

BR-5 Fantasy Adventure Module for 6-8 Characters of Levels 7-9



ISLE OF THE ANCIENTS

Written by Ben Burns
Art by Jenna Bastion

**DARK
CULT
GAMES**

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ISLE OF THE ANCIENTS

Introduction

“Isle of the Ancients” is a fantasy adventure module compatible with first or second edition AD&D. The module is designed for 6 to 8 characters of levels 7 through 10.

This adventure includes several unique and modified monsters; the DM should read the entire adventure carefully before running this module. This module can be run as a one-off game or as part of a campaign.

If you are not going to DM this adventure, stop reading now.

If you are going to DM this adventure be sure to read through the entire module first.

Isle of the Ancients

The Isle of the Ancients was colonized by dwarves centuries ago. Intended to be a Jewel in the Ocean for adventurers to visit, rest, meditate, and find their inner strength, only a small portion was finished before a great evil came to the island. Zorgana, the spawning of the devil Geryon and a Type V Daemon, decided to take up residence on the island. With her pets and an evil necromancer named Larate, she easily defeated and enslaved the

dwarf inhabitants and redirected their efforts into carving a lair from the rock of the island. Once Zorgana’s new home was complete, Larate enchanted the island with magical protections and undead warriors to ward her new home. However, Zorgana rewarded the necromancer with only betrayal, murdering him and trapping his ghost in the dungeon for eternity.

Zorgana soon realized the dwarves had put flaws in the construction of the caves. She has had to use magic to keep her lair from collapsing.

The White Roses

Centuries ago, the elves of Morlana prided themselves on their white roses. Larger and more beautiful than any other flowers in the world, they only bloomed for a few weeks each year, and once pruned lasted less than a day. Vanity prevented the elves from accepting the ephemeral nature of the flowers. Together, they cast a ritual that allowed the flowers to bloom year-round, and even after pruned the roses would never wilt.

It was soon discovered that the rose petals possessed great healing and regenerative

properties. Demand for the roses became greater than the elves were willing to part with. The elves found themselves defending their forest glen against an ever-increasing onslaught of villains and monsters. It did not take long for their small community to be overrun, the roses stolen, the plants destroyed and lost forever.

However, demand for the rose petals did not diminish. With each petal used, the cost of the remaining petals grew higher and higher. Soon fortunes were made with each rose found in a monster's lair or stolen from a rich noble's mansion or merchant's safe. Eventually, only the wealthiest or most savage collectors could obtain or keep them, until, finally, the roses were gone, lost to all people. The roses passed into legend, and eventually were forgotten by all but a few. Zorgana has one of the last of the Roses of Morlana.

The Hook

If the PCs ran through BR-4 'Oh Rats!' and saved the ship captain's daughter, she will still be diseased. If they did not save the girl or did not run through BR-4, then have one of the PCs catch a rare disease. The disease is so unique that no Cure Disease spell or ability will cure the sickness. The alchemist in town is able to discover a cure in a very old book, but is missing the final ingredient: a petal from a White Rose of Morlana. Alternatively, a sage or nobleman could have done the research and hires the PCs to fetch the rose.

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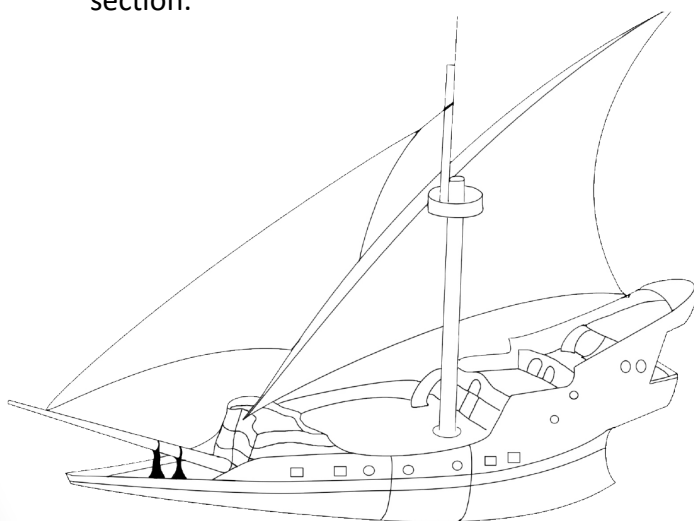
The Beginning

The party will start in the city of Black Ridge on Black Ridge Island. After getting the bad news about the young girl or party member's unfortunate condition, the PCs need to track down a white rose. If they search through the town, either the diviner or the gypsy fortune teller can point the party toward a small island just south of Black Ridge Island, where they can find both a rose and a great evil.

If the PCs are still working for the ship's captain, he will provide free passage to the island and even offer the party his ship if they can retrieve the rose for him. If the party is not working for the ship's captain, they will have to hire a ship to take them to the island.

The Sea Voyage

The trip to the island is uneventful, with the exception of random sea encounters. See the random sea encounter chart in the reference section.



The Island

The island is very small and unnaturally barren, with no vegetation or animal life, and very inhospitable. Overlooking the island's small bay are the crumbling remains of an old dwarf castle. It is silent and dark. A search of the island will reveal a concealed boat, with the same chance as finding a concealed door. It is tied to a small outcropping behind a ridge, so it cannot be seen from the sea. This is for the gnomes who are currently in the keep, hiding from the intruders and hoping they will leave. Besides the boat and the keep, there is nothing on the island.

If the PCs search the boat, they can tell it was made for smaller humanoids and is relatively new. It would probably hold about 15 to 20 smaller humanoids. There is nothing left on the boat except a collapsible sail. A gnome in the party can tell it is gnome craftsmanship.

If the party searches the water around the island they will find that it slopes out about 20 feet from shore and then drops sharply on the north side. The other sides continue at a more gradual rate before dropping off. If a party member dives down the north facing, they will find a cave opening about 30 feet down. This is the entrance to the dungeon (see The Dive on Page 9).



The Dwarves' Keep

(See Map A) The keep is made of set stones cut from the mountain on the island. While at one time it may have been very sturdy and impressive, any dwarf can tell it is not stable and might collapse if the island were to suffer a tremor. Hiding inside the keep are the gnomes. They arrived just over a week ago and are also here to loot the island. They found the underwater entrance, but after they lost six of their number to the sharks they decided to look for another way into the underground caverns. There are 10 gnomes left alive.

The gnomes have made the keep their temporary home while Nuranil sorts out where the passageway down is hidden. They have been clearing out the keep, but it is difficult, slow work due to the instability of the keep and the creatures inhabiting some of the rooms. If the PCs enter the keep, Nuranil will cast an illusion to make the back part of the castle appear to be collapsed and impassable.

The main doors to the keep are of a very sturdy wood and are currently shut and barred. It will take a knock spell or particularly brute force to get through the 8-inch-thick wooden door.

The PCs could scale the walls and enter the castle through either tower from the top. The only other way into the keep is through the secret door from the caverns below. The windows are all too small for even a halfling to fit through.

MAP A

N



1-9

1-8

1-7

1-10

1-1

1-6

1-11

1-3

1-2

1-5

1-4



1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

The Gnomes

Nuranil—Illusionist Level 10; Spells 5/4/3/2/1; HP 41; AC -4; Str 10, Int 16, Wis 12, Dex 17, Con 15, Ch 14. +7 save vs spells.

Magic Items: Bracers of Defense AC 2, Ring of Protection +3, Staff of The Gnome* +3 (34 charges), Scroll of Water Elemental Control, Spell book with all the spells listed below.

