

# FIRST EDITION FANTASY

## MODULE #1

# INTO THE MITE LAIR



**Written by Philip Reed**

Ronin Arts steps back in time to an age of excessive violence, deep dungeons, wandering monsters, and late-night gaming excitement! **INTO THE MITE LAIR**, the first release in Ronin Art's **FIRST EDITION FANTASY** series, features a descent into the terrible lair of the mites. Fight for your life in this module for 4-6 characters levels 3-5. Designed for use with **OSRIC™** or any other first edition-style game system.

This product uses the OSRIC™ System (Oldschool System Reference and Index Compilation™). The OSRIC™ system text may be found at <http://www.knights-n-knaves.com/osric>.

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**Into the Mite Lair** is an adventure for four to six 3rd-5th level player characters of any race or class combination. Set in any mountainous region of your choosing, the adventure can start in any one of the small towns or villages that exist close to your chosen mountains, though it may be best to start the PCs no further than two days away from the adventure site. If higher level characters are used, the number of creatures in the lair should be increased and, depending on how high the characters are in level, the starting point could be as far away as a month's ride.

## Adventure Background

Forty years ago a band of hobgoblins, fleeing humans and elves, discovered a complex series of caverns beneath an immense mountain range. The caverns, inhabited only by mites and a few hundred rats, were easy picking for the hobgoblins. The hobgoblin king that led the assault, in a stroke of intelligence rarely seen among their kind, decided that allowing the mites to live within the caverns would only make it more difficult for future invaders to reach his people. In fact, after establishing his hold over the caverns, the hobgoblin king had several dozen more of the creatures brought in.

Ten years ago an invasion force of qithyonki, a race of near-human beings that now live in a distant plane of existence, entered the region in search of a powerful weapon. The weapon, a magical long sword, was located in an evil fortress and after a fierce battle with the denizens of the fortress a single qithyonki managed to escape with the weapon. Stranded in the region, the invader eventually found his way to the hobgoblin-controlled complex where, after threatening the hobgoblin king, he set up a home.

Somehow, years later, bards in the area learned of a powerful weapon hidden in the mountains and, just a few months ago, a sage in a nearby city – Alexar Hinkrie – reported the discovery of an unknown creature on the beach south of the city. Alexar, after extensive research and investigation, learned of the weapon stolen from the fortress several years ago and managed to trace the weapon to somewhere within the mountains. Putting the pieces together, Alexar has decided that someone needs to look into the matter.

## Getting Them Involved

Alexar, always short on time and help, is visiting the small village near the mountains and has decided to contact a few of the younger adventurers in the area and request that they investigate the area. A few adventurers in Alexar's employ did a quick search of the area a few weeks ago and found a few cracks that lead into the mountains; Alexar recommends the PCs investigate these cracks and report their findings to him. The sage offers the party 100 gold pieces with which to purchase mountain climbing equipment and informs them that anything they bring out of the mountains is theirs; he just wants a chance to look everything over and catalog their finds.

If the PCs agree to assist Alexar they'll be given a map that indicates the cracks on the eastern side of the mountains. Additionally, the PCs have just earned themselves a powerful

ally (so long as they treat him with respect and don't attempt to break their agreement).

Before they set out on their adventure, the PCs may elect to visit a local tavern or two in search of information. You may use the following table of rumors, rolling once for each PC that spends an hour or more in an appropriate establishment. Do not give out more rumors, before the adventurers set off on their journey, than there are characters in the party.

Italicized rumors are false. Rumors that are partially true have their false section italicized.

## RUMOR TABLE

1. *Alexar has sent a dozen groups of adventurers into the mountains over the past month and thus far none have returned.*
2. Alexar is searching for a magic sword *and has spent thousands of gold in researching the sword's location.*
3. Goblins have been seen along the trail that leads to the mountains *and less than a week ago a band of goblins attacked and killed a small party of merchants.*
4. Some of the caves in the mountains are known to be home to dragons.
5. A stranger passed through the village about ten years ago *and killed several locals.* He was dressed in unusual armor and wrapped in bandages.
6. *Alexar is an evil wizard that cannot be trusted.*
7. Hobgoblins once roamed the area but several years ago they were driven off and haven't been seen since. *Several elders in the village say that all of the hobgoblins were slain, not driven off.*
8. The old hermit that can always be found begging at the crossroads in the village *was once a powerful warrior.* Today he is a weak, worn down coward.
9. The stranger that passed through the village about ten years ago was not of this world.
10. Watch for avalanches in the mountains since recent rains have made the lands damp and many rocks may have been loosened.
11. *Giants have been seen in the mountains.*
12. Some of the caves in the mountains are inhabited by mites, gelatinous cubes, and numerous types of slime.

## Traveling to the Mountains

Depending on where they start from, you may have to set-up and run a few encounters before the PCs reach the adventure site. For low-level characters this should be a fairly short journey (only roll once on the random encounter chart) in order to keep their strength up. High-level characters could use this as a distraction from an epic quest or major adventure.



#### RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLE

1. Wolves (2-5)
2. Stirges (2-8)
3. Goblins (2-8)
4. Kobolds (1-8)
5. Giant Spider (1-2)
6. Giant Ant (1-3)

### The Mite Lair

**NOTE:** Throughout the lair are hundreds of small cracks and holes that the mites use to travel through the complex. These are not indicated on the maps since they're too small for the PCs to use. If at any point you feel there should be a hole from which creatures can pour through, it is there.

Additionally, the exact number of mites in the lair is completely the decision of the game referee. In this author's opinion, there should be a near-infinite number of mites.

#### Key to Level One

##### WANDERING MONSTERS

Every three turns spent exploring this level there is a 1 in 6 chance that the party will stumble upon (or be ambushed by, your call) 2d4 mites. These mites will attack but the instant one of their number is slain the survivors will attempt to scatter, escaping through the various cracks and holes in the cavernous complex. For each mite that escapes a random encounter make a check mark on a scrap sheet of paper. Every time you roll for a random number of mites (as

detailed in each area's description) add 1 to the result for each check mark that you have made so far.

0. A twenty foot deep crack in the mountains, with no hand holds or foot holds, drops straight down into a dark cavern. Torches dropped or lowered into the crack reveal a passage leading to the south, though no other information is available without dropping down into the crack. It is best if the characters use ropes to climb slowly down the crack, though the rash amongst the group may elect to leap down into the cavern below (suffering normal falling damage).
  1. This natural room is about eight feet wide and twenty feet long, though the shape is irregular and the ceiling varies in height anywhere from six feet at the edges to well over ten-feet in the center of the room. A few torches are scattered throughout the room, all useless, and a few broken arrows lay scattered about. The room twists to the west, though a narrow (three-foot wide) passage leads to the east. A faint dripping sound can be heard to the east.
  2. This room – filled with small junk consisting of a few copper pieces, colored bits of glass, and assorted camping gear – at first appears to be an unguarded treasure room. Digging through the junk reveals a small – two-foot high – passage that leads straight down. If the characters don't think to plug this hole, 2d8 mites will crawl from it as soon as the characters leave the room. As the characters make their way down whichever passageway they choose, the mites will attack from the rear, concentrating well over half their attacks on the character in the rear guard position. If they manage to take down the rear guard character in three rounds, 2d10 mites will drop from holes in the ceiling, ropes in hand, and attempt to lift the character up against the ceiling where they'll tie him and leave him. If 25% of their numbers are killed the mites will flee into various holes and cracks. The PCs are unable to follow them, though they may be able to plug these holes (with what, the PCs will have to determine for themselves) and ensure that the mites won't be able to use the passages for some time.
- MITES (2d8 + 2d10, see text):** SZ S, AC 8, HD 1-1, HP 3, ATT 1 (1d3), bite.
3. Another room, this one has passages which lead into rooms 1, 2, 4, and 7. The moment the PCs enter this room, several hundred rats run towards various holes, all of them escaping in one round. In this room the PCs find the skeletal remains of a goblin; the creature has been tied with a heavy rope and left in the northwest corner of the room. Searching the body reveals a small rusted dagger and 1d20 copper pieces.

4. The ceiling in this room is covered with a thick web, and in the web several dead mites can be seen. A group of giant spiders calls this room their home, and daily the mites try to kill the beasts. If the PCs cut the small humanoids from the web, they'll find an assorted collection of small junk and several small darts that the creatures use as weapons. Unless they burn the web, 1d3 giant spiders will drop upon the PCs three rounds after they enter the room.

**GIANT SPIDER (1d3, see text):** SZ L, AC 4, HD 4+4, HP 14, ATT 1 (2d4), bite, save vs. poison or die.

5. Except for the standard holes, cracks, and rocks, this room is empty.
6. As the PCs scramble across the uneven floor that leads towards this room, they begin to notice a faint glow which appears to come from the room. Upon entering the chamber, the PCs see several small gem stones in the walls that are the source of the glow. Anyone attempting to identify the rocks, no matter their gem cutting skill, is unable to recognize the rocks. If *detect magic* is cast, a faint aura surrounds the rocks. Several years ago, an unsuccessful party of adventurers used this room as a camp and their spellcasters cast *continual light* spells on the rocks. If the rocks can be broken free from the walls (a (Strength) Major Test at -10%, each check requires a dagger that will be completely ruined whether the attempt succeeds or not) they'll be extremely useful. Also in this room is a molded sack and a torn suit of padded armor. Blood stains cover the floor.
7. Upon entering this room, 2d6 mites drop from the ceiling onto the PCs, attempting to steal their weapons and equipment. Each will make a grab at the lightest bit of equipment (attack roll required, with a Dexterity check to resist allowed). If a mite is successful in grabbing an item, he'll attempt to flee towards room 11 with the object. If he evades the PCs, he'll drop down a small hole in the floor to area 2 on Level Two.
8. This room is the home to well over fifty mites, 2d20 of which will be in the room at any time. If the PCs are able to kill the creatures (most likely with magic or flaming oil), they'll find the following:

3 Magic-User Scrolls

- Explosive Runes
- Burning Hands
- Magic Missile

12 platinum pieces

47 silver pieces

3 semi-precious stones

If the PCs are forced to flee; the mites won't give chase (they're too cowardly), though the creatures will notify the kobolds in room 12.

