

For Ryan:

## A History of Things

I need you to gradually explain this stuff to the other players if asked.

- In the **Age of Troubles** the most glorious city known to the dwarves, called Drukarheim, was sacked by an orcish horde headed by an evil which cannot be named, that must not be named. This ended the reign of dwarves in the lowlands. Three tribes escaped. Of them a chieftain and smith of legendary skill by the name of Durgeddin led the Blackfeet in a centuries long exodus.
- In the **Age of the Star** Khundrukar was founded by Durgeddin's folk in the mountains overlooking Blasingdell. So began another age of prosperity. Durgeddin became the chosen of Volund, the all father of the Dwarves, for the former's virtue brightened the dark halls of Khundrukar.
- In the **Age of the Axe** Durgeddin grew bold and seeking revenge on those who smote his ancestral home, sallied forces from Khundrukar to vanquish the orcs. Durgeddin himself worked at the forge, and made the greatest works this world has known.
- In the **Age of Tears** the orcs were weakened, but somehow located Khundrukar deep in the mountains. They made entry and assaulted it unexpectedly. The dwarves afield were routed and those within the fortress cutoff from the outside. The destruction of Khundrukar was assured. Lord Volund breathed into old Durgeddin and he grew tall, strong and invincible. In doing so, Volund became an avatar in Durgeddin and faded from the ether, to this day only heard to those outside the fortress in the deepest caves and in the holiest of shrines. He crafted great works of war to defend the fortress with insights of his god. For a time these works shocked and repulsed the orcs, but then the mind of Durgeddin was corrupted to madness. IT is not known why. Some say his mortal mind could not handle the streams of majesty coursing through it. Others that the darkness which had struck Drukarheim so many centuries ago had returned to poison it. Whatever the case, Durgeddin's eyes became mad and seething black with red billows. He smashed the works, and encased those who approached him in metal. Soon Khundrukar grew silent and the dwarves who survived strangers to all.

## Personal history of Fafnir Garth:

Your mother Lyngheid clutched your hand following the orc ambush outside of the mountains and pulled you toward the fortress of Khundrukar. You managed to reach the gates when a friendly patrol of dwarves from the fortress intercepted the orcs pursuing you. This was at the end of the **Age of the Axe**

You remained in the fortress for another ten years, at which point the **Age of Tears** was upon you. During these years your mother succumbed to depression for longing of her son Grecco and husband Alfrigg. She leaped from the top of a forge onto the throne before Durgeddin. At least two dozen other Garth clansmen were known to have survived the ambush and lived in Khundrukar.

Following your mother's death and the sealing of the fortress to the outside, the sounds of war grew louder and louder in the fortress. A wave of darkness crept over you, and you considered joining your mother. You were ordered in the defense of the fortress by helping to armor the warriors heading out to the breach. An elder and advisor to Chief Durgeddin named Alviss (pronounced awl-wiss) befriended you as you helped him fix his armor one day. Alviss was a paladin and was elder in years even to Durgeddin. He was once the head of the King's Guard at Drukarheim and was a scholar and gentleman of exceptional valor, of whimsical wit and much gravity.

As the situation grew hopeless one day you saw Chief Durgeddin casting his hand toward innocent civilians and encasing them in shrouds of metal, diamond and rock. As he pointed at you Alviss saw and leaped in front of you, deflecting the mad avatar's spells with his blade. In his typical way the mad Durgeddin fell to the ground and began muttering, shaking and cursing, with every motion the forge and throne shook the walls, his voice as loud as any war trumpet. Alviss motioned for you to come with him as the whole fortress shook. He and a small group of other dwarves had made contact with the dark elves and created a portal deep in the mountain. The portal flickered, about to collapse, the last dwarves shuffling in with a dark elf prince glaring at you both with alarming eyes. You stepped through it with your friend.

You found yourself in the subterranean kingdom of Svartlogian under the reign of King Dain, a place of no light deep below Khundrukar where the black elves dwell. Alviss paid his fortune to be brought there, and for some months was lead to the surface by loyal agents of Dain. In your company was a dozen or so dwarves dedicated to restoring Khundrukar, mostly elders, who called Alviss their leader. This was called the Nathair Sochaí (Serpent Society), marked by a tattoo of a serpent on the right wrist.

Over time you were inducted to the society and trained in the ways of the paladin of Volund by Alviss. Khundrukar was lost and with it: Volund's powers, once great in the heart of the glorious fortress, is now but a shadow, corrupted in the mind of a mortal. To speak with your god you must travel deep into the earth, to sacred caves, and there you find only whispers. Your powers as a servant of Volund wane.

