

**OSRIC™**  
COMPATIBLE

**DOOMSLAKERS ADVENTURES #1**

# HOWLER

**AN ORIGINAL ADVANCED MODULE  
FOR 4 TO 6 CHARACTERS OF LEVELS 1 TO 3**

**BY J.V. WEST**



**THIS MODULE CAN BE USED WITH MOST FANTASY ROLE PLAYING GAMES**



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WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY J. V. WEST



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This module can also be used for most fantasy games published under the OGL or similar models. You can download the SRD v.3.5 version at <http://www.rpgnow.com/product/124764/Howler>

Thanks to James Koti, Rhonda Haynes Koti, and Book and CD Hut and to the intrepid playtesters: James, Sarah, Crow, and Tree.

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Dedicated to my family and friends who give me so much joy and to the Gygaxian giants who dared to dream.

Visit [www.jwarts.com](http://www.jwarts.com) for more creations and more Doomslakers!

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# INTRODUCTION

This adventure is for a party of 4 to 6 characters of levels 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup>. It is compatible with OSRIC – the Oldschool System Reference and Index Compilation created by Matthew Finch and Stuart Marshall. If you like playing the original advanced game you'll love OSRIC. You can download it for free at <http://www.knights-n-knives.com/osric/> or buy a print copy at [www.black-blade-publishing.com](http://www.black-blade-publishing.com).

*Howler* is intended to be a single session dungeon crawl you can either drop into a longer adventure or run as a side trek. The area is not described in much detail so you can easily fit it into most medieval fantasy campaigns. Any specifics of the setting, such as the Shekeltooth goblin clan or the elves of Pricklewood forest, are part of a fantasy world that could develop from this and future adventures in the Doomslakers line. Feel free to include or exclude any of these elements to suit your needs.

There are certain types of characters or items that may be beneficial to a party in this adventure. Clerics and dwarves would be very handy since there are several opportunities for the PCs to become poisoned. A cleric might also find the idea of the ancient temple quite interesting either in a scholarly sense or as a threat or boon to his own faith. With the possibility of a fairly significant skeleton attack a cleric with power against the undead could prove useful indeed. Elves could also find an angle of interest in the adventure; there are items made of a special wood that the elves of Pricklewood are known to work. Since magic items are at risk of losing their power in this module I can say they would be useful but the likelihood of losing them is high. That having been said, to maximize the drama and excitement of the game the PCs should have a magic item or two (gotta feed the Howler).

If the PCs are not going to have any magic items, are all 1<sup>st</sup> level, have no cleric, or there are fewer than 4 of them, I suggest including one NPC who is a cleric or other spellcaster or who possesses a magic item. Part 4 of the module includes several pre-rolled PCs that your players can use or that you can easily use as NPCs in the adventure.

The Howler Hill is located in the southern tip of Hill Country. Just south of the Hill are several small villages. In days past the southern hills were dominated by the Shekeltooth goblin clan, a ruthless and disorganized gang of monstrous thugs. Eventually the villages rallied together and formed a small militia to rout the Shekeltooth clan. But in recent times a rival clan, the Sticktooths, has moved in. Far fewer in numbers, they have not yet riled the locals enough to reform the militia. Any goblins encountered in this module will be of the Sticktooth clan. They rub their nasty clothes in the offal of cave bears (a dangerous predator found deeper in Hill Country) and usually have a simple mark on their cheeks or foreheads which looks like two short parallel lines ending in points. They tip their arrows with bear dung, which can cause mild poisoning.

At the beginning of each section there might be a block of text in italics containing some description of the area. You can read these italicized sections aloud to your players if you like.

## ABOUT THE HOWLER

The Howler is a creature that feeds on the energy of magic items. Because it dominates the crypt and broken temple that constitute the primary area of the adventure, no functioning magic items can be found (with the exception of the items contained in the sealed sarcophagi in Area 6). If the PCs have magic items these items could attract the Howler early in the adventure. If the Howler can, it *will* drain the PC's magic items. **If this is the sort of thing that might cause tension among your players please make sure they are forewarned in whatever way you feel is best.** Such loss of magic items could easily spur a follow-up quest to find a new one or have an old one restored.

If the Howler is destroyed it will release magical energy all at once, causing a certain degree of random magic item creation and/or recharging.

At several points during the adventure the PCs might cause noise or do something that could alert the monster in Area 6. If this happens, it will move into Area 4 and wait on the ceiling above the doorway leading into Area 3. If it is alerted while the PCs are in Area 4 it will move to the ceiling of Area 6 and wait above the door.

If the creature does not detect magic items it will simply wait in hiding and will not reveal itself or attack unless the party is fewer than 4 members strong or appears very weak. But if it detects magic among the party members it will lust for it. It will attack as soon as it has a chance of draining a magic item, usually the most powerful one first. If the PCs take longer than 10 minutes to make their way to where the Howler is lurking it will cautiously move to ambush them where they are. If it moves through Area 3 it will only trip a dart on a roll of 1 on a d6. The poison will have no effect on it. It will continue moving closer until, when it is within 10', it will not be able to resist any longer and will attack, going for the most powerful magic item.

## IT IS NOT UNDEAD

This creature looks like an undead thing. It lives in a tomb on a graveyard hill. The players will almost certainly assume the thing **is** undead. There is no need to "fool" them, just let them assume what they will. It could be really interesting to see what happens when the PCs plan to tackle this monster as if it were something other than what it actually is. The cleric of the party, if there is one, might find herself at wits end trying to figure out why the unholy thing is unimpressed with her righteous assaults.



## PART 1: HOWLER HILL

*You stand at the base of Howler Hill, a depressing knob rising like a gray swell in an otherwise green land. Dotting the drab scene are many weathered old standing stones marked with ancient writing. These stones, though perhaps older than any can tell, are gravestones. But the locals have not used the Hill as a graveyard in a thousand years and few living can read the ancient writing scrawled upon the markers.*

*A gusty wind kicks up and, as the air passes between the many standing stones, the hill begins to earn its name as an eerie howl fills the air.*

*You've been told that strange things happen around these stones at night. Dusk is not far off. The thick, briar-filled underbrush that flanks the Hill forces the road to rise straight up the slope and over the naked top. As you make your way to the apex you notice something sprawled upon the road...a dead body.*

*The body is that of a large man. The man's eyes are gone and his suit of fine-looking chain mail armor is dotted with blood.*

A search of the body will reveal:

1. The man has a leather pouch on his belt containing 11 gp and a small blue vial of liquid. This is actually a **potion of healing** (heals 2d4+2 hp).
2. His eyes have been plucked from their sockets, possibly by birds.
3. He has some slashes on his neck that apparently caused his death. There is a trail of blood leading from the body to the Broken Tomb in Part 2. Unless it is dark there is no need to roll to follow this trail. If it is dark, any non-Ranger PCs have a 50% chance of finding the blood trail (Rangers only fail on a roll of 100). A failed roll adds 10 minutes to the search time before making another roll, possibly triggering a random encounter.

4. The man's appearance is that of a warrior, though a bit soft. He bears a few battle scars and his boots and other clothes are in fairly good condition.

This poor sap is actually Gundrin O'Noggin, a local farmer-turned-warrior who made a name for himself battling the Shekeltooth goblin clan a few years back. Gundrin had noticed something strange going on around the hill and, along with his partner Rains Calibrin, managed to find the Howler's lair. He thought himself quite clever but he didn't realize the Howler's *modus operandi* is to lure adventurers into its lair to kill them and eat the magic from their items. Gundrin always wore his **+1 chainmail**, a gift from the elves of the nearby Pricklewood forest. He also carried a moon-hilted **+2 longsword** that was given to him by the elves (see Part 2, Area 1).

## SEARCHING THE AREA

The standing stones are markers for small tombs, each filled with ancient bones. Most of the tombs are ruined and few contain anything worth digging up. There is a 1-in-6 chance per grave of finding 1d6 gp or the equivalent amount of other coins and/or various personal trinkets. None of the stones are magical; none of the graves contain anything of great value or importance. No one frequents the mound anymore, and there are no recent gravesites.

If any PCs are inclined to be scholarly or are from the area have the player make an Intelligence check. On a good roll they will know that moon goddess religion once thrived in the region many hundreds of years ago and that temples are rumored to be scattered around, now buried in ruin. The standing stones are actually holy to this ancient faith.

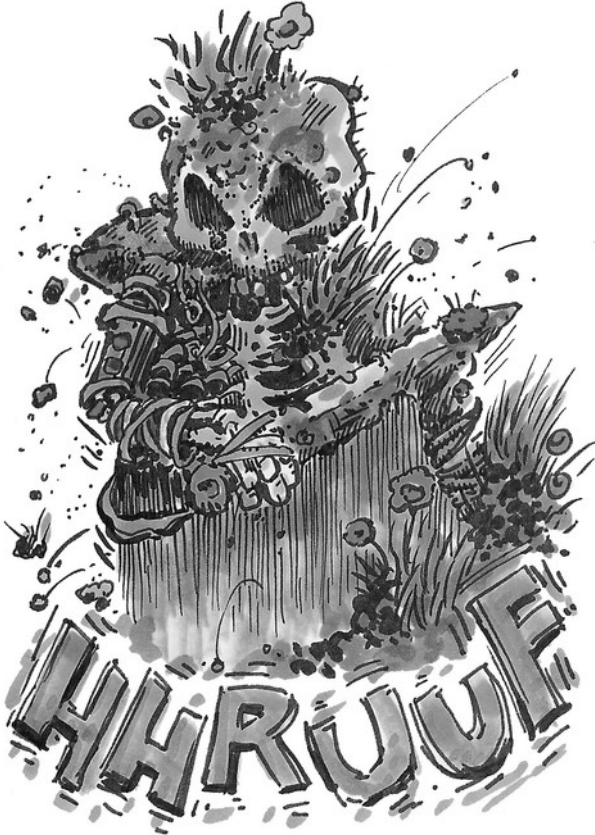
If a PC casts **detect magic** while on the hill they will get a strong sense that the area is protected by a powerful old spell that seems to be focused on the graves. The exact nature of this spell cannot be determined.

