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GM'S SCREEN #10: SUBTERRANEAN MINE



SYSTEM
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Space behind your GM's screen is precious (and limited). You've got dice, figures, the adventure, reference books—obviously a drink and snacks—as well as pencils, pens, a notebook and more! Often times a GM needs to be a juggler to make it all fit. That's why we created the GM's Screen line. Most GM screens focus on presenting the rules. This GM's Screen line is different. Instead of rules, each instalment presents hyper-focused pages of dressing, minor events and more all designed to add depth and flavour to an adventure. (And better yet, you can use the tables without your players realising what you are doing!)

This instalment of GM's Screen comprises three tables designed to bring to life the subterranean mines in your campaign and is compatible with virtually any roleplaying game.

DESIGN CREDITS

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HOW TO USE THIS SUPPLEMENT

Using this supplement is easy. Simply print out page 2 and pin it to the inside of your GM's screen. (You can also print it out and cut it up before clipping it to your screen so you do not obscure vital tables printed on the screen itself).

When play calls for it, roll on the relevant table and use the result to build verisimilitude, detail and flavour into your game. Always re-roll inappropriate results, but consider any given result as a starting point. Describe the situation and see how the players react!

Because words have power, we've also added some flavoursome examples to help you bring the setting alive in your players' minds.

SYSTEM NEUTRAL EDITION

Welcome to this Raging Swan Press System Neutral Edition supplement. Herein you'll find evocative, inspiring text designed to help you—the busy GM—run better, quicker and easier games.

This book is compatible with most fantasy roleplaying games. It's impossible to create a truly system neutral book, though, and some generic game terms—wizard, fighter, human, elf and so on—lurk within. These generic terms are easily modified to the GM's system of choice.

One special note about the NPCs in this supplement. While some are wizards, fighters, clerics and so on, others are simply normal folk. Because different game systems handle normal folk differently we've made no attempt to note their "class" leaving them simply as "female human" and so on.

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SUBTERRANEAN MINE

DRESSING

1. The haft of a pickaxe lies in the floor. Nearby, the rest of it is embedded in a wall.
2. A bucket filled with rubble stands against one wall. Stuffed between it and the wall is a shard of seemingly unremarkable rock in a dirty sack.
3. An (inanimate) skeletal arm clad in rags emerges from a caved in section of tunnel.
4. A mine cart lies on its side. It partially blocks the tunnel and rubble lies all about.
5. Water drips down from the ceiling forming a small pool on the floor.
6. One of the wooden roof supports has collapsed and fallen to the ground. A small pile of rubble lies around the fallen support.
7. An iron bar gate blocks off access to a side tunnel. The gate is old and its lock is rusted into immobility. Beyond the passageway extends 10 ft., before turning away to the east.
8. Minerals in the tunnel's walls glimmer in the party's lights. They are worthless, but pretty nonetheless.
9. A sinkhole 5 ft. wide and 120 ft. deep pierces the floor. Danger lurks here for the far side of the sinkhole is unstable; anyone jumping across and landing within 5 ft. of the edge causes an additional collapse, which drops unfortunate adventurers into the lightless depths below.
10. Phosphorescent mould grows along one wall and part of the ceiling. The mould is green and harmless. Observant PCs notice it seems to undulate gently. (Its thick growth obscures several small worked holes in the wall that lead to an air shaft).

STRANGE EVENTS & DISCOVERIES

1. Mild acid drips from the ceiling and pools on the floor before continuing its journey through the rock. The acid irritates the skin, but is otherwise harmless.
2. A skeletal figure lies sprawled at an intersection, one arm pointing towards a side tunnel. Anyone approaching feels a dramatic drop in temperature and the unmistakable feeling of being watched.
3. For several hundred feet, the tunnel is carved through a deposit of sparkling white quartz. The quartz is worthless—it crumbles if chipped from the walls—but dazzling in such concentration.
4. A dank, mouldy smell fills this area. Investigation reveals several of the pit props are rotten.
5. This whole area smells strongly of urine. A large, suspicious stain on the wall suggests some kind of large creature recently relieved itself here.
6. The faint rhythmic clinking of metal on stone reaches the party's ears. The mine's acoustics make it hard to determine from which direction the sound is coming.
7. A dull roar echoes through the mine; the sounds is so intense rock dust sifts down from the ceiling.
8. The distant clanging of a bell comes from behind, as whispering voices seem to pass by headed in its direction.
9. A rumbling sound begins to crescendo and culminates in what sounds like a cave-in, followed by muffled and fading screams.
10. A deep pit drops 30 feet onto the massive upturned three-eyed head of a hideous stone idol of alien aspect. The remainder of the statue remains buried—deliberately.

THINGS TO FIND

1. The tunnel floor is marred with deep ruts worn by steel-clad wooden cart wheels. Slippery moss grows in patches between the ruts.
2. A pulley hangs from the ceiling. The rope dangling from it has an empty wooden bucket tied to one end. The other disappears into a deep shaft in the floor.
3. A donkey cart sits to one side with its harness still attached. It contains three days' worth of dry rations for four people.
4. Small recesses at head height, one every ten-foot or so, line the walls. One of them contains a metal lantern which emits a cool, pale light that can't be extinguished.
5. The floor ahead is littered with diamond shards that glitter like stars. There is about 50 gp worth of diamond bits, but collecting them all takes about 30 minutes.
6. A small metal cage dangles from a metal hook driven into the tunnel's ceiling. A brightly coloured, but miserable-looking, bird sits on a perch inside.
7. A six-foot stick lies along the wall. It has a half-used candle lashed to one end.
8. This passage boasts a few large wooden support beams. One lies unfinished across the floor in a pool of oddly coloured water.
9. Warm, dry air flows through this part of the mine. A shaft in the ceiling cuts straight up to daylight above.
10. Short-hafted hammers, pickaxes and shovels lean against the walls in this half-finished tunnel, waiting for the workers' return.

WORDS & DETAILS HAVE POWER—USE THEM TO ADD FLAVOUR AND ATMOSPHERE TO YOUR GAME

Cramped: confined, packed, narrow, squeezed; **Dark:** dim, gloomy, murky, pitch-black, shadowy, tenebrous; **Dusty:** grime, grit; **Rubble:** wreckage, remains, ruins, debris; **Underground:** buried, hypogean, subterranean; **Mine Features:** drifts, crosscuts, headframes, shafts, stopes, timbering; **Mine Hazards:** bad air, collapses, cave-in, darkness, explosions, (rock) falls, hazardous chemicals, remoteness, water, wildlife; **Mining Tools:** baskets, bucket, cradle, sack, shovel/spade, pickaxe, axe, rope, winch.

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