The Serpent Society's mission was to discover a way into the fortress and to somehow release Volund from the mad but now apparently immortal Durgeddin. The Society understands that Durgeddin is not evil, but somehow made insane in the avatar of Volund, and that the dwarves will never be able to have a home fortress again in this part of the world until the god is restored.

Leading up to this current year many members of the Society were killed in action attempting to uncover another way into the fortress, while others died from old age, including your good mentor. He charged you on his death bed to free Volund and reclaim the halls Khundrukar. There are only a few of you left, and you have not heard of the others for some months.

Recently while traveling the countryside in search of answers you began receiving visions. Rising off your feet by several inches, your eyes glow and you begin to chant in the old tongue of the dwarves which only a few can understand to this day. It is the voice of Volund, speaking through you. He has told you that his power is almost completely lost and that if not freed from the form of Durgeddin will soon

twist from all control. As one of the few, perhaps the last, paladin of the faith, you have been called upon to take up this task. Volund has ordered you to a small human town you have yet heard of called Oakhurst. Your long lost brother is there, and holds with him an item which will guide your way.

### Equipment:

*Carwylm*, Bastard Sword +1

Special:

*Ward of Magic Immunity* (1-5 charges): *Carwylm*, when activated by command phrase, renders a 5' bubble of magic immunity against evil and chaotic spell casters.

*Bound in Grief*: *Carwylm* can only be wielded by Fafnir. The blade will harmlessly jump from the hands of other good aligned characters. If firmly held it will warm until it burns the skin. In the hands of evil characters it will shoot tremors of extreme pain through the body dealing 4d6 magical damage per round. *Carwylm* will tolerate being wielded by other lawful good paladins.



History: The blade of Alviss of the Blackfeet, forged by Durgeddin in the depths of Khundrukar to combat the invaders. On Alviss' dying breath he bestowed the blade onto Fafnir and charged him to use it to free Volund and restore the glitterhame. It has the symbol of the Nathair Sochaí just above the hilt and dwarvish runes which read "Under the earth, glitters, and madness." running down the fuller engraved into it. These symbols faintly glow blue when Fafnir receives visions, and possibly at other times.

Half plate, Dwarven

500 gold on any other items of interest

FOR: Ryan/Dylan

#### The Garth Family

- The Garths are a clan of the Blackfeet dwarf tribe who settled in the forests following the exodus from Drukarheim. The elders of the Garth clan believed that staying low, out of sight and allying with the elves would protect them from further molestation.
- At the end of the **Age of the Axe** the Garths became entangled with in the war instigated by Khundrukar, as orc and dwarf forces moved through their forest lands west of the mountains where Khundrukar lies. Accordingly the elders of the Garth clan decided to seek sanctuary at Khundrukar.
- During this exodus the brothers Grecco and Fafnir, then young children, were separated. Their father Alfrigg was killed in an orc ambush outside of the fortress, while their mother Lyngheid clutched Fafnir and ran toward the mountains. The other warriors Garth stood their ground so that the women and children could escape.

# ADVENTURE - OVERVIEW

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**Tavern at Oakhurst:** Fafnir finds the party as they are relaxing after a long adventure. All seems well after a short introduction then he is possessed by Volund and rises into the air, clearing the room and spouting prophecies that the scroll contains the secret to release him. The scroll contains a map to a large temple ruin in the Greco-Roman Parthenon style which is located in the Wood of Daggers. Fafnir knows the wood as being the ancestral meeting place of the high priests of Drukarheim. The society never ventured to travel there as the wood itself is said to be possessed by dangerous spirits, tribes of warlike centaurs and wild animals. More spectacularly, the temple grounds themselves are said to be possessed by the shades of dead dwarves.

**Journey to the Temple:** The Wood is massive and travel overland would take a month to reach the temple, it's also crisscrossed by a delta of rivers and streams called the Maze Waters. The players can learn of a portage at the mouth of a tributary east of Oakhurst in which they can possibly rent a boat upstream to the temple. The portage has been captured by a tribe of warlike centaurs, the players can try to steal a boat, pay the expensive fee imposed by them or kill them to get up the stream. A persistent rain is ongoing, bringing a heavy mist and flooding the river by morning and concealing dangerous shallow waters.

- The players should seek a guide to bring them down the river

**Down the River:** The players sail down the river. It is visibly flooded. Within 3 hours of sailing they may run aground if they don't take precautions. Even if they do, a warband of centaurs attack. The centaur high priest picks up a tree and hurls it toward the ship, cracking the bow and it begins to flood. The players must fight off the centaurs while getting wooden boards. During the encounter the shades attack and kill some centaurs, forcing a retreat. The players must get on the boat before the shades kill them – they realize their weapons don't work except for those with +1.

