

DESCENT INTO THE CAVES OF THE UNKNOWN

For 4 to 9 Characters levels 3 through 6

by rc pinnell



This adventure contains information describing a single level cave system. If you intend to use it with newer editions of the game you/the DM will have to modify any and all portions you deem necessary. It includes a map and Key describing the locations for the characters to explore. There is nothing within this adventure that cannot be altered to satisfy the goals of the DM and his or her players.

Descent into the caves of the unknown

For Four to Nine Characters levels 3rd to 6th

by rc pinnell

DUNGEON MASTER'S INFORMATION

This adventure is designed to be compatible with most earlier RPG type systems. Newer ones, with the appearance of 3rd Edition Dungeons & Dragons and on, can be modified to work as well but will likely require extensive reconfiguring. What is provided is, in the author's opinion, the minimum needed for you to run the adventure.

It is recommended that the adventure be ran for no less than 4 characters, with non-player types filling out large groups. At least one cleric, fighting man and magic-user, should be among the party; all should have from 1 to 3 minor magic items, not counting potions.

Tunnels that veer off the map that are not marked are presumed to go further/deeper into the underworld. It is expected that the Dungeon Master develop information regarding these as he or she desires.

THE CAVES

For the purpose of this adventure you may use the following generalizations. There are basically 4 types of caves to be explored: small (7&8), medium (2-3-4-5, 6, 9, 11, 14&18), large (12, 17, 19-20-21), huge (10, 13, 16). Small caves will have ceiling heights of 7' to 15'; medium caves, 8' to 19'; large caves from 9' to 22'; and huge ones from 12' to 30'. The first number being the height of the cave wall before it turns into the ceiling and the latter number being the highest point of the ceiling—usually in the center. The walls are solid rock, though jagged, bearing cracks, while the ceilings are rough and uneven, bearing many stalactites; these will hang no longer than 1/5th the height of the ceiling. The cave floors are covered with a thin layer of silty material having accumulated over centuries of time and wear.

Light is subject only to the range of the source and obstructions that might block it. Torches, on the other hand, will produce volumes of burning smoke that will eventually drift up to the ceiling and be pushed along by the natural ventilation system. However, in the small and medium size caves torch smoke will fill up the chambers quickly; after 3 turns in a small cave and 6 turns in a medium one, the air will be thick with smoke, burning characters' eyes. This will not only reduce visibility by one half, but cause judgement to falter, resulting in all combat to hit rolls to suffer -2, while any Dexterity bonus to AC is negated for the duration of time spent in the cave. Such smoke will dissipate after 3 or 6 turns once the source is gone. If such is ignored, continuous torch use will cause characters to suffer hacking coughs and deprivation of oxygen. This will result in -3 to all to hit and damage rolls while within the area, and a loss of 1-3 HP per turn until they leave the location.

Sound does not carry far within the caves, not even within the largest ones. You can adjust any die roll determining **surprise** to be better than normal, by at least 1.

BACKGROUND

Long before the **Caves of Chaos** became occupied, a large band of Troglodytes, under their leader Gogmog, fled their homeland deep within the earth. Wanting to be no part of the civil war among the many clans, Gogmog guided his brood through a maze of tunnels until arriving at the **Caves of the Unknown**. Finding them to be satisfactory to his needs, he and his clan claimed them and settled in. When outsiders began to appear from above (the **Caves of Chaos**), Gogmog and his group found them to be delicious morsels, previously unknown to them, and gladly consumed the intruders. Until their activities were discovered by the bosses of the intruders, who invaded and slew many troglodytes before sealing up the only passage between the two locations.

Since that time, the troglodytes have remained deep within their caves, unmolested by those dwelling on the surface. And Gogmog has patiently expanded his clan, while establishing trade with other races of the underground, in order to gather arms and armor until the time he and his troops can clear the passage and have their revenge.

As the adventure begins, Gogmog and his clan are unaware of what has taken place above.

GETTING STARTED

It is assumed that you have run the adventure **B2, Keep on the Borderlands**, and your players' characters have finished clearing out the **Caves of Chaos**. If your group has not cleared the passageway already, you may allow them to easily do so at this time and gain access to the caves below. If you prefer, it is also possible for them to enter this adventure from the location on the wilderness map of the B2 that is marked **Cave Of the Unknown**. Do this, if they haven't played through the B2 but are of appropriate levels.