**MITES (2d20, see text):** SZ S, AC 8, HD 1-1, HP 3, ATT 1 (1d3), bite.

9. A fairly empty room. There are some dwarven runes covering the southern wall, written on the rock with chalk and not very legible, that read CARRY ME TO THE NORTH.

Slumped against the wall, under the runes, is the rotten body of a dwarf clad in silver chain mail and clutching a jewel-adorned axe. The chain mail, while not magical, grants a +1 to AC while the finely crafted axe grants a +2 to hit. The PCs should decide what they'll do with the body (complicated if any of them can read the runes, since following the last wishes of the dwarf could be an adventure on its own), good-aligned characters will most likely want to bury the body.

10. The entrance to this room is a long, winding passage that is concealed by a secret door in room 13. The king of the mites (AC 5, 10 hp) lives here, with his honor guard of twelve mite warriors (6 hp each). The king is armed with a specialized mite dagger (2-5 damage) and has no qualms against fighting. If the PCs defeat the king and his guards, all other attacks by mites will be at only one-half the numbers listed throughout the area descriptions (most of the others having fled to deeper caverns inaccessible to the PCs). In the room is the following treasure:

A magic-user's spell book

- \* affect normal fires
- \* detect magic
- \* find familiar
- \* continual light
- \* ghost armor

staff +1

17 platinum pieces

**MITE WARRIORS (12):** SZ S, AC 8, HD 1-1, HP 6, ATT 1 (1d3), bite.

**MITE KING (1):** SZ S, AC 5, HD 3, HP 10, ATT 1 (1d4+1), dagger.

11. This room is empty, save for two rotting bodies. One is a chain mail clad human, the other a robed elf. They have no equipment, all of it having been gathered by the denizens of the cavern.

12. The lair of two elder, experienced kobolds, these creatures are considered the masters of the upper level of the cavern complex and report only to the hobgoblin tribe living in rooms 8 and 9 on level two. These creatures will attack anyone who enters their lair and, if they are warned by the mites, will pursue any intruders. Each kobold is wearing a ring of protection +2 and carrying a shield, giving each an AC of 4. Also, each kobold carries an enchanted weapon; one a short sword +1 and the other a dagger +2, and each one carries two normal daggers and a normal short sword. In area 12 are:

an empty gold scroll tube  
78 silver pieces

The kobolds will not fight to the death, instead retreating to their lair if reduced to less than half their hit points. If they are confronted in their lair, the kobolds call upon 2d10 mites and attempt to escape to room 14 (and drop down the shaft so that they can warn the hobgoblins of the invaders).

**KOBOLDS (2):** SZ S, AC 7, HD 2, HP 8, ATT 1 (1d4 or by weapon).

13. There is a small pit in this room; in the bottom of the pit (15' down) the PCs can make out the form of a heavily armored human (plate mail) as well as a backpack and several sharp spikes. If a PC lowers himself into the pit to investigate, he'll find a human paladin impaled on one of the spikes, his armor ruined. In the backpack there is a small tent, a few days of rotten food, a dagger, a small water skin (partly filled/ though the water tastes stale), and a small prayer book. The paladin is wearing a holy symbol on a chain.

Also in the room is a concealed door which leads to room 10. There is a 60% chance that 2d6 mites will be in the corridor behind the concealed door. If the PCs do not find the door, the creatures in room 10 will follow them and attempt to ambush and kill the party.

**MITES (2d6, see text):** SZ S, AC 8, HD 1-1, HP 3, ATT 1 (1d3), bite.

14. There is a deep crack in this room which drops down forty feet. It's impossible to tell what's below, but a rope ladder against the eastern side of the opening is quite inviting. There is a 50% chance that the PCs will encounter 1d6 mites climbing up the ladder as they climb down. This could cause trouble, since there isn't much room in the crack for combat. If the PCs cut the rope ladder, the mites will fall to their death but the PCs will then have to use their own rope to climb down.

## Key to Level Two

### WANDERING MONSTERS

The second level of the complex is better patrolled than the upper level; there is a 1 in 6 chance for every 6 rounds of exploration that the PCs will encounter a random monster.

1. A solitary hobgoblin on patrol.
2. 1-4 mites.
3. A gelatinous cube.
4. 1-4 hobgoblins on patrol.

15. The crack in area 14 (level one) leads to this area. If the PCs cut the rope ladder or fought any mites while coming down the ladder, there will be 1d6 hobgoblins and 1d6 mites waiting for them. Otherwise, the room will be empty except for a sleeping hobgoblin guard that wakes on a 2 in 6 chance whenever anyone descends the ladder. The guard has a short sword and dagger, as well as a small horn that he uses to summon defenses from inside the cavern complex.

**MITES (1d6, see text):** SZ S, AC 8, HD 1-1, HP 3, ATT 1 (1d3), bite.

**HOBGOBLINS (1d6, see text):** SZ M, AC 5, HD 1+1, HP 5, ATT 1 (1d8 or by weapon).

16. The shore of a massive, stagnant lake, this area has several hobgoblin footprints covering it. There is little of interest here. If the PCs make any noise at all, there is a 40% chance that the hobgoblins in area 22 will attack them here. If the hobgoblins attack then the mites in area 18 will join them in two rounds.