**Into the Elf Wood:** Free of the shades the party can consider what to do. Druid/ranger remembers a legend from their studies of a plant which can be ground to a dust and if sprinkled on someone renders them invisible to the shades. This plant is said to grow in the shadow of Forest Heart, a massive root which gives life to the forest in the east of the Wood of Daggers. Forest Heart is rumored to be the site where a great kingdom of Elves once thrived, but nothing has been heard of them since the end of the war between Drukarheim and the orcs. IF they go they find the Forest Heart with a trove of the plant nestling it, but it is patrolled by slowly lumbering, massive Forest giants. A group of orcs scurries into the clearing and gets smashed. They pose no threat as long as the party introduces themselves and asks permission to take the plant, otherwise they attack with disastrous consequences.

**Arriving at the temple:** Back on the ship the players have an uneventful day trip and the rain lifts as night falls. Revealed to them is a beautiful turquoise spring where the waters for all the river come from. It glows with a faint light which reveals the bottom of the river in the darkness. The light faintly reveals the outline of the temple and an epic stone stair path leading to it. The temple's outlines are also very

faintly outlined by moonlight. Blackness fills the inside of the temple and shrines. Ghosts of the dwarf high priests and temple defenders fighting orcish attackers plays through this area like a movie. The players will be up for a nearly impossible fight and should try to sneak around if they didn't acquire the plant.

There are paved roads leading about some deserted gardens, shrines, statues and grave stones.

**Inside the Temple:** Story of the fall of Khundrukar painted on temple walls.

50 foot long relief which depicts:

Volund touching the earth from cosmic landscape > Dwarves sprouting from the earth > dwarves going into caves, hiding, dirty, scared > dwarves running from a giant, early ones stop them with spells > Early ones meeting them and bringing gifts of a glowing stone, mithril > early ones show dwarves how to survive in the deep > dwarves build a mighty fortress and forge great works > Dwarvish king counting gold and demanding large statues > Early ones sit with friendship with a dwarf king > Ashoka shackled and thrown into slavery, Kalima killed in front of him > Early ones enslaved and operating forges, thrown from heights > Ashoka casting spells from his cave, speaking to the ghostly image of orcs > dead dwarves around prison bars, orcs and dark elf wizard standing motioning for Ashoka to come out > (no longer relief but inscribed) dwarvish fortress burning > immense inscription of Ashoka in a warlike face with dwarves running before him > Ashoka clutching his dead Kalima and casting spells, unable to bring her back from the dead > a tomb atop smoldering dwarven kingdom, moon beam casting down on the Kalima laying in state and Ashoka weeping next to her

There are stationary shades of dwarves standing in the temple, if anyone touches one they come alive and attack them. At the altar of Volund the altar is cracked and Volund beheaded. The remains of dwarven highpriests, perfectly mummified but with their eyes ripped out lay at the altar, as well as a dozen temple guardian skeletons scattered about. If they approach Fafnir's sword begins to glow and his nose bleeds, he falls to the ground and receives a vision of Ashoka entering the temple and viciously murdering the defenders, casting black magics on the priests and holding the body of his Kalima, attempting to bring her back to life at the altar, then walking slowly into the mountains toward a burning dwarven fortress. The temple defenders animate and attack them. Once they are dead the hundreds of shades standing silently in the temple begin to move slowly toward them.

## **To Drukarheim**

The party must now retrieve the remains of the Kalima.

The deep forest of the Wood of Daggers grows thinner and then hilly, rising gradually into mountains. A sheer face of mountain faces them with a winding path ahead. A beheaded statue of Volund carved into the mountain overlooks the path and a flipped caravan makes it difficult to pass, filled with the remains of dwarves.

Up ahead there is a mountain giant lair across a valley on a perch overlooking the path. If the party proceeds without scouting a stonetrap collapses on the path, trapping several adventurers and sounding a horn. A giant boulder is thrown from the lair which collapses the path up ahead. From behind a giant jumps down from the mountain with a large pack of leashed wolves and attacks, offering them to surrender. If they surrender, they are brought to the lair and slaughtered over a couple days for food. If they don't, the mountain giants will fight until wounded then retreat.

After the ambush they come upon Drukarheim. The Fortress is smashed and black drafts of smoke still billow from slowly burning fires within. There is a monumental stone ledge with the entrance below it. It's massive hundred foot tall doors are broken in and hanging off, the entrance way is filled with stone and bones. Up the sheer face of the stone ledge there is a flat area atop it. There lies a funeral monument for the Kalima. On the mountain overlooking it is Ashoka, glowing with a faint blue light. A moon beam casts down upon the monument. Fafnir's sword glows strongly as it approaches the monument.