TROGLODYTE INFORMATION

Move 120'/turn, Hit Dice 2 (See leaders), Armor Class 5 (See leaders), Alignment Chaotic/evil, Attacks 1 or 3 + Special (See below), Damage By Weapon (spear or javelin) or 1-2/1-2(claw)1-4(bite), Excretion (See below), Treasure Type A. Surprise on a 1-4 in their natural surroundings. XP Value 25 (See leaders)

Excretion. When in battle the troglodyte is aroused and will emit a stench that is nauseating to humans, dwarfs, elves and hobbits. This scent, once smelled, will cause those failing to make a Save v. Poison, to lose 1 point of strength each round for 1-6 rounds. This is cumulative and the loss of strength will last for 10 melee rounds after it has taken finale effect. Anyone losing ½ his or her strength will, thereafter, attack at -2 to hit and damage until their strength returns to normal. Those reduced to below 3 strength, will be incapacitated to the point of becoming unable to move, fight or cast spells until the effect dissipates.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

If characters are lurking about in tunnels or spending a great amount of time in a chamber they have cleared out, you may roll to see if something comes along to engage them. A roll of 1 on a d6 indicates a check is required. Roll two six-sided dice and consult the following table.

2-5 Troglodyte Warriors, 4-7, HP 12,12,11,11,10,10,10 **6-9** Troglodyte Adult Females, 2-5, HP 7 ea.

10 Troglodyte Teen Males, 1-6, HP 5 ea.

11 Pack Lizard, 1, HP 28

12 Giant Scorpion, 1-6, HP 24,22,20,18,16,14

KEY TO THE LEVEL

1. **Upper Entry.** A wide tunnel leading down from adventure B2, area 51. The exact distance from where it starts here and the blocked section appearing in that adventure is difficult to pin down, due to the varying descent to this adventure. It is certainly hundreds of feet and easily over a thousand when examining the outdoor wilderness map in the B2. It is so seldom used now, that the chance of a random encounter happening is 1 in 8 (use a d8).
2. **Cavern.** This is currently occupied by 3 adult males (HP 9 ea.), and 6 adult females (HP 7ea.)
3. **Cavern.** Occupied by 9 warriors (HP 12,12,11,11,11,10,10,10,10). Each has a spear and 3 javelins.
4. **Harem-Cavern.** 9 adult elite females (HP 8ea.)
5. **Harem-Cavern.** 9 teen elite females (HP 4 ea.)
6. **Chief's-Cave.** There is a 4 in 6 chance Gogmog will be present (1-4/d6). AC 3, HD 6/32 hp. +2 to attacks using weapons due to strength/to damage using claws and bite. If he is not surprised by intruders he will grab his favorite weapon; a **spear +2/+4 vs. Lycanthropes** (He is unaware of its magical abilities. To him, it's just shiny.) He speaks a small amount of the common tongue but is only 20% likely to surrender in battle. Three chests stacked atop each other along the southwest wall contain the clan's wealth: 2000 cp., 2000 sp., 2000 ep., 2000 gp., 2000 pp. A statue of LAGZOED stands in the southern section of the chamber, where a secret door on the pedestal leads to a hidden drawer containing a sack of gems and jewels (36/18) valued at 10050/19240 gp. If the statue is toppled, a shaft-chute descending to area 12 can be negotiated. Gogmog will use this to escape only if he feels his life is threatened.
7. **Cavern.** 15 teen males (HP 5 ea.) These will flee/surrender in the face of danger; 75% chance.
8. **Cavern.** This smaller chamber serves as a latrine. The smell within is overwhelming and has the same effects as the creatures' excretion; except for requiring only 1 Save Throw while passing through, and for only half the penalties as described earlier. If a thorough search of the waste is made, spending at least 3 turns, there is a 75% chance of finding a **magic ring—cursed**.
9. **Cavern.** 30 teen females (HP 3 ea.) These will flee/surrender, also; 95% chance.
10. **Cavern-Main.** Six warriors are located at positions **a/b** (HP 12,12,11,11,10,10) each armed with a spear and 3 javelins. Bustling about the cave floor are 20 adult males (HP 9 ea.) and 30 females (HP 7 ea.) going back and forth between **d** to **c**. These creatures are focused only on their task, which is the construction of a huge structure made of earth in the latter location. The purpose of this, and its stage of completion is left for you (the DM) to decide. They will rally to support the warriors if success seems apparent; should the warriors be too easily over-thrown, the creatures will flee into the tunnels to the southwest, or across the bridge to 15.