17. Once the PCs reach the island, either by the boat anchored at area 7 or by swimming the lake, they'll see that it is quite large and covered with several small pits. Inside each pit lives a mite family; the mites take offense at being disturbed. 2d6 mites will crawl up from each pit and attack the PCs (who should really turn back and flee from the assault). This encounter could be a problem if the PCs swam, because they could be forced to fight off an overwhelming force if they're not careful. There is nothing of value here.

**MITES (lots, see text):** SZ S, AC 8, HD 1-1, HP 3, ATT 1 (1d3), bite.

18. This room is filled with several mites who will immediately attack any strangers that enter the area. There are 2d10 mites here at any time, though all of them will flee through the various holes and cracks in the room if half their number is killed.

**MITES (2d10, see text):** SZ S, AC 8, HD 1-1, HP 3, ATT 1 (1d3), bite.





19. This area is identical to area 16, except there is a 90% chance that the hobgoblins in room 22 will attack if any noise is made.

20. This area is the same as 16 and 19, but there is only a 20% chance that the hobgoblins in room 22 will attack.

21. This area is identical to 16, 19, and 20, except there is a small boat anchored here and only a 40% chance of the hobgoblins attacking if any noise is made.

22. In this area there are twelve hobgoblin guards in the complex and all of them will be here, unless any have been encountered and killed before the PCs reach this area. Many of the hobgoblins will fight to the death, with the smallest of them (4 hp) attempting to escape to area 23 to warn the king while the others battle the PCs. In the room is:

ring of feather fall\*  
chain mail +1\*  
96 copper pieces  
64 silver pieces

**HOBGOBLINS (12, see text):** SZ M, AC 5, HD 1+1, HP 5 (see text), ATT 1 (1d8 or by weapon).

\* The game referee should assign these two one or two of the hobgoblins (lieutenants).

23. Lair of the hobgoblin king, the king is guarded by six hobgoblin warriors (6 hp/each) while the king himself is a foot taller and more powerful than the other hobgoblins (15 hp). These are the last of the hobgoblins in the cavern complex. The hobgoblin king reports only to the qithyonki living in area 12 and none of the other creatures in the complex know of the qithyonki or his treasure. The treasure in this room consists of:

50 gold pieces  
37 electrum pieces  
a silver mirror capable of casting magic mirror once a day

**HOBGOBLIN WARRIORS (1d6, see text):** SZ M, AC 5, HD 1+1, HP 6, ATT 1 (1d8 or by weapon).

**HOBGOBLIN KING (1d6, see text):** SZ M, AC 5, HD 4, HP 15, ATT 1 (1d8 or by weapon).

24. This room is filled with various torture implements, all of which are covered in dust and heavy cobwebs. The current denizens of the caverns have no use for the equipment and have left it undisturbed.

25. Several years ago, when the hobgoblins first discovered these caverns, this room was used by the hobgoblin king as his home. Once the qithyonki arrived and confronted the hobgoblin king, the hobgoblins moved to rooms 22 and 23. Today several hundred rats call this room home, though they flee the instant anyone enters the room. In the far northeast corner is a gnawed bone that, upon inspection, appears to be part of a human leg.

26. Ten winters ago, an extraplanar invasion force entered the region through a gate somewhere within the mountains. Sent to locate and recover a powerful weapon, the force was attacked by human soldiers; many on both sides were slain in the battle, though in the end only one of the invaders managed to escape. The sole survivor discovered these caverns and, after "discussion" with the hobgoblin king, took up his home here. The invader, stranded from his own plane, has since lived here, guarding the weapon and awaiting the day his people will return for him.

Unfortunately for the invader, the PCs have found him before his people. The invader knows of the PCs and is waiting for them. Armed with the weapon, a long sword +3 (detailed below), and wearing splint mail +4, the invader attacks first using the sword's magic missile ability and then engages in melee combat with. The invader fights to the death, preferring death in combat to the humiliation of another escape from battle. The following treasure is in the room:

26. spell book (illusionist)
- change self
  - hypnotic pattern
  - veil
  - rainbow pattern
  - spook
  - blur
  - fear
- 283 copper pieces  
102 gold pieces  
scale mail +4  
long sword +1  
long sword +3
- cast *magic missile* as a 15th level magic-user once per day
  - cast *mummy touch* as a 5th level magic-user once per day

**QITHYONKI SURVIVOR (1):** SZ M, AC 0, HD 6, HP 21, ATT 1 (1d8 or by weapon).

27. In this room stands a stone statue in the shape of an elf that is so detailed and life-like that it could possibly have been a living being at some point. The statue was, in fact, a carefully crafted stone golem that ceased to function long ago and has stood in this room ever since. The mage who constructed the golem hundreds of years ago is long dead and the golem's last command was to guard this room, though the reason that the mage left such a powerful guard in this room is unknown. If the PCs move the golem they could probably sell it to a high level wizard or sage for several thousand gold pieces, though how they would get it above ground is a mystery (it's quite heavy). There is nothing else of interest in this area.