### **Shrine to Kalima**

If the party waits eventually Ashoka will wander off into the mountains. The shrine is a raised platform with monumental stairs on all sides. The platform's corners have large statues of Eastern deities looming over it. It is heavily trapped. While the players can walk up the stairs, the platform itself has a force field which plays a chime which sounds throughout the mountains and shocks whoever touches it with potent waves of yellow lightning. Kalima is laying in state in a stone carved lotus in the middle of the platform.

If the party manages to disarm the traps and defenses, when approached her body will disintegrate into wispy ash which blows away, leaving behind only a skull. The skies will turn black and a powerful gusting storm will blow in. The light of a rapidly approaching Ashoka and thunder will draw near.

### **Return to Wood of Daggers**

The party escapes to the boat near the dwarven temple and may sail downstream back to Forest Heart to seek the elves who once were known to inhabit it. The elf kingdom of Andoeryn is hidden from sight by a powerful mythal of invisibility – the elves have secluded themselves from the outer world.

Fafnir/Grecco can attempt to locate the town of Dwimorholt, the place of their earliest youth, because they remember where the elves used to live from there. That area was once a battleground between orcs and an alliance of dwarves and elves, and may still be occupied by the former.

They find the village after successful tracking and find the derelict Dwimorholt. Just as they arrive so does a warband of orcs and hobgoblins lead by an imposing Ogre mage. They begin to setup camp and post sentries on the perimeter. If the players attack and the Ogre mage can blow a horn and a large war

party of 50 orcs and goblins lead by two ogres and an ogre mage arrive from the east and join the fight. As the party is clearly about to die the elves attack with forest giants, cast spells which animate the trees into ents and kill all the evil aligned creatures on the site.

The elves may be persuaded to escort the party to Andoeryn. The party is led by Captain Durathor, an elf of noble blood.

### **Forest Heart and Andoeryn**

The elves head north and the forest becomes denser, almost impassable. At the edge of a thicket of trees Durathor speaks in elvish and from above a lift appears and lowers down. The party follows the lift and at the top Durathor speaks again, revealing a small cast iron gate leading into a now revealed elvish kingdom.

Players are escorted to King Aurvandil's court and given an audience. When asked if he can help bring Kalima back from the dead he calls for High Priest Correlon. Correlon explains that the spring which

feeds the Forest Heart can be used to restore her life. King Aurvandil dispatches Correlon and Durathor, and a party of elves, to escort the players to the spring, which is very large and lies in the shadow of Forest Heart.

When they arrive Correlon takes the skull and throws it into the lake. When nothing happens Correlon explains that her remains were too far gone and only a life for a life would bring her back. Grecco should sacrifice himself, but anyone can.

When the sacrifice enters the pond he slowly descends to the bottom of the spring and disappears from sight. A few moments later the beautiful Kalima emerges and walks out. IF they explain what's happened to Durgeddin she will say that it's a curse of her people and can be lifted if she can visit him – it will also lift the rage of her husband Ashoka and hopefully break the cycle.

## **ADVENTURE - COMPLETE**

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### **Tavern**

You rest at ease after a long trek through the dark. The Tavern at Oakhurst is a welcome reprieve. The smell of pipe and roasted pork is on the air, as well as muffled laughter and cheers. Your bones ache, but a steady chair and a plate of good food, as well as the hospitality of a few vigilant waitresses is a salve. You have a table at the back corner of the tavern, under the stairs leading to the rooms. Some count their coins and other loot. You're enjoying the relative calm. What do you do?



Allow some time, then continue:

A very enthusiastic man in his early twenties approaches with two friends. They appear to be commoners from Oakhurst. They appear to be quite inebriated, and stumble about with tankards in hand. He comes up to Grecco and pulls on his shoulder

“Ey, you are Grecco, eh?”

“Me thought so. ME names Gareth. Aye. LOOK ER YOU DRUNK FOOLS, this is Grecco... and.. and Vaerus? Varius? LOOminara. LOO..MEN... AR.... AAAHHHHHH. You know.” He waves his tankard above his head.

“They are the ones who cleared that old tree. No more trees taking our young. No more sheep misshin. DRINKS FOR THEM BARKEEP!”

The tavern explodes into roaring cheers. A round of ales is brought over and soon you are mobbed. Willaby, you feel yourself being hoisted into the air and a drumstick is shoved into your hand. A group of drunk villagers is carrying you around and screaming your name.

::pass hidden paper to ryan with indication he has entered the tavern::

After Ryan introduces himself to the party...

Fafnir you feel a sudden extreme pain in your head. Your vision narrows to black and you feel the world spinning.

The rest of you are blinded by a sudden flash of light coming from Fafnir’s eyes. His eyes begin to glow a faint blue as he rises from the floor and floats into the air. A swift wind blows through the tavern, tearing the shutters from the windows. The tavern folk scramble, screaming.

