

COLD HARD CASH

A DUNGEONS & DRAGONS[®] ADVENTURE

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The rebels need cold hard cash and lots of it to fight the empire. Fortunately, the empire has to pay their troops and all it takes for a small group of people to take it from them. A bit of guile and stealth is required along with a requisite amount of sheer brute force. This adventure is designed for five 6th-level characters. This is a Classic-style event with characters provided and is a qualifier for the D&D Championship. The D&D Championship Series uses 5 player tables.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS[®] rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Andy Collins, Rob Heinsoo, and James Wyatt.

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By sanctioning and reporting this adventure you accomplish a couple of things. First, it is an official game, tracked under your play history. Second, players and DMs gain rewards for sanctioned RPGA play if they are members of the RPGA REWARDS program. Playing this adventure is worth four (4) points.

This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2008.

To learn more about RPGA event sanctioning and RPGA REWARDS, visit the RPGA website at www.rpga.com.

PREPARING FOR PLAY

In order to play this adventure, you'll need copies of the following D&D 4th Edition rulebooks: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. Any other rules referenced in this adventure will be noted in the **New Rules Items** section at the end of the adventure.

Throughout this adventure, text in bold italics provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text.

Along with this adventure, you'll find a RPGA Session Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this sheet to your Senior GM directly after play.

READING MONSTER STAT BLOCKS

Most of the information should be easy to understand, as it mirrors the information presented in the *Monster Manual*. Attacks have a letter next to them designating the type: M for melee, R for ranged, C for close, and A for area. A lower-case letter (used only in some melee and ranged attacks) denotes that the attack can be used as a basic attack.

IMPORTANT DM INFORMATION

Keep in mind the following and note that some of these rules only apply to the D&D Championship Series:

- **Unlike normal RPGA adventures, you are not empowered to make adjustments to the adventure. You may, however, make decisions about how the group interacts with the world of this adventure.** This is especially important and applicable outside of combat encounters. However, since this is a tournament, **DO NOT** adjust combat encounters for groups that are having too easy or too hard of a time in an adventure. It is important that you follow the tactics as written to provide a consistent experience between tables during the tournament.
- **While following the combats as outlined, try to give everyone a fun experience.** Try to feel out what the players like in a game, and attempt to give each of them the experience they're after when they play D&D. Give everyone a "chance to shine."
- **Be mindful of pacing, and keep the game session moving along appropriately.** Do not allow the round to stall due to your pacing. RPGA adventures are normally designed to be played within 3.5 - 4 hours; try to be very aware of running long or short but **DO NOT** adjust the pacing accordingly if the slowness or quickness or play is due to the actions of the players. The tournament scoring varies with how much of the adventure a team completes and as such you should **NOT** prompt a team to keep moving or give them hints the adventure does not tell you to give. Unlike a normal adventure where you might prompt the players to remain focused if they were to get off track, let the players dictate the speed of play. Because this is a tournament, it is possible that all of the characters may be dead before the end of the adventure. In this event, you may be forced to

end prematurely or if you desire, you may score the event and then continue play as if the PCs were all still alive. This is particularly appropriate if all of the characters die in the first hour of play.

- **Give the players appropriate hints so they can make informed choices about how to interact with their environment.** Players should always know when enemies are affected by conditions and are bloodied. When directed to by the adventure, you should be given clues about how to interact with the PCs surroundings so the players can tackle skill challenges, combats, and puzzles without getting too frustrated over lack of information. This helps to encourage immersion in the adventure and gives players “little victories” for figuring out a good choice from a clue. Since this is a tournament, however, you are not allowed to give any clues to the party unless specifically instructed to do so by the adventure.
- **The adventure happens all in one day.** Unless specifically told otherwise in the adventure, the adventure happens all in one day and teams MAY NOT take an extended rest without ending the portion of the event that is scored. If your team discusses the possibility of resting, you MUST inform them that doing so will automatically end their round. If they agree, stop and score the event. If time remains and your team desires, you may to continue play for fun.
- **Unexpected difficulties and damage.** If the PCs do something that requires you to invent a DC or assign some damage that is not covered by the adventure, use the chart on page 42 of the DMG.
- **Unlike the finals, the qualifying rounds are treated as a normal play experience.** Some judges may be used to taking 10 for the initiative or averaging damage; things that may be done in some tournaments. Do NOT do this for the qualifying rounds. Treat this adventure like any other beyond the exceptions listed above.

A great deal of good information on being a DM for a D&D game can be found in Chapters 1-2 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

MILESTONES

No matter if the characters succeed or fail in an encounter, they reach a milestone if it is the second combat or trap encounter they've had since the start of the adventure or their last extended rest. Make certain to mention this information to the players when applicable, as it gives each adventurer another action point and affects how some magic item powers are used.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The coastal kingdom of Aeris has a long history, with a benevolent but uninvolved monarchy ruling from Aerithmas, the City of Waves. This peaceful and stagnant rule came to a crashing end two years ago when an unknown empire from across the sea undertook a rapid and successful conquest.

Now the Empire has installed its own government in the capital city and has spread from there to the far reaches of Aeris. Only now has it managed to reach the edges of the kingdom and nearly all corners of Aeris have been subjugated. Now that peace reigns, the foreign invaders have begun extensive construction projects and despite their sometimes harsh rule, they are beginning to bring about an age of prosperity not seen under the languid monarchy of ages past.

For the rebellion to succeed against the empire, the rebels must have money and lots of it. The rebels have targeted the empire's army payroll, located in an underground bastion.

The payroll is staged at this heavily guarded underground bastion and from there it is escorted to the troops. Decoy payroll shipments are used to further safeguard the real payroll.

PLAYER'S INTRODUCTION

Once you are seated but before handing out characters, read the following to the players:

The dim flickering light from a few burning candles barely illuminates the musty and dingy root cellar. Around you are gathered other individuals, all listening to the words of the rebel leader Yovann as he outlines his proposal.

“For this rebellion to succeed, we need money and lots of it. The empire's army payroll provides us an opportunity to get this needed resource and all it takes is for someone to walk in and take it. Will you do this?”

You may now hand out the characters to the players. Once the start time is announced, begin play with Encounter 1.