28. At first glance, this room appears empty. But, if the PCs search closely, they will locate a small trigger that operates an unknown mechanism (a dropping steel gate, carefully constructed by dwarven slaves when the hobgoblins first entered this cavern complex, located in the corridor between rooms 11 and 14 on the first level). The PCs will find nothing else of interest here.

## Concluding the Adventure

Once the PCs return to their starting town, Alexar will contact them and inquire into how their expedition went. He will honor his promises, even going a little further if the PCs offer to donate the qithyonki weapon to his collection (if they wish to sell it, though, he will be an eager buyer). If they are especially friendly and bring back anything of real interest (such as scrolls or spellbooks), Alexar may give each PC a small magic item that is useful in some way. One-time use items, such as potions, are best suited for this purpose.

## Monsters

The monsters that follow are either new to OSRIC -- the mite and qithyonki -- or are reprinted here for the game referee's convenience. Please note that only the monsters guaranteed to be encountered in this adventure are listed; those creatures that may appear as random encounters are not described. As with all monsters players may again encounter these monsters in a future adventure.

### HOBGOBLIN

**SIZE:** Medium

**MOVE:** 90 ft.

**ARMOR CLASS:** 5

**HIT DICE:** 1d8+1

**ATTACKS:** 1

**DAMAGE:** By weapon (usually 1d8)

**SPECIAL ATTACKS:** None

**SPECIAL DEFENSES:** None

**MAGIC RESISTANCE:** Standard

**RARITY:** Uncommon

**NO. ENCOUNTERED:** 10-200

**LAIR PROBABILITY:** 25%

**TREASURE:** Individual: 3-24 cp, 2-8 gp; In Lair: 1-8k cp (20%), 1-12k sp (15%), 1-8k ep (15%), 1-6k gp (50%), 3-18 gems (80%), 1-6 jewelry (25%), 2 magic items plus 1 potion (15%)

**INTELLIGENCE:** Average

**ALIGNMENT:** Lawful Evil

**LEVEL/X.P.:** 2 / 30 + 1/hp

*General Information:* Hobgoblin society is divided into tribes, with the tribes being further subdivided into clans. The number appearing shown above is for a single clan. Hobgoblins have 60' Darkvision, and do not suffer any penalties for fighting in daylight making their homes both above and below ground with equal frequency.

They are typically armed with swords, morningstars, spears, and/or composite bows. A group of 20 or more goblins may contain leaders who fight as gnolls or even bugbears, and a chief is even more powerful.

Hobgoblins sometimes have a tribal standard with them which causes them to fight at +1 on attack and morale rolls - but only if the hobgoblins are within 60 ft. of the standard. They are miners of fair aptitude, but dislike work and will much prefer to capture slaves to do any heavy labor.

Hobgoblins have a strong grasp of strategy and tactics and are capable of carrying out sophisticated battle plans. Under the leadership of a skilled strategist or tactician, their discipline can prove a deciding factor. Hobgoblins hate elves and attack them first, in preference to other opponents.

*Languages:* Hobgoblins speak hobgoblin, their alignment tongue, and the languages of goblins and orcs.

*Physical Description:* Hobgoblins are larger cousins of goblins. Hobgoblins' hair color ranges from dark reddish-brown to dark gray. They have dark orange or red-orange skin. Large males have blue or red noses. Hobgoblins' eyes are yellowish or dark brown, while their teeth are yellow. Their garments tend to be brightly colored, often blood red with black-tinted leather. Their weaponry is kept polished and in good repair. They generally live to the age of 60 years.



## KOBOLD

**SIZE:** Small

**MOVE:** 60 ft.

**ARMOR CLASS:** 7

**HIT DICE:** 1d4

**ATTACKS:** 1

**DAMAGE:** By weapon (usually 1d4)

**SPECIAL ATTACKS:** None

**SPECIAL DEFENSES:** None

**MAGIC RESISTANCE:** Standard

**RARITY:** Uncommon

**NO. ENCOUNTERED:** 40-400

**LAIR PROBABILITY:** 40%

**TREASURE:** Individual: 3-24 cp; In Lair: 1-4k cp (25%), 1-3k sp (20%), 10-40 gp (50%)

**INTELLIGENCE:** Low to average

**ALIGNMENT:** Lawful Evil

**LEVEL/X.P.:** 1 / 5 + 1/hp

*General Information:* Kobold society is divided into tribes, with the tribes being further subdivided into clans. The number appearing shown above is for a single clan. Like goblins, kobolds are nocturnal, and have 60' darkvision but suffer a -1 penalty from their attack rolls in any light equivalent to full daylight or brighter.

Kobolds like to attack with overwhelming odds—at least two to one—or trickery; should the odds fall below this threshold, they usually flee. However, they attack gnomes on sight if their numbers are equal. They begin a fight by throwing missile weapons, closing only when they can see that their foes have been weakened. Whenever they can, kobolds set up ambushes near trapped areas.

Kobolds are typically armed with spiked wooden clubs, axes, javelins and spears. A group of 40 or more of these creatures may contain leaders who fight as goblins or even orcs, and a chief is even more powerful. If encountered in their lair or in any large settlement, there will be (in addition to the male kobolds) a number of females equal to 50% of the number encountered and young equal to 1/10th the number encountered. For example, if 200 kobolds are in their lair, an additional 100 females and 20 children are also present.