::pass paper to ryan:: erky timbers

“HEED THE WORDS OF THE LORD IN THE EARTH. GRECCO FORTH YOUR SCROLL. LOOK TO IT. THERE YOU WILL FIND MY SPELL OF FREEING.”

::collapse to ground::

Scroll:

When grasped the scroll unrolls itself and a map materializes, looking like a crude charcoal rubbing. The map is of the lands to the east of Oakhurst, specifically the mighty forest known as the Wood of Daggers. Handout for ryan:

The scroll contains a map to a large temple ruin which is located in the Wood of Daggers. Fafnir knows the wood as being the ancestral meeting place of the high priests of Drukarheim. The society never ventured to travel there as the wood itself is said to be possessed by dangerous

spirits, tribes of warlike centaurs and wild animals. More spectacularly, the temple grounds themselves are said to be possessed by the shades of dead dwarves.

You may want to consult Erky Timbers on this strange place before departing.

## Erky Timbers

You arrive at the church of pelor, a simple house of brick and mortar. On the door something is different. In scrobbled cursive is a placard offering redemption of one's transgressions for the paltry sum of 10 copper – so that one can be "Bathed in loving light." It's obvious that your friend Erky Timbers is up to no good.

...

Enter: Entering the church, once a modest and solemn sanctuary of contemplation, you find the rows of pews draped with decadent, shiny, but clearly cheap cloth. Gaudy tapestries with Pelor's beaming face hang everywhere. Erky Timbers is pacing back and forth and enthusiastically shouting orders to a few village children as they help him hang streamers and other decorations from shoddy old ladders. Erky is dressed in a gold foil robe accented with a sunburst behind his head which makes him look a bit taller than his gnomish statue would have him be.

## Portage

You depart Oakhurst head toward the Portage.

[pass through farms then a plain of grass, leading to hills and scattered woods]

[After a few hours the sun begins to fall and the rains come, a mist comes in from the eastern forest and covers the land]

[The hills gradually flatten and the trees become sparser, before you is a plain of grass with a river tributary running through it. The river runs into a thick, mist covered forest where light no penetrates. At the river landing are a dozen or so boats, pulled out of the water and on rollers, casually dispersed, some tied down, there are some mud huts and a large fire roaring amidst them. The sun falls and darkness comes as the rain intensifies and cold drafts blow from the forest. You can barely make out some figures moving about near the encampment]

[Upon closer inspection you can see that the encampment is inhabited by creatures which look to be some mating of horse and man. The lower bodies are that of a horse, the upper that of a man. They are well armed, and a banner flies with a cracked hoof and spear. Most stand surrounding the fire pit, while others pill about. There are some humans here as well, seemingly working by moving boxes and preparing ships]

If party approaches:

[A loud thundering of hooves is heard suddenly from the hills to your backs. 3 centaurs rush upon you before you can respond and stop just short, flicks of mud spitting into the air. The heavy rains create a heavy mask and hide their features. The leader of them is something yet to behold: more massive than the others, he is armed with a giant club of some 6 feet and wears a terribly rusted suit of plate armor sporting signs of ancient elvish craftsmanship. His hateful countenance is marked by dozens of scars, and his gnarled black hair wraps around him like dreadlocks, bits of bone throughout]

“Travelers, travelers – calm yourselves. You’re now safe in the Kingdom of Chief Osrik the Cracked Hoof. What are your names and intentions?”

“It is ten pieces per head to pass through this land under our security. It will cost you more to go upstream. I shall bring you to the king. COME”.

- His name is Halfdan
- He will want to bring them to “King Osrik” if they want to pass through

### **Court of “King” Osrik:**

[You are brought into the middle of the encampment. As you draw closer you see that the mud huts appear newly constructed and house dirty mats, boxes of supplies and sleeping workers. A few contain sleeping centaurs. Near the center is the roaring fire, so powerful the rain appears to have stopped here. There is a deer on a spit and a cauldron of some sort of pottage. The fire is surrounded by six centaurs. Many show signs of battle, and all are armed with lances, bows, spears, swords and scraps of armor and shields. The patrol which brought you in remains behind you. A few men walk by hauling boxes of supplies and load them onto a boat barely visible behind the muds near the river]

[ Across the fire rising above the spit is a tidy centaur with a well groomed, curly black beard and piercing blue eyes. He dons a spotless chest of plate and a red cape, as well as a simple gold crown. HE grins and nods his head]

[The patrol leader Halfdan reads your names]

“KNEEL” he says violently.

...

“Welcome my friends. I am Chief Osrik and I now rule this port. All of this forest is my kingdom and these my knights. What is your business before this court?”

He motions to his side and a frightened human lady, dark rings under her jittering eyes, approaches with a chalice in her hand and hands it to the centaur, who takes a long draft and throws it aside.