DM's INTRODUCTION

Introduction. The PCs are asked by Yovann, a rebel leader, to steal the empire's army payroll.

Encounter 1. The PCs can ask Yovann questions and receive the assistance he can offer.

Encounter 2. The PCs gain entrance into the underground complex where the payroll is kept by defeating the human guards.

Encounter 3. The PCs make their way down to the vault where the payroll is located. On their way there, the PCs encounter a patrol of dwarves and their hell hound that they must defeat.

Encounter 4. The PCs ply their skills to avoid other patrols and bypass guards to finally reach the vault's entrance room.

Encounter 5. The PCs fight the vault's guardians.

Encounter 6. The PCs must retrieve the chests holding the payroll from a room filled with poisonous gas.

Encounter 7. The PCs deliver the payroll to the rebel leader Yovann at the village of Copper Hill.

ENCOUNTER 1: WHAT'S UP?

SETUP

Important NPCs: Yovann (rebel leader).

The PCs are meeting with the rebel leader Yovann in the cellar of a farmhouse located in the small village of Meadow Green. Yovann is asking them to steal the empire's payroll.

Proceed with character introductions. Once finished with them, continue with any questions the PCs may have.

Yovann can relate the following:

- Where is the payroll? *"It is located in an underground bastion near Allustria's provincial capital city of Aerithmas and is in a guarded vault. I have a sketch of the bastion's layout and map showing how to get there."* The PCs receive the sketch and map.
- Who or what guards it? *"The bastion has about 100 guards, mostly human. It is said that there are guardian creatures, but no one knows what they are."*
- How much or how big is the payroll? *"The payroll is around 30,000 gold, but it is primarily silver and copper. I do not know how many actual coins. Since it is common coinage, it is quite useful for the rebellion as it is hard to trace."*
- How do we get in? *"In a few days there is an empire holiday feast that takes place from sun down to sun up and any of the bastion's occupants who can, will be at it. Their guard should be down. I suggest posing as the empire's soldiers and gain entrance by bringing in supplies. Once inside stealthily make your way to the vault, retrieve the payroll and escape."*
- Is there any help you can give us? *"I can supply a wagon and a team of mules along with crates and barrels. Unfortunately, the crates and barrels do not have real supplies in them instead being filled with dirt and water. I have some uniforms and forged papers which should withstand anything but thorough scrutiny. Finally, I have a scroll describing a ritual to open doors that are locked, even magically locked ones."*
- How do we get out? *"You can use the wagon to take the payroll out. If that is not possible, you*

have to find some method at the bastion to bring the payroll out."

- Where do we take the payroll? *"Take it to the village of Copper Hill. I will be there waiting for you."*
- What is in it for me? *"A chance to strike against the evil empire and to help the rebellion. I can offer you no more and no less than that."*

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the PCs are finished asking questions, they receive the wagon, mules, 'supplies', uniforms and papers. They also receive the Knock ritual scroll.

The players should determine who the teamsters for the wagon are (at least one but no more than two PCs) and who are the guards. It is also helpful if one of them is selected as the leader and the one who is speaking for the group. If desired, the players can come up with aliases and cover stories for their PCs also.

Once the players are ready, continue with Encounter 2.

Treasure

The PCs gain one (1) Knock ritual scroll (PH 307).

ENCOUNTER 2: GETTING IN

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 5

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures:

5 Human Guards (G)

1 Lieutenant Edosard (L)

The players should place their PCs on the map anywhere they like outside of the actual entrance.

The PCs have traveled without incident to the underground bastion where the payroll is located.

As the adventurers enter the area, read:

With the sun sinking low in the west, your arrival at the bastion was met by three guards, all humans armed with halberds and armored in chainmail. They bar your way with the sharp spear-point of their halberds and brusquely shout, "Halt where you are. Who are you and what are you doing here?"

Behind them lies a pair of closed iron-bound oak doors with an arrow slit to each side.

At this point the PCs should present their papers and identify themselves as bringing supplies to the bastion. Assuming the PCs, likely the one chosen as leader, indicates this, the guards relax, lowering their weapons, but still warily watching.

Lieutenant Edosard reads the paperwork and questions the PC who appears to be the leader about their orders. The PC may attempt to prevent Edosard from discovering their true nature (they are rebels). Bluff skill checks opposed by his perception can prevent this.

Additionally, the guards inspect the wagon and the cargo to ensure it is not a rebel trick. Diplomacy skill checks opposed by their active Perception can prevent this. Intimidate skill checks opposed by their Will (+5 to defense due to being unfriendly) can also prevent this.

If the PCs fail to convince the guards nothing is amiss or arouse their suspicions, the guards order the PCs to disarm and they call for reinforcements. If the PCs fail to respond to this order, the guards attack.

If the PCs are successful in convincing the guards of their legitimacy (they are a supply wagon):

Two guards from inside the bastion open the iron-bound oak doors while the other three guards wave you forward. As the wagon pulled by the mules lurches

forward, one of the guards exclaims, "What is that? Dirt?"

A stream of dirt spills from a crack in a wooden barrel whose side has given way.

Edosard and the guards attack, suspecting wrongdoing.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Lanterns posted on nearby poles brightly illuminate the courtyard.

Arrow Slits: These arrow slits can be used to loose crossbow bolts at the PCs. They also provide superior cover (-5 attack).

Doors: The iron-bound oak doors are opened. If they are closed use the following: DC 20 to break down; AC/Reflex 5; Fortitude 10; HP 30.

TACTICS

The human guards prefer to attack in pairs: one using Powerful Strike to knock a PC down to grant the other one combat advantage for attacking a prone PC.

Once three of the human guards have fallen, the two remaining guards retreat and close the iron-bound oak doors behind them. One goes for reinforcements, while the other holds the doorway.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

If the PCs forgo the ruse and attack the human guards, 1 human guard inside goes for reinforcements. When the PCs break through the door, they face another group of 5 human guards plus any remaining guards from this encounter.

Once the human guards are defeated, the PCs may proceed inside the bastion. Continue with the next encounter.

TREASURE

If the PCs search the bodies of the humans they recover their equipment.

