d4 (a sharpened bone); STR 15, DEX 13, CON 13, INT 10, WIS 12, CHA 15, Alignment Orderly Kind (Guardian)

An escaped prisoner is hiding, shaking, behind the curtain of water. Senna Holt crouches in the rubble as far from the water as she can get. If cornered, she fights fiercely and to the death, unless the heroes show they mean her no harm.

Senna is one of only two Tarrow-folk still alive down here. Her cell (area 70g) is near the dragon's lair. If the heroes are friendly, she joins them gladly. If Maren is with the party, Senna knows her, and bursts into tears.

Senna tells the heroes that the other survivor, Bram Holt, her brother, is still chained in the palace cells.

The Hob Warren

The Hobs of Under-Valcath live in the old thieves' guildhall southeast of the Great Plaza. It is a sprawl of rooms with secret doors and hidden ways, and the Hobs have made it home in their own particular style.

68a. The Alley

> A narrow passage, framed by crumbling walls, winds through vine-covered ruins and ends suddenly at a door.

68b. The Back Door

> The room is damp and cold. An old and terrible quiet hangs over the place, as if stunned by something that happened here once.

68c. The Nap Room

> Brown, drying mold covers every wall, and a dull, sour smell rises from the lumpy woven mats piled all over the floor. Faint sounds come from every one of the mats.

> **15 Hobs of Under-Valcath (Hob), asleep** - HP 30 each, AC 13, DR 0, Attack 1d8+3, Save TN 15.

† **Hob:** existing creature; Monster Trove: Old Fears and Hungry Things, entry "Hob". Rules entry

This is a Hob dormitory. A thief must Move Silently to walk among the sleeping Hobs without waking them. Non-thieves who come into the room wake them automatically.

If woken, the Hobs rush for the door. If captured, they know about the lift (47c and 66), but nothing else of use.

68d. The Peeping Room

> Fungus stains and water streak the walls. Light flickers into the room through four tall, narrow slits in the north wall.

Heroes who look through the slits see the torch-lit room beyond (area 68e).

68e. The Welcome Room

> Torches sputter and smoke in brackets on the east wall. Darker than the smoke are the slits in the south and west walls. The slits are only two inches wide, but four feet tall.

The southern slits look into an empty room (68d). Loud snoring rumbles through the western ones. The guards in 68f, who are meant to make this room a death-trap, are napping. No amount of noise in this room wakes them.

68f. The Guard Post

> Their backs to the slits in the east wall, three Hobs are leaning against each other, fast asleep. The biggest has an enormous round nose that bobs up and down with every rolling snore. His arms are folded across his chest; his notched short sword lies on the floor well out of reach. He leans on the second Hob, whose ears flap in time with his own snoring. The feet of the third, smallest Hob stick out from under the other two, in two enormous boots with the soles worn through.

3 Hob Guards (Hob) - HP 30, 28, 26, AC 13, DR 0, Attack 1d8+3, Save TN 15.

These are elite Hob guards! If woken, they try to bully any single intruder, but run away from more than one. If they run, they go straight to the king's throne room (68m), announce that an army has broken in, and ask for orders.

68g. The Waiting Room

> The streaked walls of this room are buried under hangings and decorations too gaudy to believe. Rugs, banners, curtains and bolts of cloth hang everywhere, some upside down or sideways. Fraying gold cloth is draped between statues of every shape and kind, many of them wearing hats.

It is the Hob idea of the good life.

Besides the obvious doors, a secret door at the north end of the east wall leads to 68h. Anyone within three feet of it hears thumping against the door from the other side, then muffled growls and yells.

68h. The Strong Room

> A single soldier glares at you out of the dark. His hands and feet are tightly bound, and he has been stripped of his armor down to a stained undershirt. On each side of him stands a small Hob with a wooden spear. They poke him with the spears, then leap back as if he were not tied up. Each time they jump, the huge iron helmets on their heads wobble around, sometimes falling down over their eyes.

2 Hob Guards (Hob) - HP 9, 11 (these two are very young), AC 13, DR 0, Attack 1d8+3, Save TN 16.

> **Ember Captain Durn Malloc** - Human Fighter, level 4, HP 48, AC 10 (no gear) or 12 (with shield), DR -1 (no armor) or 3 (chainmail), Attack 1d4 (fists) or 1d8+2 (longsword); Saves Quick +0, Tough +2, Mind +1, Alignment Orderly Vile (Tyrant), Intelligence Average (8-10), Save TN 12.

The two little Hobs notice the heroes after only 2 rounds and try to run. The prisoner is the captain of the Ember-sworn garrison, and he has woken up with a horrible hangover. The Hobs carried him off from his own celebration because he kicked one of them. They have not decided what to do with him.

If he is untied, the captain uses every trick he has to get away and take command of his troops again.

The captain tells the heroes the following only if threatened with death, or if charmed:

"Malvorn Ashcrowne is the Regent. A true priest of the Ember, he calls the fire down out of the dark to make this land his. But he's afraid of one thing: hope. A land that can heal is a land that won't kneel. We guard the thing that could give it back to them. The Leaves. The bronze pages. The last words of the mending goddess. Under the Tarwing's eye, they're safe in the dark. That's the whole plan. Keep the land hurting, and the land stays ours."

68I. The Dining Hall

> Warm, stinking stew is flying through the air. Bowls smash against the walls, and spoons clatter on the floor. A crowd of Hobs is settling a furious argument over dinner.

> **8 Hobs of Under-Valcath (Hob)** - HP 30 each, AC 13, DR 0, Attack 1d8+3, Save TN 15.

Every round a hero is in this room, there is a 70% chance that a bowl of stew hits them and splatters. Hob stew is made by putting anything edible, or nearly edible, into a pot. It stinks, and it keeps stinking. The smell wears off in 1d20 turns, and during that time other heroes must make a Tough save to stand within 10 feet of the smelly one. Neither the smelly hero nor anyone with them can surprise an enemy.

The Hobs do not notice the heroes until 5 rounds after they come in. Some of them then throw food at the intruders, though their aim does not improve. They are too busy ducking bowls themselves. If the heroes try to fight, the Hobs just run out the nearest door.

If a hero sits down and eats a bowl of stew without complaining, the argument stops dead. Every Hob in the room stares. Then they cheer, and the hero is declared a guest of the house. Word reaches King Grumbit before the heroes do.

68J. The Bedrooms

> Snores and whistles echo out of dirty little rooms along the hall.

8 Hobs of Under-Valcath (Hob), asleep - HP 30 each, AC 13, DR 0, Attack 1d8+3, Save TN 15.

If woken, these Hobs try to run. If captured, they reveal something valuable: they know the tunnel from 69b into the dragon's lair.

68k. The King's Bedchamber

A huge bed with carved, rotting posts at each corner sags in the middle of the room. Racks along the west wall are hung with ragged hats, some sporting torn or filthy feathers. Caps and loud clothing of every kind are piled everywhere.

This is King Grumbit's bedroom. A secret door is set in the west wall. A hero who searches the clothes piles finds an old, stained map.

The map shows the way from the sewer access (69b) through the tunnel that leads to the dragon's lair at 70k. Crude notes scrawled in the margin read: "Big hoard. Lots of shiny. Old lizard won't notice if the King takes a little present."

68l. The Bolt-Hole

The guild thieves of old Mor Valcath used this exit when they needed to get into the streets in a hurry. The secret doors here only open one way: out of the guildhall.

68m. The Court of King Grumbit

Heavy, frayed gold cloth covers the walls of the hall. Statues line both sides, and carpets of every color and pattern make a patchwork across the floor. At the west end stands a huge throne, its gold leaf peeling badly from the carved frame. On it, nodding under a tarnished crown three sizes too big for him, sits a wrinkled little figure buried in robes. Four armed Hobs stand beside him, their heads rattling around inside their helmets.

King Grumbit the Ninth, King Under the Hill - HP 32, AC 13, DR 0, Attacks 1, Attack 1d8+3 (scepter, which is a soup ladle); Saves Quick +3, Tough +1, Mind +4, Size Small, Alignment Impartial Kind (Mediator), Intelligence Bright (11-12), Save TN 15; Special Attack: Work Undone and Gift, Not Wage, as other Hobs. His Work Undone can reach every object in the throne room at once.

4 Royal Guards (Hob) - HP 26, 28, 30, 30, AC 13, DR 0, Attack 1d8+3, Save TN 15.

This is the court of King Grumbit the Ninth. He bargains with anyone who comes before him. His guards attack only if they or the king are attacked first. Hobs usually run from a fight, but backed into a corner, they are ferocious.

Grumbit does not like the Host. He says so at length. The Hobs were happy before the Host came: they kept house for an empty city, polished statues nobody would ever see, and made stew. Then the Host arrived, threw the furniture around, and started paying Hobs to work. Paying them! In scraps! Like servants! Grumbit has been planning revenge for months, though his plans so far have consisted mostly of hiding the soldiers' left boots.

How the bargain goes depends entirely on how the heroes treat him.

- If the heroes offer coin, treasure or anything framed as payment, Grumbit is deeply offended. He becomes very formal and very polite. He agrees to whatever they ask, and nothing they agreed on ever quite works. Guides lead them in circles. Maps are slightly wrong. Their straps keep breaking.
- If the heroes give him a gift freely, with no strings, and especially if it is a hat, he is delighted. He becomes their friend for life.
- If any hero has already been declared a guest of the house in 68i, Grumbit greets the whole party as family.

Grumbit knows that the Leaves of Ilvessa lie in the dragon's hoard at 70k. He calls them "the shiny pages." He knows about the tunnel from 69b into the lair. He will gladly give the heroes guides to anywhere in the cavern and the map from his bedchamber (68k), but he offers no other help. Hobs keep house. They do not fight dragons.

If the heroes have been generous, Grumbit adds one more thing, very quietly: "The old lizard sleeps on her left side. Always her left side. Bad wing, see. Something bit her once."

The Secret Way

69a. The Delvers' Hall

> Water seeps down the walls of this room, pools on the floor, then winds out through the south door. A long stone counter divides the room from east to west. Behind it is another doorway.

69b. The Secret Way

> Little streams trickle down every wall. Although a great deal of water is running across the floor, it seems to be only a few inches deep.

Heroes who search the floor near the middle of the room find a closed trapdoor with an iron pull ring. Opening it takes combined effort: add up the Strength bonuses of every hero pulling, and add 10. That total is the TN they must meet on a single d20 roll, rolled by the strongest hero. Heroes can keep trying.

The trapdoor is 4 feet square and opens onto a shaft 20 feet deep. At the bottom is a stone tunnel five feet across, half full of water.

When the heroes go in, check for a random encounter. If one is indicated, roll 1d20 to see how many rounds later it happens. If the result is Nyxara, treat it as no encounter.

North of the shaft, the tunnel runs 30 feet to a cave-in. To the south, it runs 200 feet, then turns east for 340 feet to another cave-in. Thirty feet before the end of the east tunnel, a shaft climbs 30 feet straight up to an iron grate in the floor of Nyxara's lair (70k).

The grate is rusted but sound. A hero can lift it quietly with a Strength Chance Roll against TN 14. If the heroes come up this way while Nyxara sleeps, they are behind her, on her bad side.

The Palace of Mor Valcath

70a. The Pillared Court

> Broad steps climb from the Great Plaza into a courtyard of pillars. All of them are cracked, and some have shattered, but they still hold up a sagging stone roof. In places the cavern wall has broken through the stonework and makes up much of the courtyard. At the south end of the court, a broad stair leads down to the First Hall (70c) and the Hall of Kings (70b) beyond it. Doorways to either side open onto the palace treasury (70d) and the officers' quarters (70e-70h).

70b. The Hall of Kings

> Enormous statues of ancient kings, forty feet tall, stand along the east and west walls of the hall, three to a side. Their deep-carved faces are hidden in shadow, but they seem to be watching you.

These are the priest-kings of Valcath, the same six who lie in the tomb at 47g. Every statue's right hand is held out, palm up, as if asking for payment. A hero who looks closely sees that a single coin has been carved into each upturned palm.

70c. The First Hall

> Grimy walls rise thirty feet to an arched ceiling. Moss and pale fungus line the hall. Old life-sized statues stand all through the room.

Two Ember-sworn guard the north end of the hall.

> **2 Ember-sworn Palace Guards (Soldier)** - HP 22, 23, AC 14, DR 2, Attack 1d8+2, Save TN 15.

† **Soldier:** existing creature; Monster Trove for Early Adventurers, entry "Soldier". Rules entry

70d. The Palace Treasury

> Huge chests, their wood rotted and split, spill their contents across the floor.

There are 30,000 clay marks in this room, the old copper-backed tokens of Valcath. They are completely worthless today, except to a certain ghost in area 57a.

However, a hero who digs through them for a turn has a 30% chance of finding one of the following (roll 1d4, or choose). Each item can only be found once.

1d4	Find
1	Shadowstrike Dirk (+1 to hit and damage, 1d4)

1d4	Find
2	Wall-Walker Slippers
3	A Valcathi spellbook holding Arcane Unseal, Veil of Obscurity and Silent Path
4	Aegis of the Protector (+1 AC shield)

WALL-WALKER SLIPPERS

Wondrous; Recharge at dawn.

Walk on walls and ceilings at normal speed for up to 10 minutes. Stand on any surface regardless of which way is up. Soft gray slippers stitched with a pattern of climbing ivy.

‡ **Wall-Walker Slippers:** existing magic item; Magic Items for Early Adventures, entry "Wall-Walker Slippers". Rules entry

70E. THE OFFICERS' QUARTERS

> Cells open to the north off a long hall that runs east. The hall is silent.

70F. THE CAPTAIN'S ROOM

> This twenty-by-thirty-foot room is plain: a bedroll on the floor, a pack in the corner.

The pack holds dried meat and a map that shows the exact layout of the palace (70a-70k). This is Captain Malloc's room; he is currently a prisoner of the Hobs (area 68h).

70G. THE PRISONER CELL

> The door creaks open. A man hangs limp from iron cuffs fixed high on the wall. His shirt is gone, and his body shows signs of a beating.

> **Bram Holt, Tarrow Warrior** - Human Fighter, level 2, HP 24 (currently 4), AC 12, DR -1, Attack 1d4 (fists); STR 14, DEX 14, CON 13, INT 12, WIS 9, CHA 12, Alignment Orderly Kind (Guardian)

The man is Bram Holt. Weak as he is, he speaks: "Our village was attacked by fire-masked men out of the east. We fought. To our shame, they took us anyway. There are only two of us left down here. My sister got away a few hours ago." He knows the way to the dragon's lair (70k) and will join and help the heroes.

If the heroes have found Senna, their reunion is the kind of thing nobody at the table should have to describe.

70h. The Commander's Room

> The door opens on a room lit by a smoky torch. A rough desk stands in the middle of the floor. Behind it sits a broad-shouldered woman in a soot mask and a half-buckled breastplate. She looks up, startled, and leaps to her feet.

> **Ember Commander Ysolt Varr** - Human Fighter, level 5, HP 60, AC 12 (shield), DR 3 (breastplate), Attack 1d8+3 (arming sword); Saves Quick +1, Tough +3, Mind +2, Alignment Orderly Vile (Tyrant), Intelligence Bright (11-12), Save TN 11; Special Attack: Second Wind - once per day, regains 1d6 HP. (Grit, not magic; the Hush does not stop it.)

Commander Varr is clever. If she is badly outnumbered, she surrenders at once, then offers to lead the heroes across the Hall of Echoes (70j), swearing she knows the safe path over its floor. She does, and she walks them straight onto the plates. It is the trap.

70i. The Long Hall

> Water seeps down the arching walls of this ten-foot-wide hall. A cold, musty smell hangs in the air.

The hall runs south from the officers' quarters, then bends west and comes out on the east side of the Hall of Echoes (70j). There is no other way into the lair from the palace: every road to 70k crosses the Hall of Echoes, or comes up through the grate from 69b.

70j. The Hall of Echoes

> A round chamber, forty feet across, opens below the Hall of Kings. Two thin streams fall from openings high in its walls and run away in channels to either side. Mosaic patterns cover the floor in a design that seems to mean nothing. A short stair leads down to the doors of the great chamber beyond.

A ring of pressure plates is hidden in the mosaic around the center of the room. Nobody can cross the chamber without stepping on one unless they know where they are. Any of them sounds a great gong somewhere in the palace. A thief can spot the plates with a Remove Traps roll; any hero searching the floor carefully finds them on an Intelligence Chance Roll against TN 13.

If the heroes miss the trap and sound the gong, Nyxara pushes her head up the stair through the lair doors and uses her Acid Breath straight across the chamber. Everyone in the room is in the line. Then she roars for her Ember-sworn guards. Any the heroes have not yet dealt with in the palace (the guards at 70c, Commander Varr at 70h) come running; otherwise nobody answers.

70k. The Court of the Scales

> A vast round chamber opens before you, a hundred feet across. It climbs four stories to a cracked dome of milky glass. Dim light seeps through the mist above and spreads over the center of the room, where a great pair of scales is set into the floor in bronze. Two robed stone judges, each holding scales of their own, stand on either side of the chamber. On the far side, a stair climbs away into the dark.
>
> There, a glossy black dragon lies coiled on a heap of coins, gems, steel weapons and strange old objects. On the very top of the heap, under her chin, lies a stack of bronze pages on a chain, gleaming like a sunset.

This is Nyxara's lair, once the Court of Judgment of the priest-kings, where the price of each healing was set. The stair on its south side is choked with rubble a short way up and leads nowhere. Nyxara is bound by her bargain with the Regent to keep the Leaves of Ilvessa from the heroes.

If her Acid Breath is ready, she rises into the air under the dome and uses it. Otherwise, she has to fight on the ground. She fights to the death in her own lair.

Remember: Nyxara has not healed since the plaza (area 44k). Use her HP from that fight. If the heroes came up through the grate from 69b and she was asleep, they get one free round before she wakes. She sleeps on her left side, because of her bad wing.

If the heroes have the Staff of the Pale Thread, a voice speaks to the hero who is holding it. It is a soft woman's whisper, close to the ear, and only that hero hears it:

"Take back the Leaves. Then strike her with the Thread. All will be mended."

If the hero who holds the staff hits Nyxara with it before the heroes have the Leaves in hand, the staff does not break. It deals its normal damage, and the whisper comes again: "Take back the Leaves."

Once the heroes hold the Leaves, the next time the staff hits Nyxara, it shatters on impact. Read the following:

> The staff breaks against the dragon's scales with a sound like a great bell.
>
> White light bursts out of it in rings, wave after wave, brighter than noon. The hero who struck the blow disappears inside the light as a ringing fills the whole chamber. A wall of white fire, soft as milk and hard as iron, rolls out across the hoard and over the dragon. Nyxara is caught in it. She screams, and falls, and goes into the light.
>
> The walls are shaking. The great pillars sway and begin to topple. The cracked glass dome overhead groans. Above it, the walls of the cavern itself begin to come down.

This is a divine effect. Nothing stops it, and Nyxara does not get a save. She is destroyed.

The hero who broke the staff is not lost. The light carries them to the Temple of Ilvessa, where the others will find them (see the Epilogue). Do not tell the players this.

From now on, everywhere the heroes go in the cavern, rocks are falling from the walls and water is pouring in with tremendous force. Every creature in every area of Under-Valcath is trying desperately to escape. Each turn, every hero has a 15% chance of being hit by falling rock for 1d12 damage. The water in the cavern rises 1 foot every turn.

The Hobs are everywhere, running, carrying their furniture. If the heroes were kind to them, Hobs appear out of nowhere to lead them to the fastest way up: the lift, which the Hobs now ride upward on their own, laughing, as the counterweight cage of Ember-sworn plunges into the rising water. If the heroes were not kind to the Hobs, they are on their own.

If the heroes escape, send them to the Temple of Ilvessa (area 46b) and read the Epilogue.

Nyxara's hoard holds the Leaves of Ilvessa (see Appendix 2), 56 gems of various kinds worth 50 gp each, 1,000 pp, and these items:

Cloak of Protection

Cloak; +1 to all saves; Permanent.

A gray traveling cloak lined with old silver thread. It smells faintly of lavender, three hundred years later.

‡ **Cloak of Protection:** existing magic item; Magic Items for Early Adventures, entry "Cloak of Protection". Rules entry

Bottle of Endless Smoke

Wondrous; 1d6 charges.

A brass bottle with a tight cork. Produces a 60-foot-radius cloud of smoke that hides everything inside it. The cloud lasts 1 hour or until a strong wind scatters it.

‡ **Bottle of Endless Smoke:** existing magic item; Magic Items for Early Adventures, entry "Bottle of Endless Smoke". Rules entry

WAND OF UNERRING BOLTS

Wand (wizards only); 1d4 charges.

Fires 1d3+1 mystic darts that strike their chosen targets without fail for 1d6+1 force damage each.

‡ **Wand of Unerring Bolts:** existing magic item; Magic Items for Early Adventures, entry "Wand of Unerring Bolts". Rules entry

If the heroes destroy Nyxara without breaking the staff, there is no light and no collapse. The heroes take the Leaves and find their own way out of the cavern.

If they still have the staff, they can carry it and the Leaves back to the statue in area 46b. When the staff is laid across her hands with the Leaves in the room, it becomes part of the statue and the Hush ends. Run the Epilogue from there; the hero who laid the staff down is the one who receives the Star, and is simply standing at the statue's feet.

If the staff is lost, there is no miracle. Do not read the Epilogue box. The Leaves still hold the rites of mending, and a cleric who studies them may still bring healing back to the Torrenmark, but it will take far longer, and the Ember Host will be hunting the pages.



Epilogue

If the heroes broke the staff, escaped the cavern and returned to area 46b, read the following:

> The statue of the goddess stands over you in the hush of the temple. In her cupped hands now rests a perfect carved likeness of the white staff, with a line of silver running through its heart.
>
> At the foot of the statue, someone stirs.

The figure on the floor is the hero who broke the staff. They lie there unhurt, with every hit point restored. Around their neck now hangs a small pendant of silver, a twelve-pointed star with a single line of stitches across it: the same pendant the statue wears. See the Star of the Mending in Appendix 2.

Then let every cleric in the party try a healing prayer. It works. The Hush is broken. For the first time in three hundred years, a prayer for mending in the Torrenmark has been answered.