- 13 centaurs, six at fire, 3 behind them at patrol, 4 scattered about the camp
- 20 humans who were captured along with their boats, but he doesn’t mention how he got them and refers to them as loyal subjects
- 500 gold to go upstream

- 500 gold is a tax for “Royal coffers”
- 10 gold/day for a crew of ten
- 10 gold/day for a navigator
- 10 gold per head just to pass through
- Ship is a longboat with a black sail and oars

The players either steal a boat, kill the centaurs, jailbreak to get crew etc, pay for it, or some combination of the above.

## Down River

[ describe going down river: light rain, mists, flooded banks]

[run aground if no precautions/navigator, centaur attack if no]

[run aground: A light, cold rain continues to hit your faces. Suddenly a tremendous crack is heard, like lightning. The port bow of the ship has ran aground, sending two men overboard and another horribly crushed by wooden boards. Water is spurting into the ship like an open wound. The ship lists off the flooded river edge and slowly drifts further downstream about ten feet, finally resting along the visible river bank.]

[ centaur attack: A light, cold rain continues to hit your faces. Suddenly a crack from your right flank and a massive oak falls, smashing into the starboard bow of the ship, instantly crushing one of your men to death and throwing two overboard, water begins to spurt into the ship like an open wound]

[The ship will need to be repaired or is going to sink]

[There is an old trade path parallel to the river and then heading into the dark forest. A sign reads trade post in dwarvish points down path on a badly eroded marker stone]

[Rain pools forming puddles along the depressions of a well worn path into the forest]

[There are only sparse, new growth near the beginning of the path, then it bends into a thicker thicket of trees and an old rotting trade post, the trees around it or the tradepost itself can be broken down for boards]

[Start to take wood, get all the wood]

[Several workers seem cheerful having collected the wood. One yells for the party to return to the ship. He gets shot in the heart and black blood spills out everywhere as he chokes to death on his blood, hooves heard from the trees]

1 round of movement

Attack by 3 centaurs on each side

If they try to escape from the ship, 5 centaurs from both sides attack, and one blocking path

After a few rounds of melee...

[The centaur opposing you comes down with a fierce strike of his axe and your armor catches it and absorbs the shock but knocks you to your back. He growls, raising it high up above for another blow and suddenly his hateful eyes lose all life. A black dagger made of shadow passes through his chest and twists for a moment. Then just as fast a shadowy mass passes through him, rapidly turning his flesh to dust and drawing the sinews like cut ropes away from the body. Standing in his place is what appears to be a dwarf, but a dwarf of wispy shadow. It's eyes are black holes. He is dressed in shimmering robes and intricate armors of an age long forgotten. He begins to walk toward you with his dagger low to his side and the grass at his feet recoils and shrinks from life]

[10 shades appear]

[Centaurs begin to flee on their round, few sailors die as if consumed on contact]

[If the players attempt to fight, another 10 shades appear the following turn, walking slowly from the depths of the forest toward them]

[Escape to boat, patch crack takes 4 rounds, shadows emerge from tree line and try to kill those on the ship]

## **Into the Elf Wood**

[ describe how boat is no longer leaking, rain still beating them]

[ surviving crew wants to go back to the portage, can possibly be persuaded by inspirational players or more gold]

[ read summary text, should be enough]

## **Temple**

[describe journey back to ship]

[uneventful day trip, falls to night and rain lifts]

[Up ahead low hanging tree limbs and darkness block your view further down river. As your ship passes through, scraping by branches, a glowing light bounce up from below and cascades in rippling patterns on the sail. Dancing wisps below the surface light a verdant pool, the bottom of which, though deep, is filled with turquoise and green seas of around a bubbling spring. The pool is about 100 feet wide and roughly circular. The light faintly illuminates the silhouette of a massive temple complex to the north east, as well as an underwater slip and monumental marble stairs to the north west heading up onto raised land. At the top of the stairs is the dimmest outline of a massive, motionless humanoid some 50 feet tall]

1: [ monumental stairs]

As go up, you all feel a sudden wave of indescribable fear and a heavy pressure on your chest.

2: The figure at the top of the stairs is not a living thing at all, but a monumental statue of the allfather Volund holding an anvil. His face has been terribly disfigured. About the base of the monument are six other dwarvish gods: a crone, a mother, a cloaked scoundrel, a merchant, a necromancer and a gem setter. These statues have also been shattered. INbetween them are the remains of what may have once been a garden. The whole monument is encircled by a badly beaten paved stone road. To the east is a tangled hedgerow, but you can make out the faint outlines of temple structures and gardens by the moonlight.