ENCOUNTER 2: GETTING IN STATISTICS

Lieutenant Edosard	Level 3 Elite Soldier (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid	XP 350
Initiative +5	Senses Perception +6
HP 86; Bloodied 43	
AC 20; Fortitude 18, Reflex 15, Will 14	
Speed 5	
Saving Throws +2	
Action Point 1	
m Halberd (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage and the target is marked.until the end of the human guard's next turn.	
M Powerful Strike (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Weapon	
Requires halberd reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 7 damage, and the target is knocked prone.	
R Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 15/30; +9 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage.	
Battle Lord Tactics	
The battle champion and its allies deal an extra 1d6 damage against enemies that the battle champion flanks.	
Battle Talent	
The battle champion can score critical hits on attacks rolls of natural 19 and 20.	
Inspiring Assault	
Whenever it scores a critical hit, the battle champion and allies within 5 squares of it regain 1 hit point.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common
Skills Streetwise +7	
Str 16 (+4)	Dex 14 (+3)
Con 15 (+3)	Int 10 (+1)
	Wis 11 (+1)
	Cha 12 (+2)
Equipment chainmail, halberd, crossbow with 20 bolts	

Human Guard	Level 3 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +5	Senses Perception +6
HP 47; Bloodied 23	
AC 18; Fortitude 16, Reflex 15, Will 14	
Speed 5	
m Halberd (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage and the target is marked.until the end of the human guard's next turn.	
M Powerful Strike (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Weapon	
Requires halberd reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 7 damage, and the target is knocked prone.	
R Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 15/30; +9 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common
Skills Streetwise +7	
Str 16 (+4)	Dex 14 (+3)
Con 15 (+3)	Int 10 (+1)
	Wis 11 (+1)
	Cha 12 (+2)
Equipment chainmail, halberd, crossbow with 20 bolts	

ENCOUNTER 2: GETTING IN MAP

RUINS OF THE WILD

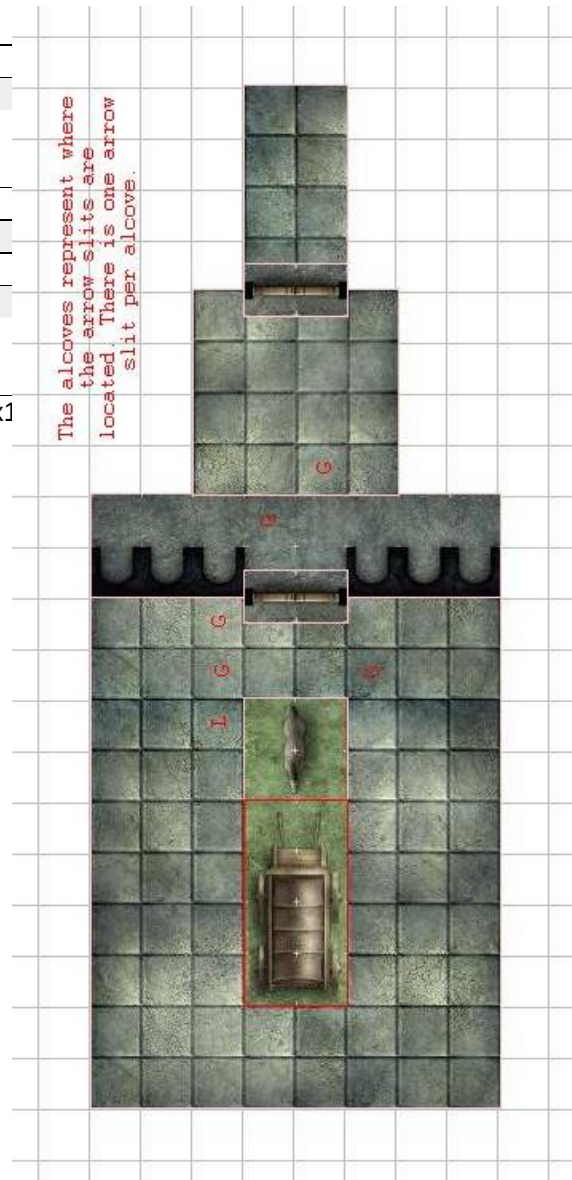
Horse / Road Bend	2x2
Covered Wagon / Field w/log	4x2

ARCANE CORRIDORS

Blood Symbol	4x4
Double Doors	2x1
Iron Doors / Floor	4x2
Tower Base / Floor	8x10

HIDDEN CRYPTS

Alcoves / Floor	8x2	x1
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ENCOUNTER 3: ONCE INSIDE

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 6

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures:

2 Dwarf Bolter (B)

3 Dwarf Hammerer (D)

1 Hell Hound (H)

After gaining entrance to the underground bastion, the PCs likely leave the wagon and mules behind in the courtyard and cover up the human guards' deaths. The sketch of the bastion shows them the way to the vault and the PCs likely proceed towards it. On their way there, the PCs encounter a patrol.

As the adventurers enter the area, read:

Following the sketch given you, you make your way through one of the bastion's little-used corridors, heading to the vault with the occasional sounds of revelry accompanying your travels.

As you approach a double door, you hear someone from behind you gruffly shout, "Halt!"

Five stern-faced dwarves, heavily armed and armored, stand behind you in the corridor with a sleek, muscular hound at the forefront.

One of the dwarves demands, "Drop yer' weapons and surrender. Now."

Unless the PCs have done something foolish (judge's call), they are not actively looking for the PCs.

Assuming the PCs do not comply with the order to drop their weapons, the dwarves and hell hound attack.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Lanterns are posted in each hall and room, providing bright illumination.

Doors: The doors are closed and locked. Use the following if the PCs try opening the doors: DC 20 to break down; AC/Reflex 5; Fortitude 10; HP 20.

TACTICS

The dwarf bolters loose their bolts from around corners while concentrating their fire on unarmored or lightly armored PCs. The dwarf hammerers form a line to keep PCs away from the bolters. Once a dwarf hammerer successfully uses their shield bash to knock a PC prone, the other hammerers attack that PC. The hell hound stays near the hammerers, attacking any PC as

commanded by the dwarves. If the PCs group up, the hell hound is commanded to use its fiery breath on them. If no command is given to the hell hound, it attacks the nearest PC.