## IN CASE OF GRAVE ROBBERS

If the PCs start digging up graves you should make a secret Wisdom check for each character. Those who pass the check should be told that they have a "very bad feeling" about what they are doing. Outward signs that something is wrong should include sudden gusts of icy wind, weird noises, and the PCs' neck hair standing on end. If they continue to dig this feeling should increase in severity until PCs with good alignments actually feel physically ill. If good aligned PCs continue to defile graves after passing or failing their Wisdom checks they will actually lose 1-2 points of Constitution (randomly determined; Con is healed at a rate of 1 per day of rest and cannot be otherwise restored).

If a Paladin defiles (digs, opens, or disturbs) even a single grave she will instantly know that she has made a terrible mistake. If she persists in doing it she will lose 2 points of Constitution per grave disturbed.

Each time a grave is violated there is a 25% chance of triggering the protective spell. This is a cumulative likelihood so that the 2<sup>nd</sup> grave results in a 50% chance, the 3<sup>rd</sup> in a 75% chance, and the 4<sup>th</sup> grave to be disturbed causes the spell to take effect no matter what. By this time the sense of



immediate threat should be oppressive and overwhelming. The temperature in the area should drop to freezing within a single turn.

If the spell is triggered, 1d10 skeletons will arise from random tombs near the PCs and immediately attack. Every round thereafter 1d4 skeletons will appear and attack.

**Ancient Skeletons:** AC 7; MV 120'; HD 1; hp 2; #AT 1; D 1d4; Int None; AL N; Size Man

**OPTION:** Since the skeletons are ancient and kind of weak, try allowing a single melee strike by a PC to potentially hit multiple targets if the damage rolled is enough to take out more than a single skeleton. For example, if a warrior swings her sword for 4 damage allow her to actually destroy two skeletons instead of just one, for this battle only. Imagine the clattering and shattering of bones!

These are the only ways to stop the assault of the undead.

1. A cleric or other priest of good or neutral alignment has a 20% chance (+10% per level) of successfully praying for forgiveness from the ancient powers that defend the Hill. If this prayer is successful the skeletons will stop appearing, though the existing ones will continue fighting until destroyed.

**OPTION:** The cleric responsible for stopping the swell of undead receives a powerful vision, perhaps during sleep. This vision spells out a very specific quest the party must endeavor to complete in order to appease the ancient powers. This could mean retrieving the remains of some dead that were misplaced or buried in the wrong place. It could require a quest to find an ancestor to come and bless the hill again. Or it could be as simple as fixing the disturbed graves.

2. The party can leave the hill. The undead will follow only to the edge of the site, where they will stand guard until dawn, then return to their slumber. Entering the site again will not trigger the spell but disturbing the graves a second time will cause the same effect.

3. The PCs can undo the damage to the best of their abilities. Even if this means chucking dirt back onto the tombs with their bare hands, the act of doing it will appease the powers in 1d4 rounds and no more skeletons will rise after that point.

4. If the party enters the Broken Tomb in Part Two and moves into Area 2 the skeletons will not follow. They cannot enter the ancient temple. But they will wait until daylight before returning to their graves.

No treasure can be won battling the skeletons. They are ancient dead, mostly brittle or incomplete, carrying rusted blades, sticks, rocks, and whatever is lying around.

## THE BROKEN TOMB

The blood trail left by O'Noggin leads to an open tomb about 100' from the road. This tomb is marked by the largest of the standing stones. PCs will find this tomb after about 1d6 turns even without following the blood trail if they simply look around. See Part Two.

## RANDOM ENCOUNTERS ON THE HILL

As the PCs top the hill and discover the body the sun will be just sinking over the horizon. In Hill Country the sun sets about 30 minutes earlier than in flat areas.

For every 20 minutes the PCs remain on the road near the body there is a 25% chance of a random encounter. If there is an encounter roll 1d6 and see below. Do not use an

encounter more than once. If the PCs linger on the surface of Howler Hill more than an hour it will be dark and they should be aware that their activities will draw the attention of the Sticktooth goblins that dwell in the wilder areas of Hill Country just north of Howler Hill. For every 15 minutes they remain on the face of the Hill past the first hour there is a 50% chance of attracting a party of 3d4 goblins, increasing to 4d4 after the first attack.

**Goblins of the Sticktooth Clan (3-12):** AC 6; MV 60'; HD 1-1; hp 3; #AT 1 (50% short bow, 50% club); D 1d4+poison (bow only) or 1d6-1 (club); Int Low; AL CE; Size S

Sticktooth goblins, being smaller than typical goblins, use very small short bows that do 1-4 damage (creatures larger than Small have -4 to hit when using them). The poison arrows are dipped in bear dung. A save vs. Poison negates the effect, otherwise a hit PC will take an additional 1 damage every turn until the save is made.

### 1-2: Vulture Attack

A wake of 1d6+2 vultures begins to circle. Within 5 minutes a very large vulture will descend and attempt to chase the PCs away. Its only interest is feeding on the corpse. It will flee upon taking more than 3 points of damage. If the PCs linger, the huge vulture will return for a second attempt. If it is injured again it will flee and not return. None of the other birds are a threat. But the presence of the vultures will cue the band of goblins listed below that will show up in 10 minutes regardless of random encounter rolls.

**Huge Vulture:** AC 5; MV 30'/360'; HD 2; hp 8; #AT 3; 1d4/1d4/2; Int Animal; AL N; Size S

8 hp ○○○○○○○○

### 3-4: Sticktooth Goblin Bandits

A band of 7 goblin scouts spots the PCs from the base of the hill. They split into two groups with group A approaching the party from the south side and group B circling the bottom of the hill and approaching from the north. Group A will attempt to sneak up to within 100' and begin firing arrows at the party (-2 to hit at 100', +0 at 50'). The goblins will use the standing stones as cover (25%, -2 to AC). If the PCs do not declare that they are keeping watch they will suffer a -2 on their surprise roll. There is a 50% chance that the wind will blow the goblin's fetid scent uphill towards the PCs. In that case, the PCs have a +1 to their surprise roll.

Group B, led by a bigger, stronger goblin named Brash, will sneak up the other side of the hill in exactly the same manner, but they will attempt to ambush the party while the PCs are being attacked from the other side. If the PCs are engaged in combat with Group A they suffer a -4 penalty to their surprise roll against Group B.

**Goblins (3), Group A:** AC 6; MV 60'; HD 1-1; hp 2, 3, 4; #AT 1; D 1d4 (very short bow); SA Poison; Int Avg (low); AL CE; Size S

2 hp ○○ 3 hp ○○○ 4 hp ○○○○

The arrows are tipped with bear dung poison as described above.

**Goblins (3), Group B:** AC 6; MV 60'; HD 1; hp 4, 4, 5; #AT 1; D 1d6 (short sword); Int Avg (low); AL CE; Size S

4 hp ○○○○ 4 hp ○○○○

5 hp ○○○○○

**Brash the Goblin Raider:** AC 5; MV 60'; HD 1+1; hp 7; #AT 1; D 1d6 (hand axe); Int Avg; AL CE; Size S

7 hp ○○○○○○○

All the goblins wear ragtag leather armor bearing the Sticktooth emblem. Brash, the goblin leader, wears a brass **ring of protection +1**. The ring looks old and cracked. Unless the party has a **detect magic** they might simply toss it to the side. All together the goblins possess their weapons (which are in ill repair and worthless), their ratty armor, some nasty smelling dried meat, a small pouch of bear dung, and 1d6+3 cp.

### 5: Cursed Coyotes

A pack of cursed coyotes, smelling the body, come to feed. These creatures are like normal coyotes but they have pitch black eyes due to a dark enchantment laid upon them by a local witch who is no longer in her mortal coil. The pack itself emanates **fear**, per the spell, once per day (treat as 2<sup>nd</sup> level caster). They will use this power immediately if the PCs stand between them and the body of O'Noggin. The pack is 5 members strong. Losing a member reduces the effectiveness of the **fear**, granting +2 on saving throws to resist. Losing more than 1 member negates the ability entirely. The pack is ravenous and unafraid and will attack if the PCs try to prevent it from feeding. The creatures will not attack or pursue if they are left to feed.

If Brash and his goblins have not come yet the sounds of the coyote pack will draw them within 10 minutes.

**Cursed Coyotes (5):** AC 7; MV 150'; HD 1+1; hp 3, 4, 5, 7, 9; #AT 1; D 1d4+1; SA **fear**; Int Animal; AL N; Size S

3 hp ○○○ 4 hp ○○○○

5 hp ○○○○○ 7 hp ○○○○○○○

9 hp ○○○○○○○○○

## 6: Drunken Ogre

Rorkker the drunken ogre happens to be stumbling across the hill toward his cave in the nearby forest singing an ogre song. Upon seeing the PCs he will take a giant swig of his whiskey, throw the empty jug against a standing stone, and rage into battle with a giant “Woooooo!” battle cry.

Due to his inebriation he has a -3 to all attack rolls but gains +2 to any saving throws vs. illusions or charms. Rorkker wields a club in battle that is banded with spiked iron giving him a +1 to damage. It is a rather small club for his size but he thinks it is just awesome. If he rolls a natural 17 or better on a hit he has hooked the target on the iron spikes and will fling it against the nearest standing stone. Such hapless characters must make a save vs. paralysis or be knocked prone for 1 round. Rorkker carries a sack with some animal bones, a rusty knife, and a lovely golden **ring of feather falling** with a small sapphire inset (it still has some dried blood on it, presumably belonging to the former owner).

If any PC attempts to appeal to the ogre’s drunken sensibilities, such as by singing a really inappropriate limerick or offering the monster more to drink, he might be momentarily satiated (+20% Reaction Bonus, +40% if a female dwarf does the singing). If he is distracted and someone can hit him on the head for at least 4 points of damage he will be rendered unconscious for 2d4 turns. If he is hit on the head from behind he will be knocked out regardless of damage.

**Rorkker the Drunken Ogre:** AC 7 (drunken); MV 90’; HD 4+1; hp 15; #AT 1; SA hook and slam (save vs. paralysis or be knocked prone for 1 round); D 1d6+4; Int Avg (low); AL CE; Size L

15 hp ○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○



## PART 2: THE BROKEN TOMB

*A large tombstone bearing the swirls and crescent moons typical of the region stands here. In its shadow is a root-ridden old stairway leading down into the earth. Peering into the dimness you see that the stairs end only about ten feet down where they meet an earthen floor. The smell coming from the hole is that of an old cellar, long abandoned. Here and there you see the shattered remains of skeletons as if some battle had recently taken place.*

The entrance to this tomb was once covered by a great stone, which has been recently moved to the side, revealing the earthen, root-flanked steps. There are many skeletons and random bones scattered around the steps.