If Maren is alive, she is the first to try. She heals Corvin's old wounds, and Corvin weeps, and nobody at the table should rush that moment.

If the players are going on to further adventures in the Torrenmark, read this:

> The day ends as you trudge back out of the Blackmire. The plains stretch away to the west, golden in the low sun, all the way to the dark wall of the Spine.
>
> Above the mountains, something smudges the western sky. Not clouds. A black, billowing column, rising higher than the peaks themselves.
>
> It is smoke. It is rising from beyond the Spine, from the shores of Lake Ishvane, where Hollowmere stands on its old stone piers.

This is the Host's northern army, the one Edric Fenn warned of in area 38, coming down on the western valleys while the heroes were underground.

Appendix 1: The Staff of the Pale Thread

The Staff of the Pale Thread (Artifact)

Staff; Holds 20 charges when found; Charges do not return on their own.

A staff of milk-white glass, five feet long and as thick as two fingers, cool to the touch even in the swamp's heat. A single thread of silver runs through its core from end to end, and the head of the staff is shaped like a twelve-pointed star.

The staff is the last gift Ilvessa left in her temple on the night of the Sundering. Because its power comes from the goddess herself, the Hush does not touch it. It is the only thing in the Torrenmark that can heal by magic, apart from the Murmurwood and its Warden.

Who can use it. Anyone can carry the staff. Only a cleric or a wizard may call on its powers by choice, as with any staff. The staff also answers those it has chosen: Maren Ashby and Corvin Dray, and any hero it heals of its own will in Event 2.

Who it rejects. The staff will not be held by anyone who means to sell its healing, hoard it, or use it for cruelty. Such a person takes 3d6 radiant damage the moment they touch it. The DN decides who that is. The elders of the Mending Synod qualify (area 17b), because they have sold hope by the coin for three hundred years.

Powers.

Power	Charges	Effect
Mend	1	Touch one creature. It regains 1d8+2 HP.
Greater Mend	3	Touch one creature. It regains 3d8 HP.
Cleanse	2	Touch one creature. One poison or disease affecting it ends.
Pale Strike	1	When the staff hits in melee (1d6 bludgeoning), it deals an extra 1d6 radiant damage.
Pale Ward	5	A dome of white light, 10 ft in radius around the bearer, turns aside one breath weapon or other area attack. Everyone inside takes no damage from it.
Glimmer	0	The staff sheds a soft white light in a 20-foot radius, or goes dark, at the bearer's will.

Recharging. The staff's charges never come back on their own. It is fully recharged when laid across the cupped hands of Ilvessa's statue in area 46b. Laid in the hands of the shrine carving in area 47i, it regains 1d6 charges, but only once.

Its own will. The staff sometimes acts on its own, at moments that matter. It fell across a wounded stranger in Event 2. The DN may have it act this way whenever the story calls for it. When it acts on its own, it spends no charges.

Its end. When the bearer strikes Nyxara with it in her lair, once the heroes hold the Leaves, the staff shatters and destroys her (area 70k). This is a divine effect and cannot be stopped. Afterward, the staff becomes part of Ilvessa's statue in area 46b.



Appendix 2: The Leaves of Ilvessa and the Star of the Mending

The Leaves of Ilvessa (Artifact)

Book of twelve bronze pages; Permanent.

Twelve pages of thin bronze, each about eighteen inches across and no thicker than a fingernail, threaded together at one corner on a silver chain so that each can swing out and be read. Both sides of every page are engraved in fine, close Valcathi script.

The Leaves hold every rite of mending that Ilvessa ever taught her priests. They are what the goddess called "my words."

Touching the Leaves. The Leaves have the same judgment as the staff. Anyone who means to sell what is written on them, hoard them, or keep their knowledge for themselves takes 3d6 radiant damage each time they touch or read them. Nyxara learned this the hard way. She keeps the Leaves on top of her hoard, under her chin, but she never touches them, and a pale burn scar runs along her lower jaw.

Reading the Leaves. A cleric who spends ten uninterrupted hours studying the Leaves learns the rites of Ilvessa. From then on, that cleric may choose to serve Ilvessa, in addition to any god they already serve. The DN decides what that means for the cleric's faith and their other god.

What the Leaves teach. The Leaves tell how to give mending freely, and the cost of doing otherwise. They name the old oath of the temple: "What is given freely stays. What is sold runs out like sand." If the Hush has already been broken by the staff (area 70k), the Leaves are the foundation for rebuilding Ilvessa's faith across the Torrenmark. If the staff was lost, a cleric who studies the Leaves and then gives healing away freely for a year and a day, with no payment of any kind, may end the Hush instead. Prayers still cannot mend in the Torrenmark, so that healing is done by hand: bandage, herb, needle and bone-setting, given to anyone who asks. The DN decides how that story goes.

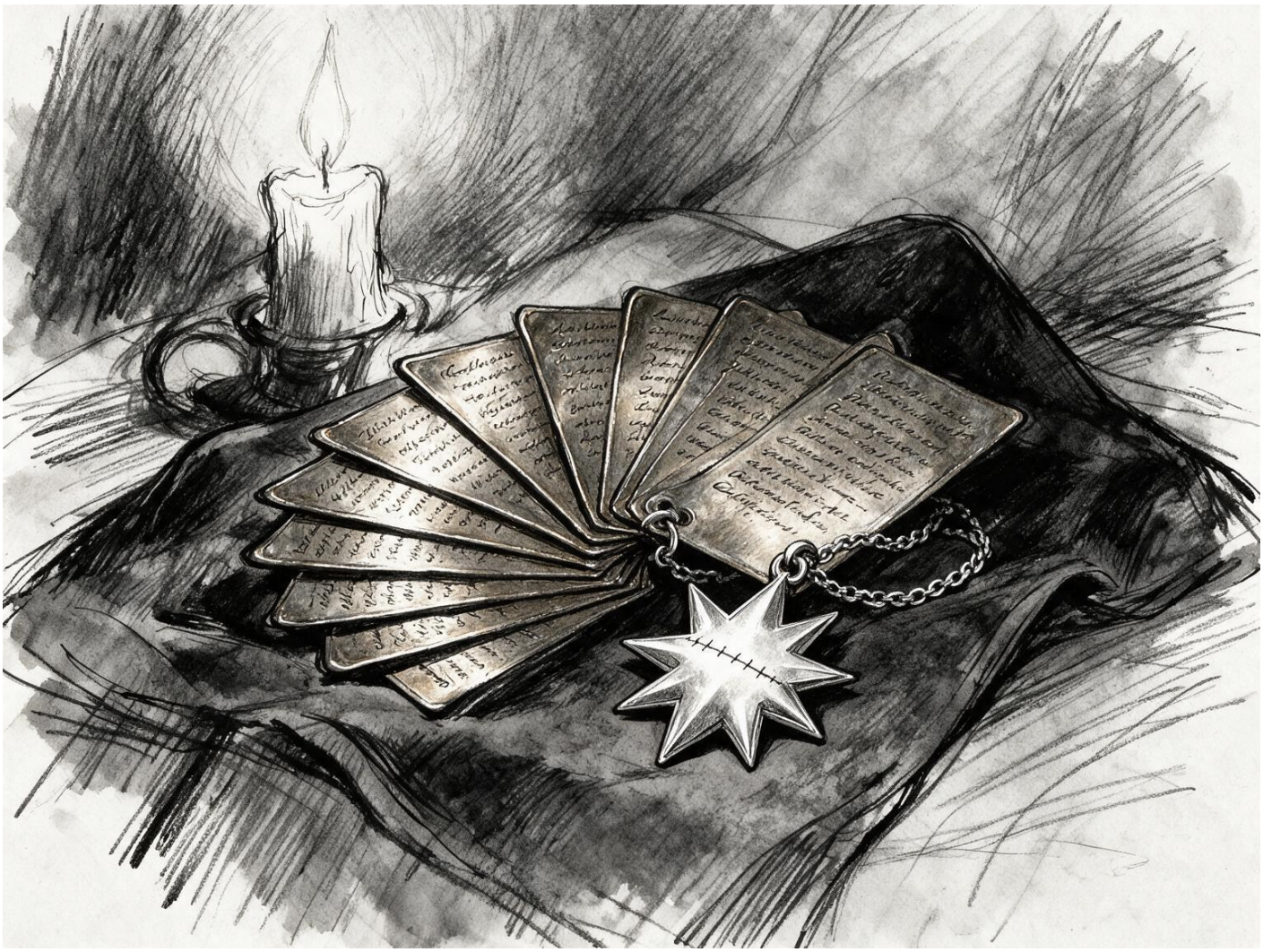
THE STAR OF THE MENDING

Amulet; Permanent.

A small silver pendant shaped like a twelve-pointed star, with a single line of tiny stitches engraved across its face.

The goddess places this on the hero who broke the staff. It has no power in battle. It is a sign that its wearer is trusted by Ilvessa.

Any cleric who professes Ilvessa's oath to the wearer, swearing to give mending freely and never to sell it, finds a second Star of the Mending in their own hand. It is always the star of the god that cleric serves, whatever god that is, but it always bears the line of stitches. Those who wear the Star wear it always, but rarely openly.



Appendix 3: Monsters and NPCs

Most creatures in this adventure come from the Monster Trove line. Their full entries are on opendungeons.com. This appendix gathers the ones that appear most often and adds the adventure's own NPCs.

The Ember Host

The Ember Host is the army of Archpriest Malvorn Ashcrowne, the Ember Regent. Its soldiers wear soot-black masks of oiled cloth and black sashes, and carry small iron brands shaped like a crown of flames. Their battle cry is "Ash for the Regent!"

Troop	Use These Stats	Typical Group	Notes
Ember-sworn	Soldier (Monster Trove for Early Adventurers)	Squads of 6-10; units of 10-20	Zealots in formation. They do not flee or surrender unless an entry says so.
Ember-sworn Scouts	Bandit	4-6 in hiding	Ambushers. Unlike bandits, they fight to the death.
Ember-sworn Hunters	Raider	2-3, often with a Warg	Slave-catchers and trackers.
Ember Adepts	See below	1-2 with a squad	Wizards of the Host. Masters of sleep and binding.
Goblin warbands	Goblin (Monster Trove: Old Fears and Hungry Things)	6-12	Hired with plunder. They will bargain if fed.

Ember Adept (typical) - Human Wizard, level 3, HP 15, AC 11, DR 0 (padded), Attacks 1, Attack 1d4 (dagger); Saves Quick +1, Tough +0, Mind +2, Size Medium, Alignment Orderly Vile (Tyrant), Intelligence Exceptional (15-16), Save TN 13; Spells (each once per day; targets add the Adept's level to their Save TN): choose four or five of Mystic Bolt, Lethargic, Rootbind, Beguile, Mage Shielding, Binding Threads, Veil of Obscurity, Searing Lances. Tactics: Adepts open with Lethargic or Binding Threads, then pick off sleeping or tangled heroes. They prefer captives to corpses.

Malvorn Ashcrowne, the Ember Regent

The Regent does not appear in this adventure. He is a tall, gaunt man of about sixty, his face and hands scarred by old burns he refuses to have treated even by ordinary healers. He serves a dark fire-god he calls only "the Ember," and he believes that a people who cannot heal is a people who must kneel. He is patient, cruel and very intelligent. His stats are left to the DN, because when the heroes finally meet him, they should be ready for him.

Nyxara the Tarwing

Nyxara is a young black dragon. She uses the Young Black Dragon entry in the Monster Trove for Seasoned Adventurers: HP 85, AC 15, DR 1, bite 1d10+3 and claws 1d8+3, and a 40-foot line of Acid Breath (Tough save, 4d6 acid, half on a success, cooldown 3 rounds). She is immune to acid, flies fast, and sees in the dark.

She is vain, petty, bored and not especially clever. The Regent's bargain is simple enough for her: guard the pages, collect the treasure. She resents being kept in a hole minding a pile of bronze pages, but she loves the treasure he sends her. She has a bad left wing from an old fight, and always sleeps on her left side to protect it.

A young black dragon can have up to eight claws on its right forefoot, which makes the young easy to identify. As the dragon grows, three of those claws fuse into the others, and by adulthood it has five larger, more powerful claws. Nyxara still has all eight.

Nyxara does not heal during this adventure. A dragon's wounds close only over weeks of deep sleep.

The Hobs of Under-Valcath

The Hobs use the Hob entry in Monster Trove: Old Fears and Hungry Things: HP 30, AC 13, DR 0, Attack 1d8+3, Quick 3 / Tough 1 / Mind 4, Small, Impartial Kind (Mediator), Average intelligence.

Hobs were the household spirits of old Mor Valcath: the stubborn small folk who finished the chores at night in every home in the city, in exchange for a bowl of cream and a place by the fire. They sank with the city and have kept house for its empty buildings ever since.

The single most important thing about Hobs is **Gift, Not Wage**. They will do anything for someone who treats them as part of the household and gives them a gift freely. They will do the bare minimum, exactly and literally, for someone who pays them, and they will make sure that person's buckles, straps and bowstrings keep coming undone (Work Undone). The Ember Host pays them in scraps. The Hobs hate the Host.

Hobs speak an old-fashioned Valcathi accent. They love hats.

The Murmurwood

Creature	Use These Stats	Notes
Sentinels of the Murmur	Garrison Ghosts (Monster Trove for Early Adventurers)	Oath-bound spirits. Immune to physical damage. Stop if the heroes give their true names or show the staff.
The Warden of the Wood	Unicorn (Monster Trove for Seasoned Adventurers)	Guardian of the Murmurwood. Heals freely. Its wood is outside the Hush.
Centaurs	Centaur (Monster Trove for Early Adventures)	Escorts. Answer every question with "The Warden will answer all things."
Dryads	Dryad (Monster Trove for Early Adventures)	Watchers. Vanish when approached.
Pegasi	Pegasus (Monster Trove for Early Adventures)	Carry the heroes to the Quiet Hollow, and from there over the Spine.



Appendix 4: Random Encounters

Random encounters happen on a roll of 1 on 1d10, as often as Table 1 says for the terrain the heroes are crossing. If an encounter happens, roll its distance from Table 1 (each point is 10 yards), then roll in the Monster Range for that terrain and use that numbered entry from Table 2. In the Murmurwood, use Table 3 instead. In the swamp ruins of Mor Valcath (areas 44a-44k), use Table 4. In the temple and the cavern below (areas 45-70), use Table 5.

Table 1: Encounter Checks by Terrain

Terrain	How Often to Check	Distance	Monster Range (Table 2)
Towns	Once every 3 turns	1-6	1-6 (1d6)
Plains	4 times per day	1-100	3-14 (1d12+2)
Forest	6 times per day	1-10	4-15 (1d12+3)
Hills and mountains	4 times per day	1-20	7-18 (1d12+6)
Swamp	8 times per day	1-4	13-24 (1d12+12)

Match each area's terrain in the Map Key to the nearest row. Use Plains for farmland, valleys, villages and burned plains. Use Hills and mountains for canyons, passes and the river gorge. Use Forest for the lake shore, river banks and forest roads. Use Towns for Caldris.

Table 2: The Torrenmark

Roll	Encounter
1	3-30 townsfolk (Common Folk) going about their business.
2	6-12 Ember-sworn (Soldier) in gray Synod robes, searching for the white staff. They claim to be mendicants from whom the staff was stolen. If a fight starts, they fight to the death.
3	1-10 Tarrow-folk refugees (Common Folk), quiet plains people walking west and south, away from the Host.
4	1-4 Thornwood elves of Iselmar (see area 19), scouts watching the roads beyond their closed border. Cool and aloof.
5	2-20 townsfolk (Common Folk).

Roll	Encounter
6	1-6 Synod Wardens (Guard). They have orders to bring anyone who knows of the staff to Caldris. If a fight starts, they fight bravely until half are down, then fall back for help.
7	The Lantern Fox (see area 5). It stays just ahead of the heroes, leading them by the best path, and vanishes after 1d4+2 areas.
8	1-2 Griffins (Monster Trove for Early Adventurers) wheeling high overhead. They fly off in the worst direction for the heroes to take, as if pointing the way.
9	2-4 Wargs (Monster Trove: Things Others Swore They Saw), hunting.
10	4-8 feral dogs (use Loyal Hound stats). They attack 40% of the time, or if attacked. When half are killed, the rest run.
11	1-10 Ember-sworn (Soldier), a patrol.
12	1-2 Ember Adepts with 2-8 Ember-sworn. When they lose half their number, they retreat.
13	1-2 Titan Spiders (Monster Trove for Early Adventurers).
14	1-4 Ogres (Monster Trove for Early Adventures) hired by the Host to guard a road. They ask about the white staff and will not let anyone pass.
15	2-8 Wind Wraiths (Monster Trove for Early Adventurers): the angry dead of the Sundering, riding the gusts.
16	A Lantern Bugbear King and 1d6 Goblins in the Host's pay, raiding farms.
17	1-3 Will-o'-wisps (Monster Trove: Things Others Swore They Saw). They try to lead the heroes the wrong way and let the land do the rest.
18	1-6 Cave Viper Snakes (Monster Trove for Early Adventurers).
19	Nyxara the Tarwing, high overhead. Before the heroes have met her in area 44k, they see only a huge black shape against the clouds; she does not attack, and nobody will believe them. After 44k, she attacks 20% of the time, or if the heroes attack her: she uses her Acid Breath once, then flies away before taking real damage.
20	1-4 Ember Adepts and 4-8 Ember-sworn, a command group.
21	1 Swamp Devourer (Monster Trove for Early Adventurers).
22	1-6 Tarlings (see area 44h).
23	1 Giant Snake (Monster Trove: Old Fears and Hungry Things).
24	2-5 Tomb Wraiths (Monster Trove for Early Adventurers): Valcathi priests who died selling mending, still angry about it.

Table 3: The Murmurwood

Encounters in the Murmurwood happen on a roll of 1-2 on 1d6. Check every 4 game hours (6 times a day). If one happens, roll 2d4. Unless the entry says otherwise, the creatures question the heroes. If the heroes give their true names or show the staff, the creatures escort them to the Warden of the Wood (area 26).

2d4	Encounter
2	1-2 Griffins (Monster Trove for Early Adventurers). They attack 20% of the time (70% if the heroes are on horseback, because griffins love horse).
3	1 Verdant Guardian (Monster Trove for Seasoned Adventurers): an ancient tree-spirit that watches the heroes for an hour without moving, then asks them one question: "Why?"
4	2-6 Satyrs (Monster Trove for Early Adventures). Pranksters. They try to lure the heroes into net traps, drop water on them from the branches, and jeer at them from across covered pits.
5	1-6 Centaurs (see area 23).
6	1 Pixie (Monster Trove: Things Others Swore They Saw). It tries to steal the staff and take it to the Warden. If it succeeds, the Warden gives the staff back.
7	2-8 Noct Sprites (Monster Trove for Early Adventurers). If they put the heroes to sleep, a party of centaurs comes by shortly and carries the heroes to the Warden.
8	1 Dryad. She never shows herself, but leads the heroes toward the Warden by her voice alone.

Table 4: The Blackmire

Use this table for random encounters in the swamp ruins (areas 44a-44k), and whenever someone goes into the water in 42, 44b or 44c and the roll calls for it. Roll 1d6.

1d6	Encounter
1	1 Swamp Devourer, rising out of the black water.
2	1-4 Tarlings, hunting.
3	1 Giant Snake, coiled around a sunken pillar.
4	1-3 Will-o'-wisps over the water at night. Treat as no encounter by day.
5	1d6 Ember-sworn (Soldier), a patrol from the camp at 44f.

1d6	Encounter
6	2d4 Hobs carrying salvage from the ruins to the lift. They are frightened and polite.

TABLE 5: UNDER-VALCATH

Use this table for random encounters in the temple and the cavern below it (areas 45-70). Check once every 3 turns. Roll 1d8.

1d8	Encounter
1	2d6 Hobs carrying furniture from one empty building to another.
2	1d6 Ember-sworn (Soldier), a patrol.
3	1 Ember Adept and 4 Ember-sworn, escorting a line of Hobs to the lift.
4	1d4 Tomb Wraiths, priests of the old temple.
5	1 Titan Spider, hunting along the walls.
6	1d6 Cave Viper Snakes.
7	Echoes of the drowned city: a market crowd of harmless ghosts going about a day three hundred years old. They do not notice the heroes.
8	Nyxara passes overhead, gliding through the dark between the waterfalls. She does not notice the heroes unless they draw her attention.



Appendix 5: The Lament of the Pale Thread

Sing or read the verses in order. The last line of each verse is the refrain.

I.
He went down to the black water
where the iron trees grow tall,
He went down in the fever season
with no lantern, none at all.
And the mire it took his breathing
and the dark it took his name,
And the swamp gave nothing back, my love,
the way it never came.

II.
He came walking out of Blackmire
with the frost upon his beard,
Something white was in his hands, my love,
whiter than the thing he feared.
And he would not say where he'd been
and he would not say for why,
And the swamp gave nothing back, my love,
but a soldier, and a lie.

III.
There's a burn upon the baby
and the baby will not sleep,
There's a mother at the doorway
and the mother cannot weep.
And I laid the white thing on her
like you lay a cloth on bread,
And the swamp gave something back, my love,
and the child's skin closed instead.

IV.
Then the headman called us witches
and the village called for stones,
And we walked out on the Kingsroad
with our coats and with our bones.
And the white thing hums at night, my love,
like a cradle-song gone wrong,
And the swamp gave something back, my love,
and it wants to go back home.

V.
So I'll carry it to the lake towns
and I'll carry it to the sea,
And I'll carry it to the drowned stair
if the drowned stair calls for me.
For a thing that mends for nothing
is a thing that can't be sold,
And the swamp gave something back, my love,
that is worth more than gold.



Appendix 6: The Verses of the Sundering

Pass this page around the campfire in Event 4. Each player reads one verse aloud, in order.

I.
Hear how the old kings ruled in Valcath,
on the white bluff over the plain,
where the temple of the Stitched Star stood
and the sick came up, and were well again.

II.
No coin was asked at the golden doors.
The goddess gave with an open hand.
The farmer's child and the lord's own heir
were mended alike in that open land.

