

CASTLES & CRUSADES

DRAGON WYRM



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CASTLES & CRUSADES®

THE DRAGON WYRM

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THE DRAGON WYRM'S LAIR

THE STORY SO FAR...

The dwarves of the Gold Hills are a small, peaceful clan that mine the minerals that run through the southern hills. While their actual clan name is Darokin, most refer to them as simply the Gold Dwarves. Centuries ago, the Darokin clan was much larger and lived much further north, in the mineral-rich heart of the mountains. A great red dragon moved in and killed many of the dwarves, sending them on an exodus to the south, where they live to this day.

Word has come from travelers and scouts that the red dragon Varshanal, has died. A band of adventurers invaded the beast's lair and eradicated the threat, leaving the Darokin clan's old home once again open. Hearing this, the dwarves sent a contingent of scouts north to investigate. They returned with mixed news.

In the interim, another creature swooped in. The dwarves did their best to run the beast off, but more than a few were killed and the rest made a hasty retreat back home. They tell stories of a small dragon, purple in color with two great horns. It is great in size, though smaller than Varshanal, and thankfully lacks the fiery breath of its predecessor. Still, it has sharp claws, a deadly bite, and a swift anger. These dwarven miners, so close to reclaiming their homeland, seem to be denied yet again.



How the party comes in contact with these dwarves is up to the CK. It could simply be a chance meeting while traveling or word could have spread to local human settlements nearby that the Gold Dwarves were seeking help. The party may be familiar with the Gold Dwarves or may ask about them. Regardless of how they come about the information, they should be aware that the Gold Dwarves are not warriors but are simply skilled miners that have mined the gold and other minerals for many generations. They are respected as merchants by nearby humans for their integrity and honesty.

Once contact is made with the dwarves, their leader (an elderly male named Fritzhugh, but simply called Fritzy by most of the dwarves) asks the party to travel to their old home and see about eliminating this new threat. The remaining scout team, three dwarves, will tell the story of the ambush by the dragon (which they repeatedly call 'the damned wurm'). The description they give is a large, thin creature almost forty feet in length. It slithered along the ground before rising up on its multiple legs and attacked. It was purple fading to white near the head. It did not speak. Fritzy tells the party they will pay the party 100gp to each party member that returns if they bring the head of the beast with them. Depending upon various role-playing and charisma checks as seen appropriate by the CK, this amount could go up, or down.

The journey from the dwarves to their old home takes about a week. Most of this is through the Gold Hills as they transition into the Auxin Mountains. This can be a quick trip or fraught with encounters as the CK sees fit. It is known that gnolls patrol this area during the warm months and travel south when winter comes.

The entry to the dwarves' old home is large and conspicuous. Although touched by time, the great entry way is still guarded by two great statues of dwarves wielding hammers. Above the old entrance is written in dwarvish, "The people of Darokin Clan wish you health, happiness, and good friends. We hope you find them all inside. Welcome!" The large entry way quickly shrinks to a more moderate tunnel that heads deeper into the mountain.

Varshanal destroyed most of the old town here, knocking down pillars and walls to more accommodate her large size. Now, great boulders and cave-ins have turned the once proud city to rubble. Small tunnels run away from the central area, many ending in dead-ends, some opening into smaller rooms. The adventurers that killed Varshanal cleared out the caves quite well and nothing much still stands. Aside from the new residence, and their meager belongings, the caves are empty.

Down one of the larger tunnels is the lair of the new ruler of this domain, a behir. Smaller and less intelligent than dragons, it is still a formidable foe. A few months after the behir settled here, a tribe of jarim wandered inside. The behir cares little for the jarim, but does nothing to run them away. The jarim hope to feast off the leavings of the beast.

As the party searches, the behir will slither in a parallel tunnel as they approach a merge. Here, it will leap and attempt to surprise the party. Characters should make a wisdom save (CL – 6) or be surprised. The behir will attack without fear, attempting to take down spell casters quickly. It will not give ground or retreat but will fight to the death.

BEHIR (This aberration creature's vital stats are HD 12d8, HP 65, AC 16. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with a bite (2d10) and two claws (1d4 each).)

During the battle, a group of jarim will descend upon the group from inaccessible cubby holes and twisting tunnels that run through the ceiling and walls of the caves. If a party member falls to 0 hp, and thus falls unconscious, the jarim will drop a net on the helpless victim and pummel it with their saps in an attempt to finish the job. It should be noted that the behir and jarim are not allies and the behir, in frustration and anger, may attack any jarim it feels are threatening or stealing its meal.



JARIM x 25 (These lawful evil, small humanoid creature's vital stats are HD 1d4, HP 2 each, AC 13. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with various small weapons doing 1d2 damage. Multiple hits can cause loss of consciousness.)

If the party delves deeper in the tunnels, they will find the lair of the behir. Piled in the back are 214gp, 387sp and 529cp. There is also a mace, a suit of scale mail and a pot helmet (all non-magical). Buried amid the coins is also a short sword that is a Sword of Peleus.

The Sword of Peleus: The Sword of Peleus seeks always to have the upper hand in battle and will bestow powers upon its wielder to make this so. The weapon is initially a +1 weapon. With each missed strike, however, the weapon gains another +1. This can continue to grow as large as possible until a hit is achieved, at which point it resets to a +1 weapon. The user must intend to hit his victim for this to work, he cannot intentionally miss in order to make the sword stronger. Like most magical weapons, this bonus applies to both "to hit" and damage.

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