The bones lying around are from a wave of skeletons that were automatically summoned when the crypt was recently opened. The Howler, a creature that seeks out tombs in which to live, tripped the ancient protective spell described in the previous section and was able to vanquish the skeletons that arose to destroy it. This fact is to the PCs’ advantage because the Howler is weakened from that fight as well as its encounter with O’Noggin and Calibrin.

### FINDING STUFF IN THE TOMB

Every room in the tomb is a mess of broken stone, mold, and spider webs. It is completely dark so PCs will have to light torches or use some other light source.

The whole place should feel and smell like an old cellar. To drive this point home, any PC with a Constitution score less than 8 needs to pass a save vs. poison or have a harsh immune response that includes an annoying headache and random sneezing (25% chance of sneezing in any given situation). A sneeze after Area 3 has a 50% chance of alerting the Howler.

Because the Howler eats the magic of items but leaves the items intact it tends to simply drop its “food” when finished. In any given chamber within the tomb the PCs will find *something*. When they look around, roll 1d4 to determine how many objects are found then roll 1d20 and check the list below. Some items can only be found one time, as indicated. The others can repeat, though you should embellish some details to make each find a little bit different.

**1. Find only once:** O’Noggin’s longsword. It has runes along its blade and a moon motif on the pommel and was also a gift from the elves. If any party member has arcane knowledge he will deduce that the sword was once enchanted but now the magic is gone.



2. 1d10 gp.

3. Roll 1d4. 1 = a shovel; 2 = dagger hilt; 3 = broken lantern; 4 = damaged short sword.

4. A golden ring worth 2 gp.

5. **Find only once:** A leather boot with leaf patterns. Any elf looking at the boot will know it to be from a pair of **boots of elvenkind**, though the magic is gone. If, by some strange twist of fate, the PC finds or has an odd **boot of elvenkind** and puts both boots on they will both be fully functional.

6. 1d10 arrows, 1d4 of them broken.

7. A necklace with a wolf's head emblem worth 2d4 sp.

8. An emerald-crested silver dagger worth 40 gp.

9. Roll 1d4. 1 = short sword; 2 = hand axe; 3 = 1d4 caltrops; 4 = long sword.

10. **Find only once:** An axe that looks like that of a woodsman but is actually a hefty battle axe.

11. **Find only once:** A little brass figure of a pony about 3" tall. This was never a magic pony and is only worth a few cp as a child's toy.

12. **Find only once:** A scroll in a scroll case. Curiously, it is blank. A magic-user passing an Intelligence check will determine that the scroll once contained a number of spells and now they are somehow gone, though not actually used.

13. **Find only once:** Small holy symbol of a dwarven deity made of wood and brass worth 2 sp. The deity, known as Old Hoar Beard, is in the form of a rotund, naked, male dwarf.

14. 1d4 chewed up ears of corn. Curiously chewed.

15. 1d6 rusty steel coins that resemble the silver coinage of a nearby city but are clearly fraudulent.

16. A horse shoe.

17. 1d20+20 feet of rope (25% chance of breaking if used).

18. A lantern with enough oil for 1d4 turns of light.

19. A torch (50% chance of being wet or too damp to light).

20. **Find only once:** A scroll with a map showing the Howler Hill area. An "x" marks the location of the tomb

the PCs are currently in. Scrawled next to it in some red ink (ink?) are the words "burn and seal up". On the north side of the hill is another "x" marked by a particular standing stone and the words "could not open" written next to it.

Many of these items were once magical as a magic-user passing a simple Intelligence check will note. Their magic is now gone. They do, however, function perfectly well as normal items. The mystery location marked on the map described in #20 could be another ancient temple ruin to explore and is left for the game master to develop as desired.

## AREA 1: THE BURIAL CHAMBER

*The steps lead down to a square burial chamber. The floor of this dark room is nearly covered with bones. The walls are nondescript stone covered with spider webs and cracked with time.*

This area contains what is left of the grave's occupants. A large pile of bones is scattered across the floor. The PCs can see at least 20 skulls in the mix. Bodies would have been placed here wrapped in ceremonial garb but otherwise left to decompose, thus the scattered remains.

In the rear, southern corner of the room the stone wall is shattered. This reveals an older tunnel that goes down at an incline ending in Area 2, which is roughly one level below the burial chamber.

Casual observers, particularly dwarves, might notice that the stonework revealed by the crumbling areas of the chamber walls is of a different, older style of construction featuring various moon and star patterns.

The incline leads to an old temple associated with the worship of a long-forgotten moon goddess. In those days the temple had a prominent entrance on the face of Howler Hill. The standing stones are much older than the tombs that lie beneath them. Their original construction and purpose was in service to a moon goddess whose name is long forgotten.

The Howler has recently broken through the wall leading to Area 2; the opening was probably a small crack when it arrived.

## AREA 2: THE PURIFICATION ROOM

*The short, dank passage leads down a relatively steep incline ending in an oblong room decorated with moons and stars. The ceiling, covered in cobwebs and mold, once boasted an ornate map of the night sky. In the center of the room is an oval basin in the floor that looks like it might have been a shallow ceremonial pool. A few skeletal remains are scattered here and there. The pool contains a few inches of water.*



**NOTE:** If the PCs are carrying any sort of magic item there is a 25% chance the Howler will detect the magic as soon as they enter this chamber.

This room is about twice the size of the burial chamber. It was once used for purification rituals in an ancient religion. There is nothing of value in this room though some of the friezes lining the walls appear to have once been decorated with gems and golden embellishments. Apparently this place has been robbed once or twice.

There is a basin in the middle of the room with a few inches of water in it. The basin is roughly 6' long, 4' wide, and the rim is 1' high. It is oval in shape. It's southern end has a tiny opening a few inches from the bottom through which water slowly trickles. There are cracks in the bottom of the basin through which, apparently, the water leaks. Anyone accustomed to being in the wilds will recognize that small critters have lived here, or still do. A search will reveal very small tunnels leading out of the room through broken parts of the floor and walls. These are animal tunnels and contain neither danger nor treasure. Even small PCs such as halflings will be too large to fit into any of these tunnels.

A passage leads out of the north wall. The ornate door once covering this opening lies atop a heap of bones where it fell long ago. If anyone lifts or moves the door they will be attacked by a rather large black spider that was minding its own business. The spider is about the size of a well-fed house cat.

**Large Black Spider:** AC 6; MV 60'/150'; HD 1+1; hp 4; #AT 1; D 1d4; SA venom; Int Animal; AL N; Size S

4 hp ○○○○

This spider has a more robust venom than others of a similar kind but a save vs. Poison will negate its effects (no bonus to the save as with other large spiders). Bitten creatures failing the save will take an additional 1d4 damage on the following round after which the venom will cause no more harm.

A battle with the spider will attract its companion hiding in one of the small animal holes. It will quickly rush out and chomp on the nearest PC.

**Large Black Spider #2:** AC 6; MV 60'/150'; HD 1+1; hp 5; #AT 1; D 1d4; SA venom; Int Animal; AL N; Size S

5 hp ○○○○○

There is an ivory inlay on the back of the door in the shape of a moon. It is a lovely piece that would fetch about 10gp as an art object. But the moon is actually a good luck charm (detectable by **detect magic** spells). The PC carrying it will gain +1 on all saving throws until 20 saving throws have been made at which point the luck is depleted. The magic of this

item is of a divine nature, which the Howler cannot detect. Any PC of evil alignment will find that the moon brings the opposite effect, giving them -1 on all saving throws.

### AREA 3: HALLWAY OF THE PENITENT

*The passageway before you stretches out into darkness. The passage is only wide enough for two people to walk abreast and the walls, though partially overtaken by earth, still show their ornate reliefs...images of animal sacrifice and cultish worship. Earthworms can be seen wriggling here and there, often crawling out of the eye sockets of the occasional skull*

This is a long passage that the priests used to walk as they went to take care of their temple rites. The cult of the goddess had many enemies so an elaborate trap system was installed along the hallway walls. Only true clerics of the temple knew the method for passing through the hall untouched.

There are small, dart-sized holes in the wall lined up with some of the eyes of figures depicted in the reliefs. Any PC doing a cursory inspection of the hall will be able to notice these holes on a successful Intelligence check. A thief who is aware of these holes gets +20% to his find traps check. Just inside the passage on both sides of the hall are hidden kill switches that will disable the traps (revealed by a successful find traps roll). The switch on the right side will disable the traps on the right side of the hall and the one on the left will do the same for traps on that side. But these switches are located on the ceiling (about 15' high) and are well hidden. The clerics of the temple used a long pole to turn the traps on and off when necessary. If the thief can find a way to reach the switches his disarm traps roll gets a +50% bonus.

The trap shoots poisoned darts out of the randomly-placed holes in the wall when pressure is placed on the right stones in the floor. The pattern is very complex, appearing to be random. A thief making a successful disarm traps roll can deduce the pattern and safely traverse the corridor without actually disarming the traps. He can teach this pattern to the other PCs but they must pass an Intelligence check to understand the pattern and avoid stepping in the wrong places.

The holes are randomly placed, sometimes at the level of a human head, other times as low as an ankle. There are 1d4 holes for every 5' of hallway, divided randomly between left and right. Most of the traps have been sprung and never reset. But if the PCs walk down the hall without disarming the traps or figuring out the pattern there is a 25% chance per 5' of 1d4 PCs being shot by a dart. A dart does no actual damage but does carry a poisoned tip. A failed saving throw vs. aimed items means the PC isn't hit. If it, the PC takes 1d4 damage each turn unless she makes a successful save vs. poison (save ends).

Randomly determine if a triggered dart came from the left or right side of the passage. If the PCs trip a dart on the right side of the hall the Howler will be alerted to their presence. If they do not trip any darts or if they trip a dart from the left hand side, the Howler will remain in Area 6, sleeping after its meal of the magical armor of Gundrin O’Noggin.