Kobolds hate gnomes, halflings and small faeries such as pixies, nixies and brownies, and will usually attack these foes first if given a choice of targets. They are miners of fair aptitude, but dislike work and will much prefer to capture slaves to do any heavy labor.

*Languages:* Kobolds speak their own tongue, their alignment tongue, and the language of Goblins. They generally live to the age of approximately 130 years.

*Physical Description:* Kobolds are short, reptilian humanoids with cowardly and sadistic tendencies. A kobold's scaly skin ranges from dark rusty brown to a rusty black color. It has glowing red eyes. Its tail is nonprehensile. Kobolds wear ragged clothing, favoring red and orange. A kobold is 2-1/2 to 3 feet tall and weighs 35 to 45 pounds. Kobolds speak with a voice that sounds like that of a yapping dog.

## MITE

**SIZE:** Small

**MOVE:** 30 ft.

**ARMOR CLASS:** 8

**HIT DICE:** 1d4-1

**ATTACKS:** 1

**DAMAGE:** Bite(1d3)

**SPECIAL ATTACKS:** None

**SPECIAL DEFENSES:** None

**MAGIC RESISTANCE:** Standard

**RARITY:** Rare

**NO. ENCOUNTERED:** 6-30

**LAIR PROBABILITY:** 25%

**TREASURE:** Individual: 2-12 cp; In Lair: 100-400 cp (25%), 100-600 sp (20%), 10-40 gp (50%)

**INTELLIGENCE:** Low

**ALIGNMENT:** Lawful Evil

**LEVEL/X.P.:** 1 / 3 + 1/hp

*General Information:* Mites are a tribal race, living in caverns and other underground chambers which they will fight to protect. Living deep beneath the surface, mites are never encountered outside of the underground chambers in which they are at home. Sunlight does not harm the creatures but their fear of the light is so intense that if they are thrust into the sunlight they panic and flee, doing anything within their power to return to the underground.

Mite lairs are filthy, garbage-filled chambers; the creatures do not understand the needs for sanitation and encountered mites are frequently diseased. (Especially cruel game referees will take advantage of any intrusion into a mite's lair by subjecting the party of adventurers to some disease or other of his choosing.)

Mites prefer to attack in the cramped quarters of their homes, dropping or otherwise appearing from concealed tunnels and pits that offer an escape route through which their (usually) larger prey may not pursue them. These hidden tunnels and pits are treated like secret doors for purposes of discovering them. In some caverns in which the mites are completely alone and in control the creatures construct numerous, crude traps in order to capture intruders. These traps can be easily spotted and disarmed by experienced thieves. Mites survive on the items they can lift from those that are captured in their traps.

When threatened or otherwise coerced, mites will join other, more powerful races and the creatures make excellent servants for those that enslave them.

*Languages:* Mites speak their own language of garbled twittering and frequently use body language and hand signals to communicate silently.

*Physical Description:* Mites are small, rather ugly humanoids about 2 feet tall. They have long pointed ears and large noses. Their skin is pale brown or gray, and they are thought to be distant relatives of the goblins. Mites are commonly dressed in loose, ill-fitting rags and sometimes use weapons and tools.

## QITHYONKI

**SIZE:** Medium

**MOVE:** Game referee's call, usually 80 ft.

**ARMOR CLASS:** Game referee's call, usually 2.

**HIT DICE:** Game referee's call, upper limit of 12.

**ATTACKS:** 1

**DAMAGE:** By weapon (usually 1d6)

**SPECIAL ATTACKS:** None

**SPECIAL DEFENSES:** None

**MAGIC RESISTANCE:** Standard

**RARITY:** Very Rare

**NO. ENCOUNTERED:** 1-4

**LAIR PROBABILITY:** 25%

**TREASURE:** Game referee's call, usually magical items.

**INTELLIGENCE:** High

**ALIGNMENT:** Game referee's call, always evil.

**LEVEL/X.P.:** Game referee's call

*General Information:* Tens of thousands of years ago a human-like race, one which may have been strongly tied to the ancient elves, was captured and ripped from their world, deposited on an extraplanar landscape where they became the unwilling slaves of an unspeakable, unseen race. This master race kept itself hidden from its slaves, the humanoid masters remaining in shadows or wrapped in robes that concealed all but their glowing eyes and long, tentacle-like fingers.

For thousands of years the qithyonki were slaves, forced to fulfill every twisted desire of their unseen masters, the most disgusting of which was eating the brains of others that the masters brought to the qithyonki every few weeks. This persisted until a day at which the masters did not bring the qithyonki brains to eat but, rather, attempted to eat the brains of the qithyonki. Screaming in terror, and filled with a mad rage that permanently transformed their minds, the qithyonki rose up as a single people and attacked their masters, defeating them in a bloody battle. Free of the masters, the qithyonki found that they had forever changed and, rather than return to their world of origin (which many realized they no longer had any knowledge of) the qithyonki mastered the tools of the masters and instead explored the planes of existence.

Today, the qithyonki travel from plane to plane, stealing whatever they wish in an attempt to collect enough power so that when they discover the homeworld of their former masters they will be strong enough to kill them all.