When there are two dwarves left, one retreats to get help while the other holds the PCs off. The hell hound does not retreat and fights until it dies.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

If the PCs comply with the dwarf's order to drop their weapons and surrender, the PCs are led to a prison cell. Their possessions are taken and likely the adventure ends.

Once the PCs defeat the dwarves, the PCs may have reached a milestone provided this is the second combat they have undertaken. If so, award each PC an additional action point and then continue with encounter 3.

Treasure

If the PCs search the bodies of the dwarves they recover their equipment.

ENCOUNTER 3: ONCE INSIDE STATISTICS

Hell Hound	Level 7 Brute
Medium elemental beast (fire)	XP 300
Initiative +5	Senses Perception +11
HP 96; Bloodied 48	
AC 20; Fortitude 18, Reflex 17, Will 18	
Resist 20 fire	
Speed 7	
m Bite (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire	
+10 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 plus 1d8 fire damage.	
C Fiery Breath (standard; recharge 4-6) ♦ Fire	
Close blast 3; +9 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 3 fire damage.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages --
Str 14 (+5)	Dex 14 (+5)
Con 16 (+6)	Int 2 (-1)
	Cha 10 (+3)

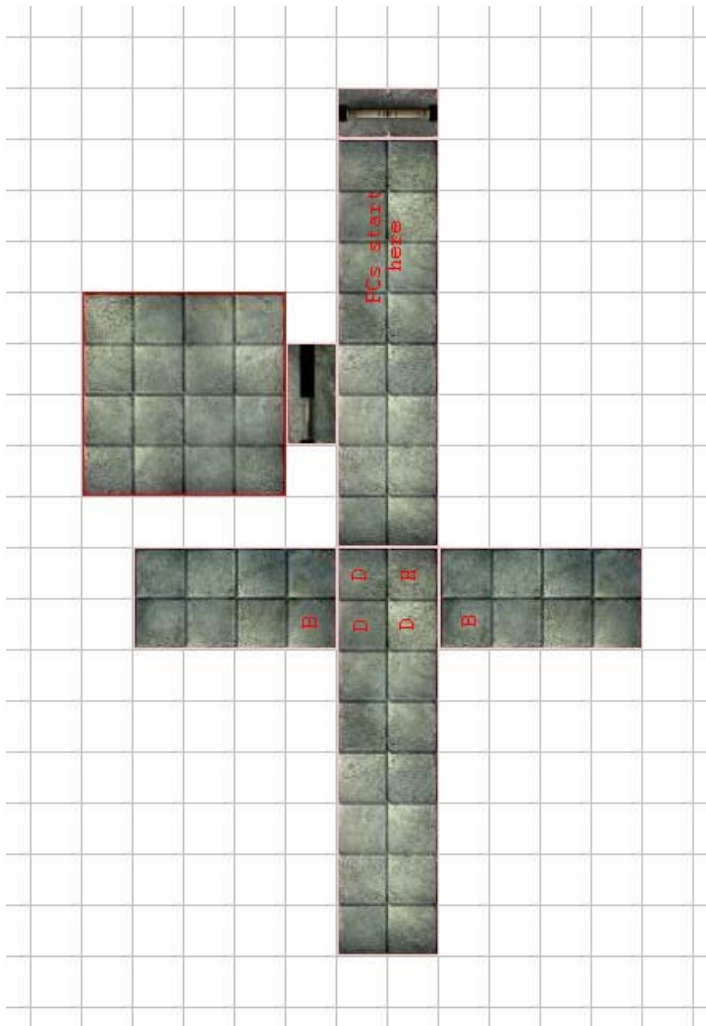
Dwarf Bolter	Level 4 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid	XP 175
Initiative +5	Senses Perception +8; low-light vision
HP 46; Bloodied 23	
AC 17; Fortitude 16, Reflex 16, Will 14	
Speed 5	
m Warhammer (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+8 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage	
R Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 15/30; +10 vs. AC; 1d8 +3 damage.	
Aimed Shot	
The dwarf bolter gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls and deals an extra 1d6 damage with ranged attacks against creatures that don't have cover.	
Stand Your Ground	
When an effect forces a dwarf to move through a pull, a push, or a slide, the dwarf moves 1 square less than the effect specifies. When an attack would knock the dwarf prone, the dwarf can roll a saving throw to avoid falling prone.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common, Dwarven
Skills Dungeoneering +10, Endurance +7	
Str 14 (+4)	Dex 16 (+5)
Con 16 (+5)	Int 11 (+2)
	Cha 10 (+2)
Equipment chainmail, warhammer, crossbow with 20 bolts	

Dwarf Hammerer	Level 5 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid	XP 200
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +4; low-light vision
HP 64; Bloodied 32	
AC 23; Fortitude 18, Reflex 15, Will 17	
Speed 5	
m Warhammer (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+11 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage	
M Shield Bash (minor; recharge 5-6)	
+9 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 3 damage, and the target is knocked prone or pushed 1 square (dwarf hammerer's choice).	
R Throwing Hammer (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 5/10; +10 vs. AC; 1d6 +3 damage.	
Stubborn (Immediate interrupt, when an enemy tries to push the dwarf hammerer or knock it prone; at-will)	
The hammerer makes a melee basic attack against the enemy.	
Stand Your Ground	
When an effect forces a dwarf to move through a pull, a push, a slide the dwarf moves 1 square less than the effect specifies. When an attack would knock the dwarf prone, the dwarf can roll a saving throw to avoid falling prone.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common, Dwarven
Skills Dungeoneering +11, Endurance +5	
Str 17 (+5)	Dex 10 (+2)
Con 16 (+5)	Int 11 (+2)
	Cha 12 (+3)
Equipment plate armor, heavy shield, warhammer, 3 throwing hammers	

ENCOUNTER 3: ONCE INSIDE MAP

ARCANE CORRIDORS

Blood Symbol / Floor	4x4	x1
Broken Doors / Floor	4x2	x1
Couches / Floor	8x2	x2
Double Doors / Floor	2x1	x1
Flame Blast / Floor	4x2	x1
Lightning / Floor	8x2	
Single Door / Floor	2x1	



ENCOUNTER 4: STEALTH & GUILF

SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 6, COMPLEXITY 3

SETUP

Number of Successes: 8

Number of Failures: 4

Primary Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Dungeoneering, Intimidate, Perception and Stealth.