III.
But the kings grew old, and the kings grew proud,
and they said: a gift is a waste of a crown.
So they set a price on the mending,
and the price went up, and the poor went down.

IV.
Then the plague came out of the eastern sea
on the breath of the wind and the wing of the fly,
and the kings sealed shut the golden doors
and they let the poor on the temple steps die.

V.
The Stitched Star looked on her empty steps,
and she looked on the bodies, row on row,
and she did not weep, and she did not rage.
She only said: then let it go.

VI.
That night the bluff split down to its roots
and the city slid into the dark below,
and the rivers ran in over the roofs,
and the sea came in where the wheat would grow.

VII.
And the gift went out of the Torrenmark
like a lamp blown out in a silent hall.
Three hundred years we have bound our wounds
and prayed, and been answered not at all.

VIII.
But the old wives say, by the Ishvane shore,
that a thread was left in the drowned stone room,
and when it is carried home again
the Star will open her hands, and bloom.



Appendix 7: Pre-Generated Characters

These eight heroes are ready to play at level 3, and each carries a minor magic item listed on their sheet. A printable character sheet follows each hero's entry. The pre-generated characters are level 3 only; a group starting at level 2 brings its own characters. Every one of them made the promise at the Salt Kettle three years ago. Maren Ashby can be played as a ninth hero, but she did not make the promise: she is a stranger who joins the party in Event 2. Hand each player their character, and have them read their background aloud at the start of the first session. Maren's player reads hers in Event 2.

All level 3 characters have a Save Roll TN of 13 (16 minus level 3). Add the listed ability bonus to the roll: Dexterity for Quick, Constitution for Tough, Wisdom for Mind.

About the Hush and the pre-generated clerics. Brother Aldous and Maren are clerics. Their healing prayers do not work in the Torrenmark. Every other spell and ability they have works normally. Make sure both players understand this before play begins, and that it is a mystery the adventure is about to solve.

Brannoc Hale

Human Fighter, Level 3



STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+4)	13 (+2)	15 (+3)	11 (+1)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

HP 36 | **AC** 14 (Dex +2, shield +2) | **DR** 3 (chainmail) | **Save TN** 13

Saves: Quick +2 | Tough +4 (Resilient) | Mind +1

Weapons: Longsword 1d8+4 (+1 to hit, Weapon Supremacy: swords); Javelins (3) 1d6+4, thrown 30/60 ft

Race ability: Resilient (+1 Tough saves)

Class abilities: Weapon Supremacy (swords), Second Wind (1d6 once per day), Mighty Heave (45%), Combat Focus (reroll one missed attack once per day), Fearless

Level-up bonuses: Tactical Eye, Battle Roar, Marching Discipline, Veteran's Eye, Battlefield Medicine, Combat Momentum

Gear: Chainmail, shield, half-helm, longsword, 3 javelins, backpack, bedroll, healer's kit (5 uses), rope (50 ft), 12 gp

Magic item: Ironheart Tonic (Magic Items for Early Adventurers). One use. For 1 hour after drinking, he gains 6 temporary HP and +1 DR. Damage comes off the temporary HP first, and any left over vanish when the effect ends. The Hush does not stop it.

> I rode guard on the Gatewatch road for nine years. Wagons, mules, salt fish, wool. Ordinary work. When I was twelve, my little brother cut his leg on a wagon nail. A small cut. By the next week the fever had him, and the Synod's mendicant prayed over him for three days and nothing came of it. I promised him I would find someone whose prayers worked. I went over the mountains, all the way to the coast. I found clerics who healed with a word, and I begged one to come home with me. She came as far as the high road over the mountains, and the moment we came down into the Torrenmark, she sat down in the road and cried, because her god had gone quiet in her mouth. She went home. I came back here with nothing but the promise.



Open Dungeons RPG Character Sheet

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NAME	RACE	CLASS	HP	LEVEL	XP
Brannoc Hale	Human	Fighter	**36**	3	4,000

STR	BONUS	DEX	BONUS	CON	BONUS	INT	BONUS	WIS	BONUS	CHA	BONUS
17	+4	13	+2	15	+3	11	+1	12	+1	14	+2
Strength		Dexterity		Constitution		Intelligence		Wisdom		Charisma	

AC	SHIELD TYPE	ARMOR TYPE	DR
14	Shield (+2 AC)	Chainmail	**3**

AC = 10 + DEX bonus + shield (+2). Magic items may change it.

Armor gives DR, which reduces physical damage.

WEAPONS / EQUIPMENT / NOTES

✓	Item	Notes
✓	**Longsword**	1d8+4, +1 to hit
	Javelins (3)	1d6+4, thrown 30/60 ft
✓	**Chainmail**	DR 3
✓	**Shield**	+2 AC
✓	**Half-helm**	
	Ironheart Tonic	Magic. 6 temp HP, +1 DR, 1 hour
	Healer's kit	5 uses
	Rope	50 ft
	Backpack, bedroll	

BACKGROUND & PERSONALITY

Nine years a caravan guard on the Gatewatch road. Promised his dying little brother he would find someone whose prayers worked, and is still keeping that promise.

CLASS ABILITIES

Weapon Supremacy (swords)

Second Wind (1d6, once per day)

Mighty Heave (45%)

Combat Focus (once per day)

Fearless

LEVEL-UP BONUSES

Tactical Eye

Battle Roar

Marching Discipline

Veteran's Eye

Battlefield Medicine

Combat Momentum

RACE ABILITY

Resilient

SAVE ROLLS

DEX / Quick	**13 / +2**
CON / Tough	**13 / +4**
WIS / Mind	**13 / +1**

Save TN / bonus. Roll 1d20 + bonus; meet or beat 13.

MONEY

PP	GP	SP	CP
	12		

APPEARANCE



DEFAULT CLASS ABILITIES	
Weapon Supremacy (swords)	Choose a weapon type at 1st level (sword, axe, spear, etc.). You gain +1 to hit when using it. At level 5 +2 to hit with it. This stacks with magic and/or magical weapon that is of the same. At level 5 select a second weapon.
Second Wind (1d6, once per day)	Once per day, regain 1d6 HP mid-battle through sheer grit. At level 4 1d6+6 HP mid-battle. At level 7 3d6+6 - once per day can be used any time.
Mighty Heave (45%)	You can attempt feats of sheer strength: lifting gates, breaking shackles, bending bars. Success chance = 35% at 1st level, +5% per level thereafter.
Combat Focus (once per day)	Once per day, you may re-roll one missed attack roll. At 5th level twice per day.
Fearless	Immune to fear effects from foes with HP equal to or lower than your current level max Hit Points.

SELECTED LEVEL-UP BONUSES	
Tactical Eye	After a moment of study, ask the DN one: "Where's the danger?", "What's the best escape?", or "Who's the biggest threat?"
Battle Roar	Once per combat encounter, unleash a roar or battle cry that rallies allies and shakes foes. Allies within earshot gain +1 to their next attack roll.
Marching Discipline	When you lead, your group travels 25% farther without fatigue. You know when to rest and when to push.
Veteran's Eye	You can accurately assess any combatant's skill level, remaining HP (roughly), and armor quality at a glance. Know who's dangerous and who's fodder.
Battlefield Medicine	You can patch wounds during battle. Once per battle, spend one round to restore 1d4 + your level HP to yourself or an adjacent ally using bandages and pressure who are not engaged. The ally may be unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to fight. Practical trauma care.
Combat Momentum	When you move at least 10 feet before attacking, add +2 to damage. You've learned to put your whole body into strikes.

RACE ABILITY	
Resilient	+1 Con Tough saves.

MAGIC ITEMS	
Ironheart Tonic *Magic Items for Early Adventurers*	One use. For 1 hour after drinking, gain 6 temporary HP and +1 DR. Damage comes off the temporary HP first; any left over vanish when the effect ends. The Hush does not stop it.

THESSALY GRIMBOLT

Dwarf Fighter, Level 3



STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	17 (+4)	12 (+1)	11 (+1)	9 (0)

HP 36 | **AC** 14 (Dex +1, shield +2, Aegis +1) | **DR** 4 (banded mail) | **Save TN** 13

Saves: Quick +1 | Tough +6 (Iron Stomach) | Mind +1

Weapons: Warhammer 1d8+3, -2 DR to the target (+1 to hit, Weapon Supremacy: hammers); Throwing axe 1d6+3, thrown 20/40 ft

Race ability: Iron Stomach (+2 Tough saves). Dwarves also have Dark Sense: in complete darkness, a 40% chance to sense something within 30 ft.

Class abilities: Weapon Supremacy (hammers), Second Wind, Mighty Heave (45%), Combat Focus, Fearless

Level-up bonuses: Weapon Lore, Weapon Tinker, Athletic Feats, Blood for Blood, Weapon Stunt, Unstoppable

Gear: Banded mail, shield she made herself, nasal helm, warhammer, throwing axe, smith's hammer and tongs, whetstone, backpack, bedroll, 20 gp

Magic item: The shield she made herself is an Aegis of the Protector (Magic Items for Early Adventures). +1 AC while equipped, on top of the normal +2 for a shield. Included in her AC above.

> I make shields. My clan in the hill-holds has made shields for six hundred years, and I am better at it than any of them, and I will say so to their faces. When I was a girl, my hand went into the forge-quench on a bad day, and it healed crooked. Look. Two fingers do not close. In any other land, my grandmother says, a priest would have set it right in a breath. So I went out to find the land where that is true, and I found it, many of them. What I could not find was the reason it is not true here. I am back. I am going to find the reason, and I am going to hit it with a hammer.



Open Dungeons RPG Character Sheet

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NAME	RACE	CLASS	HP	LEVEL	XP
Thessaly Grimbolt	Dwarf	Fighter	**36**	3	4,000

STR	BONUS	DEX	BONUS	CON	BONUS	INT	BONUS	WIS	BONUS	CHA	BONUS
16	+3	12	+1	17	+4	12	+1	11	+1	9	+0
Strength		Dexterity		Constitution		Intelligence		Wisdom		Charisma	

AC	SHIELD TYPE	ARMOR TYPE	DR
14	Aegis of the Protector (+3 AC)	Banded mail	**4**

AC = 10 + DEX bonus + shield (+2). Magic items may change it.

Armor gives DR, which reduces physical damage.

WEAPONS / EQUIPMENT / NOTES

✓	Item	Notes
✓	**Warhammer**	1d8+3, -2 DR, +1 to hit
	Throwing axe	1d6+3, thrown 20/40 ft
✓	**Banded mail**	DR 4
✓	**Aegis of the Protector**	Magic. +3 AC total
✓	**Nasal helm**	
	Smith's hammer and tongs	
	Whetstone	
	Backpack, bedroll	

BACKGROUND & PERSONALITY

A hill-hold shieldsmith with a crooked hand the Torrenmark could never mend. Back to find the reason healing fails here, and to hit it with a hammer.

CLASS ABILITIES

Weapon Supremacy (hammers)
Second Wind (1d6, once per day)
Mighty Heave (45%)
Combat Focus (once per day)
Fearless

LEVEL-UP BONUSES

Weapon Lore
Weapon Tinker
Athletic Feats
Blood for Blood
Weapon Stunt
Unstoppable

RACE ABILITY

Iron Stomach
Dark Sense

SAVE ROLLS

DEX / Quick	**13 / +1**
CON / Tough	**13 / +6**
WIS / Mind	**13 / +1**

Save TN / bonus. Roll 1d20 + bonus; meet or beat 13.

MONEY

PP	GP 20	SP	CP

APPEARANCE



DEFAULT CLASS ABILITIES	
Weapon Supremacy (hammers)	Choose a weapon type at 1st level (sword, axe, spear, etc.). You gain +1 to hit when using it. At level 5 +2 to hit with it. This stacks with magic and/or magical weapon that is of the same. At level 5 select a second weapon.
Second Wind (1d6, once per day)	Once per day, regain 1d6 HP mid-battle through sheer grit. At level 4 1d6+6 HP mid-battle. At level 7 3d6+6 - once per day can be used any time.
Mighty Heave (45%)	You can attempt feats of sheer strength: lifting gates, breaking shackles, bending bars. Success chance = 35% at 1st level, +5% per level thereafter.
Combat Focus (once per day)	Once per day, you may re-roll one missed attack roll. At 5th level twice per day.
Fearless	Immune to fear effects from foes with HP equal to or lower than your current level max Hit Points.

SELECTED LEVEL-UP BONUSES	
Weapon Lore	By handling a weapon, you know its type, quality, and cultural origin. You can tell if it's masterwork, ceremonial, or built for a monster.
Weapon Tinker	You can modify or adapt weapons in the field. With simple tools, you can shorten a spear for close quarters, sharpen a broken blade into a dagger, or improvise a weapon from scrap on the spot (DN decides the weapon type and damage stats).
Athletic Feats	You can leap across 10-foot gaps, lift portcullises, break doors, or throw heavy objects farther than most. Gain +2 Chances to such feats of strength or speed.
Blood for Blood	When an enemy hits you in melee, you can choose to take an extra 1d4 damage to immediately counter-attack them, interrupting their action. Pain fuels you.
Weapon Stunt	On turn, you can use your weapon for a non-damage feat - hook a shield (pull shield from them), sweep a leg, knock a helmet off, flip a lever, snag a keyring, etc.
Unstoppable	Once per day, for the next 2 rounds you can act normally regardless of conditions - paralyzed, stunned, webbed, held, etc. You just keep coming through sheer bloody determination. Fighters will grow while leveling up, not just organically, but through magic weapons that will help with health, attack, defense via treasures.

RACE ABILITY	
Iron Stomach	+2 Con Tough saves.
Dark Sense	In dim light +2 to attack and darkness +1 to attack roll (see above).

MAGIC ITEMS	
Aegis of the Protector *Magic Items for Early Adventures*	The shield she made herself. +1 AC while equipped, on top of the normal +2 for a shield.

Uzra Kettleback

Half-Orc Fighter, Level 3



STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	10 (0)	16 (+3)	9 (0)	13 (+2)	12 (+1)

HP 36 | **AC** 10 | **DR** 2 (hide) | **Save TN** 13

Saves: Quick 0 | Tough +3 | Mind +2

Weapons: Maul 2d6+6 (two-handed; includes Brutal Strikes +2; +1 to hit, Weapon Supremacy: mauls)

Race ability: Brutal Strikes (+2 damage with melee weapons)

Class abilities: Weapon Supremacy (mauls), Second Wind, Mighty Heave (45%), Combat Focus, Fearless

Level-up bonuses: Pack Mule, Wall Mule, Battlefield Medicine, First Strike, Weapon Break, Adrenaline Surge

Gear: Hide armor, maul, an iron cooking pot (he will not leave it), spices, flint and steel, backpack, bedroll, 3 days of very good rations, Transmuter's Jug, 8 gp

Magic item: Transmuter's Jug (Magic Items for Early Adventures). Roll 1d3 for its charges when play begins. Each charge fills it with one liquid: 2 gallons of water, 1 gallon of wine, 4 gallons of beer, 1 quart of oil, 8 ounces of acid, or another common liquid in a modest amount.

> I cooked for the Synod levy for six years. Big pot, small wages, a lot of soldiers who called me "the orc" until they tasted the stew, and then they called me Uzra. I left after the bridge fire at Callow Ford. Eleven burned men in my cook tent, and nothing to give them but water and onion poultices. The mendicant prayed all night. In the morning there were three. I put down the ladle and picked up the maul. I am not angry. I want you to understand that. I am just finished waiting for someone else to fix it.



Open Dungeons RPG Character Sheet

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NAME	RACE	CLASS	HP	LEVEL	XP
Uzra Kettleback	Half-Orc	Fighter	**36**	3	4,000

STR	BONUS	DEX	BONUS	CON	BONUS	INT	BONUS	WIS	BONUS	CHA	BONUS
18	+4	10	+0	16	+3	9	+0	13	+2	12	+1
Strength		Dexterity		Constitution		Intelligence		Wisdom		Charisma	

AC	SHIELD TYPE	ARMOR TYPE	DR
10	None	Hide	**2**

AC = 10 + DEX bonus + shield (+2). Magic items may change it.

Armor gives DR, which reduces physical damage.

WEAPONS / EQUIPMENT / NOTES

✓	Item	Notes
✓	**Maul**	2d6+6, +1 to hit, two-handed
✓	**Hide armor**	DR 2
	Transmuter's Jug	Magic. 1d3 charges
	Iron cooking pot	He will not leave it
	Spices, flint and steel	
	Rations	3 days, very good
	Backpack, bedroll	

BACKGROUND & PERSONALITY

Cook for the Synod levy for six years, until the bridge fire at Callow Ford. Not angry. Just finished waiting for someone else to fix it.

CLASS ABILITIES

Weapon Supremacy (mauls)

Second Wind (1d6, once per day)

Mighty Heave (45%)

Combat Focus (once per day)

Fearless

LEVEL-UP BONUSES

Pack Mule

Wall Mule

Battlefield Medicine

First Strike

Weapon Break

Adrenaline Surge

RACE ABILITY

Brutal Strikes

SAVE ROLLS

DEX / Quick	**13 / +0**
CON / Tough	**13 / +3**
WIS / Mind	**13 / +2**

Save TN / bonus. Roll 1d20 + bonus; meet or beat 13.

MONEY

PP	GP	SP	CP
	8		

APPEARANCE



DEFAULT CLASS ABILITIES	
Weapon Supremacy (mauls)	Choose a weapon type at 1st level (sword, axe, spear, etc.). You gain +1 to hit when using it. At level 5 +2 to hit with it. This stacks with magic and/or magical weapon that is of the same. At level 5 select a second weapon.
Second Wind (1d6, once per day)	Once per day, regain 1d6 HP mid-battle through sheer grit. At level 4 1d6+6 HP mid-battle. At level 7 3d6+6 - once per day can be used any time.
Mighty Heave (45%)	You can attempt feats of sheer strength: lifting gates, breaking shackles, bending bars. Success chance = 35% at 1st level, +5% per level thereafter.
Combat Focus (once per day)	Once per day, you may re-roll one missed attack roll. At 5th level twice per day.
Fearless	Immune to fear effects from foes with HP equal to or lower than your current level max Hit Points.

SELECTED LEVEL-UP BONUSES	
Pack Mule	You can carry twice the normal weight with no penalties. You're also great at loading gear and balancing packs.
Wall Mule	You can climb while carrying up to twice your body weight in gear or passengers. Armor, packs, even another person slung over your shoulder - you just keep climbing. You never need help with ropes or ladders, and others can climb faster if you're hauling them. You have a 40% chance to climb walls, limited to heights of 60 feet.
Battlefield Medicine	You can patch wounds during battle. Once per battle, spend one round to restore 1d4 + your level HP to yourself or an adjacent ally using bandages and pressure who are not engaged. The ally may be unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to fight. Practical trauma care.
First Strike	You always act first in the first round of combat, regardless of initiative. You've trained to react instantly to violence.
Weapon Break	Once per combat encounter, deliberately destroy your weapon on impact to deal triple damage. Better to win with a broken sword than die with a whole one.
Adrenaline Surge	When you kill an enemy, only your next attack in this combat encounter will automatically hit. The rush of victory guides your blade.

RACE ABILITY	
Brutal Strikes	+2 damage with melee weapons.

MAGIC ITEMS	
Transmuter's Jug *Magic Items for Early Adventures*	Roll 1d3 for charges when play begins. Each charge fills it with one liquid: 2 gallons of water, 1 gallon of wine, 4 gallons of beer, 1 quart of oil, 8 ounces of acid, or another common liquid in a modest amount.

Sefiran Vael

Elf Wizard, Level 3



STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (0)	15 (+3)	12 (+1)	17 (+4)	13 (+2)	11 (+1)

HP 15 | **AC** 14 (Dex +3, Fey Grace +1) | **DR** 0 (padded) | **Save TN** 13

Saves: Quick +3 | Tough +1 | Mind +2

Weapons: Staff 1d4 (two-handed); Darts (6) 2 HP each, thrown 20/40 ft

Race ability: Fey Grace (+1 AC in no armor or light armor). Elves also see outdoors at night as if it were twilight.

Class abilities: Arcane Focus (spellbook), Ritual Casting, Arcane Overload (once per day)

Spellcasting: Access to all 1st, 2nd and 3rd level wizard spells. 5 first-level, 5 second-level and 4 third-level spells per day; each spell once per day.

Level-up bonuses: Ghost Eye, Mnemonic Focus, Ley Step

Gear: Spellbook in a waxed leather case chained to his belt, padded robe, staff, 6 darts, ink and quills, a pressed iselbirch leaf, Potion of Minor Healing, backpack, bedroll, 30 gp

Magic item: Potion of Minor Healing (Magic Items for Early Adventures). One use. Restores 1d4+2 HP. Bought over the mountains, where it worked. In the Torrenmark, like every healing potion, it tastes like stale water.

> I was born in Iselmar, under the birches, and I am not allowed to go back. Four winters ago, the river froze and the refugees from the Synod farms came across the ice to our border, starving. The Thornwood Wardens turned them back. I opened a way through the birches at night and let forty of them in. They lived. I was exiled for it, by a vote of the Wardens, and the one who cast the deciding vote was my teacher, Thessarin. I have spent three years learning everything I could about why this land is broken. I know more than anyone else alive about how a curse is made. I still do not know how to unmake this one.



Open Dungeons RPG Character Sheet

Print and play tonight!

NAME	RACE	CLASS	HP	LEVEL	XP
Sefiran Vael	Elf	Wizard	**15**	3	4,000

STR	BONUS	DEX	BONUS	CON	BONUS	INT	BONUS	WIS	BONUS	CHA	BONUS
9	+0	15	+3	12	+1	17	+4	13	+2	11	+1
Strength		Dexterity		Constitution		Intelligence		Wisdom		Charisma	

AC	SHIELD TYPE	ARMOR TYPE	DR
14	None	Padded robe	**0**

AC = 10 + DEX bonus + shield (+2). Magic items may change it.

Armor gives DR, which reduces physical damage.

WEAPONS / EQUIPMENT / NOTES

✓	Item	Notes
✓	**Staff**	1d4, two-handed
	Darts (6)	2 HP each, thrown 20/40 ft
✓	**Padded robe**	DR 0
✓	**Spellbook**	Chained to his belt
	Potion of Minor Healing	Magic. Restores 1d4+2 HP
	Ink and quills	
	Pressed iselbirch leaf	
	Backpack, bedroll	

BACKGROUND & PERSONALITY

Exiled from Iselmar for opening the birches to forty starving refugees. Knows more than anyone alive about how a curse is made, but not how to unmake this one.