About 5’ from the end of the hall the PCs will notice a slumped figure. This is the companion of Gundrin O’Noggin, Rains Calibrin. Rains has unfortunately been poisoned by the darts as well as by the Howler and he is dying. A healing spell or potion administered within one minute of finding him will stabilize Rains to 1 hp, but he will remain paralyzed from the waist down for 24 hours.

Rains will be delusional and feverish. If the Howler was alerted by the PCs making noise or the detection of magic items it will be hiding on the ceiling in Area 4 just above the doorway, which is only about 5’ from Rains Calibrin. On a 1-in-4 Rains notices the creature moving into ambush position and will try to alert the PCs. His ramblings will be wild and inarticulate but he will fix his gaze clearly toward the top of the doorway.

Otherwise, he will chatter like a complete nutter, speaking of the “shadow of death” and the “thing that eats all things”. If no healing is given to him within one minute he will die in 1d4 rounds. During that time, if pressed for information, he will say one thing from the list below per round until dead. Roll 1d6 to see what Rains has to say.

1. “The fingers that eat! The skull face that howls!”
2. “I had a friend and his name was Noggin. O’Noggin.”
3. “It drooled over my friend’s elven armor! Like it was looking at a meal. Sucked it dry! The elves are pretty.”
4. “Curses are upon us! We are all doomed!”
5. “You die as you live.”
6. “I...I have soiled myself and I am sorry for many things I did in life...I want my pony.”

Rains is wearing leather armor in poor repair and rough, dirty clothes...pants, boots, shirt, a dirty old cloak. In his pocket is a set of thieves’ tools. He clutches his dagger with white knuckled hands. Inside his shirt is a pocket containing 3 gp...his only earthly wealth. Rains and O’Noggin were both in the local army that fought the Shekeltooth goblins out of the area. But while O’Noggin went on to be a respected warrior Rains became something of a purse-snatcher and ale-guzzler.

**NOTE:** If you feel that Rains would be a necessary benefit to the party, being a 2<sup>nd</sup> level Thief, then you can allow a healing spell or potion to completely restore him. If no such healing is available simply state that he is frozen in fear and let him snap out of it upon being found. In this case, assume he has minor wounds and is at 5 hp. Full stats for Rains are given in Part 4.



## AREA 4: CHAMBER OF DREAMS

*The hallway ends and a short set of stairs lead down a few feet to a very large worship chamber. This appears to be the primary place of worship and reverence for the cult of the goddess. There is a pile of rubble against the wall opposite the hallway that appears to have once been a great statue, perhaps of the local goddess. You can still see her ornate hair carved from stone lying in ruin amid broken rubble and bones. The bronze braziers arranged around the room's walls are mostly overturned, some of them housing nests of small furry creatures that scatter as you enter.*

**NOTE:** As soon the PCs enter this room there is a 50% chance the Howler will notice their entry and a 75% chance it will detect any magic items they are carrying.

The room's ceiling is about 30' high and features the same star map design as was seen in Area 2. Living on the ceiling are 4 more Large spiders. These animals will not attack a full party but might drop down to take a bite out of a single PC who wanders away from the group (75% chance). With torches, the party can spot the spiders easily if they examine the ceiling. If attacked, the creatures will attempt to flee into Area 5. If cornered they will fight.

**Large Black Spiders (4):** AC 6; MV 60'/150'; HD 1+1; hp 4, 4, 5, 5; #AT 1; D 1d4; SA venom; Int Animal; AL N; Size S

4 hp ○○○○○○ 4 hp ○○○○○○

5 hp ○○○○○○

5 hp ○○○○○○

These animals are identical to the ones in Area 2 with the exception of their hit points.

The room has bones and random rubble scattered around much like the other rooms. There is nothing of interest on the statue but a battered medium shield can be found among the broken stones. The shield bears a leaf and grasshopper motif. This symbol was used for the ragtag local army that drove out the Shekeltooth goblins.

There are 8 brass braziers remaining in this room, though there used to be more. Each is about 6' tall and weighs 200 lbs. The braziers are placed above small holes in the floor that feed a fairly innocuous natural gas through holes in the braziers. Through some fairly innovative design, the braziers, when not lit, do not allow the gas to escape into the chamber. However, at least one of them has been recently knocked over in the northwestern part of the room. If a torch or any other open flame is carried within 5' of the toppled brazier the gas will catch on fire in a sudden burst. Anyone standing next to the brazier must save vs. Dragon Breath or take 1d6 fire damage. Anyone standing between 5' and 15' must also

make the save, but with a +2 to the roll and only 1d4 damage upon failing. Once lit, the hole in the floor will continue to burn in a 3' tall flame that illuminates 80' of space. Any other braziers that are lit will illuminate 60' of area (a torch illuminates 40').

The two braziers at the northwest corner of the room are home to a couple of red death spinners (see Appendix for full description). The creatures possess Intelligence higher than animal, making them cunning, more adaptive, and more tactical in their thinking. The pair like to team up on prey, normally issuing their web abilities immediately and then sharing the meal.

If the party is fewer than 4 strong the spiders will attempt to attack them. If the party is larger than that the spiders will actually choose to hide atop their respective braziers and not risk death. If disturbed, they will fight.

**Red Death Spinners (2):** AC 6; MV 60'/150'; HD 1+2; hp 5, 7; #AT 1; D 1d4+1; SA venom; Int 4; AL NE; Size S

5 hp ○○○○○○ 7 hp ○○○○○○○○

Creatures bitten by a spinner must save vs. poison each round for 1d4 rounds or take 1d4 damage from being poisoned.

On the southwest wall is the doorway to Area 5. The stone door is broken and leaning against the wall so that the doorway is only partially blocked. Any PCs can easily step into the chamber.

On the southeast wall is the door to Area 6, which is closed but not locked. The upper half of the door is broken and the Howler tends to enter and exit through the broken section along the ceiling. If the PCs open the door the Howler will immediately wake up and move into position on the ceiling to ambush them. It will be slumbering in the broken sarcophagus described in Area 6. A PC standing at the broken door has a 25% chance of catching a glimpse of the creature scurrying up the wall into the darkness.

## AREA 5: CLERICS' QUARTERS

*This long, narrow chamber appears to have once been sleeping quarters. Cut into the west wall are several bunks. The east wall, to the left, is undecorated but has two visible alcoves.*

The floor of this long chamber is littered with bones, debris, and some mushrooms. The mushrooms are small and dotted with brown spots. They are not attractive and do not smell good. A ranger, druid, or elf passing either an Intelligence or Wisdom check (+2 to ability) will be able to identify these as so-called "lucky hats". It is said that eating them brings you good luck and makes you feel better.



Any other PC hailing from the area can make an Intelligence check to identify the fungi but they must roll under half their Int score to be successful.

If a character eats one of them have the player make a save vs. poison, adding the PC's Constitution modifier. If the save fails then the PC gets a belly ache but nothing more will happen. On a successful save the PC gains a temporary ability score boost (Enchantment) for 1d4 hours.

Roll 1d6 to determine which ability gets the temporary increase.

<u>DIE ROLL</u>	<u>ABILITY BOOST</u>
1	+1 to Strength
2	+2 to Dexterity
3	+1 to Intelligence
4	+2 to Wisdom
5	+1 to Constitution
6	+2 to Charisma

PCs can gather 1d10 usable mushrooms. They will remain potent for up to 1 year as long as they are kept in a dry, closed area such as a pouch or sealed container. Only one mushroom will take affect at the same time. Eating a second one will simply negate the first one.

Along the east wall is the access to the poison dart traps that line the walls of Area 3. There are two recesses in this wall that open to a sort of crawlspace about 3' wide running along the corridor of Area 3. In this space are the various levers and pulleys that operate the system. To the casual observer it looks quite complex but in ill repair. Any PC trained in machinery, traps, or military affairs will determine that all the traps along the middle and lower portion have been sprung while there are still several traps in the upper area, about head-level for a human. There is a kill-switch located in this crawlspace and a thief can find and use it on a single successful disarm traps roll (+20%). This will disarm all traps along the western wall.

Any non-thief PC attempting to figure this out and activate the kill-switch has a 10% chance.

Make a standard roll to determine what kind of junk can be found on the floor of this room. In addition to these items the PCs will find a quality short bow made of an unknown, lightweight wood of a slightly blueish color. Any elf examining the bow will recognize it as elven handiwork. Any elf from Hill Country or nearby will recognize the material as a rare and magical wood called *ellysi*. Rangers and druids will also know this on a successful Int or Wis check. Any other PC from the area will recognize the wood by passing an Int check at half their ability score.

The bow has no magic. The *ellysi*, though still strong and light, has been robbed of its magical properties. The string is broken, but the bow can be re-strung and used as a normal short bow.

Those who recognize the *ellysi* will know that it is a rare and valuable material and will fetch a nice price, magical or not. If the bow is taken to an elven wizard with the proper skills to create or repair magic items it can be easily restored and will then function as a **bow of clairvoyance** (see Appendix). The cost to do this will be about 5000 gp.

## AREA 6: THE HOWLER'S LAIR

***A large room opens before you, its walls completely covered with moon and star symbols. The floor just inside the door is charred as if something was burned on the spot. In the back of the room you can see what looks like three stone sarcophagi on a raised platform.***

This very large room is the final resting place of the ancient cult's most revered priestesses, and it also happens to be the preferred lair of the Howler. Like all the other rooms it is littered with bones and broken stone.

Searching this room will reveal the following items in random places on the floor. Most of these were once magical but no longer carry any enchantment.

1. A longsword with an impressive golden eagle pommel with ruby eyes. It is worth 50+2d8 gp.
2. A set of two twin daggers with evil looking skulls on the hilts. These are worth about 10 gp for the set.
3. A helmet with a bull emblem worth 2 gp.
4. A thick iron rod with six stud-like buttons along its length and a flanged ball at one end. Worth a few gp to the untrained eye, but possibly worth much more to a learned collector.
6. A pile of 5 rings of various colors and designs worth 1d4 gp each.
7. An assortment of coins scattered here and there, totaling about 6d6 gp.

Most of the room is just an open space much like Area 4. But in the southern end of the room on a raised platform are three stone sarcophagi. At the northern end of each coffin is an inscription written in an ancient language. A thief familiar with the area gets a +15% on his read languages roll to attempt a translation. This is not a magical language.