Important NPCs: Human Guard

The PCs should attempt to get the vault by stealth and guile: avoiding guards and patrols; traveling via little used corridors and rooms; browbeating anyone who challenges their authority; or by convincing any who challenge them they are suppose to be here.

Despite that many of the bastion's occupants are celebrating the empire's holiday by feasting there are still guards and patrols. One slip up could bring you unwanted attention or even the entire garrison down on your heads.

There are five (5) scenes described, sufficient enough for the PCs to reach a success or failure for the skill challenge. Once the PCs have reached the number of successes or failures indicated, you can stop running the other scenes.

You should tell the players which skill can be used in each scene and in addition, let the players know if their PCs attack and slay the human guards, this draws unwanted attention and alerts the garrison. This means it counts as a failure.

Additional bonuses for the skill challenge:

- The PCs may opt to role-play the skill challenge. You may award a +2 for good role-playing and a -2 for poor role-playing.
- It is DC 21 for using a secondary skill to assist the primary skill. It is your judgment call whether the secondary skill can be used or not.

SKILL CHALLENGE

SCENE 1

The guard's face flushes red with anger, "You there. What are you doing here? You shouldn't be here. What is your explanation for this?"

The PCs are confronted by a lone human guard who demands to know who they are and what they are doing here. He is angry as he is not at the feast and is instead on duty.

Bluff (DC 17): You convince the guard that you are supposed to be here by spinning a believable lie. PCs can cooperate to aid in the skill check.

Diplomacy (DC 17): You calm the guard down, placating him. PCs can cooperate to aid in the skill check.

Intimidate (DC 17): You verbally confront the guard, questioning his authority to question you. PCs can cooperate to aid in the skill check.

SCENE 2

The bored guard at the door you must go through, eyes you with suspicion, "I am not to let anyone through the door without proper orders."

The PCs are confronted by a lone human guard who is ordered to not allow anyone through a door without the proper orders.

Bluff (DC 17): You persuade the guard that you are someone important and that you have the authority to order them to let you pass. PCs can cooperate to aid in the skill check.

Intimidate (DC 17): You verbally confront the guard, bullying him into submission and into letting you pass. PCs can cooperate to aid in the skill check.

SCENE 3

With the sounds of a patrol heading your way, you find yourself in a room with three doors exiting it. With seconds to spare, you have to determine which door the patrol is going to use, which door they are checking to see if it is locked and which door they are going to ignore.

The PCs have to choose the correct door, thus avoiding the patrol's unwanted attention.

Dungeoneering (DC 17): Your knowledge of dungeons comes in handy as you know how they are guarded and patrolled, thus allowing you to pick the right door. The PCs cannot cooperate to aid in the skill check.

Perception (DC 17): You can hear which hall the patrol is coming from and by looking at the doors and floor, you determine the wear made by hands and feet, thus allowing you to pick the right door. The PCs cannot cooperate to aid in the skill check.

SCENE 4

The young human male has barely any whiskers on his face and his voice is still high-pitched, "But sir, I am not allowed to let anyone to pass without today's password. If you don't have today's password, I can't let you pass. If you give me the correct password you can pass."

The PCs are confronted by a lone human guard who is young and inexperienced.

Bluff (DC 17): You persuade the guard that you do not have today's password because the new day's password has been issued and the guard does not have the correct password. PCs can cooperate to aid in the skill check.

Intimidate (DC 17): By preying on his inexperience and youth, you browbeat him into letting you pass. PCs can cooperate to aid in the skill check.

SCENE 5

The intersection through which you must pass is in plain view of the guards. Fortunately for you, they seem distracted, as they are busy telling each other jokes.

The PCs must get past the guards.

Bluff (DC 17): You distract the guards somehow, allowing you to pass by unobserved. Perhaps a noise they go to investigate or some other ploy. PCs can cooperate to aid in the skill check.

Intimidate (DC 17): You confront the guards, chastising them for being distracted and not paying attention to anything while they are on duty. PCs can cooperate to aid in the skill check.

Stealth (DC 17): The PCs must use the shadows and timing to pass through the intersection to avoid the guard's notice.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Success: The PCs make it to the vault entrance with little or no trouble.

Failure: The PCs make it to the vault entrance with a great deal of trouble. Each PC uses two (2) healing surges. This simulates an unavoidable combat that took

place, with a PC using one healing surge during the combat and a second healing surge after the combat.

ENCOUNTER 4: STEALTH & GUILF STATISTICS

Human Guard		Level 3 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid		XP 150
Initiative +5	Senses Perception +6	
HP 47; Bloodied 23		
AC 18; Fortitude 16, Reflex 15, Will 14		
Speed 5		
m Halberd (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
Reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage and the target is Marked until the end of the human guard's next turn.		
M Powerful Strike (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Weapon		
Requires halberd reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 7 damage, and the target is knocked prone.		
R Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
Ranged 15/30; +9 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage.		
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common	
Skills Streetwise +7		
Str 16 (+4)	Dex 14 (+3)	Wis 11 (+1)
Con 15 (+3)	Int 10 (+1)	Cha 12 (+2)
Equipment chainmail, halberd, crossbow with 20 bolts		

ENCOUNTER 5: JUST OUTSIDE

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 7

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures:

1 Venom-Eye Basilisk (B)

4 Grimlock Minions (G)

After traversing the underground bastion, the PCs arrive at the vault's entrance room.

As the adventurers enter the area, read:

Following the passageway leads you to the vault's entrance lit by lanterns. Across the room is a large obviously locked iron door. Tucked into each of the four corners is a small statue of a dragon's head.

The grimlocks serve as the basilisk keepers. The basilisk does not attack them, and responds to simple commands, such as attacking the PCs as they enter the room.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Lanterns brightly illuminate the room.

Dragon's Head Statue: Use the following statistics if the PCs damage the statue: small size; DC 20 to break; AC 8; Reflex 8; Fortitude 8; 20 HP.