... as you approach you hear the thunderous roar of an orc and five orcs, clad in black mail and with murderous instruments, leap from the side of the monument as if materializing there. Dwarven royal guards, ornate in dress and fearful take their charge and a melee ensues. Their visages are wispy white, like a thing of fog or smoke, and they pass through all things. Then a horrific humanoid, some ten feet in height whips a lariat at the face of the monument of Volund and pulls downhard, his face one of indescribable rage and bloodlust. [show picture of ashoka] . The dwarven guards are split open and bleed black, choking on their blood at the tips of orc spears and blades. These spirits vanish.

Investigate? Find some scattered dwarf remains where the dwarf ghosts died

3: The path continues north about 30 feet then bends east. Up ahead you can see a ghostly dwarf wrapped in a simple monk's robe running away from you and looking back over his shoulder as if running from something advancing quickly on him. He vanishes around the bend. Ahead of you the path is flanked by uniformly spaced trees. At the base of each is a plaque of some sort. The stones below your feet here are badly crushed and the hedge to the east ends at the bend up ahead.

...

From the east bend the path continues south east, then forks, continuing south east and east. The remnants of gardens is here ,but the cases have been overgrown for a long time. To your direct front you can see an oversized statue of an elderly dwarf encircled by a waisthigh hedge. You cannot make out the statue's eyes, and blackness covers most of it. [show picture] [Dugmaren, God of scholarship, invention, discovery]

Standing in front of the statue appears to be a dwarven temple guard with his back to you, staring up at the statue, although the darkness makes it very difficult to make out details. The sense of fear intensifies as the air becomes extremely cold. From behind you you feel as if you are being charged and then a orc ghost roars and passes through you leaping up and viciously hacking a then instantly materialized dwarf priest in the back near the fork ahead. They both disappear.

[if approach dwarf zombie at statue shambles forward and attacks]

[impaled zombie dwarves in hedge, impaled through ass, come out and attack, plus other shambling ones from down road to east and from gallery of heroes]

6 zombies

4:

[dirt paths]

[caskets and monument stones for various dwarven kings, nobles, heroes, high priests, a good number of which have been smashed by signs of battle]

[not ghosts... lookreal]

[murdered dwarf priest, ripped apart neck, seen staring through various lanes]

[ashoka seen staring through various lanes]

5: [statue of Thard Harr, naked dwarf with tattoos, massive beard which covers his face, toothed skull helmet, surrounded by a statue of brambles and twisting vines. Little pedestal for offerings knocked over and laying at his feet]

6: Offering shrine. Show picture.

Three ghostly dwarves kneeling and facing the spring, praying. Two dwarven guards facing outward and parrying blows then swinging axes. They fall and vanish. Then the dwarves kneeling get picked up, one gets thrown out toward the spring and vanishes, the other has his head ripped off effortlessly and it rolls, vanishing, the third looks like his hooked around the neck and then pulled back first toward the viewer, shade of a dead priest standing atop remains of a dwarf priest, stone box with lid near the left side]

[describe outstretched hand of dwarf priest if inspected, if players try to touch shade energy drain]

Remains: Ring of the Ram

Box: Dessicated food and forest offerings, a few empty flasks and potions, two potions of healing, one potion of antidote, one potion of tongues, scroll of restoration (lesser), scroll of hide from undead

7: [this path leads to a shadow cloaked mausoleum surrounded by high hedges. The path to it is never overgrown, with brambles growing across the pathway. There is a faint yellow glow coming from within mausoleum, possibly candlelight. [show picture]

[inscription: "Here lies King Clovis, first king of Drukarheim, he who took the deep and built a realm which shall last forever"]

The entrance is warded but can be magically opened somehow.

[describe as per drawing left of map area and picture]

[Death knight, neutral evil, inside casket]

[Will demand to know why the party has awoken him, will want a sacrifice of life force before answering questions, knows everything about the founding, died sometime after the elders will enslaved but before the revolt]

8: Dirt path with more trees and memorial stones at their base. Graveyard.

Reflecting pool: Flashes of Andoeryn, Ashoka on top of mountain, Durgeddin deep in his throne room

9: The brambles and trees part from the path and reveal the shattered majesty of the temple of the spring. [show picture]

Suddenly the thunderous cracks of battle sound from all directions. An incredible fear grips you and the moonlight is blotted out by darkness, reducing the whole temple ground to pitch black. ...

...

The sounds of battle continue and screaming dwarves, roars of orcs, as well as the thundering spell casting in a male tongue you have never heard. The pitch lifts suddenly as the wispy forms of a battle come before you. On the plain leading to the temple to your near front is the horrific sight of the destroyer from which you saw deface the monument of Volund earlier. He has a young acolyte priest in one of his powerful hands and crushes his throat, throwing it toward the temple steps. An army of orcs, giants and black cowed others advance in line with him on the temple. Twenty dwarves bravely hold their ground at the temple steps, locking shields. Bolts of fiery lightning arc from the hands of the destroyer, dispersing their masses, then black mists which turn some of the dwarves undead and will them to attack their comrades, then a charge is signaled and all vanishes, the moonlight returns. You then notice a large pile of dwarven remains at the temple steps.