Spells: **1st**: Detect Invisibility, Gaze Reflection, Phantasmal Force, Light *2; **2nd**: Blindness, Mirror Image, Invisibility *2; **3rd**: Invisibility 10' Radius, Non-Detection, Continual Light; **4th**: Improved Invisibility *2; **5th**: Summon Shadow

Kongral—Fighter Level 8; HP 87; AC -3; Str 18(16), Int 9, Wis 9, Dex 9, Con 18, Ch 12. +5 save vs spells. +4 to hit, +6 damage.

Magic Items: Chain Mail +3, Ring of Fire Resistance, Broad Sword +3, Potion of Speed, Shield of the Salamander* (+4, Regenerate).

Kirhek—Assassin Level 9; HP 42; AC -2; Str 16, Int 13, Wis 14, Dex 18, Con 12, Ch 8. +9 Save vs spells.

Magic Items: Short Sword of the Assassin* +2 (+10% chance to assassinate), Cloak of Protection +4, Ring of Protection +2, Dagger +4. Leather armor.

5 Gnomes—Fighters Level 3; HP 20 each; AC 3; +3 vs spells, Chain mail, Shield, Short Sword.

2 Gnomes—Assassins Level 4; HP 15 each; AC 5; +2 vs spells, Leather, Shield, Short Sword.

Spells cast after PCs arrive: Improved Invisibility on Nuranil and Kirhek. Invisibility on the two 4th-level assassins. Invisibility 10' radius on fighters, Phantasmal Force to make Rooms 1-5 and 1-6 appear to be collapsed and impassable.

If the PCs discover the gnomes, the fighters will charge, while the assassins attempt to assassinate the PCs. Kongral will take his Potion of Speed, while Nuranil will cast Summon Shadows spell. If the gnomes are not discovered, they will continue to work and will meet the PCs in Room 2-8.

The gnomes also have a total of 200 gold, 400 silver, and 10 gems worth 400 gold total.

See reference section for more details on magic items marked with an *.



The Keep

Room 1-1: This hall was obviously once grandiose, decorated with huge tapestries on the walls. Some are missing, probably taken by looters over the years, but the tattered and weathered tapestries and empty pedestals that remain give a feel for what this hall must have been like in its glory days. Large tables, now broken and scattered, clutter the hall, and it is difficult to walk around without running into strands of cobwebs. Small creatures and rodents now scurry among the debris, but none are a threat. Anything that might have been of value in this room is long gone.

Room 1-2: This room may have been used to prepare food before being brought out into the main hall. Broken tables, rusted knives and forks, and shattered crockery litter the floor. At the center of the room is a fireplace with a stone stove likely used as a food warmer. Cobwebs cover this room as well. A large family of spiders live in the chimney above the stove. The spiders will not attack unless provoked. The spiders may be provoked by burning their webs or investigating the stove.

10 Spiders: HD 1+1; AC8; HP 6; #Attacks 1; Damage 1d3 + Poison (+2 to save or +5d6 extra damage).

Treasure: 400 gold, Ring of Weakness

Room 1-3: Large stone stoves line one wall, where large amounts of food could be cooked. Otherwise, there is nothing of interest here.

Room 1-4: This is a storeroom containing 10 ballista bolts and spare parts for the ballista throwers above. A trap door in the floor leads to a small room (about 8 feet by 8 feet, with a 5-foot ceiling) once used for food storage. It is considerably colder than the other area.

Stairs lead up to the top of the tower, where sit two large ballista throwers. Both are rotted, unusable and beyond repair. The top of the tower is very unstable: for every PC on the top of the tower there is a 10% chance of collapse (e.g., for two PCs there is a 20% chance). If a PC is wearing anything heavier than chainmail they count as two people for this roll. Roll every time a new PC climbs up. If it collapses, anyone on top of the tower will suffer 2d6 damage. Anyone on the stairs or on the ground level of the tower will suffer 3d6 damage.

Room 1-5: These were the sleeping quarters for the cooks and servers. When the PCs enter this room, it will appear to be almost completely covered in rubble. Several gnomes are hiding in here. A Phantasmal Force spell has been cast by Nuranil to make this room and half of Room 1-6 appear to be covered in debris.



The Keep Continued

Room 1-6: This was meant to be a greeting room. There are no thrones in here, only a large table that is rotted and crumbling. When the PCs enter this room, it will appear to be full of debris and impassable, covering up the doors to Room 1-5 and Room 1-11. This is due to the Phantasmal Force spell cast by Nuranil as described in Room 1-5.

Room 1-7: This was intended as a guest bedroom, but anything of value has long been scavenged. Some of the gnomes have been sleeping here, and a search will reveal that this room has been used recently.

Room 1-8: An awful stench greets anyone who walks into this room. This room was never fully finished, and has long been used as a garbage room by many visitors over the years and by the gnomes. There are stairs that lead to the top of the tower. The trash appears strangely lumpy thanks to the three carrion crawlers that have taken up refuge in the trash. Three more are hanging on the ceiling and walls. If visitors just open the door to throw in trash and leave, they will not attack, but if anyone ventures into the room they will. These are faster and stronger than everyday crawlers. Their barbed tentacles are extremely nasty, ripping skin and causing paralysis.

6 Carrion Crawlers: HD 5+1; AC 2; HP 30; Move 15"; #Attacks 8; Damage 1d6+Paralysis

Treasure buried in the garbage: 875 gold, 673 silver, 1 piece of jewelry (1,500 gold), Potion of Super-heroism, and a Mace +2

Room 1-9: The top of Tower 2 is unstable, but not as bad as Tower 1, and is similarly equipped with a pair of ballistae. One of the ballistae found here is still in decent shape, and could be scavenged to be mounted on a ship. It was covered and so did not suffer as much weather damage as the others. There are no bolts for it here, though.

Room 1-10: Another room set aside for guests. There is nothing of value here, but if searched it is apparent that someone has been here recently.

Room 1-11: This room holds the secret door to the stairwell down into the dungeon. However, the doorway is caved in. This cave-in is real. The gnomes discovered the underwater entrance, but their fear of the sharks drove them back to clearing this room, which is hard and tedious work. If the PCs decide to clear this room of the rubble, they can find the secret door to the underground cavern. It should take them approximately 1 week to complete the labor. If they do this, it leads to stairs 2-14 on Map B.

When the dungeon is collapsing after Zorgana is dead, that disturbance will clear the rubble.





The Dive

A character using magic, an item, or potion will be able to swim down easily enough once their armor is removed. With any metal armor on, a character could swiftly fall past the cave entrance without a rope or other item to arrest their fall. The ocean floor is another 30 feet down, and without something to allow them to breathe they will almost certainly drown. Make a Con check the first round, then a Con -2 check (cumulative) every round after that until they fail or make it up to the cave.

In addition, as the second character approaches the entrance a great white shark will show up and attack anyone moving, starting with the one closest to the entrance.

Great White Shark: HD 10; AC 5; HP 56; #Attacks 1; Damage 4d4 +4. Attacking with any weapon longer than a dagger suffers a -2 to hit and damage. Any blunt weapons suffer a -4 to hit and damage penalty.

The Caves

All the caves are 10 to 15 feet high unless stated otherwise. The walls are carved out of stone with stone doors, though many are carved from already existing natural caverns. The stone is an unremarkable dull gray color with brown striations. The air is stale but breathable. Stalactites and stalagmites are common in almost every room unless they have been intentionally cleared. In rooms that have been cleared, smaller ones have started to grow.

