

ADP2-01



DESCENT INTO DARKNESS

A One-Round D&D[®] LIVING GREYHAWK[®]
Adaptable Adventure

Version 1

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Undead are attacking farmsteads. The farmers speak of a mysterious Man In Black. A crippled wizard seeks the party's help in recovering a family heirloom from the bottom of a wartime resistance base. What evil lies within the old base, and can you survive it? An adventure for characters level 3-8.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS[®] rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Willams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

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This is an RPGA Network scenario for the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game. Most sanctioned events delegate a four-hour time block for each round of this scenario, with actual playing time being around three hours. The rest of the time is spent in preparation before game play, reward distribution and scoring after the game. The following guidelines are here to help you with both the preparation and voting segment of the game. Read this page carefully so that you know and can communicate to your players the special aspects of playing an RPGA scenario.

PREPARATION

First, print this scenario. This scenario was created to support double-sided printing, but printing it single sided works as well. There is enough room along the inside margin to bind the adventure, if you desire.

Read this entire adventure at least once before running the event. Take time to review any special rules, spells, or equipment presented in the adventure. It may help to highlight particularly important passages.

When you run an RPGA D&D adventure we assume that you have access to the following books: the *Player's Handbook*, the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. We also assume that you have a set of dice (at least one d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20), some scrap paper, a pencil, an RPGA scoring packet, and your sense of fun. It's also a good idea to have a way to track movement during combat. This can be as simple as a pad of graph paper and a pencil, as handy as a vinyl grid map and chits, or as elaborate as resin dungeon walls and miniatures.

Instruct the players either to prepare their characters now, or wait until you read the introduction, depending on the requirements of the scenario described in the introduction.

Keep in mind that you must have at least three players (not counting the DM), for the game session to be a sanctioned RPGA event. You cannot have more than six players participating in the game.

Once you are ready to play, it is handy to instruct each player to place a nametag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for both the players and the DM to keep track of who is playing what character.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying. But, as the DM, you can bar the use of even Core Rulebooks during certain times of play. For example, usually the players are not free to consult the *Dungeon Master's Guide* when confronted with a trap or hazard, or the *Monster Manual* when confronted with a monster.

Text that appears in ***bold italics*** is player information, which you may read aloud or paraphrase as appropriate. Text in appendixes contains important DM notes, for you, offering insight to issues particular to the adventure. Monster and non-player character (NPC) statistics are provided with each encounter in abbreviated form. Full monster statistics for standard monsters are provided in the *Monster Manual*, while statistics for unusual monster and unique individuals are profiled in the Appendix at the end

of the adventure. You should review all of these statistics before the game starts to refresh your memory of the creatures' abilities.

SCORING

After the players have completed the scenario or the time allotted to run the scenario has run out, the players and DM score the game. The RPGA has three ways to score its games. Consult your convention coordinator to determine which method to use for this scenario:

1-No-vote scoring: The players write their names and RPGA numbers on the scoring packet grid. You fill in the top of the grid. That is all. No one is rated. This method is used for people who are just playing for fun.

2-Partial scoring: The players rate the game master and the scenario on their player voting sheet, and provide personal information, but don't vote for other players. The game master rates the scenario and completes personal and event information, but does not rate the players as a team or vote for players. This method is used when there is no competition, but the event coordinator wants information on how the DMs are performing, or the game master wants feedback on his or her own performance.

3-Voting: Players and game masters complete the entire packet, including voting for best player. If this method is used, be sure to allow about 15-20 minutes for the players to briefly describe their characters to the other players, and about 5-10 minutes for voting. This method is used when the players want to know who played the "best" amongst the group, or when the adventure is run in tournament format with winners and prizes.

When using voting, rank the players in order of your voting choice while they are completing their forms, so that you are not influenced by their comments on your abilities. It's a good idea to have the players vote while you determine treasure and experience awards for the scenario.

After voting, give the Scoring Packet to your event coordinator.

This is a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure. As a LIVING™ adventure it is expected that players bring their own characters with them. If players do not have a LIVING GREYHAWK character generated, get a copy of the current LIVING GREYHAWK character generation guidelines, and a character sheet from your convention coordinator or the RPGA Website (www.wizards.com/rpga), and then have any players without a character create one. Once all players have a LIVING GREYHAWK character, play can begin.

Along with the other materials that you are assumed to have in order to run a D&D game, it is also recommended that you have a copy of the LIVING GREYHAWK Gazetteer.

LIVING GREYHAWK LEVELS OF PLAY

Because players bring their own characters to LIVING GREYHAWK games, this adventure's challenges are proportioned to the average character level of the character participating in the adventure. To determine the Average Party Level (APL):

1) Determine the character level for each character participating in the adventure.

2) If characters bring animals that have been trained for combat (usually war horses and riding dogs), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (such as animal companions, familiars, a paladin's mounts, and so forth) use the following chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single character may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.

CR	1	2	3	4
1/4 and 1/6	0	0	0	1
1/3 and 1/2	0	0	1	1
1	1	1	2	3
2	2	3	4	5
3	3	4	5	6
4	4	5	6	7

3) Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure-round up.

4) If you are running a table of six characters, add one to that average.

By following these four steps, you have determined the modified APL. Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge that the characters face. APLs are given in even-numbered increments. If the APL of your group falls on an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they would like to play a harder or easier adventure. Based on their choice, use either the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

APL also affects the amount of experience you may gain at the end of an adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL that this adventure is played at, that character will receive only half of the experience points awarded for the adventure. This simulates the fact that

either your character was not as challenged as normal, or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Note: LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Three or four, or sometimes even five 1st-level characters may find difficulty with the challenges in a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure. If your group is APL 1 there are three things that you can do to help even the score.