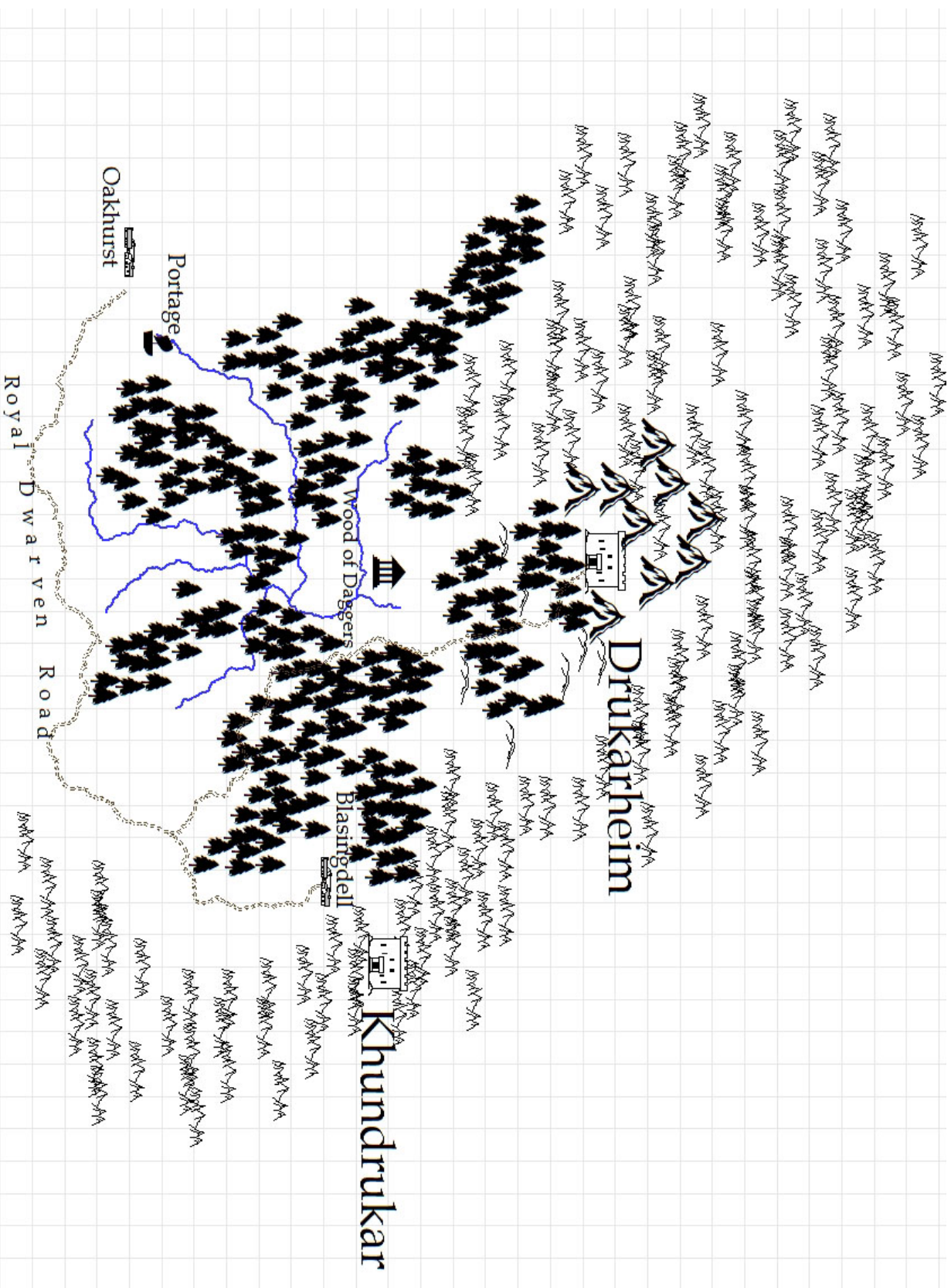
Parthenon: fresco of description above

Main temple hall: describe as per picture, also large crack revealing distant Drukarheim in north wall then:



The entire hall is filled with dozens of motionless shades of the dwarven dead, showing various signs of terrible death, standing motionless in rows. Their eyes track you as you walk but they do not move.

Read further description above in adventure overview



Dwarven Temple, details





## Mausoleum at the Dwarf Temple



**Prince Ashoka, Princess Kalima**



Princess Kalima





## Prince Ashoka



## Andoeryn



King Aurvandil and Captain Durathor





Forest Giant