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The Caves Level 2

Room 2-1: From the ocean, there is a 20-foot tunnel. There are small pockets of air in which someone can stop and breathe. The tunnel opens into a small pool about 10 feet in diameter, which is part of the roughly 40-foot-diameter room. The room is dark when the PCs enter. Infra-vision or ultra-vision will show stalactites and stalagmites everywhere.

Opposite the pool is a small door. The door is only 4 feet tall and 3 feet wide. Inspection of the door reveals scratch marks that form the words of a riddle. It is a rather simple riddle, but the answer must be spoken aloud for the door to open.

The riddle is:

Pointers, Pokers, Stabbers, Jabbers,
Made to Hold, worth more than Gold.
What are they?

The answer is: Fingers

After the PCs give an answer, right or wrong, a giant squid will emerge from the pool and attack. If there are characters still in the pool or tunnel, it will attack them first.

Giant Squid: HD 16; AC 0; HP 100; Attacks 11; Damage 2x 2d6, 8x 2d4, 1x 5d6. The squid can only attack with its 10 appendages (8 arms, 2 tentacles) the first round—the bite attack may only be used once it captures a victim. If a character is hit with either of the two tentacles, they are caught. The next round they take automatic damage from the tentacle and the squid can then try its bite attack. The tentacles have an AC of 4 and 30

HP, and the arms have 20 HP. The arms can also grab a character but will not pull the victim in toward the mouth; rather, they continue to squeeze (no need to hit, just roll for damage). If a character is captured by a tentacle he or she will be +2 to hit that tentacle while captive.

There is a large jewel worth 1,000 gold embedded between the squid's eyes. The jewel is enchanted and enslaves the squid to protect this entrance. Once removed, the enchantment ends.

If the PCs cannot solve the riddle, a knock spell or other magical means will open the door. Enough hammer blows or lightning bolts will also create a doorway.

Room 2-2: The door opens into a small hallway. It is only 5 feet high and 4 feet wide. There are no stalactites or stalagmites in this tunnel. A dwarf can detect that the tunnel slopes down from Room 2-1. It ends in another stone door. This door is unlocked, and a normal open door chance will allow entry into the roughly circular room 30 feet in diameter. The ceiling here is approximately 30 feet high. The room is littered with bones, rusted armor, and weapons, many of dwarf make. There are two other stone doors that are not locked. The old cave formations had been cleared out of this room long ago, but new ones are growing. There is nothing useful or valuable among the bones, armor, or weapons. See Page 13 for more.

MAP B



UNDERWATER
ENTRANCE

2-1

2-3

2-2

2-4

WATER

Ⓢ

2-5

Ⓢ

2-6

2-7

2-9

Ⓣ

Ⓢ

2-8

STAIRS
UP

2-14

STAIRS
DOWN

2-13

UNDERWATER
TUNNEL

2-12

2-11

Ⓣ

Ⓣ = TRAP

Ⓢ = SECRET DOOR



1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

2-10

Ⓢ

Room 2-2 Continued: Also in the room, in a shadowed hollow of the ceiling, is a nest of stirges. Their small cave has a tunnel that lead to the surface, allowing them to hunt. This tunnel is too small for any person. The stirges prefer the dark dank of the cave for their prey.

20 Stirges: HD: 2+1, HP: 12, AC 8, +4 to hit when diving, Dam: 1d6 + 1d6 blood drain every round. Once a stirge hits, it will cling to the target and automatically continue to drain blood each round until it -- or the victim -- is dead.

Inside the cave of the stirges, if the PCs climb up to look, is 228 gold, 154 silver, and 7 gems with values of 50, 70, 90, 100, 110, 120, and 200 gold.



The Caves Level 2 Continued

Room 2-3: This hall again slopes down to a door that has been knocked down and opens into a caved-in room. If the PCs dig through the rubble they can find the remains of a skeleton in the rocks. If they spend the time to dig it out, they can find a ring hidden in one of the boots. Everything else has been looted or is worthless. The boots are now rotted, revealing the ring that others missed. The ring is a Ring of the Ethereal (see the reference section at the end of the module).

If the PCs attempt to dig deeper into the cave, they will find that it is 30 feet in diameter, and they have a chance to find the secret door at the back of the room.

Room 2-4: This room is barren except for six skeletons scattered on the floor among numerous stalagmites. If the PCs examine the 20-foot-high ceiling closely, by flying close or using magic sight, they can see that the stalactites hanging from the ceiling appear to be moving, as they are crawling with rot grubs. If any character moves into the room, the rot grubs will begin falling from the ceiling to burrow beneath the skin of anyone in the room. 1d6 rot grubs will fall on each character each round. The only way to escape them is to leave the room or burn the whole ceiling. This nasty variety of rot grubs is immune to cure disease. The only way to kill them is to burn them out.

100 Rot Grubs: HP 1 each. Automatically hit when falling on the PCs. Fire must be applied to kill them: 1d6 damage to the victim of this

cure for each grub that falls on them. After 1d3 turns, the grubs burrow to the victim's heart, resulting in death.

Among the skeletons, the bones of which are pitted with tiny teeth marks, are the following treasures: Chain Mail +3, Shield +2, 12 Arrows +2, three potions of healing, potion of water breathing, Long Sword +2, 600 gold.

Room 2-5: This 20-foot-diameter room has a well at the center. Dwarf runes etched into the stones of the well read: "Find your inner strength, but do not be greedy." During a failed revolt, the dwarves summoned a water elemental and tried to lure Zorgana to this room, but she failed to take the bait. Touching the water will awaken the water elemental. The elemental prefers to make a whirlwind that will fill the entire room and hit anyone in it.

Water Elemental: HD 16; HP 128; AC 2; Whirlwind attack hits everyone in room, Damage 5d6. Weapons of +2 or better are required to hit it. The Water Elemental cannot go beyond the halls that lead out of this room.

Anyone who drinks from this well will gain +1 to any attribute they choose. If a character has an 18 strength, it will raise it to 19. They will also be fully healed. A drink may be taken from the well 1 time per week, each time raising a separate stat.

If a character attempts to drink from the well again before a week has lapsed, the stat point

The Caves Level 2 Continued

Room 2-5 Continued: gained from the previous drink will be lost and the character must save vs death. If they fail, they will drop into a deep coma and die in 24 hours without a neutralize poison spell or some other means. Even if the character is healed, the stat point will be lost. After six uses, any further drinks will poison the drinker.

Room 2-6: The south doorway from Room 2-2 leads to another twisting tunnel. It appears to mostly be natural cave formations. Half-way through the tunnel is a shallow pool of water, about 8 feet across. The PCs must either walk through it or attempt to jump over it, with only a 5-foot ceiling. The pool has some small blind fish in it, but nothing else.

After 40 feet, the tunnel opens into a 40-foot room with a 12-foot-high ceiling. The room is covered in a thick layer of dust. Several skeletons of different races litter the floor. There is nothing of value in the remains. There are two doors in this room, one on the south wall and one on the east wall.

The room is home to five dust specters. The south door is locked. If anyone approaches within 5 feet of the south door, one of the dust specters will appear to block their way. They will announce that they are the guardians to the Cavern of Ancients. They were bound here decades ago and serve here still. They will not attack unless attacked, or unless someone tries to run by them to the door.

They will taunt the PCs as being unworthy, urging them to turn and flee from this place. The specters will only allow characters to pass if they are defeated in combat or the PCs answer their riddle. If the PCs answer the riddle, the specters will unlock the door and allow the party to pass.