Illusionary Wall: From inside the vault entrance, this appears to be an ordinary stone masonry walls (blocks line-of-sight). From the side room, where the basilisk and grimlocks are located, the walls are transparent (does not block line-of-sight). Regardless, the walls do not block line-of-effect. This means the stone-eye basilisk can use its petrifying gaze through it. A DC 21 Insight checks reveals the wall's true nature.

Vault Door: The large iron door is closed and locked. In addition it is arcane locked (*PH 301*). Use the following: DC 21 Thievery to open lock; DC 26 Thievery to open Arcane Lock; DC 25 to break down; AC/Reflex 4; Fortitude 12; HP 120.

TACTICS

The stone-eye basilisk attacks from behind the illusionary wall using its petrifying gaze. The basilisks and the grimlocks remain quiet as to not give away their location.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the PCs defeat the basilisks, the PCs should come up with a method to open the vault door. These methods include: the Knock ritual scroll; the wizard's ritual Knock; break down the vault's door; and using Thievery skill checks to unlock it.

Once the vault door is opened, continue with encounter 6.

TREASURE

The PCs can recover the grimlocks' equipment.

ENCOUNTER 5: JUST OUTSIDE STATISTICS

Stone-Eye Basilisk	Level 12 Soldier
Large natural beast (reptile)	XP 700
Initiative +9	Senses Perception +13
Baleful Gaze Any creature within 5 squares of the stone-eye basilisk that attacks the basilisk is slowed until the end of its next turn. This effect doesn't rely on the target seeing the basilisk.	
HP 126; Bloodied 63	
AC 28; Fortitude 26, Reflex 22, Will 22	
Immune petrification	
Speed 4	
m Bite (standard; at-will)	
+17 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5.	
C Petrifying Gaze (standard; recharge 4-6) ♦ Gaze	
Close blast 3; +17 vs. Fortitude; the target is slowed (save ends). <i>First failed Save:</i> The target is immobilized (save ends). <i>Second Failed Save:</i> The target is petrified (no save).	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages --
Skills Stealth +12	
Str 20 (+11)	Dex 12 (+7) Wis 14 (+8)
Con 22 (+12)	Int 2 (+2) Cha 8 (+5)

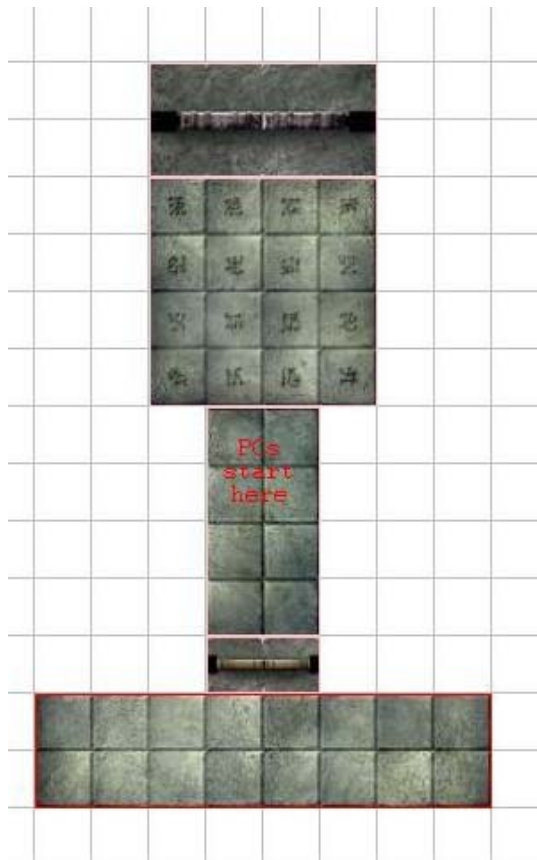
Grimlock Minion	Level 14 Minion
Medium natural humanoid (blind)	XP 250
Initiative +6	Senses Perception +7; blindsight 10
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion	
Immune gaze	
AC 24; Fortitude 24, Reflex 23, Will 23	
Speed 6	
m Greataxe (standard; at-will) Weapon	
+17 vs. AC; 7 damage (9 damage against bloodied target).	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Deep Speech
Str 17 (+11)	Dex 12 (+9) Wis 15 (+10)
Con 14 (+10)	Int 7 (+6) Cha 9 (+7)
Equipment greataxe	

ENCOUNTER 5: JUST OUTSIDE MAP

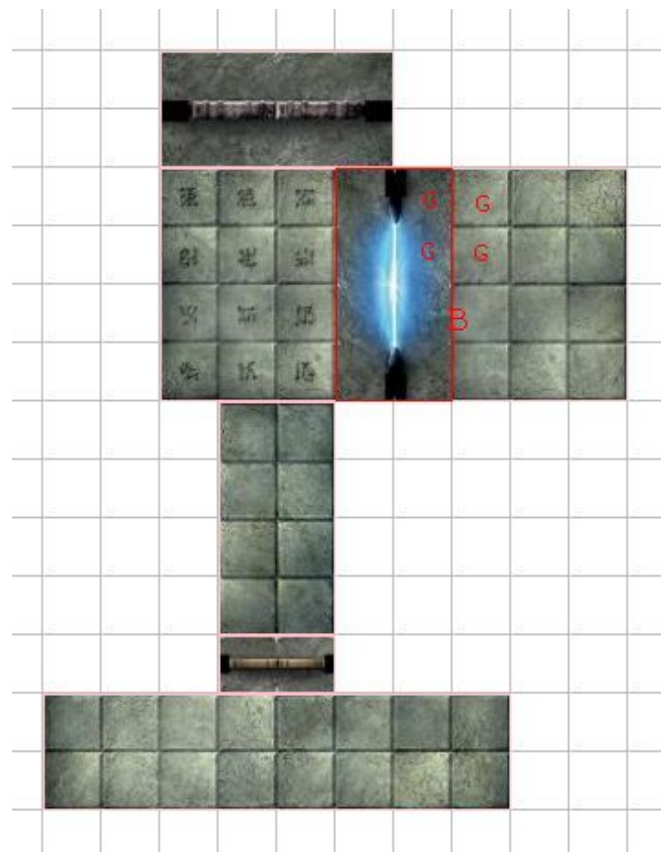
ARCANE CORRIDORS

Blood Mist / Floor	4x4	x1
Double Doors / Floor	2x1	x1
Fire Vortex / Runes	4x4	x2
Flame Blast / Floor	4x2	x1
Iron Doors / Floor	4x2	x1
Lightning / Floor	8x2	
Magic Wall / Floor	4x2	

Starting map without illusionary walls



With illusionary walls



ENCOUNTER 6: VAULT

SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 6, COMPLEXITY 1

SETUP

Number of Successes: 4

Number of Failures: 2

Primary Skills: Dungeoneering, Endurance, First Aid, Healing, Perception, Thievery.