CLASS ABILITIES

Arcane Focus

Ritual Casting

Arcane Overload (once per day)

LEVEL-UP BONUSES

Ghost Eye

Mnemonic Focus

Ley Step

RACE ABILITY

Fey Grace

Twilight Sight

SAVE ROLLS

DEX / Quick	**13 / +3**
CON / Tough	**13 / +1**
WIS / Mind	**13 / +2**

Save TN / bonus. Roll 1d20 + bonus; meet or beat 13.

MONEY

PP	GP	SP	CP
	30		

APPEARANCE



DEFAULT CLASS ABILITIES	
Arcane Focus	You must keep your spellbook; it is your lifeline. Losing it means you cannot prepare new spells. You know how to protect it: encase and seal it in waxed leather, wrap it in oiled canvas, or keep it within a metal-bound case. Lock and chain it, perhaps even to your belt. Hide it in secret compartments - false bottoms in satchels or concealed pouches. Disguise it as a farmer's ledger or a holy book. Some wizards even carry decoy tomes to mislead the careless and the curious.
Ritual Casting	Wizards do not only cast spells; they study, record, and preserve them. A ritual is not a spell but a deliberate act of scholarship and magical craft. A ritual requires ten uninterrupted hours of intense study, ink-stained fingers, and unwavering concentration. It is not a quick trick or flourish of power, but a grueling act of scholarship that drains the mind and tests the will. Through this exhaustive process, a wizard can copy spells from scrolls, fragments, or another wizard's notes into their spellbook, stabilize fragile magical texts so they do not fade or crumble, encrypt or disguise their own writings so only they can read them, or expand their spellbook with diagrams, formulae, and protective wards. Rituals never expend spell slots - they are the wizard's true craft, earned through patience and endurance. Each successful ritual is a victory of discipline over fatigue, and through them the spellbook grows, survives, and becomes a true grimoire.
Arcane Overload (once per day)	Once per day, a wizard may unleash an Arcane Overload within 60 feet in sight, dealing 1d6 damage per caster level to a single target with no Save Roll allowed. The wizard also suffers 1 point of damage per caster level used, which cannot be reduced, making this desperate power costly and dangerous.

SELECTED LEVEL-UP BONUSES	
Ghost Eye	Once per day, you may open your sight to the unseen. For 1 minute you perceive invisible or ethereal beings. Your pupils glow faintly when this power is active, betraying your altered vision.
Mnemonic Focus	Once per day, you may recall with supernatural clarity something you have witnessed, read, or heard, even if it was in a language unknown to you. You can repeat it word-for-word or recreate it exactly, up to 20 seconds of content. At 6th level 1 minute of content.
Ley Step	Once per day, you can shift your position a short distance by stepping through ambient magic. Instantly teleport up to 10 feet to an unoccupied space you can see. This counts as your action for the turn. At 4th level you can teleport 30 feet. At 8th level you can teleport 60 feet.

RACE ABILITY	
Fey Grace	+1 AC when wearing no armor or light armor (padded / leather / studded).
Twilight Sight	Outdoors at night, you can see in twilight, dusk, dawn, or under a clear full moon as though it were daytime. This does not function indoors, underground, or in total/magical darkness.

MAGIC ITEMS	
Potion of Minor Healing *Magic Items for Early Adventures*	One use. Restores 1d4+2 HP. Bought over the mountains, where it worked. In the Torrenmark, like every healing potion, it tastes like stale water.

MAGIC / SPELL STACKING

No more than 2 magical effects (spells or items) apply to the same destination. A destination is a stat, ability, skill, action, resource, equipment, and so on.

If any single modifier is +3 or greater, only that greatest magic or spell modifier applies. No additional stacking occurs for that destination.

SPELL RECORD

Spells per day: 5 first-level, 5 second-level and 4 third-level spells per day. Each spell can be cast once per day.

Cast	Spell	Effect
1st-Level Wizard Spells		
☐	**Beguile** Wizard 1	The target must succeed on a WIS Mind save or become charmed by you for the duration. 30 feet | 1 minute, plus 30 seconds per caster level | WIS Mind
☐	**Glow Orb** Wizard 1	The orb sheds bright light in a 20-foot radius and dim light for an additional 20 feet. On your turn, you may move the orb up to 60 feet, and it follows simple mental commands. 60 feet | 10 minutes, plus 2 minutes per caster level | no save
☐	**Guided Arcana** Wizard 1	You hurl a dart of pure magical force that automatically hits one creature you can see within range, dealing 1d4+1 force damage. 120 feet | Instant | no save
☐	**Lethargic** Wizard 1	You whisper ancient words of drowsiness that seep into the minds of your targets. Each creature must succeed on a WIS Mind save or fall into a magical slumber. 90 feet | 1 minute, plus 30 seconds per caster level | WIS Mind
☐	**Mage Shielding** Wizard 1	You weave a shimmering barrier of arcane energy around creature. While this spell is active, target gain a +2 bonus to your Armor Class. Self | 1 hour, plus 10 minutes per caster level | no save
☐	**Mage's Reach** Wizard 1	The unseen force can lift or move up to 10 pounds, travel up to 20 feet per round, and perform simple actions such as opening a latch, pulling a lever, or picking up an item. 90 feet | Concentration, up to 1 minute + 30 seconds per caster level | no save
☐	**Mistcall** Wizard 1	The fog heavily obscures sight, unable to see throug it, and when in it creatures can see only 3 feet. 60 feet | 10 minutes, plus 2 minutes per caster level | no save
☐	**Moonlight Mark** Wizard 1	While the spell lasts, you always know the direction and approximate distance to the marked target. Touch | 24 hours, plus 2 hours per caster level | no save
☐	**Mystic Bolt** Wizard 1	You unleash a crackling bolt of radiant energy that streaks toward your target. The bolt deals 1d8 radiant damage. 90 feet | Instant | CON Tough (half damage on successful save)

☐	**Rootbind** Wizard 1	Roots, vines, or earthen tendrils surge from the ground, wrapping around a target's legs and anchoring them in place. 60 feet | 1 minute + 30 seconds per caster level | DEX Quick
☐	**Sense Arcana** Wizard 1	You can sense the presence of magic within 30 feet. Magical items, spells, and enchanted creatures emit subtle auras you can discern with focus. Self | 10 minutes, plus 2 minutes per caster level | no save
☐	**Slipfield** Wizard 1	Any creature entering or starting its turn in the zone must succeed on a DEX Quick save or fall prone and continues slipping for 1d4 turns, if still in area affected, repeat, sliding a few feet in a random direction. 60 feet | 1 minute, plus 30 seconds per caster level | DEX Quick
☐	**Soft Descent** Wizard 1	You reach out with your mind to slow a creature's fall, wrapping them in a gentle cushion of magical force. 60 feet | 1 minute, plus 30 seconds per caster level | no save
☐	**Storm Pulse** Wizard 1	Each creature - including allies - within 15 feet takes 1d6 damage on a failed DEX Quick save, or half damage on success. Self (15-foot radius) | Instant | DEX Quick - half damage on success
☐	**Tongue of Concord** Wizard 1	You attune your mind to the root structure of language, allowing you to understand and speak any spoken tongue. Self | 10 minutes, plus 2 minutes per caster level | no save
☐	**Ward of Deflection** Wizard 1	For 3 rounds, the ward deflects any non-magical ranged attack each round that would otherwise hit you. Self | 3 rounds | no save

2nd-Level Wizard Spells

☐	**Arcane Unseal** Wizard 2	You can break equal or lower-level magical seals. 60 feet | Instant | no save
☐	**Binding Threads** Wizard 2	Any creature that enters or starts its turn within the affected area must succeed on a DEX Quick save or become restrained. 60 feet | 1 minute, plus 30 seconds per caster level | DEX Quick
☐	**Doppelveil** Wizard 2	When you are targeted by an attack, roll a d4 to determine the target. On a roll of 1, the attack hits you. Self | 1 minute, plus 30 seconds per caster level | no save
☐	**Ember Orb** Wizard 2	The orb sheds bright light in a 20-foot radius and dim light for an additional 20 feet. On your turn, you may move the orb up to 30 feet. 60 feet | Concentration, up to 1 minute, plus 30 seconds per caster level | CON Tough (half damage on successful save)
☐	**Firebranch** Wizard 2	The weapon deals an additional 1d6 fire damage on a hit and sheds bright light in a 20-foot radius. Touch | 1 minute, plus 30 seconds per caster level | no save
☐	**Mind Probe** Wizard 2	You extend your consciousness into the target's mind, attempting to read their surface thoughts and emotions. 30 feet | Concentration, up to 1 minute, plus 30 seconds per caster level | WIS Mind
☐	**Miststride** Wizard 2	You dissolve into mist and reform at a location you can see within 60 feet. You cannot Miststride if arms are bound, or are bound by magic or magical restraints. 60 feet | Instant | no save

☐	**Seal of Warding** Wizard 2	You trace glowing runes that form a magical barrier over the target object. The seal prevents the object from being opened by normal means and sounds a soft chime within 30 feet if tampered with. Touch | 1 hour, plus 10 minutes per caster level | CON Tough (half damage)
☐	**Searing Lances** Wizard 2	You create up to three lances of searing light that streak toward your targets. Each lance targets a creature within range and deals 1d6 fire damage (CON Tough save for half). 120 feet | Instant | CON Tough (half damage on successful save)
☐	**Silent Path** Wizard 2	Creatures cannot hear you unless you choose to make noise. The spell also muffles sounds 5 feet around you, softening nearby footsteps and rustling. Self | 10 minutes, plus 2 minutes per caster level | no save
☐	**Veil of Obscurity** Wizard 2	While invisible, you cannot be seen by creatures that rely on normal vision. Self | 10 minutes, plus 2 minutes per caster level | no save
☐	**Windcall** Wizard 2	You summon a violent vortex of wind that fills the target area. 60 feet | Concentration, up to 1 minute, plus 30 seconds per caster level | CON Tough (half damage on successful save)

3rd-Level Wizard Spells

☐	**Arcane Refuge** Wizard 3	You create a shimmering dome of pure arcane energy that surrounds you in a 30-foot radius. Self | 15 minutes, plus 5 minutes per caster level | no save
☐	**Arcane Severance** Wizard 3	You unleash a blade of pure arcane force that slices through the target. The spell deals 4d6 damage and can cut through magical barriers or destroy enchanted objects. 60 feet | Instant | CON Tough (half damage on successful save)
☐	**Breath of the Deep** Wizard 3	You exhale a powerful blast of pressurized water originating from your mouth that can knock creatures off their feet and cause severe damage. Self, 30-foot cone | Instant | CON Tough (half damage on successful save)
☐	**Dreadwave** Wizard 3	Each creature in the cone must succeed on a WIS Mind save or be frightened for 1 minute. Self, 60-foot cone | Instant | WIS Mind
☐	**Farseeing Eye** Wizard 3	You create an invisible, floating eye at a location you can see or have visited before. You can see and hear through the eye as if you were present at that location. 1 mile | Concentration, up to 5 minutes, plus 1 minutes per caster level | no save
☐	**Grand Illusion** Wizard 3	You create a complex, realistic illusion that can include multiple creatures, objects, sounds, and even smells. 60 feet | Concentration, up to 5 minutes, plus 2 minutes per caster level | WIS Mind
☐	**Ocean Hand** Wizard 3	You summon a massive hand of water (4 times larger than a typical adult human hand) that rises from a nearby water source. 60 feet | Concentration, up to 1 minute, plus 30 seconds per caster level | CON Tough (half damage on successful save)
☐	**Pyroburst** Wizard 3	The blast deals 4d6 fire damage to all creatures in the area and ignites flammable objects. 150 feet | Instant | DEX Quick (half damage on successful save)
☐	**Runesight** Wizard 3	You can read magical scrolls, glyphs, and enchanted inscriptions as though they were written in your own tongue, though you gain no ability to cast or activate what they describe. Self (60 feet) | 10 minutes, plus 1 minute per caster level | no save

☐	**Skybound** Wizard 3	You imbue the target with a surge of dimensional buoyancy, granting flight with perfect control. 60 feet | 10 minutes, plus 2 minutes per caster level | no save
☐	**Spellbreaker** Wizard 3	When a creature you can see within range begins casting, you may immediately counter the spell, negating it. 60 feet | Instant | no save
☐	**Stormcall** Wizard 3	You summon a localized storm that fills the target area with crackling lightning, booming thunder, and torrential rain. 300 feet | Concentration, up to 1d6 rounds | DEX Quick (half damage on successful save)
☐	**Sunlight Bloom** Wizard 3	Each hostile creature in range takes 2d10 radiant force damage. Undead, demonic, infernal, fiends, and other creatures from the lower realms take double damage. Self (30-foot radius) | Turn | CON Tough (half damage on successful save)
☐	**Wild Summons of Spectral Hound** Wizard 3	It appears in an unoccupied space you can see within range and follows your mental commands. 60 feet | 30 minutes | no save
☐	**Winter's Veil** Wizard 3	The area becomes heavily obscured and difficult terrain for all creatures (excluding caster). Self (20-foot radius) | 10 minutes, plus 2 minutes per caster level | CON Tough (half damage on successful save)

Pip Ollander

Gnome Wizard, Level 3



STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	13 (+2)	18 (+4)	10 (0)	12 (+1)

HP 15 | **AC** 12 (Dex +2) | **DR** 0 (padded) | **Save TN** 13

Saves: Quick +2 | Tough +2 | Mind 0

Weapons: Staff sling 1d6, 60/120 ft (two-handed); Dirk 1d4-1

Race ability: Cave Sense (50% chance to find the way out of unknown underground terrain). Gnomes also have Dark Sense.

Class abilities: Arcane Focus, Ritual Casting, Arcane Overload

Spellcasting: Access to all 1st, 2nd and 3rd level wizard spells. 5 / 5 / 4 spells per day; each spell once per day.

Level-up bonuses: Wizard's Whim, Familiar, Arcane Veil

Gear: Spellbook disguised as a ledger of fish prices, cartographer's tools, a huge rolled map of the Torrenmark, compass, three colors of chalk, staff sling, dirk, Starlight Compass, backpack, 41 gp

Magic item: Starlight Compass (Magic Items for Early Adventures). Roll 1d4 for its charges when play begins. Each use points toward the nearest source of magic within one mile and gives a rough sense of its power, for 10 minutes.

> I make maps. Correct maps. The Synod's maps of the Torrenmark are an embarrassment, and I have told them so in writing, twice. I have mapped every road from Hollowmere to Gatewatch, and every one of the Synod Reaches, and I have mapped the coast beyond the mountains and three kingdoms past that. On every map of the Torrenmark there is a great blank in the east, over the Blackmire, and some fool has written "here is nothing." There is always something. I would also like it noted that my cousin Nim went off to look at the Blackmire himself six weeks ago, without asking me, and has not written. Nim never asks. Nim always writes.

Pip's cousin is Nim Corrowby, the gnome prisoner in area 65a.



Open Dungeons RPG Character Sheet

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NAME	RACE	CLASS	HP	LEVEL	XP
Pip Ollander	Gnome	Wizard	**15**	3	4,000

STR	BONUS	DEX	BONUS	CON	BONUS	INT	BONUS	WIS	BONUS	CHA	BONUS
8	-1	14	+2	13	+2	18	+4	10	+0	12	+1
Strength		Dexterity		Constitution		Intelligence		Wisdom		Charisma	

AC	SHIELD TYPE	ARMOR TYPE	DR
12	None	Padded	**0**

AC = 10 + DEX bonus + shield (+2). Magic items may change it.

Armor gives DR, which reduces physical damage.

WEAPONS / EQUIPMENT / NOTES

✓	Item	Notes
✓	**Staff sling**	1d6, 60/120 ft, two-handed
	Dirk	1d4-1
✓	**Padded armor**	DR 0
✓	**Spellbook**	Looks like a fish ledger
	Starlight Compass	Magic. 1d4 charges
	Cartographer's tools	
	Huge map of the Torrenmark	
	Compass, three colors of chalk	
	Backpack	

CLASS ABILITIES

Arcane Focus

Ritual Casting

Arcane Overload (once per day)

LEVEL-UP BONUSES

Wizard's Whim

Familiar

Arcane Veil

RACE ABILITY

Cave Sense

Dark Sense

SAVE ROLLS

DEX / Quick	**13 / +2**
CON / Tough	**13 / +2**
WIS / Mind	**13 / +0**

Save TN / bonus. Roll 1d20 + bonus; meet or beat 13.

MONEY

PP	GP	SP	CP
	41		

APPEARANCE



BACKGROUND & PERSONALITY

Makes correct maps, and has told the Synod so in writing, twice. Cousin Nim went to look at the Blackmire six weeks ago and has not written.

DEFAULT CLASS ABILITIES	
Arcane Focus	You must keep your spellbook; it is your lifeline. Losing it means you cannot prepare new spells. You know how to protect it: encase and seal it in waxed leather, wrap it in oiled canvas, or keep it within a metal-bound case. Lock and chain it, perhaps even to your belt. Hide it in secret compartments - false bottoms in satchels or concealed pouches. Disguise it as a farmer's ledger or a holy book. Some wizards even carry decoy tomes to mislead the careless and the curious.
Ritual Casting	Wizards do not only cast spells; they study, record, and preserve them. A ritual is not a spell but a deliberate act of scholarship and magical craft. A ritual requires ten uninterrupted hours of intense study, ink-stained fingers, and unwavering concentration. It is not a quick trick or flourish of power, but a grueling act of scholarship that drains the mind and tests the will. Through this exhaustive process, a wizard can copy spells from scrolls, fragments, or another wizard's notes into their spellbook, stabilize fragile magical texts so they do not fade or crumble, encrypt or disguise their own writings so only they can read them, or expand their spellbook with diagrams, formulae, and protective wards. Rituals never expend spell slots - they are the wizard's true craft, earned through patience and endurance. Each successful ritual is a victory of discipline over fatigue, and through them the spellbook grows, survives, and becomes a true grimoire.
Arcane Overload (once per day)	Once per day, a wizard may unleash an Arcane Overload within 60 feet in sight, dealing 1d6 damage per caster level to a single target with no Save Roll allowed. The wizard also suffers 1 point of damage per caster level used, which cannot be reduced, making this desperate power costly and dangerous.

SELECTED LEVEL-UP BONUSES	
Wizard's Whim	Once per day, you may conjure harmless alterations to your surroundings - smoke puffs, glowing eyes, a voice that echoes, a shift in robe color, a change in food flavor, the scent of incense or rot, sparks, floating quills, self-turning pages, candles that light or snuff, drifting shadow-shapes, or the sound of distant chimes. These illusions last 1 minute and cannot cause harm. And once per day, you can concentrate to manipulate small objects at a distance, up to 30 feet away, as if using an invisible hand. You can push, pull, open, or carry up to 2 pounds. Actions must be simple and visible to you, and the DN may require a roll for delicate or risky work. Lasts up to 1 minute.
Familiar	Once per day, you can target a small, low-intelligence animal (squirrel, raven, cat, rat, lizard, etc.) within 30 feet and forge a temporary magical bond. The animal does not make a Save Roll and becomes your familiar for 3 hours. While bonded, it understands your simple commands and shares basic emotions with you through an empathic link. The familiar can perform simple tasks but retains its natural instincts and limitations. If frightened you will feel it, and the bond immediately breaks. When the effect ends, the animal returns to its normal behavior with no memory of the bonding. At 4th level, the duration increases to 4 hours. At 8th level, the duration increases to 6 hours.

Arcane Veil	Once per day, when you are struck by an attack, you may instantly shroud yourself in a veil of flickering wards. All damage is reduced by half, and you become blurred for 1 minute. While blurred, attacks against you suffer -2 to hit. At 4th level, you may use this power twice per day, and attacks against you suffer -3 to hit while blurred.

RACE ABILITY	
Cave Sense	50% chance to find your way out of unknown underground terrain.
Dark Sense	In dim light +2 to attack and darkness +1 to attack roll (see above).

MAGIC ITEMS	
Starlight Compass *Magic Items for Early Adventures*	Roll 1d4 for charges when play begins. Each use points toward the nearest source of magic within one mile and gives a rough sense of its power, for 10 minutes.

MAGIC / SPELL STACKING

No more than 2 magical effects (spells or items) apply to the same destination. A destination is a stat, ability, skill, action, resource, equipment, and so on.

If any single modifier is +3 or greater, only that greatest magic or spell modifier applies. No additional stacking occurs for that destination.

SPELL RECORD

Spells per day: 5 first-level, 5 second-level and 4 third-level spells per day. Each spell can be cast once per day.