Their riddle is:

Black as the sun is bright,
Surrounded by colors and orbs of white.
They absorb all that can be seen,
Even the light.

What are they?

The answer is: Eyes

5 Dust Specters: HD 3; AC 8; HP 15; Attack 1; Damage 1d6 and -1 to all stats for 24 hours. If any stat reaches 0, the character dies.

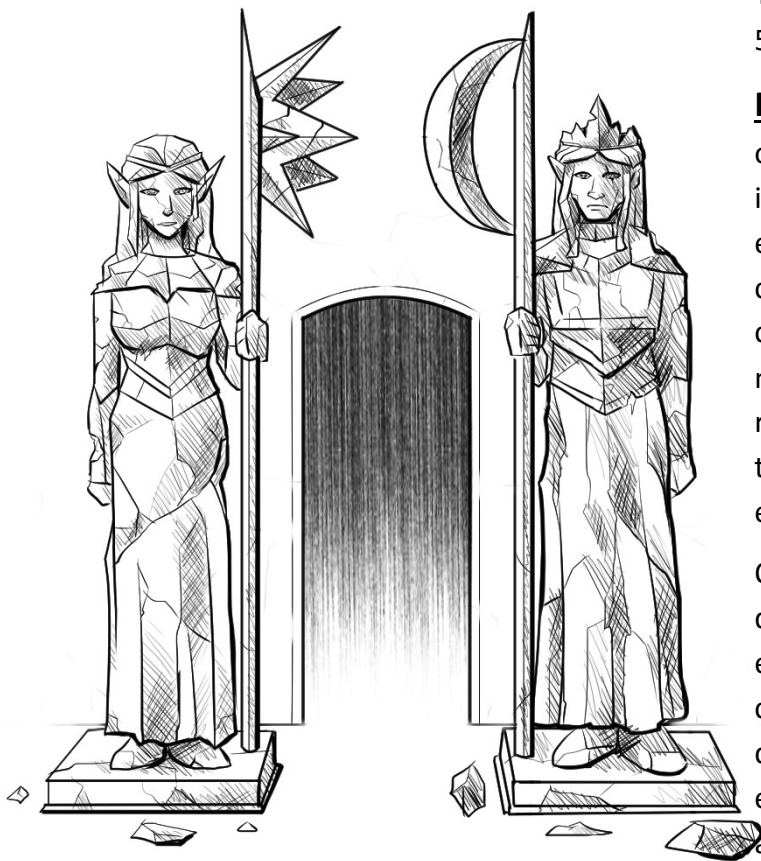
They can only be hit with +4 weapons or better. All spells are ineffective except spells that produce wind or water. This will drive them away for 24 hours. They can be turned as a special by clerics and paladins.

If the dust specters are defeated in combat, the door can be opened once it is unlocked, or by magical means.

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The Caves Level 2 Continued

Room 2-7: This room is piled high with dwarf skeletons. Against the back wall can be seen a small pile of golden treasure. If any player crosses half-way across the room, or attempts to get the treasure without entering the room,



20 dwarf skeletons will activate. Due to the magical protection placed on them, clerics must turn them as specters, and can only turn 1d6 at a time. They are wearing dwarf armor and wield dwarf axes, all of which have been magically preserved.

20 Skeletons: HD 2+1; AC 2; HP 15; Attacks 2; Damage 1d8+1; MR: 20%. Special: half damage from sharp weapons, and arrows and bolts do no damage. After a skeleton is destroyed, its armor and axe rust until they are worthless.

Treasure: 2,485 gold, three gems worth 180, 530, and 1,500 gold.

Room 2-8: The door leads to a short hall that opens up and ends only 30 feet from Room 2-6 in a 10-foot-tall door made of brass and engraved with a great battle scene. Any dwarf can immediately tell this is dwarf craftsmanship. The door is unlocked, but needs an open door roll to open. This large room is 40 feet square, 20 feet high, and extremely clean except for a fine layer of dust on everything.

On the opposite wall of the room is another door that looks the same as the one they entered. If the PCs found the secret door and came down, they will see two large brass doors, both 10 feet high and ornately engraved. Another door, on the east wall, is also brass, but plain and unadorned.

Also in the room are six statues, three on each side wall of the room. The statues are of a dwarf fighter, a half-elf female cleric of Dionysus, a human male wizard, a halfling rogue, a human male paladin of Athena, and an elf archer. Originally the statues provided only positive results, but Zorgana and the necromancer cursed them to also provide

The Caves Level 2 Continued

Room 2-8 Continued: negative results on occasion as a joke. If a PC looks at the gems intently, a beam will shoot out and strike them in the eye—roll on the chart below:

Dwarf Fighter: 21%+: Gain +1 strength
20% or less: Lose 1 point strength
Dwarf Fighters gain +10% on their roll.

Half-Elf Cleric: 21%+: Gain +1 Wisdom
20% or less: Lose 1 point of wisdom
Half Elf Clerics gain +10% on their roll
Worshippers of Dionysus gain +10% on their roll.

Human Wizard: 21%+: Gain +1 Intelligence
and can shoot a lightning bolt from their eyes 1x/day as the spell for 8d6 points of damage.
20% or less: Lose 1 point of intelligence
Human Wizards gain +10% on their roll

Halfling Rogue: 21%+: Gain +1 dexterity
20% or less: Lose 1 point of dexterity
Halfling Rogues gain +10% on their roll.

Human Paladin: 21%+: Gain +1 charisma
and gain a Lay on hands 1x per day.
20% or less: Lose 1 point of charisma
Human Paladins gain +10% on their roll.
Worshippers of Athena gain +10% on their roll.

If a Paladin gains the bonus, they may now lay on hands +1 times per day.

Elf Archer: 41%+: Gain ability to fire a 12d6

Fire Bolt out of your eyes 1x per day

40% or less: The PC is hit with a death spell.

There are no bonuses for this statue

If a character attempts to look at a second statue, they are -40% on their roll. If they gain two abilities and try to look at a third statue or more, they are hit with a disintegration spell.

The eyes of each statue are gems worth approximately 1,000 gold each. If a PC attempts to pry a gem free, the statue has a defense trap that will shoot a death spell at the PC. If the save is successful, the PC will have a 30% chance to pry out the gem. A death spell will fire every round that the character attempts to take a gem.

Each statue will only operate twice per day unless someone is trying to look at a third statue or if they attempt to steal a gem. All bonuses or deductions are permanent.

Behind the halfling rogue statue on the west wall is a secret door.

If the players did not encounter the gnomes in the Keep, they will encounter the gnomes in this room.

Refer to page 6 for the gnome stats.

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The Caves Level 2 Continued

Secret Hall to Room 2-9: This hall is only 4 feet high and 3 feet wide. It goes 40 feet and ends in a door. The hall itself has a pressure plate trap 30 feet from the secret door. Stepping on the pressure plate will fill the hall with a deadly poisonous gas. Everyone in the hall must save vs poison or die. Any character that saves suffers 1d6 hit points.



The door itself is both locked and trapped. If the trap is triggered by trying the handle before it is disarmed, it will release darts from the ceiling. Anyone in the hall will be hit by 1d6 darts. Anyone hit by darts suffers 1d3 points per dart, then must make a saving throw vs poison at -1 per dart that hit. Any PC that fails suffers 4d6 hit points +2 points per dart that hit, any PC that saves suffers 1d6 hit points +1 point per dart that hit.