The sunken area fills with an invisible, heavier-than-air poisonous gas. It is treated as a trap. There are hidden vents that if opened, clear the gas from the room. The mechanism to do so is hidden in the poison gas filled area.

With the vault door opened, the contents are revealed. In front of you there is a small landing on which sits an empty handcart. There is a set of stairs leading thirty feet down to a sunken area containing thirty neatly stacked wooden and iron-bound chests. The chests are all marked with numbers and letters.

Assuming the PCs go down into the sunken area to retrieve the payroll, they trigger the poison gas trap.

Each chest weighs 50 lbs. Use the following: AC 8; Reflex 8; Fortitude 8; 15 HP.

If a player attempts to use a secondary skill, you must adjudicate if it can be used or not. If it can be used, it is a DC 21 skill check. A success grants a +2 bonus to the primary skill check.

Please note that only the skill Thievery is used to determine the success or failure of this skill challenge. The other skills assist in some way.

SKILL CHALLENGE

Dungeoneering (DC 21): Using this skill does not count as a success or failure for the skill challenge. A PC may make a skill check to determine how this poison gas trap works. A success provides a +2 bonus to Perception and a failure provides no penalty or bonus.

Endurance (DC 21): Using this skill does not count as a success or failure for the skill challenge. Every PC must make an Endurance check at the beginning of each turn as a free action to resist the cumulative and debilitating effects of the poisonous gas for as long as they remain in one of the trap's squares. A success provides a +2 bonus to the PC's Fortitude for the next attack the trap makes

and a failed check provides a -2 penalty to the PC's Fortitude for the next attack the trap makes.

Healing (DC 21): Using this skill does not count as a success or failure for the skill challenge. A PC may take a standard action to tend to a PC that has succumbed to the poison gas' effects (is slowed or immobilized). A success provides the afflicted PC a +2 bonus to a saving throw versus the poison gas at the end of their next turn and a failure provides no penalty or bonus.

Perception (DC 21): Using this skill does not count as a success or failure for the skill challenge. A PC may take a standard action to search for the hidden control panel to open the air vents to clear the gas out of the room.

Thievery (DC 21): A PC must first make a successful Perception check to find the mechanism that opens the vents to clear the room of the poison gas. Once found, a PC can work to operate the mechanism.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Success: The PCs clear the air of the poisonous gas.

Failure: The controls fuse and the PCs cannot clear the air of the poisonous gas.

The encounter ends when the PCs retrieve all thirty chests; if all the PCs are unconscious from the poisonous gas; or if the PCs decide to quit retrieving chests.

Continue with encounter 7.

ENCOUNTER 6: VAULT STATISTICS

Poisonous Gas Trap	Level 6 Obstacle XP 1250
Trap: Sixteen squares in the room are filled with a heavier-than-air poisonous gas that attacks when triggered.	
Perception	
♦DC 21: The character notices the poisonous gas.	
Trigger	
The trap is triggered when a creature enters one of the sixteen Squares in the room.	
Attack	
Opportunity Action	Melee
Target: Creature in one of the sixteen squares triggering the trap.	
Attack: +8 vs. Fortitude; slowed (save ends).	
First Failed Save: Target is immobilized instead of slowed (save ends).	
Second Failed Save: Target is unconscious for 1d4 hours instead of immobilized (no save).	
Countermeasures	
♦See the skill challenge above.	

ENCOUNTER 7: GET AWAY

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 8

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures:

3 Griffins (G)

3 Human Mages (Devastators) (G)

After retrieving the chests containing the payroll, the PCs manage to get it and themselves out of the underground bastion. It is assumed the PCs use the wagon they were given to carry the payroll. The PCs have taken an extended rest before arriving at this encounter.

As the adventurers enter the area, read:

With the underground bastion two days behind you, and no sign of pursuit, you manage to rest up from your exertions. The sun is shining and there is only a few clouds in the sky today. This made it easier to spot the flying creatures hurtling down towards you.

Having determined the location of the payroll through divinations, the empire has sent mages riding on flying mounts to retrieve it.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Trees: These 30 foot tall trees can be used for cover and concealment.

TACTICS

The human mages are mounted on the griffins. They start with *thunder burst* followed by *dancing lightning*. The griffins use *thunder charge* when attacking, but do not receive two attacks because the riders are not 7th level or higher.

See DMG 46 for rules on mounted combat and DMG 47 for rules on flying.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the PCs defeat the griffins and the human mages, continue with encounter 8.

TREASURE

The PCs can recover the human mages' equipment.