Cast	Spell	Effect
1st-Level Wizard Spells		
☐	**Beguile** Wizard 1	The target must succeed on a WIS Mind save or become charmed by you for the duration. 30 feet | 1 minute, plus 30 seconds per caster level | WIS Mind
☐	**Glow Orb** Wizard 1	The orb sheds bright light in a 20-foot radius and dim light for an additional 20 feet. On your turn, you may move the orb up to 60 feet, and it follows simple mental commands. 60 feet | 10 minutes, plus 2 minutes per caster level | no save
☐	**Guided Arcana** Wizard 1	You hurl a dart of pure magical force that automatically hits one creature you can see within range, dealing 1d4+1 force damage. 120 feet | Instant | no save
☐	**Lethargic** Wizard 1	You whisper ancient words of drowsiness that seep into the minds of your targets. Each creature must succeed on a WIS Mind save or fall into a magical slumber. 90 feet | 1 minute, plus 30 seconds per caster level | WIS Mind
☐	**Mage Shielding** Wizard 1	You weave a shimmering barrier of arcane energy around creature. While this spell is active, target gain a +2 bonus to your Armor Class. Self | 1 hour, plus 10 minutes per caster level | no save
☐	**Mage's Reach** Wizard 1	The unseen force can lift or move up to 10 pounds, travel up to 20 feet per round, and perform simple actions such as opening a latch, pulling a lever, or picking up an item. 90 feet | Concentration, up to 1 minute + 30 seconds per caster level | no save
☐	**Mistcall** Wizard 1	The fog heavily obscures sight, unable to see throug it, and when in it creatures can see only 3 feet. 60 feet | 10 minutes, plus 2 minutes per caster level | no save
☐	**Moonlight Mark** Wizard 1	While the spell lasts, you always know the direction and approximate distance to the marked target. Touch | 24 hours, plus 2 hours per caster level | no save
☐	**Mystic Bolt** Wizard 1	You unleash a crackling bolt of radiant energy that streaks toward your target. The bolt deals 1d8 radiant damage. 90 feet | Instant | CON Tough (half damage on successful save)

☐	**Rootbind** Wizard 1	Roots, vines, or earthen tendrils surge from the ground, wrapping around a target's legs and anchoring them in place. 60 feet | 1 minute + 30 seconds per caster level | DEX Quick
☐	**Sense Arcana** Wizard 1	You can sense the presence of magic within 30 feet. Magical items, spells, and enchanted creatures emit subtle auras you can discern with focus. Self | 10 minutes, plus 2 minutes per caster level | no save
☐	**Slipfield** Wizard 1	Any creature entering or starting its turn in the zone must succeed on a DEX Quick save or fall prone and continues slipping for 1d4 turns, if still in area affected, repeat, sliding a few feet in a random direction. 60 feet | 1 minute, plus 30 seconds per caster level | DEX Quick
☐	**Soft Descent** Wizard 1	You reach out with your mind to slow a creature's fall, wrapping them in a gentle cushion of magical force. 60 feet | 1 minute, plus 30 seconds per caster level | no save
☐	**Storm Pulse** Wizard 1	Each creature - including allies - within 15 feet takes 1d6 damage on a failed DEX Quick save, or half damage on success. Self (15-foot radius) | Instant | DEX Quick - half damage on success
☐	**Tongue of Concord** Wizard 1	You attune your mind to the root structure of language, allowing you to understand and speak any spoken tongue. Self | 10 minutes, plus 2 minutes per caster level | no save
☐	**Ward of Deflection** Wizard 1	For 3 rounds, the ward deflects any non-magical ranged attack each round that would otherwise hit you. Self | 3 rounds | no save

2nd-Level Wizard Spells

☐	**Arcane Unseal** Wizard 2	You can break equal or lower-level magical seals. 60 feet | Instant | no save
☐	**Binding Threads** Wizard 2	Any creature that enters or starts its turn within the affected area must succeed on a DEX Quick save or become restrained. 60 feet | 1 minute, plus 30 seconds per caster level | DEX Quick
☐	**Doppelveil** Wizard 2	When you are targeted by an attack, roll a d4 to determine the target. On a roll of 1, the attack hits you. Self | 1 minute, plus 30 seconds per caster level | no save
☐	**Ember Orb** Wizard 2	The orb sheds bright light in a 20-foot radius and dim light for an additional 20 feet. On your turn, you may move the orb up to 30 feet. 60 feet | Concentration, up to 1 minute, plus 30 seconds per caster level | CON Tough (half damage on successful save)
☐	**Firebranch** Wizard 2	The weapon deals an additional 1d6 fire damage on a hit and sheds bright light in a 20-foot radius. Touch | 1 minute, plus 30 seconds per caster level | no save
☐	**Mind Probe** Wizard 2	You extend your consciousness into the target's mind, attempting to read their surface thoughts and emotions. 30 feet | Concentration, up to 1 minute, plus 30 seconds per caster level | WIS Mind
☐	**Miststride** Wizard 2	You dissolve into mist and reform at a location you can see within 60 feet. You cannot Miststride if arms are bound, or are bound by magic or magical restraints. 60 feet | Instant | no save

☐	**Seal of Warding** Wizard 2	You trace glowing runes that form a magical barrier over the target object. The seal prevents the object from being opened by normal means and sounds a soft chime within 30 feet if tampered with. Touch | 1 hour, plus 10 minutes per caster level | CON Tough (half damage)
☐	**Searing Lances** Wizard 2	You create up to three lances of searing light that streak toward your targets. Each lance targets a creature within range and deals 1d6 fire damage (CON Tough save for half). 120 feet | Instant | CON Tough (half damage on successful save)
☐	**Silent Path** Wizard 2	Creatures cannot hear you unless you choose to make noise. The spell also muffles sounds 5 feet around you, softening nearby footsteps and rustling. Self | 10 minutes, plus 2 minutes per caster level | no save
☐	**Veil of Obscurity** Wizard 2	While invisible, you cannot be seen by creatures that rely on normal vision. Self | 10 minutes, plus 2 minutes per caster level | no save
☐	**Windcall** Wizard 2	You summon a violent vortex of wind that fills the target area. 60 feet | Concentration, up to 1 minute, plus 30 seconds per caster level | CON Tough (half damage on successful save)

3rd-Level Wizard Spells

☐	**Arcane Refuge** Wizard 3	You create a shimmering dome of pure arcane energy that surrounds you in a 30-foot radius. Self | 15 minutes, plus 5 minutes per caster level | no save
☐	**Arcane Severance** Wizard 3	You unleash a blade of pure arcane force that slices through the target. The spell deals 4d6 damage and can cut through magical barriers or destroy enchanted objects. 60 feet | Instant | CON Tough (half damage on successful save)
☐	**Breath of the Deep** Wizard 3	You exhale a powerful blast of pressurized water originating from your mouth that can knock creatures off their feet and cause severe damage. Self, 30-foot cone | Instant | CON Tough (half damage on successful save)
☐	**Dreadwave** Wizard 3	Each creature in the cone must succeed on a WIS Mind save or be frightened for 1 minute. Self, 60-foot cone | Instant | WIS Mind
☐	**Farseeing Eye** Wizard 3	You create an invisible, floating eye at a location you can see or have visited before. You can see and hear through the eye as if you were present at that location. 1 mile | Concentration, up to 5 minutes, plus 1 minutes per caster level | no save
☐	**Grand Illusion** Wizard 3	You create a complex, realistic illusion that can include multiple creatures, objects, sounds, and even smells. 60 feet | Concentration, up to 5 minutes, plus 2 minutes per caster level | WIS Mind
☐	**Ocean Hand** Wizard 3	You summon a massive hand of water (4 times larger than a typical adult human hand) that rises from a nearby water source. 60 feet | Concentration, up to 1 minute, plus 30 seconds per caster level | CON Tough (half damage on successful save)
☐	**Pyroburst** Wizard 3	The blast deals 4d6 fire damage to all creatures in the area and ignites flammable objects. 150 feet | Instant | DEX Quick (half damage on successful save)
☐	**Runesight** Wizard 3	You can read magical scrolls, glyphs, and enchanted inscriptions as though they were written in your own tongue, though you gain no ability to cast or activate what they describe. Self (60 feet) | 10 minutes, plus 1 minute per caster level | no save

☐	**Skybound** Wizard 3	You imbue the target with a surge of dimensional buoyancy, granting flight with perfect control. 60 feet | 10 minutes, plus 2 minutes per caster level | no save
☐	**Spellbreaker** Wizard 3	When a creature you can see within range begins casting, you may immediately counter the spell, negating it. 60 feet | Instant | no save
☐	**Stormcall** Wizard 3	You summon a localized storm that fills the target area with crackling lightning, booming thunder, and torrential rain. 300 feet | Concentration, up to 1d6 rounds | DEX Quick (half damage on successful save)
☐	**Sunlight Bloom** Wizard 3	Each hostile creature in range takes 2d10 radiant force damage. Undead, demonic, infernal, fiends, and other creatures from the lower realms take double damage. Self (30-foot radius) | Turn | CON Tough (half damage on successful save)
☐	**Wild Summons of Spectral Hound** Wizard 3	It appears in an unoccupied space you can see within range and follows your mental commands. 60 feet | 30 minutes | no save
☐	**Winter's Veil** Wizard 3	The area becomes heavily obscured and difficult terrain for all creatures (excluding caster). Self (20-foot radius) | 10 minutes, plus 2 minutes per caster level | CON Tough (half damage on successful save)

Wren Tallowmere

Halfling Thief, Level 3



STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (0)	17 (+4)	13 (+2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+2)

HP 27 (21, +6 Lifeblade) | **AC** 14 (Dex +4) | **DR** 1 (leather) | **Save TN** 13

Saves: Quick +4 | Tough +2 | Mind +1

Weapons: Lifeblade Shortsword 1d6; Short bow 1d6, 60/120 ft

Race ability: Lucky (once per day, reroll one failed save or attack roll)

Thief abilities: Backstab (+4 to hit, +50% damage, once per encounter), Pick Locks 40%, Remove Traps 40%, Pick Pockets 40%, Move Silently 35%, Hide in Shadows 35%, Climb Walls 50%, Underworld Marks

Level-up bonuses: Tier 1: Shadow Lore, Gut Instinct, Cat's Landing. Tier 2: Distraction Artist, Rumor Mill, Coin and Dice.

Gear: Leather armor, Lifeblade Shortsword, short bow, 20 arrows, thieves' tools, a small flat-bottomed skiff she left tied up under the Salt Kettle, dark cloak, 55 gp

Magic item: Lifeblade Shortsword (Magic Items for Early Adventurers). +6 maximum HP, included above. Healing runes run the length of the blade, and they glow faintly green when she is wounded. The extra HP is not healing, so the Hush does not touch it.

> I ran a skiff on Lake Ishvane, at night, with no lamp, carrying things the pier-wardens did not need to hear about. Mostly wine. Sometimes letters. Once, a crate of healing potions from over the mountains, which a very nice merchant swore would work here if you drank them under a full moon. I sold every bottle. I sold one to a woman whose husband had a crushed foot. Nothing happened, of course. Nothing ever happens. She paid me in fish for a month, because it was all she had, and she thanked me every time. I gave it all back and went to find a healing that was real. I owe that woman.



Open Dungeons RPG Character Sheet

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NAME	RACE	CLASS	HP	LEVEL	XP
Wren Tallowmere	Halfling	Thief	**27**	3	4,000

STR	BONUS	DEX	BONUS	CON	BONUS	INT	BONUS	WIS	BONUS	CHA	BONUS
10	+0	17	+4	13	+2	14	+2	12	+1	13	+2
Strength		Dexterity		Constitution		Intelligence		Wisdom		Charisma	

AC	SHIELD TYPE	ARMOR TYPE	DR
14	None	Leather	**1**

AC = 10 + DEX bonus + shield (+2). Magic items may change it.

Armor gives DR, which reduces physical damage.

WEAPONS / EQUIPMENT / NOTES

✓	Item	Notes
✓	**Lifeblade Shortsword**	Magic. 1d6, +6 max HP
	Short bow, 20 arrows	1d6, 60/120 ft
✓	**Leather armor**	DR 1
	Thieves' tools	
	Dark cloak	
	Skiff	Tied up under the Salt Kettle

BACKGROUND & PERSONALITY

Ran smuggled wine across Lake Ishvane by night, and once sold fake healing potions. Gave the money back, and owes a fisherwoman a healing that is real.

CLASS ABILITIES

Backstab (+4 to hit, +50% damage, once per encounter)
Pick Locks (40%)
Remove Traps (40%)
Pick Pockets (40%)
Move Silently (35%)
Hide in Shadows (35%)
Climb Walls (50%)
Underworld Marks

LEVEL-UP BONUSES

Shadow Lore
Gut Instinct
Cat's Landing
Distraction Artist
Rumor Mill
Coin & Dice

RACE ABILITY

Lucky

SAVE ROLLS

DEX / Quick	**13 / +4**
CON / Tough	**13 / +2**
WIS / Mind	**13 / +1**

Save TN / bonus. Roll 1d20 + bonus; meet or beat 13.

MONEY

PP	GP	SP	CP
	55		

APPEARANCE



THIEF ABILITIES	
Backstab (+4 to hit, +50% damage, once per encounter)	Once per encounter, if the moment arises, a strike from surprise (often from behind or when the foe is distracted) grants +4 to hit and +50% more damage.
Pick Locks (40%)	You can attempt to pick locks (other classes see next page). 1st level success starts at 30% success, +5% per level.
Remove Traps (40%)	You can attempt to disarm traps safely, not triggering trap (other classes see next page). 1st level success starts at 30% success, +5% per level.
Pick Pockets (40%)	You may attempt to filch small items unnoticed. 1st level success starts at 30%, +5% per level.
Move Silently (35%)	You can sneak where others cannot. 1st level success start at 25%, +5% per level.
Hide in Shadows (35%)	You can sneak where others cannot. 1st level success start at 25%, +5% per level.
Climb Walls (50%)	You can scale sheer surfaces (castle walls, cliffs, dungeon shafts). 1st level success start at 40%, +5% per level.
Underworld Marks	You know the hidden symbols criminals use: scratches on doorframes, chalk marks on walls, arranged stones. Read and leave coded warnings about guards, loot, or danger. Other thieves recognize you as guild-trained.

SELECTED LEVEL-UP BONUSES	
Shadow Lore	You know the hidden layouts of cities: smuggler tunnels, thieves' marks, rooftops, etc. Once per month, ask "Where's the hidden way?"
Gut Instinct	Once per day, ask "Is this a trap or setup?" The DN gives a vague but honest feeling: safe, suspicious, or very wrong. Choose any 1 of Tier 2 Bonuses per level starting at level 1. Thief chooses any 1 unique Level-Up Bonuses Abilities at each level (1–6). These reflect social cunning, deception, and performance skills.
Cat's Landing	You take half damage from falls. Once per day, survive any fall up to 30 feet in height as long as there's something to grab or bounce off on the way down.
Distraction Artist	You can create a scene that draws everyone's attention for one minute - a fake fight, dropped coins, feigned illness. During this time, your allies can act unnoticed.
Rumor Mill	In any tavern or marketplace, you can plant a rumor that spreads through town within a day, or gather the latest gossip about anyone important. Information is currency.
Coin & Dice	You never lose at games of chance unless you choose to. You can spot any cheating at cards, dice, or gambling. In any town, you can find the high-stakes game where real money and secrets change hands.

RACE ABILITY	
Lucky	Once per day reroll any 1 failed save or attack roll.

MAGIC ITEMS	
Lifeblade Shortsword *Magic Items for Early Adventurers*	+6 maximum HP, included above. Healing runes run the length of the blade and glow faintly green when she is wounded. The extra HP is not healing, so the Hush does not touch it.

SKERRIT

Half-Goblin Thief, Level 3



STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+1)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	13 (+2)	10 (0)	9 (0)

HP 21 | **AC** 14 (Dex +4) | **DR** 1 (studded leather) | **Save TN** 13

Saves: Quick +4 | Tough +1 (+3 against poison, Poison Savvy) | Mind 0

Weapons: Throwing knives (4) 1d4+1, thrown 20/40 ft; Dirk 1d4+1. Pack Raider: +1 to hit when an ally is within 5 ft of his target.

Race ability: Pack Raider. Half-goblins also have Dark Sense.

Languages: Common and Goblin.

Thief abilities: Backstab, Pick Locks 40%, Remove Traps 40%, Pick Pockets 40%, Move Silently 35%, Hide in Shadows 35%, Climb Walls 50%, Underworld Marks

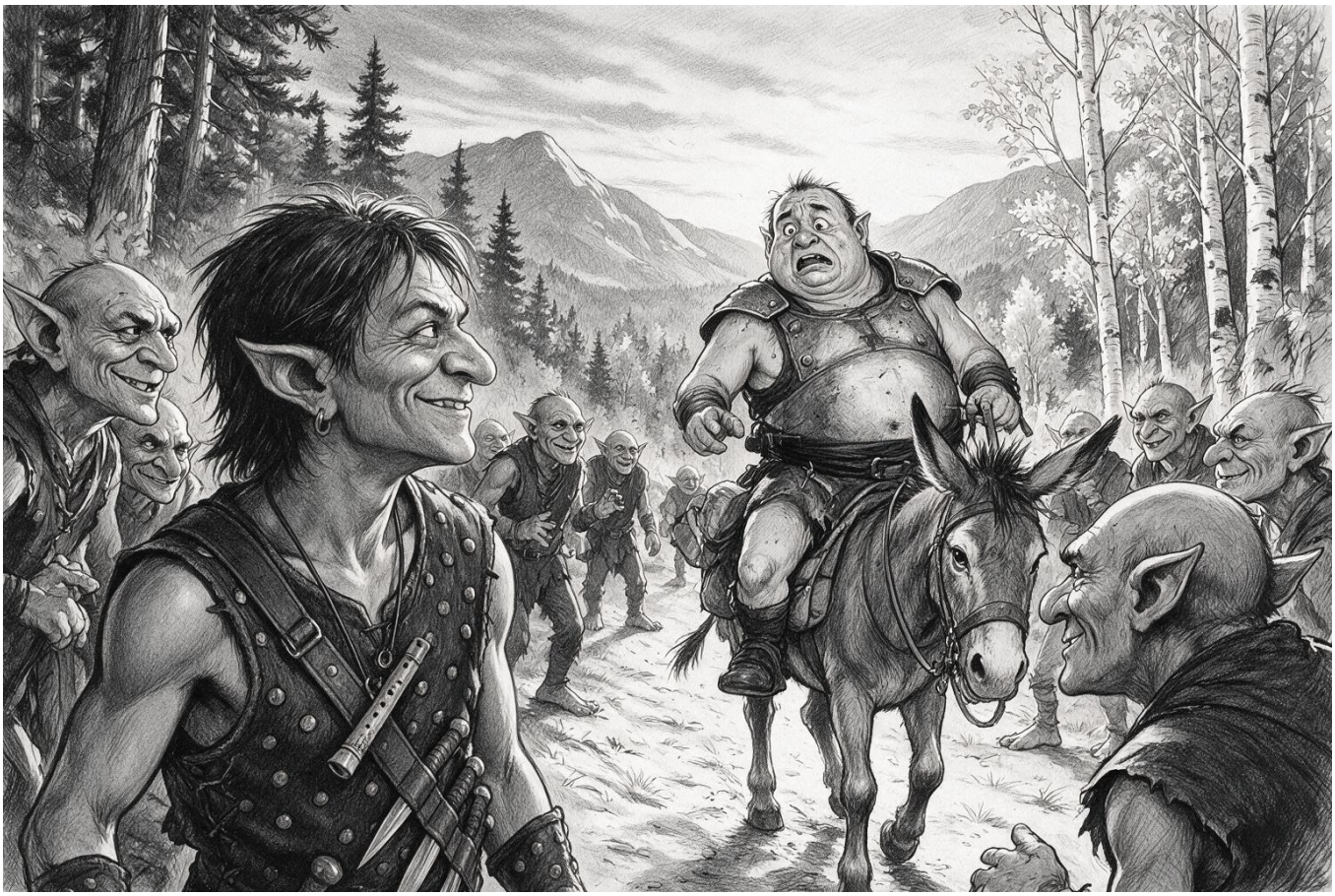
Level-up bonuses: Tier 1: Poison Savvy, Dark Markets, Inside Man. Tier 2: Ear for Music, Fast Friends, Performer's Face.

Gear: Studded leather, 4 throwing knives, dirk, thieves' tools, a goblin reed flute, disguise kit, a very old letter from his mother, 17 gp

Magic item: His goblin reed flute is a Flute of Calm (Magic Items for Early Adventures). Roll 1d3 for its charges when play begins. Playing it for 1 minute soothes emotions and charms animals within 30 feet for 10 minutes (Mind save negates).

> Don't ask. Everybody asks. My mother was from the goblin camps below Gatewatch, and my father was a toll-keeper who did not stay. I grew up in both places and was welcome in neither. In the camps I was "the tall one." In town I was "the green one." The Salt Kettle was the first place anybody called me by my name. That was you, by the way. Three years ago you sent me to find a healer and I went where none of you could go: into the camps, the markets, the places nobody writes down. There are no healers there. But I'll tell you what I did find. My mother's cousin, Muckle Tarr, has bought himself a black sash and a mule. Goblins are saying a man called the Regent is paying in silver for a white glass staff. That's never good news.

Skerrit is related to Overseer Muckle Tarr of Event 1. Muckle recognizes him on sight and is enormously embarrassed by it.



Open Dungeons RPG Character Sheet

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NAME	RACE	CLASS	HP	LEVEL	XP
Skerrit	Half-Goblin	Thief	**21**	3	4,000

STR	BONUS	DEX	BONUS	CON	BONUS	INT	BONUS	WIS	BONUS	CHA	BONUS
11	+1	18	+4	12	+1	13	+2	10	+0	9	+0
Strength		Dexterity		Constitution		Intelligence		Wisdom		Charisma	

AC	SHIELD TYPE	ARMOR TYPE	DR
14	None	Studded leather	**1**

AC = 10 + DEX bonus + shield (+2). Magic items may change it.

Armor gives DR, which reduces physical damage.

WEAPONS / EQUIPMENT / NOTES

✓	Item	Notes
✓	**Throwing knives (4)**	1d4+1, thrown 20/40 ft
✓	**Dirk**	1d4+1
✓	**Studded leather**	DR 1
	Flute of Calm	Magic. 1d3 charges
	Thieves' tools	
	Disguise kit	
	Very old letter from his mother	

BACKGROUND & PERSONALITY

Grew up between the goblin camps and the town, welcome in neither. Speaks Common and Goblin. His mother's cousin, Muckle Tarr, has just bought himself a black sash.

CLASS ABILITIES

Backstab (+4 to hit, +50% damage, once per encounter)
Pick Locks (40%)
Remove Traps (40%)
Pick Pockets (40%)
Move Silently (35%)
Hide in Shadows (35%)
Climb Walls (50%)
Underworld Marks

LEVEL-UP BONUSES

Poison Savvy
Dark Markets
Inside Man
Ear for Music
Fast Friends
Performer's Face

RACE ABILITY

Pack Raider
Dark Sense

SAVE ROLLS

DEX / Quick	**13 / +4**
CON / Tough	**13 / +1**
WIS / Mind	**13 / +0**

Save TN / bonus. Roll 1d20 + bonus; meet or beat 13. Tough +3 against poison.