Example: A PC is hit with 5 darts. They first suffer 5d3 points of damage, then make a saving throw vs poison at -5. If they fail, they suffer 4d6+10 points of damage. If they pass, they suffer 1d6+5 points of damage. The minimum damage for this trap is 1d3+1d6+1 hit points. Max damage is 6d3+4d6+12 hit points, giving a range of 3 to 54 hit points.

Room 2-9: This room is a roughly carved room about 30 feet in diameter. The center of the room is dominated by a 5-foot-tall obelisk, and there are six skeletons scattered about. The obelisk has engravings on all four sides. The skeletons were a group of adventurers who made it through the traps but were killed by the ghost trapped here. The ghost is that of Larate, the necromancer who aided Zorgana centuries ago. As a reward for his service, Zorgana trapped him in this room forever by chaining his spirit to the obelisk. He will try and cast Magic Jar on a member of the party and destroy the obelisk himself, or convince the party to do it. The combined Intelligence and Wisdom of the ghost is 34.

If the obelisk is destroyed, the ghost is free to leave the room. He is willing to negotiate with the PCs and give them information about Zorgana in exchange for them destroying the obelisk. Larate will lie and manipulate the PCs, even offering to help them defeat Zorgana, which he will not do for fear of being trapped in this room another 500 years. He may imply that the obelisk holds his life force and beg the PCs not to destroy it if he thinks they want to destroy him. Larate can tell them the following in exchange for destroying the obelisk:

Zorgana can turn things to stone at will.
She loves the dark.
She uses a bow and two swords.

The Caves Level 2 Continued

Room 2-9 Continued:

She keeps pets that are extremely large and vicious.

Yes, she does have a white rose of Morlana. That was supposed to be his payment for helping her, but she betrayed him instead of giving it up.

Do not touch anything in the Guild Chamber.

The obelisk is AC -5 and can only be hurt with magic weapons or spells. It has 150 hit points. It receives saving throws as if it is a 20th level fighter. It must be reduced to 0 hit points before Larate is released. Once free, he will attack the PCs until he is close to dying and flee.

Ghost: HD 10; AC 0/8; HP 65; Attacks 1; Damage Age 10 to 40 years. Upon seeing him all must save vs magic or age 10 to 40 years, and flee for 2 to 12 turns (don't forget the traps!). Clerics

6th level or higher are immune to this. PCs of 8th level or higher gain +2 to their save.

First, he will attempt to cast Magic Jar on the strongest fighter; spells only affect him if the caster is ethereal. Magic weapons do normal damage. If he looks to be in danger of being defeated, he will become non-corporeal and only ethereal opponents may attack him.

In the room among the dead is 800 gold, a Flail +1, three extra-healing potions, gauntlets of swimming and climbing, Leather Armor +2, a scroll with two spells (MU 3rd: Hold Person, MU 6th: Anti-Magic Shell). Everything else is rusted, rotted, and useless.

Room 2-10: The large brass door from Room 2-8 exits into a larger hall, 10 feet wide and 10 feet high. It slopes down and turns to the right. It ends in another large brass door that is locked, but not trapped. Engraved in dwarven on the door it reads:

'Here sleep the bravest leaders of our guild, rewarded for their struggles.'

The door opens into a very large room that is 40 feet wide, 20 feet high, and stretches for 120 feet. On the opposite wall is a door similar to the one the PCs entered. Along each side wall there are six sarcophagi with the

head end against the wall and the feet end pointing towards the middle of the room. At the foot of each sarcophagi is a large pile of treasure with approximately 5,000 gold and gems and jewelry worth 5,000 to 20,000 gold. A magical sword (roll randomly if someone grabs one) stands in each pile of treasure, and a crown worth 10,000 to 50,000 gold has been slid over the sword to rest on the treasure.



The Caves Level 2 Continued

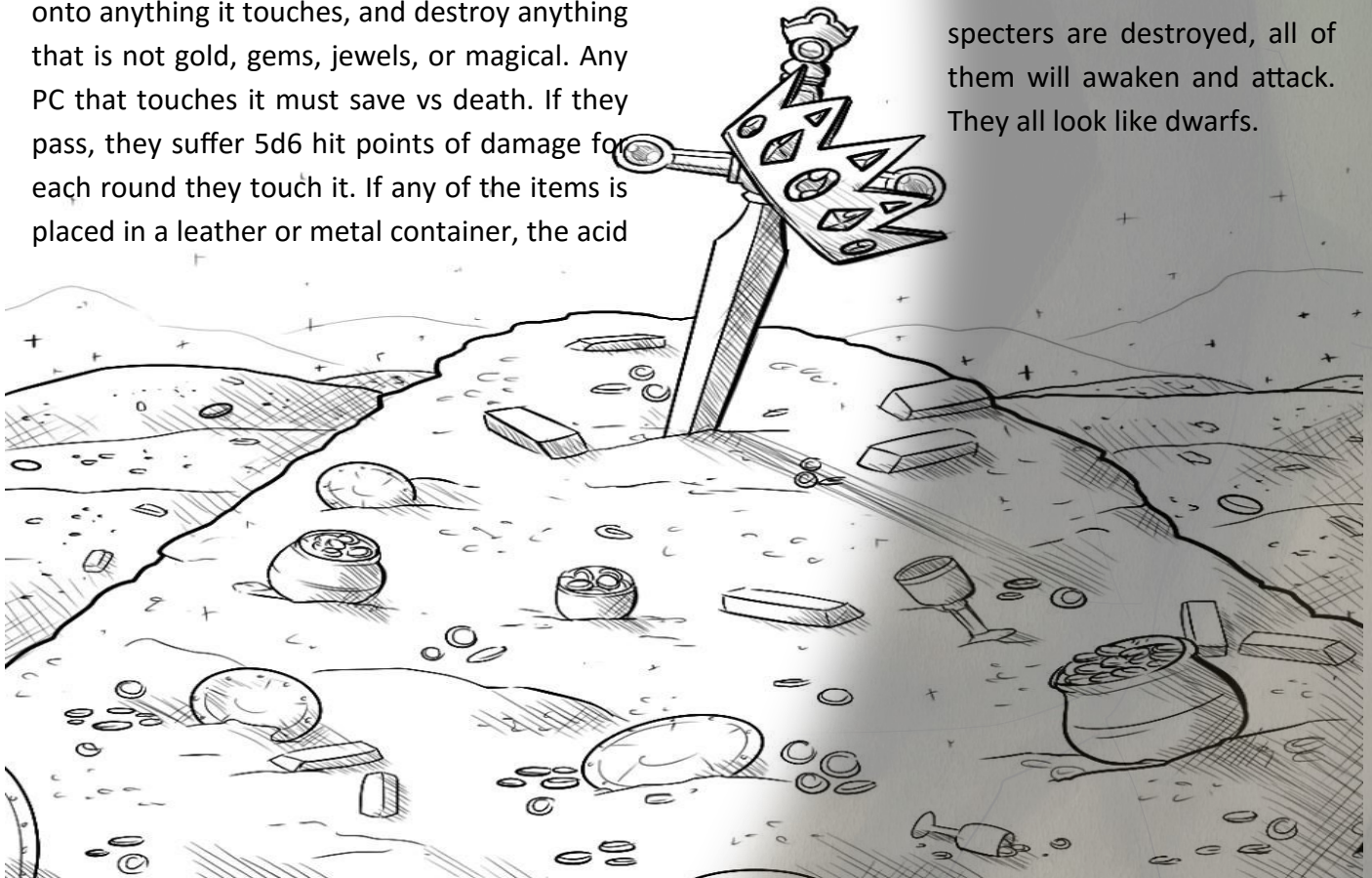
Room 2-10 Continued: Beneath the treasure lie the ancient skeletons of the dwarf guild leaders, who attempted to organize their fellow slaves in resistance against Zorgana and were denied the dignity even of being buried in the sarcophagi she had them build. Skeletal hands poke out from beneath the piles of riches, fingertips resting in grooves in the stone where they desperately tried to claw free.