11. **Cavern.** 9 warriors (HP 12,12,12,11,11,11,10,10,10) each armed with a spear and 3 javelins.
12. **Cavern—Supply.** If Gogmog is not encountered in his chambers (#6) he will be found here, sorting through the remainder of his goods. Various types of containers are scattered about the place filled with the loot his clan has managed to accumulate through trade with other races deeper within the earth, or raids upon the surface dwellers. Boxes and crates are stacked along the walls of the chamber, with huge barrels and urns standing near the middle. Many are filled with items common to surface dwellers, while some appear alien (you must determine what and where these are if you wish to elaborate more). At least 3 large crates appear to have metal padlocks on them, containing the remainder of the chief's treasure: (#1) 4000 cp, 4000 sp; (#2) 2000 ep, 5000 gp; (#3) 5000 gp, 2000 pp, **scroll of 3 spells/Raise Dead—fully, dagger +2/+3 vs. Spiders.** A secret door is located in the eastern wall, only Gogmog knows of; it leads to the surface in the woods east, 600' south of the *Chaotic Caves*. Several warriors are posted south of this chamber and Gogmog will call for their aid before attempting to slip through the secret passage.
13. **Cavern—Elites' Chamber.** 6 warriors (HP 12,12,11,11,10,10) each armed with spear and 3 javelins. A crane device (**a**) acts as a crude elevator, lowering and raising those going to and from the chamber below. While Gogmog is the military leader and chief of the clan, his first mate, *Schlopa*, serves as the Queen and is in command of fertility and reproduction. She monitors all the female troglodytes and those that meet her approval are groomed for breeding; only the elite females are bred with the chief. These and the queen reside in this and the next chamber. 12 elite females (HP 8 ea.) and 8 elite teen females (HP 4 ea.) are presently at (**b**), lounging and enjoying themselves. A long wide passage (**c**) leads to the queen's private chamber. It is guarded by 4 castrated *royal warriors* (Being 3 HD with 18 HP) each armed with a sword, dagger and shield (for AC 4). They will never leave the queen's chambers and will die defending her and the elite females.
14. **Cavern—Queen's Chamber.** The queen and her function has been described. She is a large figure, having 5 HD and 25 HP. From decades of time spent laying eggs in the hot boiling mud pool, her skin has become even more hard than normal; consider her AC 3. While she technically has no treasure of her own, she has managed to hide away a few trinkets the chief is unaware of. These she keeps in the bubbling mud pool (**b**) adjacent to her chamber. She will not fight intruders, relying, instead, on the use of a **ring** she possesses (**Human Control!**) Should the use of such fail her, she will flee into the mud pool to escape. The hot bubbling mud within the pool is thick and gooey. Characters exploring the area will move at half normal speed, lose the benefit of shield and dexterity bonuses, and attack only every other round. After 3 turns within the heat will become unbearable, with those failing a Save vs. Paralysis actually passing out, for 1-12 turns. In addition, for each turn after the 3rd the bubbling mud will harden on the characters, causing movement to further slow, attacks to suffer -1 penalties to hit/damage, and a loss of 1-3 HP. Of course, characters having magic items to counter such effects can/will ignore all this. Currently in the mud pool are 6 elite females (HP 8 ea.), half are laying eggs, half rotating those already laid or removing the shells of those already hatched (shells are discarded into chamber 15); there are roughly 2 dozen eggs within the chamber. The queen's stash is hidden within 3 eggs that did not develop and contain the mummified remains of the dead embryos; (#1) holds 9 huge gems worth 500 gp each; (#2) holds 18 large gems worth 250 gp each, and a **scarab of**

protection; (#3) holds 27 average sized gems worth 125 gp each, and a **ring of spell storing**—*Heat Resistance*. (Acts similar to Fire Resistance.)