The top portion of each inscription reads:

***Here lies she who is named below. Speak not her name,***

*but cherish her spirit.*

**NOTE:** Reading the name off one of the sealed coffins will awaken the hill mummy inside. This can be a significantly dangerous encounter for new PCs as discussed shortly.

Beneath each inscription is a name. “Ruella” on the coffin to the west, “Zullela” on the middle coffin, and “Allor” on the coffin to the east.

The middle one is smashed open. It is empty except for some of the tattered debris from the Howler’s wrappings. The creature often slumbers in this empty vessel. Inside can be found a gold ring. It is engraved with the name Zellula, written in something like the common. This is the name of the priestess once buried here. It has no magic anymore but was once a **ring of jumping**.

The burnt patch near the door is where Zellula was burnt when she arose many years ago as a mummy. If the PCs wish to investigate the other two sarcophagi see the section following the description of the Howler.

The Howler might be encountered in any of the other chambers if it detected magic. If it is still in this chamber, upon hearing the PCs entering the room, it quickly moves from the middle coffin to the ceiling in an ambush position. If this is the case it should be fairly easy for the PCs to spot it.

**The Howler:** AC 4; MV 120’/120’ (wall and ceiling climbing); HD 5+2; hp 18 (29 max) ; #AT 1; D 1d6+1; SA poison (1d4 additional damage per round until dead, save ends, dwarves immune); Int Avg; AL CE; Size Man

18 hp ○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○

This creature stands about 4’ tall and is a hunched, gaunt, nearly skeletal entity wrapped head to toe in rags and cloth of various types. If it were able to stand fully upright it would be the size of a typical human male. Its face, which is not wrapped, appears to be that of a withered corpse with an exaggerated mouth. It is, however, not undead and is not subject to any of the weaknesses unique to such creatures. But the rags, which it uses to hide its monstrous body, are very flammable. Attacking the creature with fire has a 25% chance of engulfing it in flame, causing 1d6 damage per round. If set on fire, the monster will immediately try to run to Area 2 and douse itself in the shallow pool of water located there.

The monster attacks with its long, sharp fingers, using them as slashing weapons. Anyone hit must save vs. Poison or take an additional 1d4 damage per round until dead (save ends). Dwarves are completely immune to this poisonous effect. The Howler itself is immune to all forms of poison.



The monster is very quiet when not feeding. It moves at a normal pace making very little sound though walking with a lurching gait. It can walk or crawl up walls and across ceilings as easily as walking across the floor. It can leap upward (up to 20’) and latch onto the ceiling.

When it feeds on magic it howls very loudly. Creatures within 20’ of the howling sound must save vs. paralysis or be paralyzed with fear for 1 round (this affect only happens once per target). As it feeds, the Howler’s eyes, normally black as pitch, glow bright blue and light up a cone extending out 50’ with a width of 100’ at its terminal end.

The creature feeds by touching magic items with its long, distorted fingers. This is a basic attack roll against the AC of the person carrying the item. On a hit, the item permanently loses a +1 from its modifier. If the item has additional modifiers from special abilities (such as being +1 normally but +2 vs. a particular type of enemy) the +1 drain should come from the overall sum of bonuses, determined randomly. In other words, 50% of the time it will come from the primary bonus and 50% of the time from the secondary bonus. As long as any bonuses remain, the item still functions to the degree its bonuses indicate. If it has no modifier then it will lose all its magic. The item will remain fully functional as a normal item. If it maintains any bonuses it will still function as a magic item, but at the reduced level.

The creature will heal 1d6 hp per successful drain attack *and* it will gain 1 additional permanent hit point. If the item drained had no bonuses the creature gains no additional hit points and actually suffers 1d4 damage, reeling backward in pain. In such a case, the item is still drained of its magic. Though the creature can detect magic with 100% accuracy within 50' it cannot determine the nature of the magic and will not know if an item is appropriate to feed its needs or not.

The Howler will always attempt to drain the magic items if it has the chance. It has no ability to resist this temptation and will pursue magic items even at great risk. It will hide in its lair in area 6 until disturbed or until it detects the presence of magic.

The Howler can also "eat" magic spells as they are being cast. If the Howler's action takes place on a segment of the round during the casting of a spell the caster must make a save vs. spells or his spell is interrupted and ruined. The Howler will then heal or gain 1d4 hit points.

This effect does not work on cleric spells or other divine magic and the Howler has no ability to drain or detect magic of this kind.

If the creature is at full hit points it can still gain additional temporary hit points from draining magic items. These hp will naturally fade away at a rate of 1 per hour until the monster is back to its full, permanent hit point total.

The monster will defend itself savagely if attacked. If the PCs have no magic and do not notice the monster it will attempt to simply hide from them...which it does with the same skill as a 10<sup>th</sup> level thief.

If the monster is reduced to less than 5 hp it will attempt to flee the tomb and make its way to the forest on the west side of the hill. It will hide there until it thinks the threat has passed. It will then try to find a new lair on Howler Hill but will avoid the Broken Tomb.

If the creature is destroyed it will erupt in a sudden, violent burst of blue flame, bathing everything within a 10' radius with magical energy. This has two distinct effects.

**Effect One:** The creature will lock eyes with one of the PCs and in that moment the PC will gain knowledge of the Howler's story as if by some form of clairvoyance. If you do not plan to follow-up on this adventure then simply pick a PC and reveal whatever portion of the Howler's story you wish to reveal. If you want to let details from this adventure lead into a follow-up quest then this is an opportunity to seed the players with some details of the Howler's story that could lead to further adventures. For the latter option, determine the target PC randomly, then roll 1d6 and add the PC's Wisdom or Charisma modifier and refer to the table below.

The PC should know all details listed up to the die roll. So if a 3 is rolled the PC knows the items from 1-3. If a 6 is rolled the PC knows all the details on the table.

## HOWLER'S STORY DETAILS

<u>D6 DIE ROLL</u>	<u>EFFECT</u>
1-2	The monster was once a human wizard married to a local witch. Their home was within 10 miles of the Hill.
3	The witch used a powerful spell to curse her husband. There might be clues about the spell where the magical couple lived.
4	The couple possessed a collection of magic items. The wizard drained them. But a few of the items are of a divine nature and could not be consumed by his power.
5	There are a few spellbooks locked in chests in the couples' hidden workshop.
6	The home of the couple is about 8 miles west of Howler Hill. It is a quaint cottage nestled in a wooded valley. The entrance to the secret workshop is by a secret door hidden in the chimney. There is a serpent trained to dutifully watch over the workshop.

See **The Story of the Howler** below for more information. This strange transfer of information could be viewed as the monster's last gasp effort to retain some element of its former humanity.

**Effect Two:** The release of energy has the potential to cause random enchantments or alter existing enchantments on items. Some items might become magical; others might regain their magic or be altered in some way.

Roll 1d4 for each character within the affected area to determine how many of their possessions may have been altered. Each item has a 50% chance of being altered. Determine which items are affected however you wish.

**NOTE:** As an option you could make saving throws for each item using whichever saving throw makes sense to you. If the save is made, the item is unaffected. Obviously the 50% method is faster and simpler but using saving throws lends more crunch to the process.



If an item is affected roll on the appropriate table below (Weapons/Armor or Items). Certain items that may have been found in the adventure have their own special table. When you select the items to roll for you should consider not only their utility (everyone can use a magic sword or ring) but also the novelty of the item. How interesting would it be if a simple leather sack that wasn't even written on a character sheet becomes a *magical* leather sack?

**NOTE:** The addition of magic items can seriously impact your ongoing campaign so make sure to evaluate these lists beforehand and rule out anything you feel would cause a problem in your game.

## SPECIAL ITEMS FOUND IN TOMB

<b>Longsword with eagle pommel</b>	Sword becomes +1 and grants user +2 to Cha while being wielded or held in hand (unsheathed).
<b>Helmet with bull emblem</b>	Helm becomes +1 affecting the wearer's AC per any +1 magical armor.
<b>Iron rod with six buttons</b>	Rod vibrates madly for a few seconds; then it shortens a bit and a sword blade juts from the end. It is now a <b>+1 flame blade</b> and will not change again no matter how hard you press the buttons.
<b>Twin skull daggers</b>	Roll 1d6 for each dagger. On a 1 the dagger becomes +2, on a 2-3 the dagger is +1, on 4-6 the dagger becomes -1. The daggers must be used together, one per hand, or they function as -3 weapons all the time.
<b>Zellula's ring</b>	Restored to a <b>ring of jumping</b> (wearer gains ability to <b>jump</b> , per the magic-user spell, 3 times per day as a 1 <sup>st</sup> level caster).
<b>Ruella's ring</b>	Loses its jumping power and becomes a cursed ring that causes -1 to all saves until <b>remove curse</b> is cast on it. PC owning it cannot get rid of it. It takes on the distinct aroma of spoiled milk until the curse is lifted.
<b>Allor's ring</b>	Keeps its jumping power and grants wearer ability to detect undead exactly like the spell <b>detect evil</b> 3 times per day.
<b>Gundrin O'Noggin's longsword</b>	Roll 1d6. On 1-4, sword becomes +1, on 5-6 it becomes +2. In either case the moon pommel has a 50% chance of glowing softly when chaotic evil creatures are within a 50' radius.
<b>Leather boot</b>	Nothing seems to happen. But if this boot is ever paired with an odd boot of any kind the two will become a handsome pair of <b>boots of levitation</b> .
<b>Brass pony</b>	Transforms into an actual size brass pony: AC 4; MV 120'; HD 4+4; #AT 1 bite; D

1d6; Int Animal; AL N; Size L. This pony will be a loyal companion, pet, or mount for whoever possessed the figurine.

<b>Scroll</b>	Gains 1d6 random first level wizard spells written at caster level 1.
<b>Moon good luck charm</b>	The charm's luck power is extended to 50 uses.
<b>Ellysi bow</b>	Regains its status as a <b>bow of clairvoyance</b> .