If a character draws near a pile of treasure, he or she will notice that it appears to be covered in a jelly-like substance. It is a magical acid that cannot be wiped or washed off. It will smear onto anything it touches, and destroy anything that is not gold, gems, jewels, or magical. Any PC that touches it must save vs death. If they pass, they suffer 5d6 hit points of damage for each round they touch it. If any of the items is placed in a leather or metal container, the acid

will eat through it in 1 to 2 rounds. If the items are placed in a bag of holding, portable hole, or other magical storage item or spell, it will destroy the item or spell in 5 rounds. Glass will hold the acid, but it is this room that maintains the enchantment. Two days after leaving this room, it becomes normal acid. If a character attempts to put some on a weapon it will spread to cover the entire weapon, forcing them to drop it.

If any PC touches a pile of treasure it will awaken the wraith or specter in that pile. The specters are in the four corner piles. The other eight hold wraiths. After three wraiths and/or

specters are destroyed, all of them will awaken and attack. They all look like dwarfs.



The Caves Level 2 Continued

Room 2-10 Continued:

8 Wraiths: HD 5+3; HP 35; AC 4; Attacks 1; Damage 1d6 plus level drain. Turning is at -2 since they are in their home. A successful turning will force them to return to their pile of treasure, where they will stay for 1 turn before attacking again if the PCs are still in the room. Magical weapons are required to hit the wraiths.

4 Specters: HD 7+3; HP 45; AC 2; Attacks 2; Damage 1d8 + level drain. Turning the specters is also -2 and they will return to their sarcophagi like the wraiths. Magical weapons of +2 or better are required to hit them.

If the PCs search the floor of the fourth sarcophagus from the east door on the north wall, they have a normal chance to discover a secret door. The secret door is bolted from underneath and cannot be unlocked except by magical means. This leads directly down to Zorgana's sleeping chambers; see Room 3-6 for more details.

Room 2-11: The brass door from Room 2-10 leads to a hall that turns right and opens into a round room roughly 40 feet in diameter. A pit covers almost the entire room except for a small, 3-foot-wide ledge that runs along both sides of the pit to a stone door on the opposite side. The pit slopes sharply down about 5 feet to a black, tar-like liquid. The ledge is slick, so anyone attempting to run or fight on the ledge must make a Dex-3 check or fall. If they fall there is a 50% chance to fall into the liquid.

There is a trap half-way around on the right-hand wall. A character stepping on the trigger (70% chance) will cause a stone to slide down, blocking the path on that side.

The pit is the home of a snagon, a creature half snake, half dragon. Zorgana brought it here when it was barely hatched and it has lived here for decades. The snagon will look like a black dragon when it emerges from the liquid. It causes fear as a dragon, but does not have a breath weapon, wings, or legs.



Any PC who falls into the liquid will discover they can breathe after failing to hold their breath. They can move freely and easily see the surface and any other characters still up on the ledge. Characters above the surface cannot see anything below the surface. The pit is 60 feet deep, but characters suffer no damage from floating down, and can jump up to double their strength in feet, if at the bottom. Characters cannot swim in the liquid, but can easily climb the walls. There is a tunnel about 10 feet wide at the bottom. In addition, anyone in the liquid and breathing it regenerates 3 hit points per round.

Unfortunately, the snagon is completely invisible in the liquid, and any PC attempting to attack it will be at a -4 penalty to hit. If a PC goes into the liquid, the snagon will submerge to attack them. The snagon can see the PCs in the liquid, even if they are invisible.

The Caves Level 2 Continued

Snagon: HD 12; HP 80; AC -1; Attacks 3+1 (bite, claw, claw + constrict if the target is in the liquid), Dam: 3d6/1d6/1d6. The snagon has a strength of 21, so is +4 to hit and +9 damage on all attacks including constricting. The snagon will attempt to constrict a character submerged in the liquid first. Constrict attack: If the snagon hits, it does 2d6 damage, and is then +2 to hit with its other three attacks. The next round, its constrict damage is automatic. Submerged characters are not at -4 to hit while being constricted. When the snagon drops below 20 hit points, it will flee to its lair to regenerate.



The Caves Level 2 Continued

Room 2-12: The tunnel snakes down to a round, 20-foot room that is the snagon's lair. Most adventurers who have traveled into the Cavern of Ancients end up here. In this room the party will find 3,000 silver, 2,000 gold, 200 platinum, a Helm of Brilliance (5, 10, 15, 20), Gauntlets of Ogre Power, Dust of Appearance, Poisonous Cloak, Short Bow +2, Quiver of 12 +2 arrows, a half-eaten cow that appears to be regenerating, and a large pile of bones.

This would be an excellent place to rest and heal up before moving on.

Room 2-13: This stair leads down to the third floor and Room 3-1.

Room 2-14: In the middle of this small room is a stone spiral staircase that goes up into the ceiling. This stair will lead to Room 1-11.



The Caves Level 3

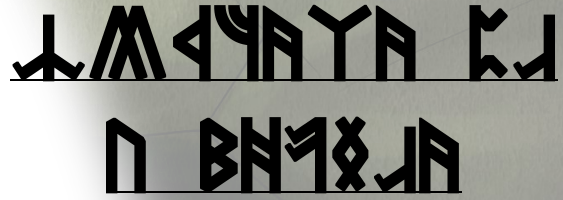
Room 3-1: The tunnel curves and continues to slope down, ending in a stone door. A skeleton sits slumped in front of the door. A half-melted candle rests in the skeleton's hand, and there is wax wedged into the door seal. The skeleton has nothing else of value.

The door is not locked, but an open door check at -1 must be made unless all the wax is first removed from the door. The room is a 30-foot square with a similar-sized door on the opposite wall, which is locked. In the room are five skeletons with armor and weapons, most of which look rusted and rotted.

One round after entering the room, a banshee will appear. On the second round, a second banshee will appear and the first will scream. On the third round, another will appear and the first two will scream. This continues until all 10 banshees appear. They cannot leave the room for any reason, so if turned will dissipate and reappear after the last appears.

10 Banshees: HD 5; AC 0; HP 30; Attacks 1; Damage Special. Only hit by +3 or better weapons, or spells. If a character's ears are not plugged, they must save vs death for each Banshee screaming or die; on a success, suffer 4d6 damage. If a character's ears are plugged with wax or another substance, suffer 4d6 damage on a failure and 1d6 on a success. Characters within the radius of a silence spell are not harmed by the screams.

On the skeletons is a set of Leather +3, Scimitar +2, Dagger +3, three potions of extra healing, clerical scroll of silence, and 550 gold.



Room 3-2: The small door leading out goes about 20 feet and opens into a hall about 20 feet tall and 40 feet deep. Large stone columns support the ceiling. The hall ends in a pair of ornate brass doors. They are each 8 feet wide and 15 feet tall. The doors are not locked but require an open doors roll at -1 to open.

The hall is decorated with statues of men in fighting positions. All are in different poses, and all uncannily realistic. Some have become chipped or fallen over and broken. Most are of dwarfs, but there are also humans, elves, and other races scattered about as well. All told there are 27 statues scattered about the hall that are mostly in one piece.