*Languages:* The qithyonki speak their own language, a soft, gentle tongue that sounds like an odd off-shoot of elven. Additionally, many qithyonki speak common and numerous other languages that they have picked up during their journeys across numerous planes of existence and from those that they have captured.

*Physical Description:* Once a human-like race, the qithyonki today still vaguely resemble tall humans or elves though their skin is drawn tight against their skin and is very pale in color (at a distance they are sometimes mistaken for undead). Their eye color is typically a clear, light blue or pink (or gray in very rare instances) and qithyonki prefer to grow their hair long and thick, wearing it loose or sometimes braiding it. Qithyonki wear a variety of different types of clothing and armors depending on what is available and personal preferences.

## Artifact: Sword of the Masters

As presented in the pages of this adventure, the sword possessed by the sole qithyonki survivor, while powerful, is nothing more than a magical weapon. For those game referees that would like to use this adventure as the launching point for a campaign, the following new artifact is presented. Fortunately for the game referee, the decision as to the true nature of the magical long sword does not have to be made when this adventure is run; the artifact is presented in a way in which its true nature can be revealed at a later time in the campaign.

**Sword of the Masters:** This seemingly-normal long sword appears at first glance just like any other common long sword. Those skilled at the identification of magical weapons and items quickly discover a faint aura of energy surrounding the weapon and, through patience and talent, can quickly unlock the sword's minor powers (which are the ability to cast magic missile and mummy touch, as described on p. 7 of this adventure). The sword will remain a +3 weapon *until* it comes within 100 ft. of one of the unknown masters, at which point it instantly glows white and then transforms, lengthening and growing larger in its wielder's hands.

As the powerful "Sword of the Masters," the long sword becomes a sentient, powerful artifact that follows the mental commands of any one of the unknown race that is within range of the artifact. The sword, under these mental commands, moves and strikes on its own without need of a sword arm to guide it (the first act is typically to turn and slay the one that was wielding it before the master came into range).

When activated the sword is chaotic evil, has an Intelligence score of 18, and possesses 1d4-1 (minimum of 1) special abilities of the game referee's choice.

In addition to those already described, the artifact possesses the following effects:

|         |       |       |       |
|---------|-------|-------|-------|
| 3 x I:  | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 2 x II: | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 2 x IV: | _____ | _____ | _____ |

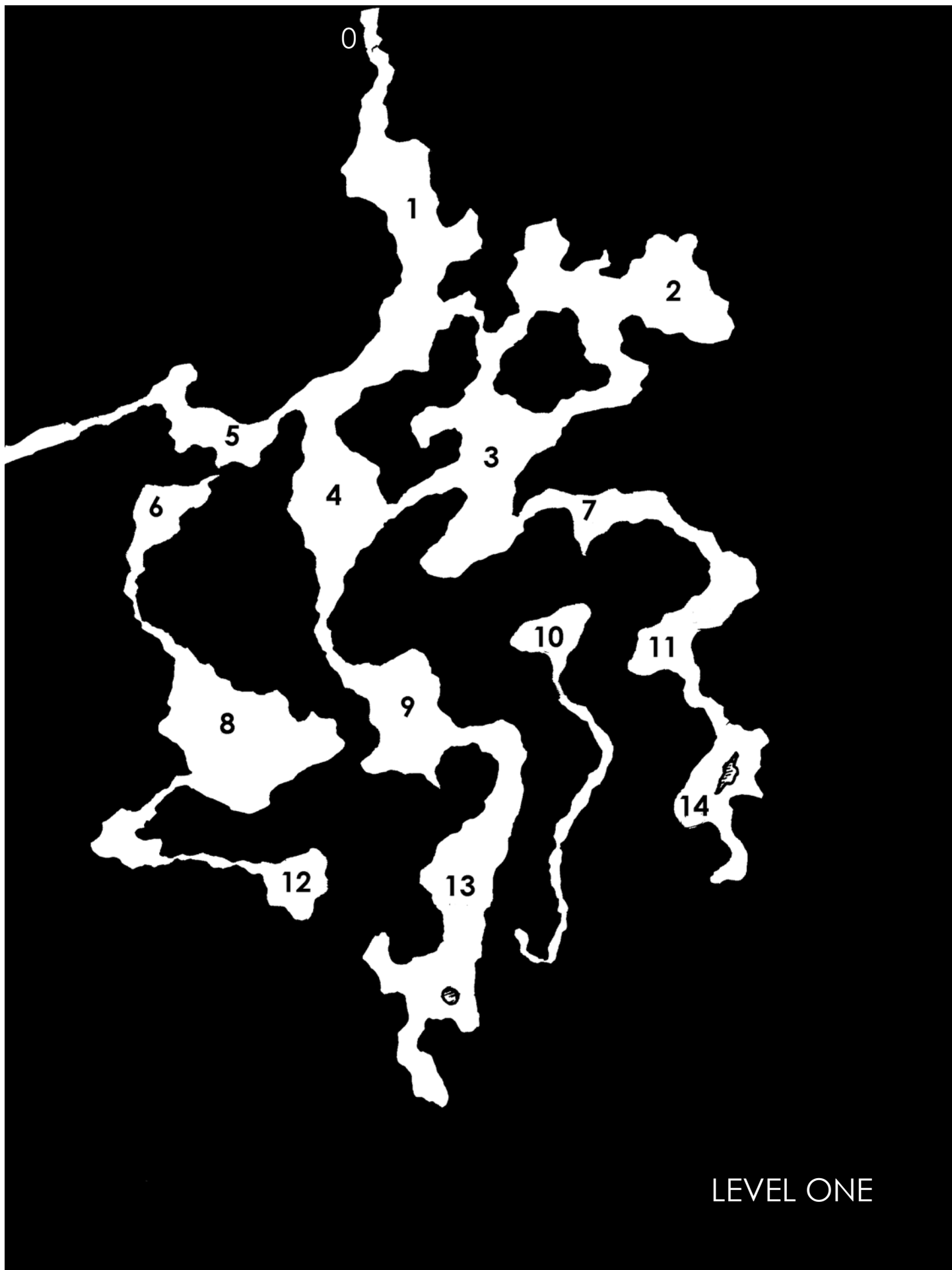
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Written by Philip Reed