## WEAPONS

<u>D6 DIE ROLL</u>	<u>EFFECT</u>
<b>1-2</b>	Weapon/Armor gains +1 bonus.
<b>3</b>	Weapon/Armor gains +3 bonus for 1d4 days, then becomes +1 permanently.
<b>4</b>	Weapon/Armor becomes -1 for 1d10 days, then becomes +1 permanently.
<b>5</b>	Weapon/Armor gains +1 bonus and 1 special ability from Items Table.
<b>6</b>	Weapon/Armor gains +2 bonus.

## ITEMS

<u>D12 DIE ROLL</u>	<u>EFFECT</u>
<b>1</b>	User gets +1 to save vs. Poison and Breath Weapon.
<b>2</b>	User gets +1 to save vs. Aimed Magic and Spells.
<b>3</b>	User gets +1 to all saves.
<b>4</b>	User gets +2 to a randomly-determined category of saves and +1 to all other saves.
<b>5</b>	User becomes more observant, gaining +10% on all searches and similar rolls.
<b>6</b>	User gains infravision, 40' or gains extra 40' to existing infravision.
<b>7</b>	Randomly determined single ability score of the user increases by 1.
<b>8</b>	Item absorbs 1d6 damage dealt to its user on any strike if worn, held, or displayed in the open (not in a

container). Item has 20 hp and self-repairs at a rate of 1 per day (no way to increase that rate). If item is reduced to zero hp it is destroyed and cannot be fixed.

9	Item glows on command as by the arcane spell <b>continual light</b> .
10	User gains <b>invisibility</b> , per the arcane spell (as 3 <sup>rd</sup> level caster), once per day.
11	User's AC is reduced by 1 due to an aura of magical protection.
12	User loses 1 from a randomly determined ability score permanently.



## THE STORY OF THE HOWLER

A wizard living not far from Howler Hill once fell in love with magic. He loved his magic so much his wife, also a skilled caster, grew jealous and cursed him. If it was magic he loved so much then it was magic he would require! From that day forward the old wizard *craved* magic as his only sustenance. He found that he could eat the spells from scrolls and consume the magic of rings and swords and that no other food or drink could satiate him. But over time this vampiric lifestyle twisted him beyond recognition. His body grew grotesque; he became like a gaunt skeletal beast, hunched over and walking with a painful gait. He began to wrap himself in strips of cloth and tattered garments to stave off the cold and cling to some vestige of humanity. His wife was

regretful of her decision and tried to cast a powerful spell to restore him. But his lust for the taste of magic was too strong. He turned on his once great love and destroyed her in the midst of casting the spell.

He lost all humanity that day and has since roamed the land seeking magic to sustain his unnatural cursed life.

## THE SARCOPHAGI OF THE PRIESTESSES

It is likely the PCs will want to investigate the sealed sarcophagi. If the PCs manage to translate the inscription on a coffin and read the name of its occupant aloud, the seal will immediately be broken with a sucking, popping sound. 1d4 rounds later the lid will be shoved off and the hill mummy inside it will rise. Without the clerics of the old faith to recite the proper prayers the mummy will become a raging undead monster.

If the PCs do not translate the inscriptions they can attempt to remove the lids anyway. The lids are sealed shut and cannot be budged by anyone with less than 19 Strength. Four characters with combined Strength scores of at least 50 or more can attempt to remove a lid. The PC with the highest Str score must pass a Major Tests roll with a +5% bonus per additional PC helping. If this roll fails they will be unable to remove the lid. A simple **knock** spell can make it so that a character with Strength 13 or greater can force a lid open on a Minor Test of Strength.

Any cleric of good alignment will know instinctively that this is a very bad idea. Such a PC will have the impression that removing a lid improperly will in fact raise a terrible evil. A paladin who understands this fact will go against his class and alignment by participating.

If a coffin lid is removed without having the name of the occupant read aloud there is only a 25% chance of the hill mummy rising. But this chance repeats every turn the PCs spend in the chamber with an unsealed sarcophagus.

Each mummy clutches a holy symbol, a short rod topped with a moon. These rods are made of *ellysi* wood and the moons are of silver. They function as normal holy symbols appropriate to any deity that uses a moon as part of its iconography. They also grant the user a +1 to all saves of a single type (determine randomly). The symbols of Ruella and Allor are with their owners but Zellula's is missing. Her symbol was stolen long ago and is currently in the possession of an old crone living in the nearby hills. The crone happens to be the only person in the area who actually knows about the ancient cult and is the only living person still worshipping the goddess.

Each mummy wears a **ring of jumping** identical to Zellula's ring, but bearing the name of the hill mummy to which it belongs.

Hill mummies are a bit slow, but the magic rings worn by these two let them do surprising leaps that will catch PCs off guard. The mummies are in poor condition and very ancient but still quite formidable. See the full description in the Appendix for more information.

**Ruella the Hill Mummy:** AC 5; MV 70'; HD 3+3; hp 13; #AT 2; D 1d6/1d6; SA fear, grab, rot (see appendix); Int Low; AL CE; Size Man

13 hp ○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○

**Allor the Hill Mummy:** AC 5; MV 70'; HD 3+3; hp 18; #AT 2; D 1d6/1d6; SA fear, grab, rot (see appendix); Int Low; AL CE; Size Man

18 hp ○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○

See the description of the hill mummy in the Appendix for details about special attacks and defenses.

The following items will be found in Ruella's coffin: A silver cup worth 30gp, a gold-dipped feather worth 15gp, and a magical **toe ring of sure-footedness** (wearer gains +1 to Dexterity and can re-roll a single saving throw per day that involves being knocked down, falling down, or falling off of some height).

These items will be found in Allor's coffin: A golden cup worth 60gp, a crescent moon made of bronze worth 2gp, and a magical **amulet of charm** (wearer gains +1 to Charisma and gets a re-roll once per day of any failed reaction roll).

## PART 3: COMPLETING THE ADVENTURE

Confronting the Howler is central to ending the adventure. The effect of destroying the monster, if the PCs manage to do it, could provide a great deal of follow-up considerations.



What items were affected by the creature's death? Were there any new magic items created or old ones diminished? Perhaps a quest to restore an important treasure is in order.

You can adjust the random magical effects of the Howler's death if you feel that the existing tables could upset the balance of your campaign. Magic items have a tendency to cause lots of ripples in an ongoing series of adventures. You might want to limit everything to a +1 bonus if adding more powerful items is of concern.

The potential battle with the mummies is not a necessary component of the adventure. If the PCs are too battered to survive such an encounter simply make it impossible for them to translate the inscriptions or open the sarcophagi. That could mean a follow-up adventure, returning to figure out what evils lurk inside those coffins. And perhaps by then the Sticktooth goblins will have moved into the broken tomb and set it up as their chieftain's new headquarters.

There is a map that might be found showing a mystery location on the north side of the hill. It could mean that the broken tomb is only a part of a larger, deeper temple complex. More temple diving could be in order!

## PART 4: SAMPLE CHARACTERS

The following pre-generated characters are suitable for use as starting PCs or as NPCs in this adventure.

### Dalthorian (male human magic-user, level 1)

AL LN, HP 3, AC 9 (magic ring)

Str 8, Dex 9, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 9, Cha 12

Languages spoken: Common, dwarvish, gnomish, goblin, elven, pixie, kobold.

Spells known: **magic missile**, **detect magic**, **magic aura**, **read magic** (select 1 spell to be memorized).

Equipment: Elegant red robes and fine traveling shoes, leather pouch with spellbook and components, **+1 staff**, **+1 ring of protection**, 16 gp.

Dalthorian is a man in his mid-30s with black hair and a black, well-trimmed mustache. He has signs of early aging brought on by his life of magical study. He is serious minded but not overly gruff. He is very interested in the legend of Howler Hill and what secrets can be learned from it.

### Seev (female elf fighter/magic-user, level 1/1)

AL NG, HP 6, AC 6 (armor, Dex, racial)

Str 14, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 17



Abilities: +1 surprise, +1 missile attack bonus, -2 to AC.

Languages spoken: Common, elven, gnoll, gnomish, goblin, halfling, hobgoblin, orcish.

Spells known: **jump, dancing lights, burning hands, read magic** (select 1 spell to be memorized).

Equipment: Traveling garb, leather boots, leather armor, satchel with spellbook, **+1 short bow** (total to hit bonus +3 due to Dex and racial), short sword, small mirror, spellbook, 9 gp.

Seev has 60' infravision.

Seev has lived her life on the road, traveling with her bard father. When he was recently killed by orcs she made a silent vow to spend her life battling all vile monsters. Seev has a nice singing voice and is accustomed to charming an audience.

### Faenhon Ulru (male dwarf cleric, level 1)

AL LG, HP 7, AC 6 (armor)

Str 12, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 8

Abilities: +2 hp/level

Languages spoken: Common, dwarfish, gnomish, goblin, kobold, and orcish.

Equipment: Scale armor, priestly robe of the dwarven gods, **+1 hammer** (also serves as holy item), oil.

Faenhon has +4 to all saving throws against poison and magic (racial), and he has 60' infravision.

Faenhon can cast 3 1<sup>st</sup> level spells. Spells usually prepared: **cure light wounds, detect evil, and light.**

This dwarf is robust and jovial, often laughing deeply at things no one else finds funny. He is dedicated to the goodly dwarven gods, doing deeds of good in their name. While disliking goblins in general, he is often amused by their ways.

### Muk Mannin (male human fighter, level 1)

AL CG, HP , AC 5 (armor)

Str 16, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 12

Languages spoken: Common, a little bit of goblin.

Equipment: **+1 bastard sword**, chain mail, rugged boots, a pouch of deer jerky spiced to the point of bringing tears, 18 sp.

Muk, the son of a local pig farmer who died in the battle against the Shekeltooth goblins, has no interest in farm animals. Upon inheriting his father's sword, which he lovingly calls "Destroyer" (with a slight smirk), he set out into the world to see what kind of trouble he could get into.

### Aluhla (female half-elf thief, level 1)

AL CN, HP 5, AC 4 (Dex and armor)

Str 9, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 10

Languages spoken: Common, elven, gnoll, gnome, goblin, halfling, hobgoblin, orcish.

Equipment: Green and black garb, **+1 leather armor, +1 dagger**, thieves' tools, 6 caltrops, 50' of rope, a wineskin with fine wine, and 6 gp.