These are all people who were turned to stone by Zorgana. Occasionally, if food is scarce, she will turn one back for her pets to feast. But usually they are left and forgotten. If the PCs turn any of the statues back to flesh, this will initially work and the recently raised will be able to give some information on how she and her pets fight. But they will soon falter, fade, and die—they have been stone too long. All of their belongings will also crumble leaving nothing usable. The DM is free to roll one random magic item that will survive the crumbling process.

MAP C



The Caves Level 3 Continued

Room 3-3: The two brass doors open into a very large room. It is 160 feet long and 80 feet wide, with a 30-foot-tall ceiling. The room will appear pitch black to almost everyone. There are 5 continual darkness spells cast every 60 feet, for a total of 15 cast in the room. A continual light, dispel magic, or item with Continual Light cast on it will cancel out one per casting. Neither normal vision nor infra-vision work in here, but ultra-vision does work normally. The floor is covered in broken stones, making it difficult to walk. There is a column every 20 feet, making four rows of seven columns each down the length of the room. If a character looks up, they'll see that between each column is a horizontal stone column 15 feet up in the air, going in both directions, lengthwise and sideways. Zorgana usually travels around the room on these horizontal columns that run the entire length and width of the room.

There are two stone doors at the very back of the room. They are 10 feet tall and 6 feet wide, and will not be locked. Zorgana keeps a pair of kurads as pets. A kurad is a large, panther-like creature that stands on its hind legs, and is about 10 to 12 feet tall.

2 Kurads: HD 10; AC 0/3 (shield/no shield); HP 64; Attacks 2 or 3 + special. Strength 20 (+3/+8 to all attacks), Dexterity of 19. Each is equipped with a Shield of Deflection*. This shield allows them to block all missiles including magic missiles with a save vs death.

If a lightning bolt or other bolt type is cast at them, a save will reflect the spell back at the caster but destroy the shield. Kurads have ultra-vision of 200 feet.

The kurads can make two attacks with a Large Axe that will do 2d8 hit points +8 damage for strength. If a kurad loses its axe, it will resort to its natural defenses to launch a claw/claw/bite assault that does d6/d6/2d6 (+8 on each attack for strength).

The kurads may also roar, which they can do every other round before attacking. Anyone within 20 feet who hears the roar must save vs paralysis or be stunned, unable to attack or use dexterity bonuses in defense this round.

Zorgana will also be in the room. She will support with only her bow, moving quickly from spot to spot in the room, so it is harder to tell where she is firing from.

Zorgana will only summon the Type V demon in the direst of situations. If her pets are dead and she is below half health and the party is still strong, she will teleport back to her personal lair, heal herself, and attempt to summon the demon.

Once Zorgana is killed, it becomes clear that she had been holding Isle of the Ancients together through sheer force of will. With a deep rumble, the walls begin to shift and crumble. The PCs will have about an hour to escape the underground before it completely collapses.

The Caves Level 3 Continued

Zorgana: HD 12; HP 96; AC -3; MR 70%; Attacks special; Damage as per weapon. Strength 19 (+3/+7 to all attacks). She wears a Ring of Protection +2. Since she is half devil and half demon, she suffers half damage from cold, electricity, fire, and gas. She is also immune to non-magical weapons. She has ultra-vision of 200 feet.

At range, she will use her +3 Strength Bow with Asp Arrows* (10). Asp Arrows do 1d8 + strength points of damage, and any hit character must save vs poison or suffer an additional 3d6 points of damage. The arrows will then drop to the ground and crawl back to Zorgana unless they are destroyed (AC: 9, HP: 2). Zorgana may shoot twice per round with her bow.

In melee, she will use a +3 Bastard Sword in one hand and a +4 Long Sword in another. She may attack twice per round with each sword.

Special attacks: Gaze of Medusa. She can use her gaze instead of shooting, and use it in close combat. She can also turn someone back from stone to flesh. She has four arms, so may either swing both swords and shoot her bow, or swing both swords and gaze.

She may cast Continual Darkness 1x/day, Teleport 1x/day, Heal 1x/day, and Summon Type V demon (60% chance) 1x/day.



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The Caves Level 3 Continued

Room 3-4: This is the living quarters for the kurads. Two sleeping mats lie among a large pile of bones. The kurads have two spare axes and standard shields here, but these are probably too big for any normal character to use.

Room 3-5: This is Zorgana's personal lair. It is a 50-foot-by-60-foot room with a single door on south wall. There are three continual darkness spells cast in this room, making it pitch black without ultra-vision. Four stone pillars rise from floor to ceiling, and the floor is covered in interweaving white rose vines.

The PCs may think these are the white roses they are after, but they are not. These are Vampire Roses. While they are a beautiful white, if a PC picks one the vine will snake into a glove, hitting on a 10+ and sucking their blood, causing 1d6 points of damage and turning blood red. If a character walks through the roses, he or she will be attacked 2d6 times and hit on a 12+ regardless of AC. Each hit does 1d6 points of damage. If a rose is picked

and does not suck blood within 5 minutes, it will wilt and die.

In the center of the room is a pile of satin pillows that are worn and reek of Zorgana. A huge chest that is unlocked is next to the pillows. Inside are 3,000 gold, 200 platinum, a mysterious black cube, a Rope of Climbing, Bag of Holding, Shield +4, and Bracers of Defense AC 3.

The mysterious black cube holds the White Rose of Morlana. There is no visible way to open it. If the cube is heated, a crack will appear on one side, which if pressed will pop open. Once the cube cools, the crack will disappear and the cube will reseal. No knock spells or other magical means will open it, though magic can be used to reveal how to open it.

Alternatively, just have the box be locked and trapped.

Room 3-6: This staircase leads to the secret door in Room 2-10.

THE END

Reference Section



Staff of the Gnome

The staff can act as a Wand of Paralyzation, using 1 charge at a range of 6" with a normal save. A failure means the target becomes rigidly immobile for 5-20 rounds.

The staff can also be used as a magical staff with +3 to hit and +3 damage, which uses no charges.

The staff can also be used in combination. The user declares they are using the paralysis attack, and then makes a melee attack with the staff using the +3 to hit and damage. If you hit, the target can attempt a save verse magic at -3 or suffer paralysis. A charge is used regardless of whether the attack hits.

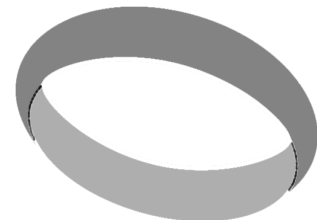
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Ring of Etherealness

The Ring of Etherealness may appear as a non-magical ring, but when the proper command word is spoken the wearer and all non-living items he or she wears and carries become ethereal just as if oil of etherealness had been used.

While in the ethereal state the wearer cannot attack material creatures. A phase door spell will negate the ethereal state and prevent the ring from functioning again for 1 day.

Each time the ring is used, there is a 5% chance the ring stops working. The ring must be used to turn ethereal and to turn back. Once it stops functioning, it is a normal gold ring.



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Reference Section

Sword of the Assassin

This short sword is a +2 magical weapon, but in the hands of an assassin grants the following bonus.

An assassin gains a +10% chance to assassinate an opponent, and the assassin always has a minimum of 25% chance to assassinate anything if they are eligible to make an assassination attempt.



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Shield of the Salamander

This shield is a magical +4 shield in the hands of anyone other than a gnome, dwarf, or halfling.