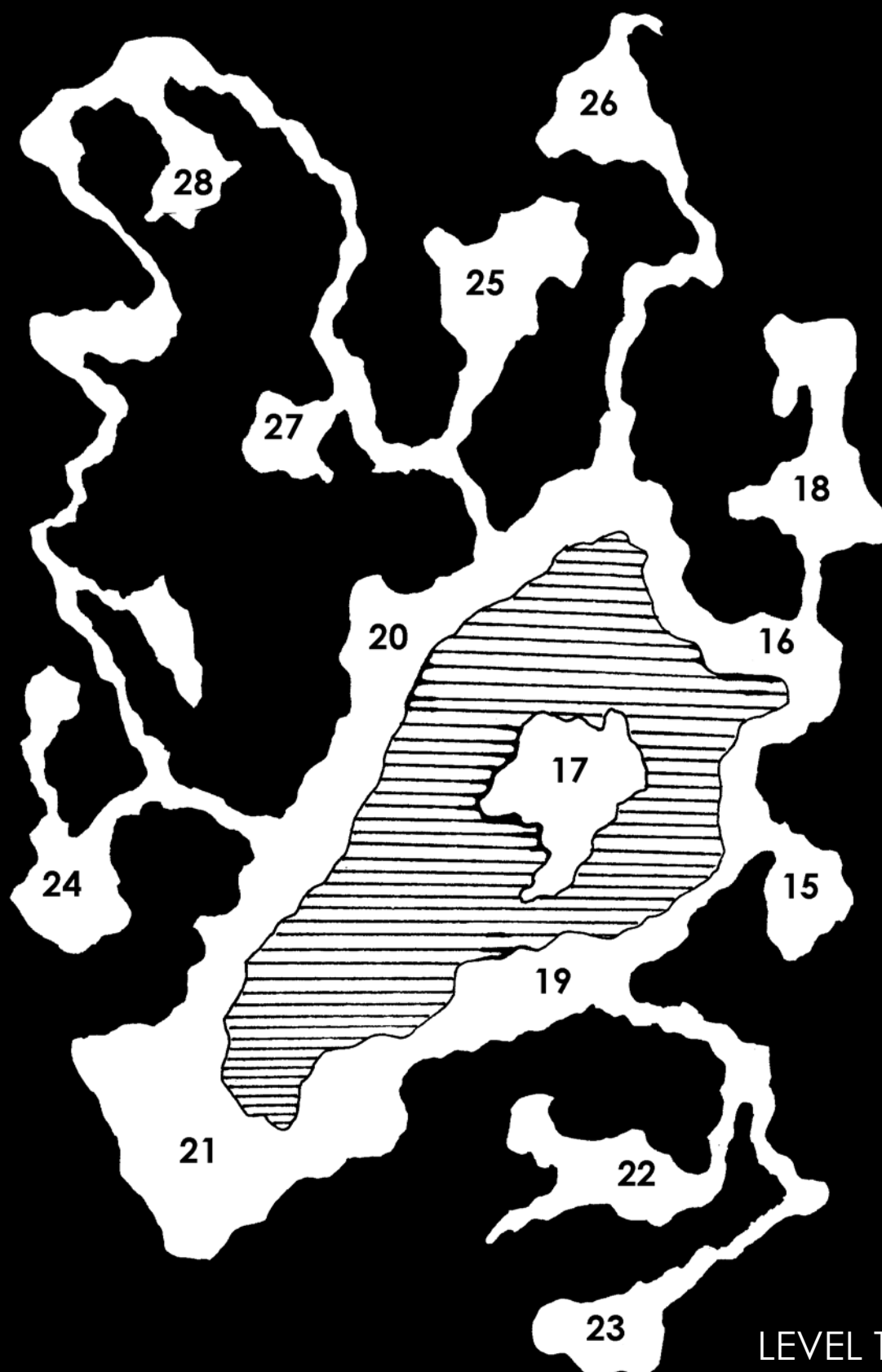
Illustrated by David Hamilton

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Layout, design, and maps by Philip Reed







LEVEL TWO

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