Aluhla is a short, black-haired girl with a bit of a gruff demeanor. She is curt and sharp-tongued, often coming off as angry even when she is not. She prefers to use the shadows to slip past danger and avoids direct confrontation whenever possible. Her primary concern on any given day is treasure.

### Rains Calibrin (male human thief, level 2)

**NOTE:** Rains is an NPC from the adventure and can only be used as a PC with GM approval.

AL CN, HP 7, AC 8 (armor)

Str 12, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 9, Wis 9, Cha 13

Languages spoken: Common

Equipment: dagger, leather armor, boots and clothes, thieves tools, 3 gp.

Rains might have been a great man, perhaps a hero. But his selfish ways lead him down the path to petty thievery. Some thieves aspire to greatness, but Rains aspires to the next bottle of whiskey. Still, his experience in the goblin war makes him a cut above the norm.



## APPENDIX: NEW STUFF

### HILL MUMMY (Undead, turned as type 4)

<b>Frequency:</b>	Rare
<b>No. Appearing:</b>	2d4
<b>Size:</b>	Man-sized
<b>Move:</b>	70'
<b>Armor Class:</b>	5
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	3+3
<b>Attacks:</b>	2
<b>Damage:</b>	1d6
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	Fear, Grab, Rot
<b>Special Defenses:</b>	See below
<b>Magic Resistance:</b>	See below
<b>Lair Probability:</b>	80%
<b>Intelligence:</b>	Low (see below)
<b>Alignment:</b>	NE (see below)
<b>Level/XP:</b>	4/200+3/hp

Hill mummies are created by rural cults of various ancient deities in areas that lack the wealth and power necessary to create genuine mummies. These mummies can be worshiped and idolized or they can be used as guardians. If properly raised with the correct rites and rituals they maintain their original alignment and ability scores and can be consulted for wisdom or help. When raised in this manner they will only remain animated for 1 day per cleric level of the high priest or priestess that did the raising. After that point they return to their sarcophagus and slumber for at least one year before they can be raised again. If raised improperly by having their coffins unsealed or their true names recited aloud, they will rise as monstrous creatures bent on destroying everything around them, an unfortunate side-effect of the quality of magic used to create them.

Hill mummies emanate **fear**, per the spell, as a constant aura in a 20' radius. Once a creature passes its saving throw against this power it is immune to the **fear** effect of that mummy from that point forward.

These creatures attack by simply grabbing any living thing they can get their hands on, then squeezing. If a hill mummy hits with both its attack rolls the target is grabbed and held in the mummy's powerful hands. The target will then suffer 1d6 damage every round until it makes a successful save vs. paralysis at which point it has broken free of the hold.

Any creature hit by a hill mummy must also pass a save vs. poison or suffer the creature's rot curse. Nasty boils and festering pustules will begin to appear on the victim's skin near the area that was touched by the mummy and will spread out from that point causing 1 point of damage per round for 1d10 rounds. The effect of the curse is so pervasive that the victim will lose 1 point of charisma.

A **cure disease** spell or similar effect will immediately remove the curse, heal all damage done by it, and repair lost charisma. Other healing spells of the same or lower level can heal damage but cannot replace the lost charisma. Charisma lost in this way will be recovered naturally after 1d4 weeks.

In life these mummies were clerics. As a raised, chaotic evil monster such mummies are capable of casting **cause light wounds** once per day as a 3<sup>rd</sup> level caster.

Hill mummies are susceptible to fire damage. A hit from a torch will cause a mummy to catch fire and take 1d4 damage every round until dead or the fire is put out (the mummy will not try to douse the fire). If it is hit with burning oil it will take 2d8 damage immediately and 2d8 per round thereafter. Magical fire adds +1 per die of damage.

Holy water deals 1d4+1 damage per vial.

**Treasure:** 1d10x1000 cp (50%), 1d6x1000 sp (30%), 1d4x100 gp (20%), 1d10 gems (40%), 1d2 magic items (20%)



## RED DEATH SPINNER

<b>Frequency:</b>	Uncommon
<b>No. Appearing:</b>	1d4
<b>Size:</b>	Small
<b>Move:</b>	60'/150'
<b>Armor Class:</b>	6
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1+2 (3+1)
<b>Attacks:</b>	1
<b>Damage:</b>	1d4+1
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	Venom, <i>Web</i> spell
<b>Special Defenses:</b>	None
<b>Magic Resistance:</b>	None
<b>Lair Probability:</b>	90%
<b>Intelligence:</b>	Low (4-5)
<b>Alignment:</b>	NE
<b>Level/XP:</b>	2/50+1/hp (4/150+3/hp)

Creeping around dark caverns waiting for victims, these dog-sized red spiders have a telltale black dot on their backs that many adventurers come to fear. Unlike their mundane cousins the red death spinners are quite clever and use their higher-than-animal intellect to better trap prey. To do so, they employ two potentially nasty attack modes.

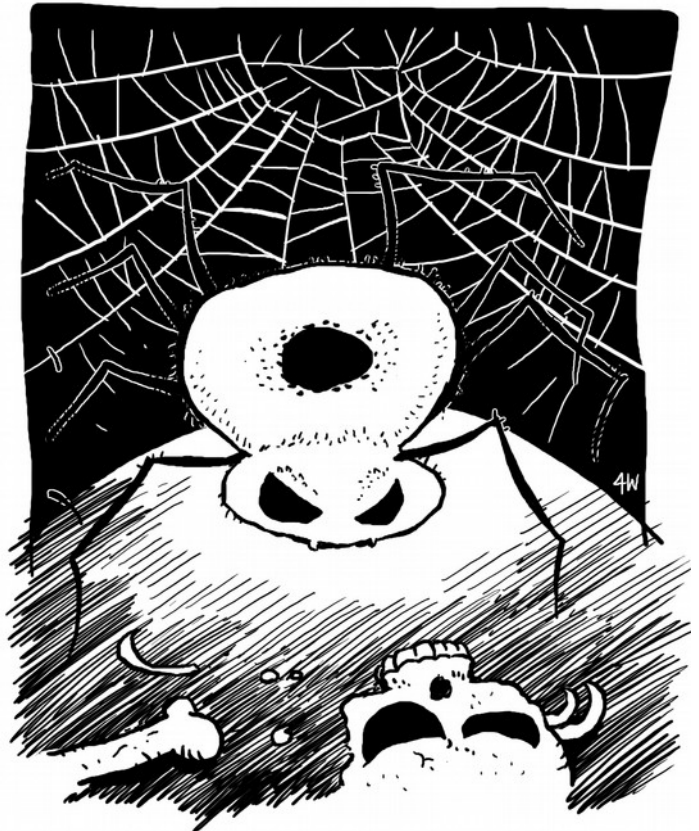
Once per day a red spinner can spin a magical web exactly like the magic-user spell of the same name. This will always be the first attack of a spinner, if possible.

After trapping a potential meal in its web, the spider will bite the victim to deliver its venom. Victims must save vs. poison each round for 1d4 rounds or take 1d4 damage for each failed saving throw. During this time the spinner will wait patiently, typically staring at its prey, studying it. The spinner can only deliver venom on a bite once every 6 turns.

There exists a rare variety of this creature often called a *spinner sage* that possess Intelligence scores as high as 10 or 11 and can speak 1 or 2 languages (albeit in a very disturbing, low voice). If red spinners are encountered in a lair that is completely isolated from daylight and surface activity there is a 5% chance that such a spinner sage will be among them. Spinner sages will have 3+1 HD and the ability to cast 1d2 random first level magic-user spells once per day in addition to its *web* ability.

Due to the nature of their feeding habits these creatures tend to accumulate the possessions of their victims. They consider these spoils to be hallmarks of their trade and will stash them safely away, usually within 100' of their primary hunting ground.

**Treasure:** 2d100 cp (75%), 3d20 sp (50%), 1d20 gp (30%), 1d4 gems (20%), 1 magic item (5%)



## ELLYSI WOOD

This rare, blue-tinted tree can only be located in temperate or far northern forests where a ranger, druid, or elf has a 10% chance of discovering a single tree. The tree is rather short (about 20' tall), gnarled, and covered with 1" thorns. Any creature cut or scraped by the thorns of the *ellysi* must save vs. poison or suffer *confusion* (per the druid spell, as if cast by a 5<sup>th</sup> level caster).

An elf magic-user of the 4<sup>th</sup> or higher level who is also a bowyer or who is working with an elf bowyer can acquire wood from the tree and make a **bow of clairvoyance** (see below). Such a bow will take 1d4 days to create. By the same limitations 1d6 **+1 arrows** can be made (3000 gp value per arrow). These arrows have the one-time ability to cause *confusion* on a successful hit. Once an arrow has made a successful hit the *confusion* ability is lost but the arrows retains their +1 bonus.

This wood is highly resistant to fire, getting a saving throw vs. death as a 10<sup>th</sup> level druid when threatened with burning. This ability is conferred to all items created from the wood of the tree.

**Bow of Clairvoyance:** This ornate bow is crafted from the rare *ellysi* tree and grants its user +2 to hit (not to damage) and the effects of a *clairvoyance* spell once per day for 1d3 rounds (treat as if cast by a 5<sup>th</sup> level caster). The value of this bow is 20,000 gp or more for the short bow variety (70%) and 25,000 gp or more for long bows (25%).

# MONSTER LIST

The following monsters appear either as random or planned encounters in this module.

**Ancient Skeletons:** AC 7; MV 120'; HD 1; hp 2; #AT 1; D 1d4; Int None; AL N; Size Man

**Goblins of the Sticktooth Clan (3-12):** AC 6; MV 60'; HD 1-1; hp 3; #AT 1 (50% short bow, 50% club); D 1d4+poison (bow only) or 1d6-1 (club); Int Low; AL CE; Size S

Sticktooth goblins, being smaller than typical goblins, use very small short bows that do 1-4 damage (creatures larger than Small have -4 to hit when using them). The poison arrows are dipped in bear dung. A save vs. Poison negates the effect, otherwise a hit PC will take an additional 1 damage every turn until the save is made.

**Huge Vulture:** AC 5; MV 30'/360'; HD 2; hp 8; #AT 3; 1d4/1d4/2; Int Animal; AL N; Size S

8 hp ○○○○○○○○

**Goblins (3), Group A:** AC 6; MV 60'; HD 1-1; hp 2, 3, 4; #AT 1; D 1d4 (very short bow); SA Poison; Int Avg (low); AL CE; Size S

2 hp ○○ 3 hp ○○○ 4 hp ○○○○

The arrows are tipped with bear dung poison as described above.