MONEY

PP	GP	SP	CP
	17		

APPEARANCE



THIEF ABILITIES	
Backstab (+4 to hit, +50% damage, once per encounter)	Once per encounter, if the moment arises, a strike from surprise (often from behind or when the foe is distracted) grants +4 to hit and +50% more damage.
Pick Locks (40%)	You can attempt to pick locks (other classes see next page). 1st level success starts at 30% success, +5% per level.
Remove Traps (40%)	You can attempt to disarm traps safely, not triggering trap (other classes see next page). 1st level success starts at 30% success, +5% per level.
Pick Pockets (40%)	You may attempt to filch small items unnoticed. 1st level success starts at 30%, +5% per level.
Move Silently (35%)	You can sneak where others cannot. 1st level success start at 25%, +5% per level.
Hide in Shadows (35%)	You can sneak where others cannot. 1st level success start at 25%, +5% per level.
Climb Walls (50%)	You can scale sheer surfaces (castle walls, cliffs, dungeon shafts). 1st level success start at 40%, +5% per level.
Underworld Marks	You know the hidden symbols criminals use: scratches on doorframes, chalk marks on walls, arranged stones. Read and leave coded warnings about guards, loot, or danger. Other thieves recognize you as guild-trained.

SELECTED LEVEL-UP BONUSES	
Poison Savvy	You can identify and apply poisons safely. +2 to resist poison. You never poison yourself by accident.
Dark Markets	You always know where to buy or sell illegal goods in towns and cities. You can fence loot discreetly. Example 1: Need poison? They know a guy. Example 2: Need to sell those jewels you stole from the duke? Know where to go without getting arrested.
Inside Man	In any organization or household, you always know someone on the inside, "you know a guy," a guard who gambles, a servant with debts, a clerk who drinks. Once per location, they'll provide one favor for the right price.
Ear for Music	You can perfectly memorize and reproduce any song, accent, or voice after hearing it once. You know the cultural origin of any music and what emotions it's meant to evoke.
Fast Friends	After sharing drinks or a meal with someone, they treat you as trustworthy for the next 24 hours. They won't betray you unless given strong reason.
Performer's Face	You can disguise yourself as different social classes, ages, or even genders with makeup and clothing. The disguise holds up unless closely inspected by someone who knows what to look for.

RACE ABILITY	
Pack Raider	Gain +1 to hit when an ally is within 5 ft of your target.

Dark Sense	In dim light +2 to attack and darkness +1 to attack roll (see above).

MAGIC ITEMS	
Flute of Calm *Magic Items for Early Adventures*	His goblin reed flute. Roll 1d3 for charges when play begins. Playing it for 1 minute soothes emotions and charms animals within 30 feet for 10 minutes (Mind save negates).

Brother Aldous Venn

Human Cleric, Level 3



STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+2)	10 (0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	17 (+4)	11 (+1)

HP 24 | **AC** 12 (shield +2) | **DR** 3 (chainmail) | **Save TN** 13

Saves: Quick 0 | Tough +2 | Mind +5 (Silverleaf Pendant)

Weapons: Flanged mace 1d8+2, -1 DR to the target

Race ability: Versatile (+1 Wisdom, included above)

Deity: Orun, the Keeper of Lamps, god of hearths, travelers and safe return

Class abilities: Divine Ward (+DR 3 against one attack, once per day), Blessing (+1 to a roll, once per day), Sacred Oath, Divine Call (13% deity, 28% messenger, once per month), Sanctify (once per day), Turn Undead (1 per day, 60 HP pool, destroys undead of 30 HP or less)

Spellcasting: Access to all 1st, 2nd and 3rd level cleric spells. 4 spells of each level per day; each spell once per day. **Healing spells do not work in the Torrenmark.**

Level-up bonuses: Mystic Sense, Sacred Authority, Healer's Insight

Gear: Chainmail, shield painted with a lamp, flanged mace, holy symbol of Orun (a small brass lamp), prayer beads, Silverleaf Pendant, Scroll of Battle Pulse, 2 lamps and 4 flasks of oil, backpack, bedroll, 25 gp

Magic items:

- Silverleaf Pendant (Magic Items for Early Adventures). +1 Mind saves, included above. Glows softly when undead are within 30 feet.
- Scroll of Battle Pulse (Magic Items for Early Adventurers). One use, clerics and wizards only. When read, one creature he touches gains 6 temporary HP and +1 to hit for 10 minutes. Damage comes off the temporary HP first. The Hush does not stop it.

> I took Orun's vows at fifteen, in the Hollowmere lamp chapel, and for ten years I prayed for the sick and nothing came of it. I thought I was unworthy. Three years ago I went over the mountains to the coast, and in a fishing village there, a boy came to me with a gashed arm. I prayed out of habit, and the gash closed under my hand. I sat down on the dock and laughed until I was sick. For two years I healed anyone who asked, all along the coast. Then I came home. The moment I came down out of the mountains into the Torrenmark, I felt it go. Like a lamp blown out. Orun still hears me. He still answers every other prayer I make. But in this land, he cannot help me mend, and he will not tell me why.



Open Dungeons RPG Character Sheet

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NAME	RACE	CLASS	HP	LEVEL	XP
Brother Aldous Venn	Human	Cleric	**24**	3	4,000

STR	BONUS	DEX	BONUS	CON	BONUS	INT	BONUS	WIS	BONUS	CHA	BONUS
13	+2	10	+0	14	+2	12	+1	17	+4	11	+1
Strength		Dexterity		Constitution		Intelligence		Wisdom		Charisma	

AC	SHIELD TYPE	ARMOR TYPE	DR
12	Shield (+2 AC)	Chainmail	**3**

AC = 10 + DEX bonus + shield (+2). Magic items may change it.

Armor gives DR, which reduces physical damage.

WEAPONS / EQUIPMENT / NOTES

✓	Item	Notes
✓	**Flanged mace**	1d8+2, -1 DR to target
✓	**Chainmail**	DR 3
✓	**Shield**	+2 AC
✓	**Silverleaf Pendant**	Magic. +1 Mind saves
	Scroll of Battle Pulse	Magic. One use
✓	**Holy symbol of Orun**	A small brass lamp
	Prayer beads	
	2 lamps, 4 flasks of oil	
	Backpack, bedroll	

BACKGROUND & PERSONALITY

Priest of Orun, the Keeper of Lamps. Healed anyone who asked along the coast, then felt it go out like a lamp the moment he came home.

CLASS ABILITIES

Divine Ward (+DR 3, 1/day)
Blessing (+1, 1/day)
Sacred Oath
Divine Call (1/month)
Sanctify (1/day)
Turn Undead (1/day, 60 HP pool)

LEVEL-UP BONUSES

Mystic Sense
Sacred Authority
Healer's Insight

RACE ABILITY

Versatile

SAVE ROLLS

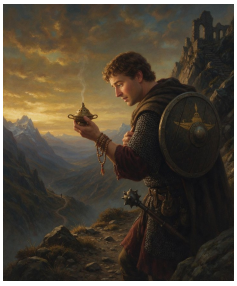
DEX / Quick	**13 / +0**
CON / Tough	**13 / +2**
WIS / Mind	**13 / +5**

Save TN / bonus. Roll 1d20 + bonus; meet or beat 13. Mind includes +1 Silverleaf Pendant.

MONEY

PP	GP	25	SP	CP

APPEARANCE



DEFAULT CLASS ABILITIES	
Divine Ward (+DR 3, 1/day)	Once per day, call upon faith to shield yourself or an ally within sight. Gain +DR 2 against one attack. At 3rd level this becomes +DR 3. At 5th level, you may shield yourself or an ally within sight with +DR 5.
Blessing (+1, 1/day)	Once per day, grant +1 to a roll (attack, save, or chance) for yourself or an ally. At 4th level this becomes +2 to a roll. At 7th level this becomes +3 to a roll.
Sacred Oath	You may wield holy symbols as a focus. Certain items may empower your spells or grant unique abilities at the DN's discretion.
Divine Call (1/month)	Once per month, you may call for divine intervention when you are near death or in grave danger. There is a 10% chance your deity will appear personally, and a 25% chance they will send a messenger. These chances increase by 1% per level. Intervention ensures you survive the moment, and may secure your safety.
Sanctify (1/day)	Once per day, create a 10-foot aura around you for 1 minute. Allies within the aura gain +1 to saves, while enemies suffer -1 to saves. At 4th level, allies gain +2 to saves and enemies suffer -2 to saves, and the aura expands to 20 feet. At 6th level, you may center the aura on a point you can see, up to 100 feet away. Casting Time: Turn Range : 30 feet radius Duration : 2d6 rounds or destroyed Save Roll : Wis Mind Effect : Channel divine power that affects a Cleric's pool of undead HP. Undead turned or destroyed from line of sight. Turning Pool Pool = 20 × Cleric Level. You may choose to target specific undead instead of going lowest HP first, until your HP pool either runs out or too low to be effective. Undead whose HP exceeds your remaining pool are completely unaffected - no save, no partial effect. Saves by Undead Undead with HP ≤25: No Save Roll. Undead with HP ≥26: Wis Mind save to resist.
Turn Undead (1/day, 60 HP pool)	Channel divine power at undead within 30 feet, once per day at level 3. Your pool is 60 HP (20 x level): undead are affected lowest HP first until the pool runs out. Undead of 30 HP or less are destroyed; others flee for 2d6 rounds (or fight at -4 to hit if they cannot flee). Undead of 26 HP or more get a Wis Mind save. The pool refreshes after morning prayer.

SELECTED LEVEL-UP BONUSES	
Mystic Sense	You feel when something within 30 feet nearby is undead, possessed or desecrated. Not what or where, but nearby. At 4th level 60 feet nearby.

Sacred Authority	Once per day, when you or an ally within 30 feet would be reduced to 0 Hit Points or fails a Save Roll against a harmful effect, you may call upon your deity to intervene. The target is wrapped in holy power. If the trigger was damage that would reduce the target to 0 Hit Points, the target instead remains at 1 Hit Point. If the trigger was a failed Save Roll, the target may immediately reroll it and use the new result. This ability cannot restore a creature already dead, cannot prevent a willing sacrifice, and cannot undo harm caused by divine judgment or the breaking of sacred vows. At Level 4, the range increases to 60 feet. At Level 6, when this ability is used, the protected target also gains either DR 3 against the triggering damage before final Hit Points are determined, or a +3 bonus to the reroll - chosen at the moment the ability is activated.
Healer's Insight	Twice per day, you can instantly assess a creature's physical condition. You learn its approximate health, any obvious injuries, and whether it suffers from poison, disease, or exhaustion.

RACE ABILITY	
Versatile	+1 to any one ability score 16 or under one time.

MAGIC ITEMS	
Silverleaf Pendant *Magic Items for Early Adventures*	+1 Mind saves, included above. Glows softly when undead are within 30 feet.
Scroll of Battle Pulse *Magic Items for Early Adventurers*	One use, clerics and wizards only. When read, one creature he touches gains 6 temporary HP and +1 to hit for 10 minutes. Damage comes off the temporary HP first. The Hush does not stop it.

MAGIC / SPELL STACKING

No more than 2 magical effects (spells or items) apply to the same destination. A destination is a stat, ability, skill, action, resource, equipment, and so on.

If any single modifier is +3 or greater, only that greatest magic or spell modifier applies. No additional stacking occurs for that destination.

SPELL RECORD

Spells per day: 4 spells of each level (1st, 2nd and 3rd) per day. Each spell can be cast once per day. Healing spells do not work in the Torrenmark.

Cast	Spell	Effect
1st-Level Cleric Spells		
☐	**Aegis of Grace** Cleric 1	You surround the target with a protective aura of divine energy. The target gains a +1 bonus to Armor Class and +1 to all saving rolls. Touch | 1 hour | no save
☐	**Beast Link** Cleric 1	The bonded creature gains +1 to all saves, can understand your simple commands, and you can sense its general emotional state and location within 1 mile. Touch | 10 minutes | no save
☐	**Beast Speech** Cleric 1	You gain the ability to speak with and understand animals. You can communicate simple concepts, emotions, and requests. Self | 10 minutes | no save
☐	**Cleanse Sustenance** Cleric 1	You purify food removing all poisons, diseases, and spoilage. Touch | Instant | no save
☐	**Harm** Cleric 1	You channel negative energy to wither and decay the target. The spell deals 1d8 necrotic damage. 60 feet | Instant | CON Tough (half damage on successful save)
☐	**Haven of Peace** Cleric 1	Creatures within the area cannot attack or cast harmful spells, and hostile creatures cannot enter unless they succeed on a WIS Mind save. Touch | 1 hour | WIS Mind (entry only)
☐	**Mend Wound** Cleric 1	The target regains 1d8+2 hit points. The healing appears as a warm, golden glow that flows from your hands into the target's wounds. **Hush: does nothing in the Torrenmark.** Touch | Instant | no save
☐	**Oakstaff** Cleric 1	The weapon becomes magical, gains a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls, and you may channel nature-themed spells through the weapon; it counts as a magical implement. Touch | 10 minutes | no save
☐	**Radiant Censure** Cleric 1	The target automatically takes 1d6 radiant damage. If the target fails a WIS Mind save, it is stunned for their following turn. 30 feet | Instant | WIS Mind (negates stun)

☐	**Radiant Glow** Cleric 1	You cause an object to emit bright light in a 20-foot radius and dim light for an additional 20 feet. Touch | 30 minutes | no save
☐	**Sacred Favor** Cleric 1	You bestow divine favor upon the target, granting them good fortune in their endeavors. The target can reroll one failed ability check, attack roll, or saving roll during the spell's duration. Touch | 4 hours | no save
☐	**Sacred Wellspring** Cleric 1	Creatures that drink from the wellspring regain 1 hit point and are cured of minor ailments. **Hush: the hit point it restores does nothing in the Torrenmark.** Touch | 10 minutes | no save
☐	**Sanctified Ward** Cleric 1	You gain DR 2 against damage and +2 to any save (Quick, Tough, or Mind) made against effects originating from undead, fiends, or evil creatures. Self | 10 minutes | no save
☐	**Sense Malice** Cleric 1	You can sense the general direction of creatures with evil intent within 60 feet, though not their exact location or identity. Self | 10 minutes | no save
☐	**Sense Sight** Cleric 1	You open your spirit to the unseen forces of faith, perceiving the presence of divine or evil power within 60 feet. Self | 10 minutes | no save
☐	**Swift Step** Cleric 1	You bless the target with divine swiftness, allowing them to move with supernatural grace. Touch | 10 minutes | no save
☐	**Vitalfruit** Cleric 1	Each piece of vitalfruit provides a full day's nutrition and restores 1 hit point when consumed. **Hush: the 1 HP of healing does nothing in the Torrenmark; the temporary HP still works.** Touch | 8 hours, plus 1 hour per level | no save

2nd-Level Cleric Spells

☐	**Beast Snare** Cleric 2	You call upon nature to bind your target with roots, vines, and thorny branches that burst from the ground. 60 feet | 1 minute | DEX Quick (negates)
☐	**Bolster Spirit** Cleric 2	You infuse the target with divine courage and determination. The target gains +2 to WIS Mind saves, and +1 to attack rolls when fighting undead, fiends, or evil creatures. Touch | 10 minutes | no save
☐	**Circle of Honesty** Cleric 2	Creatures inside must answer questions posed to them, and their answers cannot contain deliberate lies. Touch | 1 minute | WIS Mind (success save negates compulsion to answer, creatures may remain silent)
☐	**Divine Omen** Cleric 2	You beseech your deity for guidance about a single, immediate course of action you or your companions are considering. Self | Instant | no save
☐	**Exile Strike** Cleric 2	The spell deals 2d8 radiant damage. 60 feet | Instant | CON Tough (half damage on successful save)
☐	**Gills of the Deep** Cleric 2	You bless the targets with the ability to breathe underwater as easily as air. Touch | 30 minutes | no save

☐	**Greenstride** Cleric 2	You bless the targets with nature's favor, allowing them to move through natural terrain without hindrance. Touch | 30 minutes | no save
☐	**Hushed Sanctum** Cleric 2	You consecrate an area with divine silence and concealment. Touch | 1 hour | no save
☐	**Manifest Weapon** Cleric 2	The weapon can be any hand or two-handed weapon you are proficient with, deals 1d8 damage, counts as magical, and reduces target DR by 2 for 1d4 turns. Self | 10 minutes | no save
☐	**Minor Renewal** Cleric 2	The target regains 2d6+2 hit points. **Hush: does nothing in the Torrenmark.** Touch | Instant | no save
☐	**Radiant Smite** Cleric 2	You call down a pillar of divine radiance that strikes your target from above. The spell deals 2d8 radiant damage. 60 feet | Instant | CON Tough (half damage on successful save)
☐	**Rest Eternal** Cleric 2	You consecrate a corpse, protecting it from decay and preventing it from being raised as undead. Touch | Until dispelled | no save
☐	**Silver Rays** Cleric 2	Creatures under invisibility, disguise, polymorph, or illusion effects must succeed on a WIS Mind save or have their true form revealed and invisibility/illusion suppressed until the end of your next turn. Self, 30-foot cone | Instant | WIS Mind (negates)
☐	**Wild Courier** Cleric 2	The creature gains human-level intelligence for the duration, can speak one language you know, and will faithfully deliver a message to a person or location you specify within 25 miles. Touch | 8 hours, plus 1 hour per level | no save

3rd-Level Cleric Spells

☐	**Banish Curse** Cleric 3	You channel divine power to end malign bindings, ending one curse on a creature; suppressing one curse on a magic item for 72 hours; or curing lycanthropy if it was contracted within the last month. Touch | Instant | no save
☐	**Dark Benediction** Cleric 3	You imbue the target with heightened senses and resistance to hostile influences. Touch | 1 hour | no save
☐	**Divine Radiance** Cleric 3	The spell deals 3d6 radiant damage. If the target is undead or a fiend, they must also succeed on a WIS Mind save or be repelled until the end of their next turn if they aren't killed by the damage. 90 feet | Instant | CON Tough (half damage on successful save), WIS Mind (turning, undead/fiends only)
☐	**Element Ward** Cleric 3	You grant protection against elemental forces. Choose one damage type when casting: fire, cold, lightning, or acid. Touch | 1 hour | no save
☐	**Grave Tongue** Cleric 3	The conversation appears as whispered words only you can hear. Touch | 10 minutes | WIS Mind (negates, unwilling spirits only)
☐	**Halo Host** Cleric 3	You surround the targets with rings of divine light that provide protection and guidance. Choose one effect when casting: either +1 AC for all targets, or +2 on WIS Mind saves for all targets. Touch | 30 minutes | no save

☐	**Hunter's Spirit** Cleric 3	You awaken primal hunting instincts within the target. Touch | 30 minutes | no save
☐	**Litany of Renewal** Cleric 3	Each target regains 2d8+2 hit points and is cured of one of the following conditions of their choice: poisoned, diseased, blinded, or deafened. **Hush: does nothing in the Torrenmark.** 60 feet | Instant | no save
☐	**Magnus Cleansing** Cleric 3	You automatically end any spell effect of 4th level or lower, or nullify a comparable lesser enchantment. 60 feet | Instant | no save
☐	**Meldstone** Cleric 3	You grant the targets the ability to merge with and move through solid stone, whether natural or worked. Touch | 5 minutes | no save
☐	**Nature's Severance** Cleric 3	You grant the targets the ability to move through natural hazards without harm. Touch | 2 hours | no save
☐	**Pillar of Faith** Cleric 3	Allies within the area gain +2 on all saves and +1 to attack rolls. 60 feet | 10 minutes | no save
☐	**Renew Life** Cleric 3	The target regains 3d8+3 hit points and is cured of minor ailments such as weakness, confusion, Weary, temporarily blinded, etc. **Hush: does nothing in the Torrenmark.** Touch | Instant | no save
☐	**Sacred Circle** Cleric 3	Undead and beings of the lower realms that attempt to cross the boundary must succeed on a WIS Mind save each time they enter or start their turn inside; on a failed save, they are repelled to the edge. **Hush: the +4 healing bonus does nothing in the Torrenmark.** Touch | 1 hour | WIS Mind (for hostile creatures)
☐	**Sunlight Bloom** Cleric 3	All creatures (including allies) in the area take 3d6+4 radiant damage and must succeed on an additional CON Tough save or be blinded for 1d4 turns (allies must save too if not given warning before casting). 120 feet | Instant | DEX Quick (half damage on successful save), CON Tough (blinded)
☐	**Tread Waves** Cleric 3	You bless the targets with the ability to walk on liquid surfaces as if they were solid ground. Touch | 30 minutes | no save
☐	**Verdant Tongue** Cleric 3	You gain the ability to communicate with plants and plant creatures through slow, deliberate exchange. Self | 30 minutes | no save

Maren Ashby

Human Cleric, Level 3 (can be played as a ninth pre-generated character; see Event 2)



STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+1)	12 (+1)	13 (+2)	12 (+1)	17 (+4)	14 (+2)

HP 24 | **AC** 11 (Dex +1) | **DR** 1 (leather) | **Save TN** 13

Saves: Quick +1 | Tough +3 (Resilient) | Mind +4

Weapons: Cudgel 1d4+1. The Staff of the Pale Thread (Appendix 1) 1d6+1.

Race ability: Resilient (+1 Tough saves)

Deity: The Lady of the Thread, the patron the midwives of Tarrow pray to. Maren knows the Synod's Ilvessa from its sermons and has never guessed that the two are the same goddess. (They are.)

Class abilities: Divine Ward, Blessing, Sacred Oath, Divine Call, Sanctify, Turn Undead (1 per day, 60 HP pool)

Spellcasting: Access to all 1st, 2nd and 3rd level cleric spells. 4 spells of each level per day.
Healing spells do not work in the Torrenmark. Only the staff mends.

Level-up bonuses: Healer's Insight, Mystic Sense, Last Testament

Gear: Leather armor, quilted plainswoman's coat, cudgel, midwife's satchel (healer's kit with 5 uses, needles, gut thread, herbs), the Staff of the Pale Thread wrapped in sacking (Corvin carries it for her on the road), 6 gp

> I am the midwife of Tarrow. I have pulled two hundred babies into the world with my own two hands and buried more mothers than I can bear to count, because when the bleeding will not stop, there is nothing to be done. My brother Corvin took the Synod's coin as a levy soldier on the eastern marches and did not come back. Then, a year later, he did, out of the Blackmire, fevered and half mad, with this staff in his arms. When I touched it to a burned child, the burn closed. The headman said it was witchcraft and that we had brought something out of the swamp that would destroy the village. Maybe he was right. We left. Corvin does not remember how he found it. He only says that a stone woman gave it to him, and that she was kind, and that she wants it back.