15. **Cavern—Visitors.** This large chamber is where outsiders, either from deep below or the surface, arrive to meet with the chief and exchange goods. At times, small groups of traders might be camped somewhere within, and it is up to you if such is the case as characters reach the location; what types of traders and what goods they might have being up to you as well. There are always 4 warriors at location **a**, (HP 12,12,11,10) each with a spear and 3 javelins. A gorge between this and the great chamber at 10 is located at **b**; a group of 6 warriors are always stationed here (HP 12, 12,11,11,10,10) each with a spear and 3 javelins; should invaders overthrow the guards at 10 (a/b) there is a 1 in D6 chance per turn that these will rush to that chamber to investigate. Should any of the normal males or females flee across the bridge, these guards will automatically do so. The floor of this chamber is sometimes cluttered with egg shells; mostly in the area along the north eastern wall, where a passage leads slightly downward into the mud pool. The air rising out from the passage is moist and very hot, out to a range of 20' from the opening. Egg shells discarded from the pool are usually picked up and dragged away by other creatures, hoping to scrape whatever edible residue-material from inside the shells that remains. Because of this (and if the chamber is not occupied currently with traders), there is a greater chance of random creatures being encountered as the chamber is explored. Do not use the previously described random encounter table. Instead, on a roll of 1 on a D6, you may determine that from 1-8 creatures from cave 16, 1-2 creatures from cave 18, or 1-4 creatures from cave 19, are present.
16. **Cavern—Entry.** This area also serves as the kennel for the lair's pets. A pack of **Cave-dogs** is currently housed here. It is a special breed of species developed by the queen. They are immune to the troglodyte stench, but because so, their sense of smell has been reduced to 1/10th that of a normal dog. Treat them as follows: Move 150'/turn, AC 8, HD 2+1, ATK 1 (bite) DAM 1-4 * Special ATK on a roll of 20, the animal has locked its jaw upon a victim's limb or throat (determine however you desire) and continues to *crush*, causing additional damage of 1-12 points per round until it or the victim, is killed. Neutral. Each of the sub-chambers has a gate which can be swung shut when visitors are expected; otherwise, they will be open. There are currently 25 creatures: 5 each in **a**, **b** and **c**; 4 in **d** and 3 each in **e**. (Roll HP as needed.) A small passage in the south wall of the larger chamber leads downward to another adventure of your own design; the larger passage in the east/southeast wall leads to the surface, and the area marked on the wilderness map of B2.
17. **Cavern—Special.** Sometimes used to house visiting dignitaries, it has not seen such use in a long time. Currently, it is occupied by a **Black Pudding** (HP 75). It has no treasure unless you decide so.
18. **Cavern—Special.** Used to stable **Pack Lizards** by the troglodytes. Move 90'/turn, AC 5, HD 6+6, ATK 1 (bite), DAM 2-8, Neutral. About the size of a large horse, with a longer tail and not as tall, these creatures are dumb, slow, but sure footed in the underworld. Presently there are 6 stabled here. (HP 36, 32, 28, 24, 20,16) They have no treasure.

19. **Cavern—Special.** Often used the same as #17, it is currently not. But neither is it empty; a pack of **Giant Scorpions** has taken up residence within. (HP 24, 22,21,20,18,17,16,2x15) Oddly, they have managed to find the following treasure and return it to their lair: 500 cp, 150 sp, 50 ep, 25 gp, 5 pp, 3 gems (valued at 500, 350, 250 gp), and a flask/**potion** (Anti-toxin vs. troglodyte stench), 1 dose.
20. **Cavern—Guard Post.** Normally 3 warriors would be stationed here. But, recently, they were slain when a **Giant Slug** crawled up from the lower regions and surprised them. It has 60 HP, and no treasure. A narrow passage south of this chamber descends into the underworld.

This ends the adventure, ***Descent Into the Caves of the Unknown.***

Author's Statement

It is my sincerest hope that anyone/everyone that experiences this adventure enjoys it. What is provided is only the framework to which the Game/Dungeon Master must add his or her own wealth of expertise in order for it to be a success.