**Goblins (3), Group B:** AC 6; MV 60'; HD 1; hp 4, 4, 5; #AT 1; D 1d6 (short sword); Int Avg (low); AL CE; Size S

4 hp ○○○○ 4 hp ○○○○

5 hp ○○○○○

**Brash the Goblin Raider:** AC 5; MV 60'; HD 1+1; hp 7; #AT 1; D 1d6 (hand axe); Int Avg; AL CE; Size S

7 hp ○○○○○○○

**Cursed Coyotes (5):** AC 7; MV 150'; HD 1+1; hp 3, 4, 5, 7, 9; #AT 1; D 1d4+1; SA fear; Int Animal; AL N; Size S

3 hp ○○○ 4 hp ○○○○

5 hp ○○○○○ 7 hp ○○○○○○○

9 hp ○○○○○○○○○

**Rorkker the Drunken Ogre:** AC 7 (drunken); MV 90'; HD 4+1; hp 15; #AT 1; SA hook and slam (save vs. paralysis or be knocked prone for 1 round); D 1d6+4; Int Avg (low); AL CE; Size L

15 hp ○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○

**Large Black Spider:** AC 6; MV 60'/150'; HD 1+1; hp 4; #AT 1; D 1d4; SA venom; Int Animal; AL N; Size S

4 hp ○○○○

**Large Black Spider #2:** AC 6; MV 60'/150'; HD 1+1; hp 4; #AT 1; D 1d4; SA venom; Int Animal; AL N; Size S

4 hp ○○○○○

These spiders have a more robust venom than others of their kind but a save vs. Poison will negate its effects (no bonus to the save as with other large spiders). Bitten creatures failing the save will take an additional 1d4 damage on the following round after which the venom will cause no more harm.

**Large Black Spiders (4):** AC 6; MV 60'/150'; HD 1+1; hp 4, 4, 5, 5; #AT 1; D 1d4; SA venom; Int Animal; AL N; Size S

4 hp ○○○○ 4 hp ○○○○

5 hp ○○○○○

5 hp ○○○○○

**Large Red Spiders (2):** AC 6; MV 60'/150'; HD 1+2; hp 5, 7; #AT 1; D 1d4+1; SA venom; Int Low; AL NE; Size S

5 hp ○○○○○ 7 hp ○○○○○○○

These red spiders are a bit nastier than their cousins. Bitten creatures must save vs. Poison at -1 or take an additional 1d4 damage per round until the save is made or until 1d4 rounds have passed.

**The Howler:** AC 4; MV 120'/120' (wall and ceiling climbing); HD 5+2; hp 18 (29 max); #AT 1; D 1d6+1; SA poison (1d4 additional damage per round until dead, save ends, dwarves immune); Int Avg; AL CE; Size Man

18 hp ○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○

**Ruella the Hill Mummy:** AC 5; MV 70'; HD 3+3; hp 13; #AT 2; D 1d6/1d6; SA fear, grab, rot (see appendix); Int Low; AL CE; Size Man

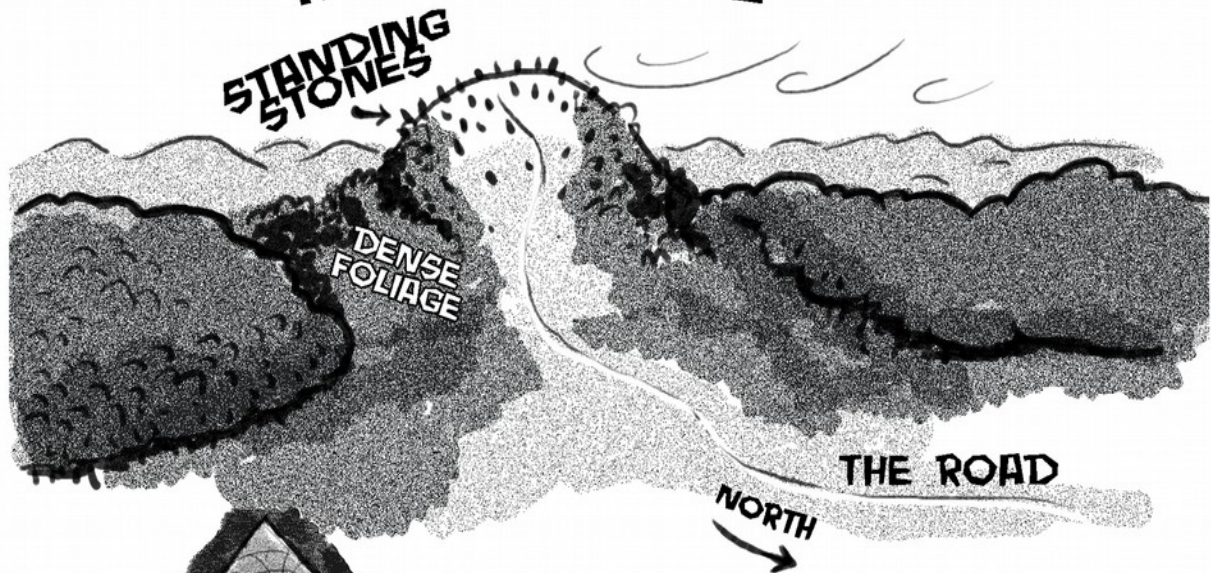
13 hp ○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○

**Allor the Hill Mummy:** AC 5; MV 70'; HD 3+3; hp 18; #AT 2; D 1d6/1d6; SA fear, grab, rot (see appendix); Int Low; AL CE; Size Man

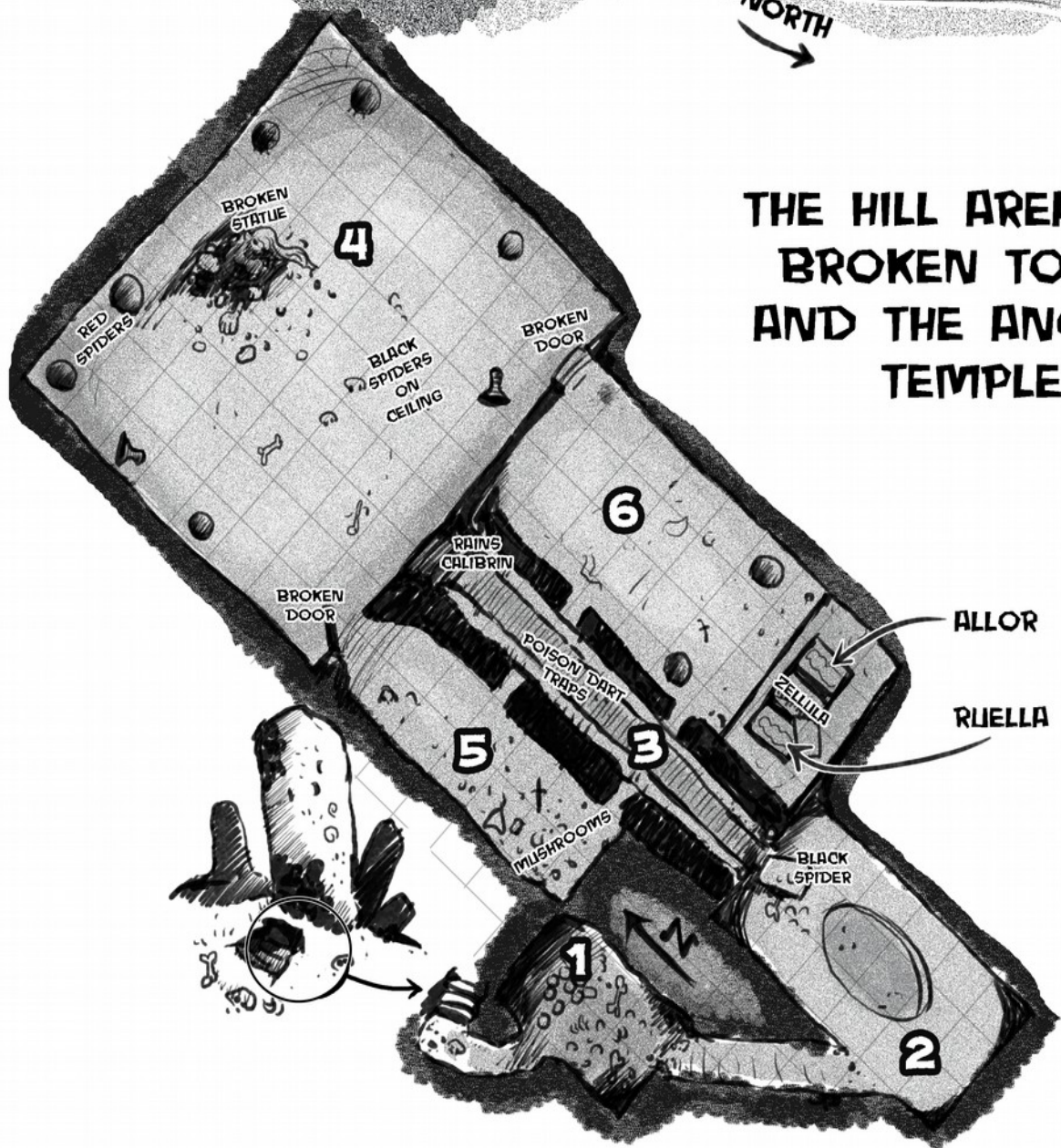
18 hp ○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○



# HOWLING HILL



## THE HILL AREA, THE BROKEN TOMB, AND THE ANCIENT TEMPLE





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THE WIND WHIPS THROUGH STANDING STONES MAKING THE HILL MOAN LIKE SOMETHING ALIVE. OR PERHAPS SOMETHING DEAD. YOU STAND ATOP ITS BARREN CROWN. THERE IS A WHISPER IN THE DARKNESS. THERE IS EVIL AFOOT...WHETHER YOU COME TO THE HILL FOR GLORY, RICHES, OR BY MERE CHANCE YOU MIGHT NOT WALK AWAY THE SAME AS WHEN YOU CAME...IF AT ALL.

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