If in the hands of a gnome, dwarf, or halfling it grants two additional powers.

1. Regeneration 1 point per turn.
2. Water Breathing as long as the wielder remain in contact with the shield.

The shield can only grant water breathing to one person at a time. It may also regenerate only 1 person in a 24-hour period.



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Reference Section



Shield of Deflection

A shield of deflection is not magical; instead these specially crafted shields were created by the kurads for fighting against opponents with bows. These shields take months of training to use properly. In addition, a minimum strength of 18 and dexterity of 18 are required.

If the user makes a save verse death they may deflect all missiles including magic missiles.

If a bolt-type spell is cast at the wielder, a save will reflect the spell back at the caster but destroy the shield.

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Asp Arrows

These are not magical arrows, but charmed snakes from Zogana's head. They do 1d8 points of damage, and anyone hit by them must save vs poison or suffer an additional 3d6 points of damage. The arrows will then drop to the ground and crawl back to Zorgana unless they are destroyed (AC: 9, HP: 2), or the magic dispelled.

After she is dead a PC may charm the Asp Arrows and use them as she did.



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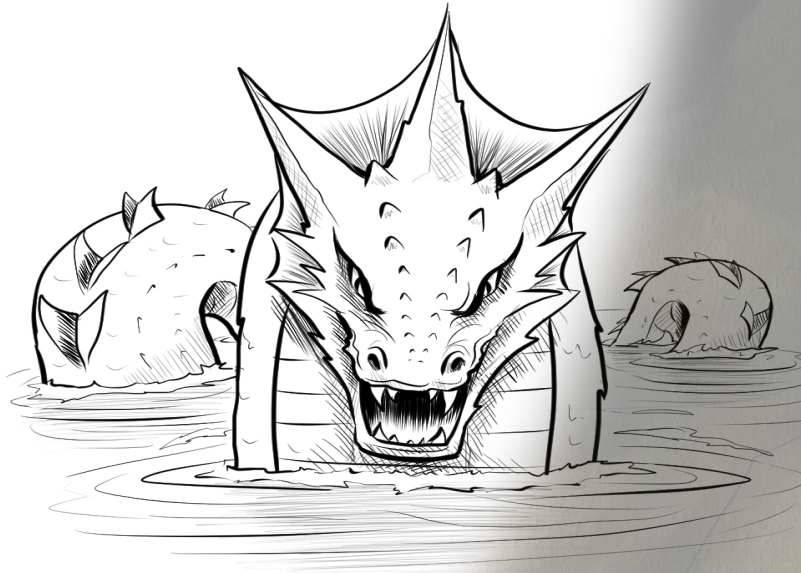
Reference Section

Random Encounter Chart 1

Ocean Voyage

Roll 1d6 every 2 hours at sea; on a 6 the party encounters one of the following::

1. A storm: The PCs must make a constitution check or become seasick losing 1 point of strength for 24 hours.
2. A giant octopus: Number 1-3; AC 7; HD 8; HP 40, 44 & 50; Attacks 7; Damage 1-4 x6 / 2-12. If a tentacle hits, it constricts and does automatic double damage next round. See the Monster Manual for further information. Their treasure is in a sunken ship at the bottom of the ocean.
3. A dragon turtle: Number 1; AC 0; HD 14; HP 84; Attacks 3; Strength 19 (+3,+7); Damage 2-12/2-12/4-32; Breathe steam for 84 points, save vs breath weapon for 1/2. Treasure for this beast is on a nearby island.
4. A bronze dragon: Number 1; AC 0; HD 8; HP 64; Strength 18(00)(+3,+6); Damage 1-6/1-6/4-24; Breath weapon lightning bolt. He will fly aboard as an albatross and just hang around the ship to observe the PCs and possibly join them to the keep. He will not go down into the caverns though, no matter what the bribe. He will grow bored and fly away.
5. 12 Pteranodon: AC 7; HD 3+3; HP 20; Attacks 1; Damage 2-8.
6. Hurricane: The ship sails into a hurricane and is destroyed. The party is marooned on the Isle of the Ancients.



Reference Section

Random Encounter Chart 2

The Island

Roll 1d6 every hour on the island; on a 6, the party encounters one of the following:

1. Griffon: Number 2-12; AC 3; HD 7; HP 40; Attacks 3; Damage 1-4/1-4/2-16; Their nest is up in the upper mountains on the island.
2. Lamprey: Number 1-4; AC 6; HD 5; HP 24; Attacks 1; Damage 1-6 blood drain 10 HP per round.
3. Ochre Jelly: Number 1-3; AC 8; HD 6; HP 48; Attacks 1; Damage 3-12.
4. Roc: Number 1; AC 4; HD 18; HP 100; Attacks 2 or 1; Damage 3-18/3-18 or 4-24; Its nest is on a nearby island.
5. Giant Scorpions: Number 1-4; AC 3; HD 5+5; HP 30; Attacks 3; Damage 1-10/1-10/1-4 + poison. (save vs poison or die).
6. Water Spiders: Number 5-10; AC 3; HD 6+6; HP 40; Attacks 1; Damage 1-8 + poison. (save vs poison or suffer 6d6 damage and paralysis).

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Random Encounter Chart 3

The Caves

There is no random encounter chart for the caves. If you feel the PCs are not making progress, feel free to create some wandering monsters to keep them moving. Snakes, spiders, black pudding, more of the rot grubs from Room 2-4, or any number of undead or demons that Zorgana might summon to deal with the intruders in her home would all be appropriate.

There are never any random encounters in the bottom level of the caves.

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Designer's Notes

Isle of the Ancients was one of my first modules I ever wrote. I have run it over a dozen times and it changes just a little every time. I hope you and your players enjoy this adventure as much as I have over the years. I have added a couple of notes that might help you when running the game.

1. Be careful with the gnomes, with the improved invisibility and assassination chances, you could be looking at a TPK if you are not careful. The gnomes really don't want to fight if they don't have to. If the PCs do fight them and leave one or two alive, make sure they follow and harass the party.
2. I make finding the secret door in Room 1-11 almost impossible to find, forcing them to come through the underwater cave entrance. The secret door is supposed to be the exit.
3. Any dwarf can tell the cave area should have collapsed years ago, and there must be some magic holding it all together.
4. There is a great opportunity for roleplaying in Room 2-9 with Lerate. Feel free to have him appear to the players through walls to try and draw the PCs to his room to destroy the obelisk.
5. The dust specters in Room 2-6 also provide a great opportunity for role playing. They don't really want to kill the PCs, just get them to turn around and go away.
6. There are two opportunities to get stat increases in the module with the statues and well. Be careful not to let the players abuse these items.
7. I go out of my way to make the black liquid in Room 2-11 seem very dangerous, even pulling any PCs that fall in to another room. The snaggon can surprise almost anyone by lunging out of the liquid and dragging the hapless victim down.
8. Zorgana is a very nasty creature, and I've seen her take entire parties down. Don't forget to play the continual darkness that only ultra-vision can see through. Don't forget her teleport—heal combo she can do if low on hit points, as well as summon a Type V demon. This is, of course, on top of her Medusa Gaze.
9. Overall this adventure is very dangerous, high risk, high reward. If your characters are in a low magic item campaign, you may want to use a higher party level for this module.
10. After the PCs kill Zorgana, the island will begin to collapse on itself. Give the players time to exit, but they don't have time to go back and explore any more of the dungeon.

Good Luck and Have Fun!

ISLE OF THE ANCIENTS



Death Awaits

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