Open Dungeons RPG Character Sheet

Print and play tonight!

NAME	RACE	CLASS	HP	LEVEL	XP
Maren Ashby	Human	Cleric	**24**	3	4,000

STR	BONUS	DEX	BONUS	CON	BONUS	INT	BONUS	WIS	BONUS	CHA	BONUS
11	+1	12	+1	13	+2	12	+1	17	+4	14	+2
Strength		Dexterity		Constitution		Intelligence		Wisdom		Charisma	

AC	SHIELD TYPE	ARMOR TYPE	DR
11	None	Leather	**1**

AC = 10 + DEX bonus + shield (+2). Magic items may change it.

Armor gives DR, which reduces physical damage.

WEAPONS / EQUIPMENT / NOTES

✓	Item	Notes
✓	**Cudgel**	1d4+1
	Staff of the Pale Thread	1d6+1. See Appendix 1
✓	**Leather armor**	DR 1
✓	**Quilted plainswoman's coat**	
	Midwife's satchel	Healer's kit (5 uses), herbs

BACKGROUND & PERSONALITY

The midwife of Tarrow. When she touched her brother's glass staff to a burned child, the burn closed, and the village drove them out for it.

CLASS ABILITIES

Divine Ward (+DR 3, 1/day)
Blessing (+1, 1/day)
Sacred Oath
Divine Call (1/month)
Sanctify (1/day)
Turn Undead (1/day, 60 HP pool)

LEVEL-UP BONUSES

Healer's Insight
Mystic Sense
Last Testament

RACE ABILITY

Resilient

SAVE ROLLS

DEX / Quick	**13 / +1**
CON / Tough	**13 / +3**
WIS / Mind	**13 / +4**

Save TN / bonus. Roll 1d20 + bonus; meet or beat 13.

MONEY

PP	GP	SP	CP
	6		

APPEARANCE



DEFAULT CLASS ABILITIES	
Divine Ward (+DR 3, 1/day)	Once per day, call upon faith to shield yourself or an ally within sight. Gain +DR 2 against one attack. At 3rd level this becomes +DR 3. At 5th level, you may shield yourself or an ally within sight with +DR 5.
Blessing (+1, 1/day)	Once per day, grant +1 to a roll (attack, save, or chance) for yourself or an ally. At 4th level this becomes +2 to a roll. At 7th level this becomes +3 to a roll.
Sacred Oath	You may wield holy symbols as a focus. Certain items may empower your spells or grant unique abilities at the DN's discretion.
Divine Call (1/month)	Once per month, you may call for divine intervention when you are near death or in grave danger. There is a 10% chance your deity will appear personally, and a 25% chance they will send a messenger. These chances increase by 1% per level. Intervention ensures you survive the moment, and may secure your safety.
Sanctify (1/day)	Once per day, create a 10-foot aura around you for 1 minute. Allies within the aura gain +1 to saves, while enemies suffer -1 to saves. At 4th level, allies gain +2 to saves and enemies suffer -2 to saves, and the aura expands to 20 feet. At 6th level, you may center the aura on a point you can see, up to 100 feet away. Casting Time: Turn Range : 30 feet radius Duration : 2d6 rounds or destroyed Save Roll : Wis Mind Effect : Channel divine power that affects a Cleric's pool of undead HP. Undead turned or destroyed from line of sight. Turning Pool Pool = 20 × Cleric Level. You may choose to target specific undead instead of going lowest HP first, until your HP pool either runs out or too low to be effective. Undead whose HP exceeds your remaining pool are completely unaffected - no save, no partial effect. Saves by Undead Undead with HP ≤25: No Save Roll. Undead with HP ≥26: Wis Mind save to resist.
Turn Undead (1/day, 60 HP pool)	Channel divine power at undead within 30 feet, once per day at level 3. Your pool is 60 HP (20 x level): undead are affected lowest HP first until the pool runs out. Undead of 30 HP or less are destroyed; others flee for 2d6 rounds (or fight at -4 to hit if they cannot flee). Undead of 26 HP or more get a Wis Mind save. The pool refreshes after morning prayer.

SELECTED LEVEL-UP BONUSES	
Healer's Insight	Twice per day, you can instantly assess a creature's physical condition. You learn its approximate health, any obvious injuries, and whether it suffers from poison, disease, or exhaustion.
Mystic Sense	You feel when something within 30 feet nearby is undead, possessed or desecrated. Not what or where, but nearby. At 4th level 60 feet nearby.
Last Testament	Once per day, when you touch a corpse, you can experience their final minute of life through their eyes. See what killed them, hear their last words, know their last emotion. Witness their vision, sound and emotions. At 4th level you can awaken the corpse to answer 1 question. The reply is simple and truthful, though limited by the creature's knowledge in life. At 7th level you can ask 3 questions.

RACE ABILITY

Resilient	+1 Con Tough saves.

MAGIC ITEMS	
Staff of the Pale Thread *Appendix 1*	The only thing in the Torrenmark that heals by magic. See Appendix 1 for its full powers.

MAGIC / SPELL STACKING

No more than 2 magical effects (spells or items) apply to the same destination. A destination is a stat, ability, skill, action, resource, equipment, and so on.

If any single modifier is +3 or greater, only that greatest magic or spell modifier applies. No additional stacking occurs for that destination.

SPELL RECORD

Spells per day: 4 spells of each level (1st, 2nd and 3rd) per day. Each spell can be cast once per day. Healing spells do not work in the Torrenmark. Only the staff mends.

Cast	Spell	Effect
1st-Level Cleric Spells		
☐	**Aegis of Grace** Cleric 1	You surround the target with a protective aura of divine energy. The target gains a +1 bonus to Armor Class and +1 to all saving rolls. Touch | 1 hour | no save
☐	**Beast Link** Cleric 1	The bonded creature gains +1 to all saves, can understand your simple commands, and you can sense its general emotional state and location within 1 mile. Touch | 10 minutes | no save
☐	**Beast Speech** Cleric 1	You gain the ability to speak with and understand animals. You can communicate simple concepts, emotions, and requests. Self | 10 minutes | no save
☐	**Cleanse Sustenance** Cleric 1	You purify food removing all poisons, diseases, and spoilage. Touch | Instant | no save
☐	**Harm** Cleric 1	You channel negative energy to wither and decay the target. The spell deals 1d8 necrotic damage. 60 feet | Instant | CON Tough (half damage on successful save)
☐	**Haven of Peace** Cleric 1	Creatures within the area cannot attack or cast harmful spells, and hostile creatures cannot enter unless they succeed on a WIS Mind save. Touch | 1 hour | WIS Mind (entry only)
☐	**Mend Wound** Cleric 1	The target regains 1d8+2 hit points. The healing appears as a warm, golden glow that flows from your hands into the target's wounds. **Hush: does nothing in the Torrenmark.** Touch | Instant | no save
☐	**Oakstaff** Cleric 1	The weapon becomes magical, gains a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls, and you may channel nature-themed spells through the weapon; it counts as a magical implement. Touch | 10 minutes | no save
☐	**Radiant Censure** Cleric 1	The target automatically takes 1d6 radiant damage. If the target fails a WIS Mind save, it is stunned for their following turn. 30 feet | Instant | WIS Mind (negates stun)

☐	**Radiant Glow** Cleric 1	You cause an object to emit bright light in a 20-foot radius and dim light for an additional 20 feet. Touch | 30 minutes | no save
☐	**Sacred Favor** Cleric 1	You bestow divine favor upon the target, granting them good fortune in their endeavors. The target can reroll one failed ability check, attack roll, or saving roll during the spell's duration. Touch | 4 hours | no save
☐	**Sacred Wellspring** Cleric 1	Creatures that drink from the wellspring regain 1 hit point and are cured of minor ailments. **Hush: the hit point it restores does nothing in the Torrenmark.** Touch | 10 minutes | no save
☐	**Sanctified Ward** Cleric 1	You gain DR 2 against damage and +2 to any save (Quick, Tough, or Mind) made against effects originating from undead, fiends, or evil creatures. Self | 10 minutes | no save
☐	**Sense Malice** Cleric 1	You can sense the general direction of creatures with evil intent within 60 feet, though not their exact location or identity. Self | 10 minutes | no save
☐	**Sense Sight** Cleric 1	You open your spirit to the unseen forces of faith, perceiving the presence of divine or evil power within 60 feet. Self | 10 minutes | no save
☐	**Swift Step** Cleric 1	You bless the target with divine swiftness, allowing them to move with supernatural grace. Touch | 10 minutes | no save
☐	**Vitalfruit** Cleric 1	Each piece of vitalfruit provides a full day's nutrition and restores 1 hit point when consumed. **Hush: the 1 HP of healing does nothing in the Torrenmark; the temporary HP still works.** Touch | 8 hours, plus 1 hour per level | no save

2nd-Level Cleric Spells

☐	**Beast Snare** Cleric 2	You call upon nature to bind your target with roots, vines, and thorny branches that burst from the ground. 60 feet | 1 minute | DEX Quick (negates)
☐	**Bolster Spirit** Cleric 2	You infuse the target with divine courage and determination. The target gains +2 to WIS Mind saves, and +1 to attack rolls when fighting undead, fiends, or evil creatures. Touch | 10 minutes | no save
☐	**Circle of Honesty** Cleric 2	Creatures inside must answer questions posed to them, and their answers cannot contain deliberate lies. Touch | 1 minute | WIS Mind (success save negates compulsion to answer, creatures may remain silent)
☐	**Divine Omen** Cleric 2	You beseech your deity for guidance about a single, immediate course of action you or your companions are considering. Self | Instant | no save
☐	**Exile Strike** Cleric 2	The spell deals 2d8 radiant damage. 60 feet | Instant | CON Tough (half damage on successful save)
☐	**Gills of the Deep** Cleric 2	You bless the targets with the ability to breathe underwater as easily as air. Touch | 30 minutes | no save

☐	**Greenstride** Cleric 2	You bless the targets with nature's favor, allowing them to move through natural terrain without hindrance. Touch | 30 minutes | no save
☐	**Hushed Sanctum** Cleric 2	You consecrate an area with divine silence and concealment. Touch | 1 hour | no save
☐	**Manifest Weapon** Cleric 2	The weapon can be any hand or two-handed weapon you are proficient with, deals 1d8 damage, counts as magical, and reduces target DR by 2 for 1d4 turns. Self | 10 minutes | no save
☐	**Minor Renewal** Cleric 2	The target regains 2d6+2 hit points. **Hush: does nothing in the Torrenmark.** Touch | Instant | no save
☐	**Radiant Smite** Cleric 2	You call down a pillar of divine radiance that strikes your target from above. The spell deals 2d8 radiant damage. 60 feet | Instant | CON Tough (half damage on successful save)
☐	**Rest Eternal** Cleric 2	You consecrate a corpse, protecting it from decay and preventing it from being raised as undead. Touch | Until dispelled | no save
☐	**Silver Rays** Cleric 2	Creatures under invisibility, disguise, polymorph, or illusion effects must succeed on a WIS Mind save or have their true form revealed and invisibility/illusion suppressed until the end of your next turn. Self, 30-foot cone | Instant | WIS Mind (negates)
☐	**Wild Courier** Cleric 2	The creature gains human-level intelligence for the duration, can speak one language you know, and will faithfully deliver a message to a person or location you specify within 25 miles. Touch | 8 hours, plus 1 hour per level | no save

3rd-Level Cleric Spells

☐	**Banish Curse** Cleric 3	You channel divine power to end malign bindings, ending one curse on a creature; suppressing one curse on a magic item for 72 hours; or curing lycanthropy if it was contracted within the last month. Touch | Instant | no save
☐	**Dark Benediction** Cleric 3	You imbue the target with heightened senses and resistance to hostile influences. Touch | 1 hour | no save
☐	**Divine Radiance** Cleric 3	The spell deals 3d6 radiant damage. If the target is undead or a fiend, they must also succeed on a WIS Mind save or be repelled until the end of their next turn if they aren't killed by the damage. 90 feet | Instant | CON Tough (half damage on successful save), WIS Mind (turning, undead/fiends only)
☐	**Element Ward** Cleric 3	You grant protection against elemental forces. Choose one damage type when casting: fire, cold, lightning, or acid. Touch | 1 hour | no save
☐	**Grave Tongue** Cleric 3	The conversation appears as whispered words only you can hear. Touch | 10 minutes | WIS Mind (negates, unwilling spirits only)
☐	**Halo Host** Cleric 3	You surround the targets with rings of divine light that provide protection and guidance. Choose one effect when casting: either +1 AC for all targets, or +2 on WIS Mind saves for all targets. Touch | 30 minutes | no save

☐	**Hunter's Spirit** Cleric 3	You awaken primal hunting instincts within the target. Touch | 30 minutes | no save
☐	**Litany of Renewal** Cleric 3	Each target regains 2d8+2 hit points and is cured of one of the following conditions of their choice: poisoned, diseased, blinded, or deafened. **Hush: does nothing in the Torrenmark.** 60 feet | Instant | no save
☐	**Magnus Cleansing** Cleric 3	You automatically end any spell effect of 4th level or lower, or nullify a comparable lesser enchantment. 60 feet | Instant | no save
☐	**Meldstone** Cleric 3	You grant the targets the ability to merge with and move through solid stone, whether natural or worked. Touch | 5 minutes | no save
☐	**Nature's Severance** Cleric 3	You grant the targets the ability to move through natural hazards without harm. Touch | 2 hours | no save
☐	**Pillar of Faith** Cleric 3	Allies within the area gain +2 on all saves and +1 to attack rolls. 60 feet | 10 minutes | no save
☐	**Renew Life** Cleric 3	The target regains 3d8+3 hit points and is cured of minor ailments such as weakness, confusion, Weary, temporarily blinded, etc. **Hush: does nothing in the Torrenmark.** Touch | Instant | no save
☐	**Sacred Circle** Cleric 3	Undead and beings of the lower realms that attempt to cross the boundary must succeed on a WIS Mind save each time they enter or start their turn inside; on a failed save, they are repelled to the edge. **Hush: the +4 healing bonus does nothing in the Torrenmark.** Touch | 1 hour | WIS Mind (for hostile creatures)
☐	**Sunlight Bloom** Cleric 3	All creatures (including allies) in the area take 3d6+4 radiant damage and must succeed on an additional CON Tough save or be blinded for 1d4 turns (allies must save too if not given warning before casting). 120 feet | Instant | DEX Quick (half damage on successful save), CON Tough (blinded)
☐	**Tread Waves** Cleric 3	You bless the targets with the ability to walk on liquid surfaces as if they were solid ground. Touch | 30 minutes | no save
☐	**Verdant Tongue** Cleric 3	You gain the ability to communicate with plants and plant creatures through slow, deliberate exchange. Self | 30 minutes | no save

Appendix 8: Scaling Encounters

The fights in this book are written for six characters at level 3. A smaller, larger or lower-level party will find them much harder or much easier than intended. The charts in this appendix show how many foes to use for parties of 4 to 8 characters at level 2 or level 3, so each fight stays close to the difficulty it was written for.

The numbers come from the Encounter Formula in the Monster Trove: the foes' total HP is kept in proportion to the party's total HP. A level 2 character has about 16 HP on average and a level 3 character about 24, so a party of six at level 3 has about 144 HP, and every chart is measured against that.

What the Charts Are For

- **Setting up a fight before it begins.** Find the area, find the party's size and level, and use that many of the foe listed.
- **Keeping the difficulty steady.** A party of four level 2 characters faces about the same challenge as six level 3 characters would.
- **Rank-and-file foes only.** Soldiers, goblins, guards, ghosts, snakes and other groups of the same creature are the ones that change.

What the Charts Are Not For

- **Leaders and single foes.** Named leaders and lone creatures always appear exactly as written: Nyxara, Ysolt Varr, Durn Malloc, Muckle Tarr, every Ember Adept, and every named NPC. The charts say which one "stays" in each fight.
- **Stats.** Never change a foe's HP, AC, DR, attacks or saves. Change only how many there are.
- **Crowds the heroes are not meant to fight.** The Ember Host's units and reserves, sleeping garrisons, the Synod Wardens, the Thornwood Wardens, the Gatewatch guards, the Brennick militia and the Hobs of Under-Valcath are obstacles to avoid, sneak past or talk to. Their numbers are part of the story. Leave them as written.
- **Treasure and rewards.** Fewer foes do not mean less treasure. Leave every hoard, purse and item as written.
- **Judgment at the table.** The charts cannot see terrain, surprise, a sleeping guard or a clever plan. They are a starting point, and the DN has the final say.

How to Use the Charts

1. **Count the characters who will fight.** Count Maren and Corvin as level 3 characters in any fight they take part in, whether a player runs Maren or not.
2. **Choose the chart for the party's level.** Use the Level 2 chart or the Level 3 chart. If the party is mixed, use the shortcut in step 5.
3. **Find the fight and read across** to the column for the number of characters. Use that many of the foe named. Everything else in the area stays as written.
4. **For any fight not on the chart,** including random encounters, roll or read the written number of foes, multiply it by the share in the table after this list, and round to the nearest whole number. Never go below 1.
5. **For mixed levels or parties larger than 8,** add up the share yourself: each level 2 character is worth about 11% of the written foes, and each level 3 character about 17%. Three level 2 characters and two level 3 characters make 33% + 34% = 67%, so a fight written with 6 foes uses 4.
6. **Remember the Hush.** No magic heals in the Torrenmark, so damage carries from one fight to the next. If the heroes walk into a fight badly hurt, use the next column to the left.

Share of the written number of foes:

Characters	4	5	6	7	8
Level 2	45%	55%	65%	80%	90%
Level 3	65%	85%	100%	115%	135%

Level 2 Party

Fight	Foe that changes	As written	4	5	6	7	8
Event 1: The Road Home	Goblins (Muckle Tarr stays)	8	4	4	5	6	7
4. Stone Ferry Road	Ember-sworn Scouts	6	3	3	4	5	5
6. Tilsen Flats	Ember-sworn (Brother Cindrel stays)	6	3	3	4	5	5
22. Murmurwood Edge	Sentinels of the Murmur	6	3	3	4	5	5

Fight	Foe that changes	As written	4	5	6	7	8
38. The Runner	Ember-sworn Hunters (the Warg stays)	2	1	1	1	2	2
39. Hollin Bridge	Bridge Guards	4	2	2	3	3	4
43. Ember Lands	Goblins (Vosk and his 2 guards stays)	6	3	3	4	5	5
44d. The Fallen Ironbark	Ember-sworn (the 2 Ember Adepts stays)	4	2	2	3	3	4
44e. The Lattice Bridge	Ember-sworn Guards	2	1	1	1	2	2
44f. The Ember Shrine	Ember-sworn (Hadric Sull stays)	7	3	4	5	5	6
44h. The Tar Pool	Tarlings	5	2	3	3	4	4
46d. The West Chapel	Ember-sworn	3	1	2	2	2	3
47c. The Lift	Shock Troops	8	4	4	5	6	7
47c. The Lift	Overseers	2	1	1	1	2	2
57a. The Outer Treasury	Treasury Guards	2	1	1	1	2	2
59b. The Hall on Its Side	Cave Vipers	6	3	3	4	5	5
64c. North Armory	Ember-sworn	5	2	3	3	4	4
64h. The Mess Hall	Ember-sworn	3	1	2	2	2	3
65a. The Larder Office	Ember-sworn Veterans	3	1	2	2	2	3
66. The Court of Reception	Ember-sworn (the Gong-Keeper stays)	8	4	4	5	6	7
70c. The First Hall	Palace Guards	2	1	1	1	2	2

Level 3 Party

Fight	Foe that changes	As written	4	5	6	7	8
Event 1: The Road Home	Goblins (Muckle Tarr stays)	8	5	7	8	9	11
4. Stone Ferry Road	Ember-sworn Scouts	6	4	5	6	7	8
6. Tilsen Flats	Ember-sworn (Brother Cindrel stays)	6	4	5	6	7	8
22. Murmurwood Edge	Sentinels of the Murmur	6	4	5	6	7	8
38. The Runner	Ember-sworn Hunters (the Warg stays)	2	1	2	2	2	3
39. Hollin Bridge	Bridge Guards	4	3	3	4	5	5
43. Ember Lands	Goblins (Vosk and his 2 guards stays)	6	4	5	6	7	8
44d. The Fallen Ironbark	Ember-sworn (the 2 Ember Adepts stays)	4	3	3	4	5	5
44e. The Lattice Bridge	Ember-sworn Guards	2	1	2	2	2	3
44f. The Ember Shrine	Ember-sworn (Hadric Sull stays)	7	5	6	7	8	9
44h. The Tar Pool	Tarlings	5	3	4	5	6	7
46d. The West Chapel	Ember-sworn	3	2	3	3	4	4
47c. The Lift	Shock Troops	8	5	7	8	9	11
47c. The Lift	Overseers	2	1	2	2	2	3
57a. The Outer Treasury	Treasury Guards	2	1	2	2	2	3
59b. The Hall on Its Side	Cave Vipers	6	4	5	6	7	8
64c. North Armory	Ember-sworn	5	3	4	5	6	7
64h. The Mess Hall	Ember-sworn	3	2	3	3	4	4

Fight	Foe that changes	As written	4	5	6	7	8
65a. The Larder Office	Ember-sworn Veterans	3	2	3	3	4	4
66. The Court of Reception	Ember-sworn (the Gong-Keeper stays)	8	5	7	8	9	11
70c. The First Hall	Palace Guards	2	1	2	2	2	3