ENCOUNTER 7: GETAWAY STATISTICS

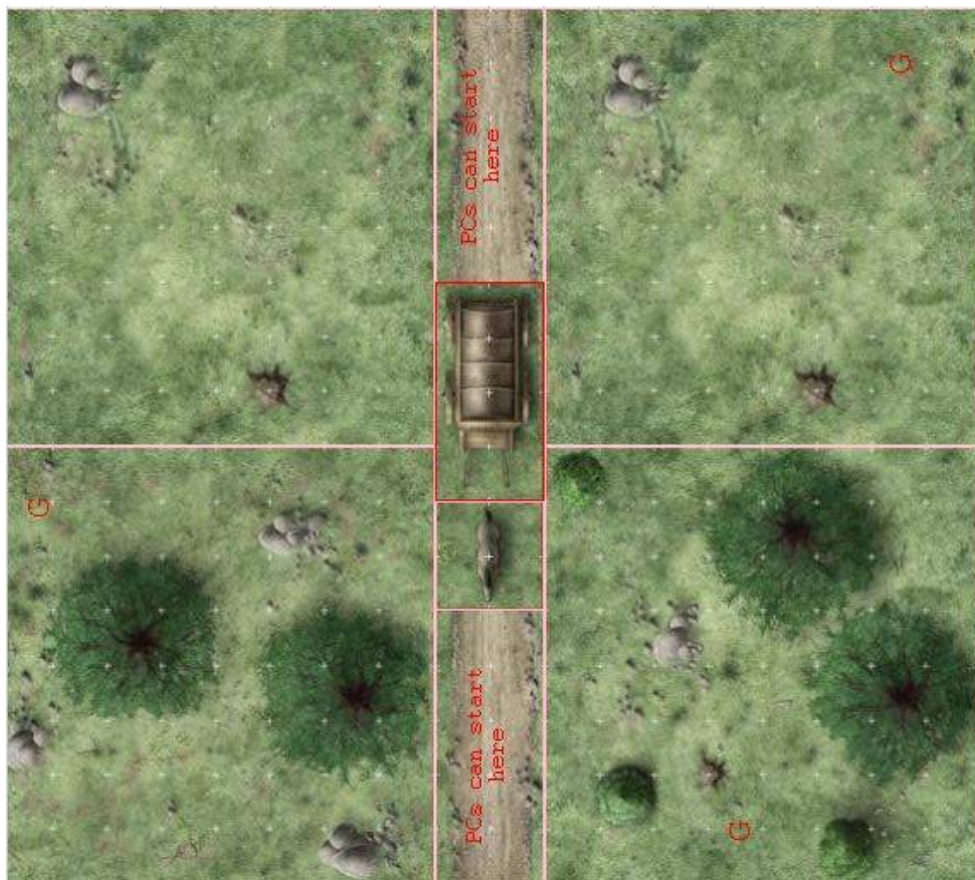
Griffion	Level 7 Brute	
Large natural beast (mount)	XP 300	
Initiative +6	Senses Perception +9	
HP 98; Bloodied 49; see also <i>blood frenzy</i>		
AC 18; Fortitude 19, Reflex 15, Will 14; see also <i>blood frenzy</i>		
Immune fear (only while bloodied)		
Speed 6, fly 10 overland flight 15		
m Claws (standard; at-will)		
+10 vs. AC; 2d6 + 7 damage		
M Rabid Charger (while mounted by a friendly rider of 7 th level or higher; at will) ♦ Mount		
When it charges, the griffion makes two claw attacks in addition to its rider's charge attack.		
Blood Frenzy (only while bloodied)		
The griffion can take an extra move action each turn. It also gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls and takes a -2 penalty to all defenses.		
Thunder Charge (standard, usable only while flying; at-will)		
When a griffion charges, it gains a +4 bonus to its attack roll instead of the normal +1 bonus.		
Alignment Unaligned	Languages --	
Str 20 (+8)	Dex 16 (+6)	Wis 12 (+4)
Con 18 (+7)	Int 2 (-1)	Cha 6 (+1)

Human Mage (Devastator)	Level 4 Elite Artillery	
Medium natural humanoid	XP 350	
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +5	
HP 78; Bloodied 39		
AC 19 Fortitude 13 Reflex 16, Will 15		
Speed 6		
Saving Throws +2		
Action Point 1		
m Quarterstaff (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+4 vs. AC; 1d8 damage		
r Magic Missile (standard; at will) ♦ Force		
Ranged 20; +7 Reflex; 2d4 + 4 force damage.		
R Dancing Lightning (standard; encounter) ♦ Lightning		
The mage makes a separate attack against 3 different targets: ranged 10; +7 Reflex; 1d6 + 4 lightning damage.		
A Thunder Burst (standard; encounter) ♦ Thunder		
Area burst 1 within 10; +7 Fortitude; 1d8 + 4 thunder damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).		
Spell Shaper		
Whenever the devastator uses a close burst or an area attack power, it can choose up to two allies in the power's area of effect. Those allies are not targeted by the power.		
Endless Power (minor; recharge 6)		
The devastator regains the uses of an expended encounter power.		
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common	
Skills Arcana +11		
Str 10 (+2)	Dex 14 (+4)	Wis 17 (+5)
Con 12 (+3)	Int 18 (+6)	Cha 12 (+3)
Equipment robes, quarterstaff, wand		

ENCOUNTER 7: GETAWAY MAP

ARCANE CORRIDORS

Ruins of the Wild	8x8	x1
Road / Crevasse	8x2	x1
Cabin / Field w/Trees	8x8	x2
Ruined Tower / Field w/Trees	8x8	x1
Horse / Road Bend	2x2	x1
Covered Wagon / Field w/Log	4x2	



ENCOUNTER 8: DELIVERY

SETUP

Important NPCs: Orbisan (rebel leader).

This conclusion assumes the PCs successfully make their escape from the underground bastion and travel to the village of Copper Hill to deliver the payroll to the rebel leader Yovann. The DM should adjust accordingly if that is not the case.

Though fraught with danger and intrigue, you escape from the underground bastion and make your way to village of Copper Hill. The rebel leader Yovann is already there, waiting for you.

He looks to you expectantly, “Do you have it?”

Allow the PCs to interact with Yovann as much as they desire.

CONCLUSION

If the PCs successfully retrieved the entire payroll:

The rebellion, flush with the cold hard cash won by your daring deeds, is able to mount new operations against the empire which one day may drive them out, returning the lands to their rightful owners, the people.

If the PCs successfully retrieved part of the payroll:

The rebellion, assisted by what cold hard cash won you gained, continues to survive. The lack of this critical resource curtails new operations against the empire and delays the day when they are driven out.

If the PCs failed to retrieve any of the payroll:

The rebellion, starved of cold hard cash, withers on the vine. Fortunately its roots run deep and one day it may flourish again, but until that time comes, the empire continues to hold its iron grip on the lands and the people.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the PCs finish interacting with Yovann and hand over the payroll, the encounter ends.