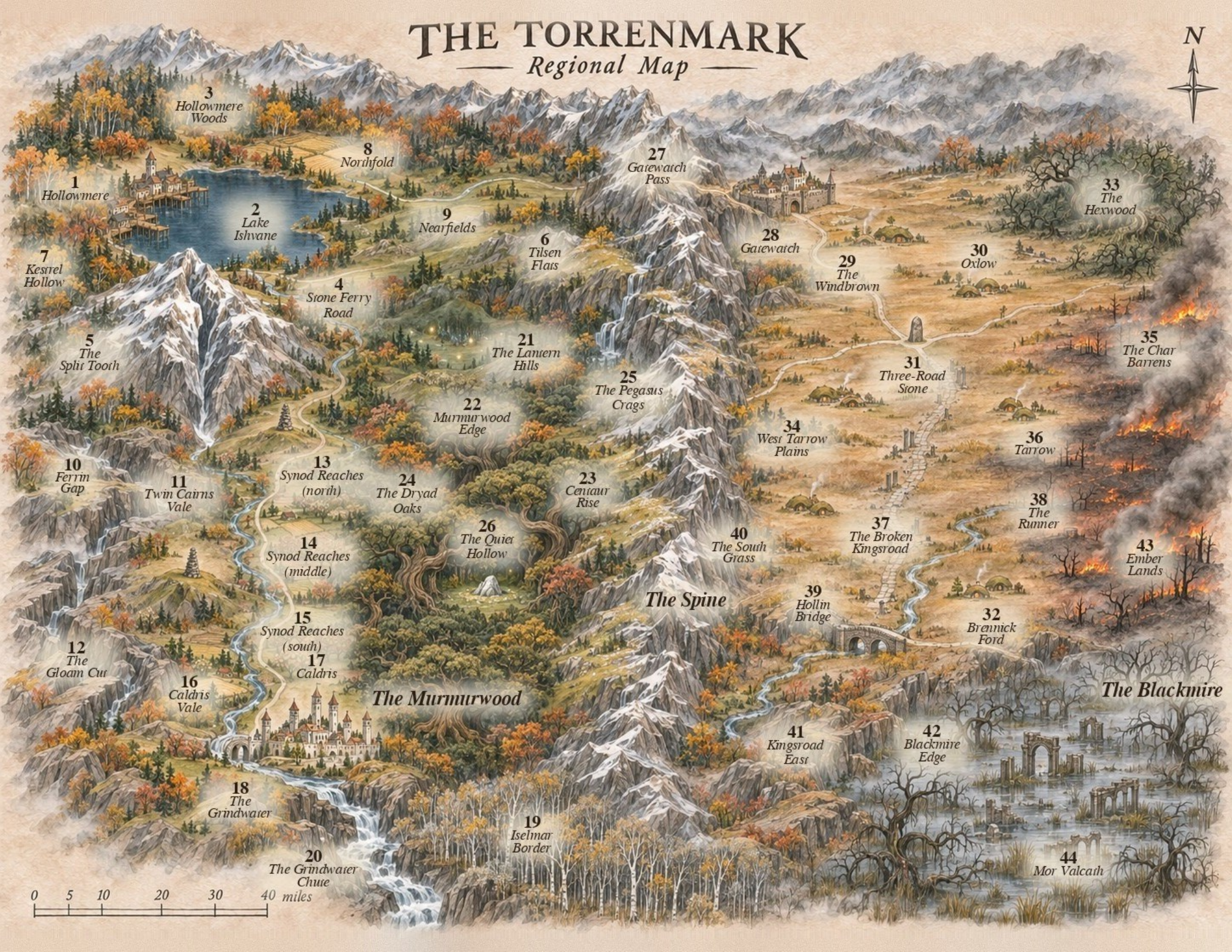
Single Foes

The charts cannot scale a single foe. Ysolt Varr and Durn Malloc are fair fights alone for any party in this book. Nyxara is not: her Acid Breath deals 4d6 damage in a 40-foot line, and a level 2 wizard has about 10 HP. In her lair (area 70k), the Staff of the Pale Thread ends the fight once the heroes hold the Leaves. The fight in the Plaza of the Well (area 44k) has no such way out. If the DN wants her gentler for a small or level 2 party, change how she behaves, not her stats.

Printable Maps

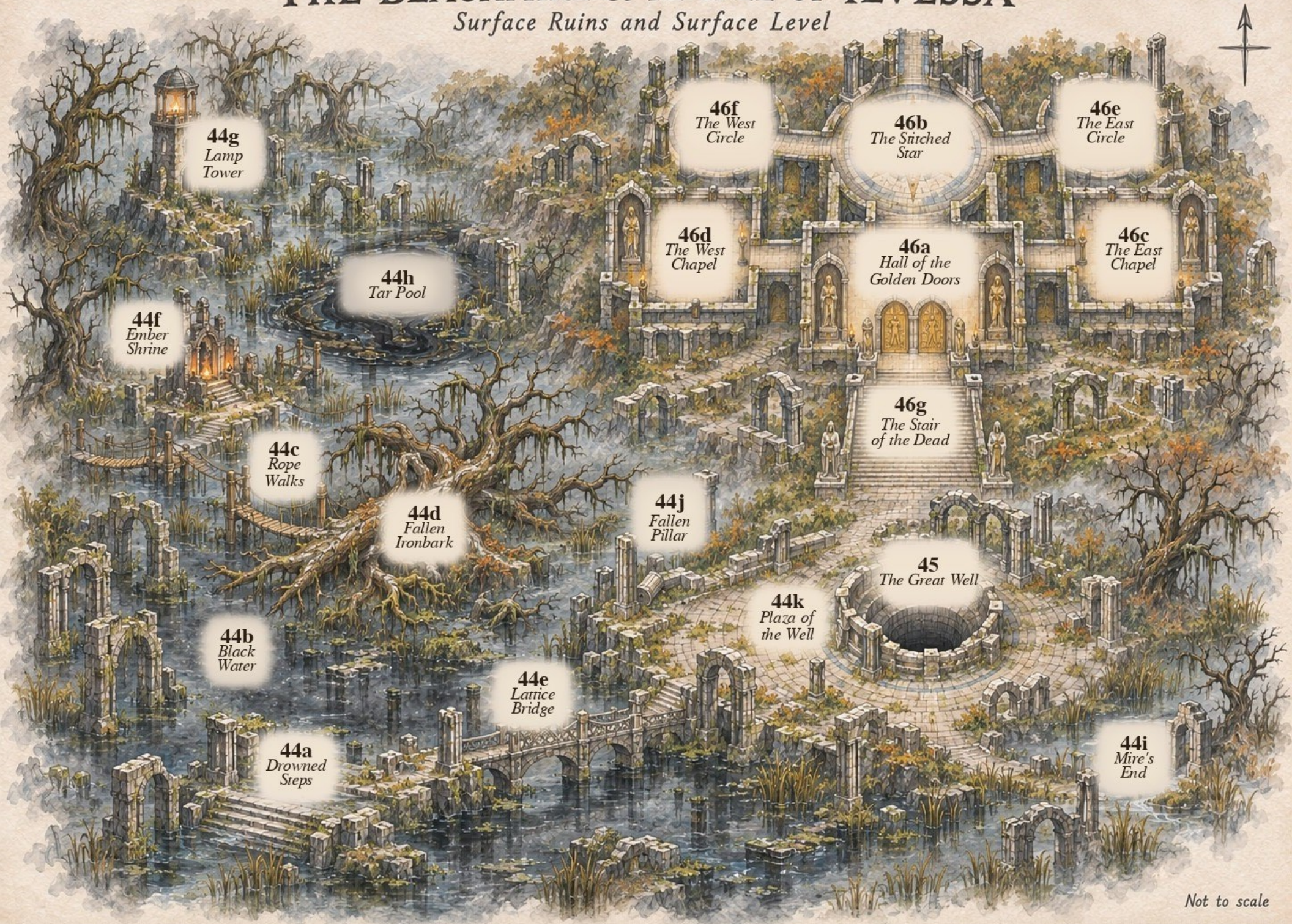
The next five pages repeat the maps from the front of this book, turned on their side to fit a standard 8.5 by 11 inch portrait page. Print them on ordinary Letter paper with no settings to change, then turn each sheet a quarter turn to read it at the table.

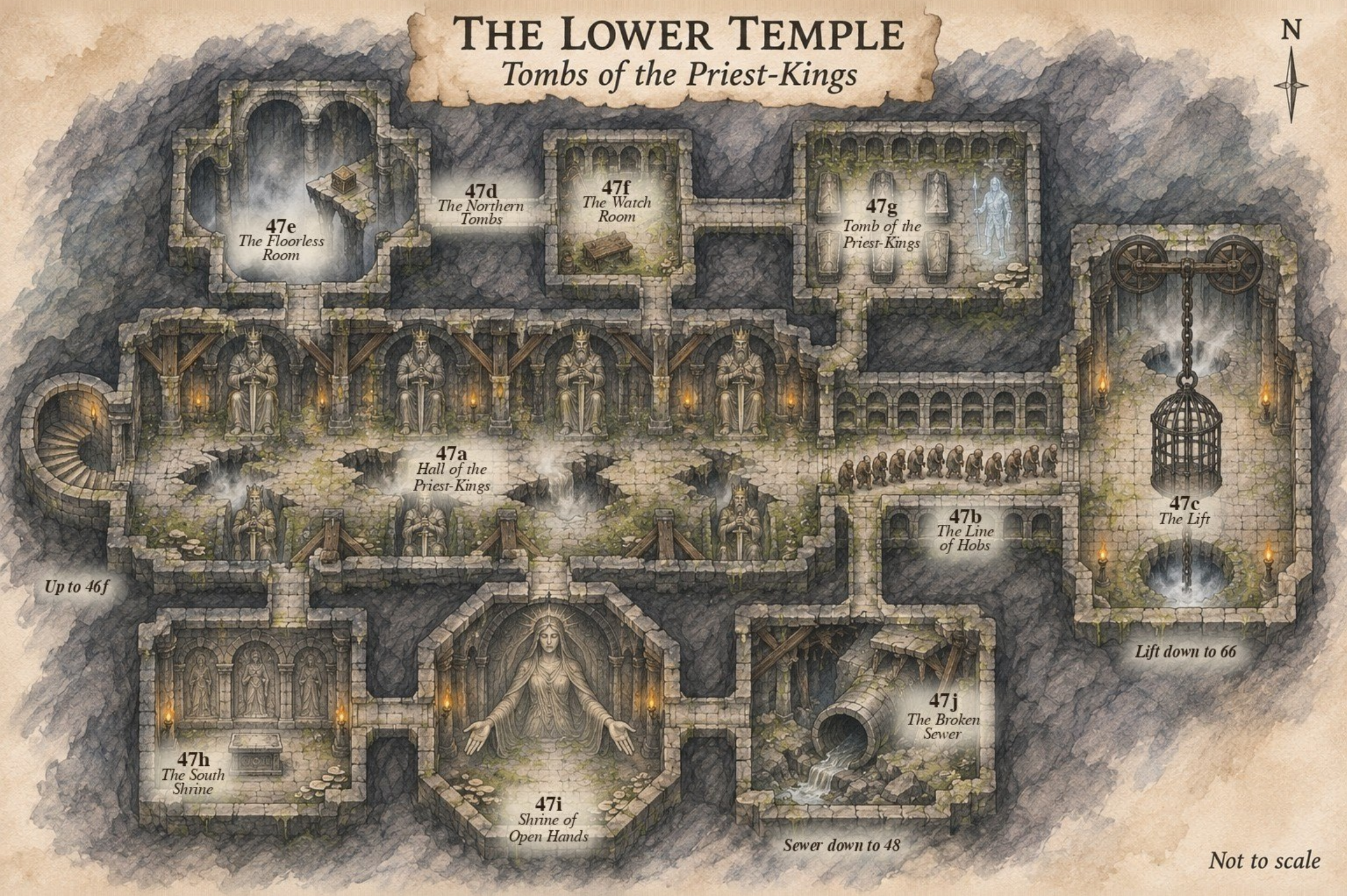


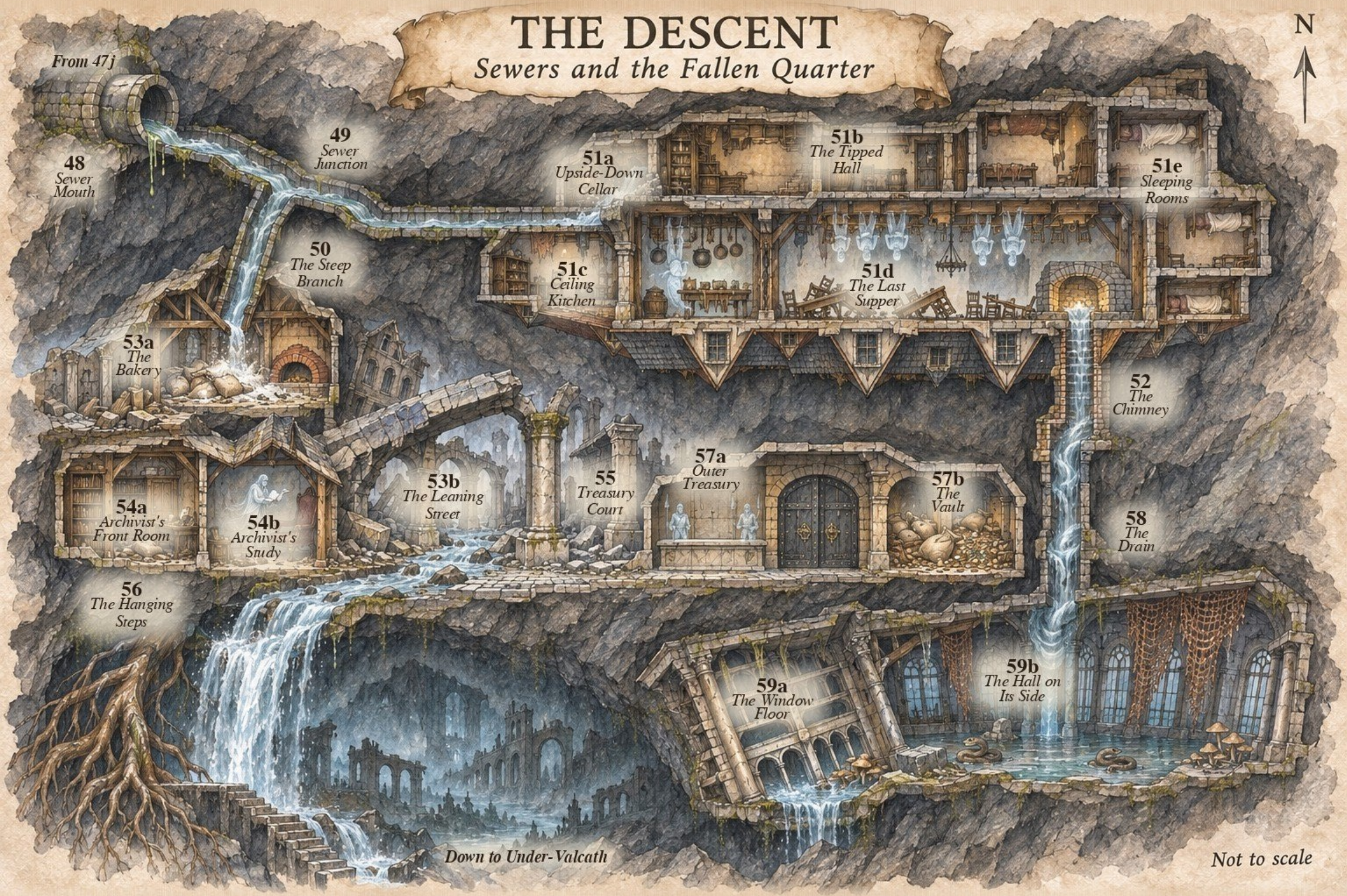

THE TORRENMARK
Regional Map
N
1 Hollowmere
2 Lake Ishvane
3 Hollowmere Woods
4 Stone Ferry Road
5 The Split Tooth
6 Tilsen Flats
7 Kestrel Hollow
8 Northfold
9 Nearfields
10 Ferrin Gap
11 Twin Cairns Vale
12 The Gloam Cut
13 Synod Reaches (north)
14 Synod Reaches (middle)
15 Synod Reaches (south)
16 Caldris Vale
17 Caldris
18 The Grindwater
19 Iselmar Border
20 The Grindwater Chute
21 The Lantern Hills
22 Murmurwood Edge
23 Centaur Rise
24 The Dryad Oaks
25 The Pegasus Crags
26 The Quiet Hollow
27 Gatewatch Pass
28 Gatewatch
29 The Windbrown
30 Oxlow
31 Three-Road Stone
32 Brennick Ford
33 The Hexwood
34 West Tarrow Plains
35 The Char Barrens
36 Tarrow
37 The Broken Kingsroad
38 The Runner
39 Hollin Bridge
40 The South Grass
41 Kingsroad East
42 Blackmire Edge
43 Ember Lands
44 Mor Valcath
The Spine
The Murmurwood
The Blackmire
0 5 10 20 30 40 miles

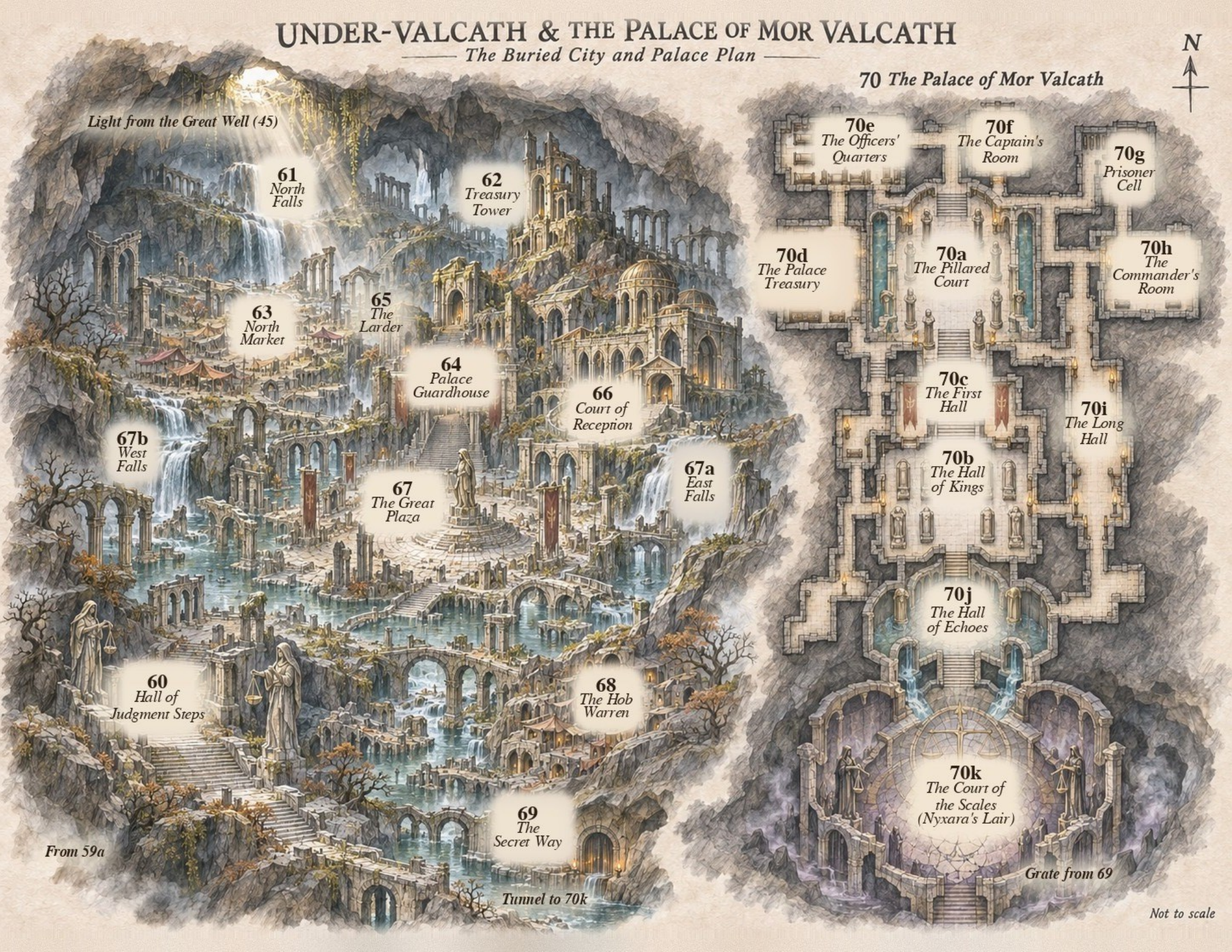
THE BLACKMIRE & TEMPLE OF ILVESSA

Surface Ruins and Surface Level




The Lower Temple
Tombs of the Priest-Kings
N
47e
The Floorless Room
47d
The Northern Tombs
47f
The Watch Room
47g
Tomb of the Priest-Kings
47a
Hall of the Priest-Kings
47b
The Line of Hobs
47c
The Lift
Up to 46f
47h
The South Shrine
47i
Shrine of Open Hands
47j
The Broken Sewer
Lift down to 66
Sewer down to 48
Not to scale


THE DESCENT
Sewers and the Fallen Quarter
N
From 47j
48
Sewer Mouth
49
Sewer Junction
50
The Steep Branch
51a
Upside-Down Cellar
51b
The Tipped Hall
51c
Ceiling Kitchen
51d
The Last Supper
51e
Sleeping Rooms
52
The Chimney
53a
The Bakery
53b
The Leaning Street
54a
Archivist's Front Room
54b
Archivist's Study
55
Treasury Court
56
The Hanging Steps
57a
Outer Treasury
57b
The Vault
58
The Drain
59a
The Window Floor
59b
The Hall on Its Side
Down to Under-Valcath
Not to scale


UNDER-VALCATH & THE PALACE OF MOR VALCATH
The Buried City and Palace Plan
N
70 The Palace of Mor Valcath
Light from the Great Well (45)
61 North Falls
62 Treasury Tower
63 North Market
65 The Larder
64 Palace Guardhouse
66 Court of Reception
67b West Falls
67 The Great Plaza
67a East Falls
60 Hall of Judgment Steps
68 The Hob Warren
69 The Secret Way
From 59a
Tunnel to 70k
70e The Officers' Quarters
70f The Captain's Room
70g Prisoner Cell
70d The Palace Treasury
70a The Pillared Court
70h The Commander's Room
70c The First Hall
70i The Long Hall
70b The Hall of Kings
70j The Hall of Echoes
70k The Court of the Scales (Nyxara's Lair)
Grate from 69
Not to scale