1) Attempt to create a table of six 1st-level characters, or try to enlist higher-level characters to play at that table.

2) Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them. All riding dogs are considered trained to attack. Characters who want their dog to attack they must succeed at a Handle Animal or Charisma check (DC 10). Failure indicates that the animal will not attack that round. This is usually a free action (see DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide Chapter 2: Characters) that may be attempted each round. If an animal loses half or more hp in a single round it flees, unless another check is successful.

3) A group of APL 1 adventurers who desire an extra hand can "enlist an iconic." The stats for the 1st-level versions of Tordek, Mialee, Lidda and Jozan are given at the end of each adventure. The group may pick one of these characters to joint them on this adventure. The DM controls that NPC.

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard one-round Adaptable Regional adventure. All characters pay one Time Unit to participate in the adventure. Adventures' Standard Upkeep costs 12 gp. Rich Upkeep costs 50 gp, and Luxury Upkeep costs 100 gp.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND

Encounter 1: Heroes for a Day

This encounter quickly brings the party into the action as they stumble across a farm being attacked by a large group of fairly nasty undead. In the middle of combat the barn goes up in flames.

Encounter 2: A Feast in your Honor

The farmer expresses his thanks to the party, and tells them of strange occurrences and mysterious strangers.

Encounter 3: A Stranger Comes Calling

A stranger interrupts the visit with the farmer and his family in the night. The path of the module is made clearer.

Encounter 4: Descent into Darkness

The party finds a treacherous mining shaft, the climb is perilous, and drowning awaits the unfortunate.

Encounter 5: Oh, the Carnage

On level 1 of the mine, the party finds signs of an old battle and much carnage. Combat with many lesser undead ensues as the party becomes caught between 2 squads.

Encounter 6: Always room for Jell-O

A series of twisting turning caverns may promise much in an old mine and safe house; but the only thing that fits in this encounter is a gelatinous cube that may be the bane of lesser parties.

Encounter 7: Heart of Darkness

Deep within the mine the party discovers the source of the undead problem, an ancient stone of sentient evil. The last party to discover this lies flung about the cavern like so many broken toys.

Encounter 8: I Must be Going Now

Mysterious stranger surprises the party, an NPC heads for the hills, the party may track down the mysterious Man In Black.

NOTES FOR TRIADS ADAPTING THIS MODULE

It is not necessary to have played, DMed, or even read the LIVING GREYHAWK adaptable adventure *What Lies Beneath* in order to play this adventure. Text from the encounters that tie the adventures together is included as DM Reference 1, should you choose to adapt this adventure as a sequel. Players who have played *What Lies Beneath* may or may not remember the encounters involved and the DM may feel free to cover that material again as time allows or situations dictate, if appropriate for your adaptation.

Moliktar, the Man in Black, is a mysterious figure that appears to be the source of undead activities in areas where he has traveled. The truth of the matter is that he is actually a tracker on the trail of his murderous brother, Daelnik. He is a wizard; he does frighten simple villagers because his disguise of choice is that of a dark and mysterious wizard. He has no power to control or raise the undead. However, it is important to create the appearance that his presence leads to bad things happening. The reality of the situation is that Daelnik is the source of trouble.

Daelnik is not necessarily evil at this point in the story, but rather serves a dark and sinister master. Three weeks prior to the beginning of this story, Daelnik was in the mine and awoke the power of the Heart of Darkness at his master's direction.

The Heart of Darkness is a semi-sentient evil stone capable of raising 80 HD worth of undead per week provided they are in contact with the earth within 2 miles of the stone. The stone can summon an Earth based

creature to protect itself 1/day. Moliktar is unaware of the stone or its powers. Daelnik is unaware of the powers of the stone, he is aware only of its presence.

In Encounter 5, the source of bones and carnage is left deliberately vague. The intention is that if the kingdom this is being run in was involved in the wars then the carnage is from that. If not, then the remnants of battle can be from what ever the Triad so desires, rebellions, raids, something older and more evil, whatever.

In Encounter 8, the party should not catch the Man In Black. The purpose of that encounter is to establish the ongoing story element of the Man In Black and the conflict with Daelnik.

Triads that have adapted "What Lies Beneath" for their areas will find that in the introduction I have included a place for town names to be changed to reflect your adaptations of that module.

House of Dragons is an adventuring company in the County of Urnst, based on an RPGA club. They hold no noble rank nor lands nor real wealth at this time. At some later point this may change within the County of Urnst. Triads should feel free to change this group to something specific to their kingdom if it would be more appropriate.

INTRODUCTION

Parties should have all spells prepared before this begins. At the end of the introduction go directly to Encounter 1 without stopping as the introduction ends with the viewing of the desperate situation.

It is late morning on this beautiful day. The sun rose early and your group left the inn where you were staying in the village of [insert village name here]. You have been following rumors of undead rising in small cemeteries throughout the land. Some of the rumors state that a great evil may be abroad in the land. Others suggest that it is a small group of wizards trying to establish a power base. Still others claim that it is surely a sign of the end of times. You're not sure about that, you do know this though, if the clues are there, they have been slippery and difficult to find. As you discuss amongst yourselves your own theories for what may actually be happening, you are interrupted by the sound of shouting and barking dogs from ahead. Looking towards the sound you see that a farmer and some of his workers are trying to hold a group of undead at bay, keeping them out of their barn. One of the men goes down as two of the undead overrun his position and enter the barn.

ENCOUNTER 1: HEROES FOR A DAY

APL 4 (EL 6)

👉 **Large Zombies (9):** hp 29 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 6 (EL 8)

➔ **Ghoul** (10): hp 13 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 8 (EL 10)

➔ **Ghast** (12): hp 26 each; see *Monster Manual*.

When the characters arrive, one or two undead should just be entering the barn, all the others are still outside and being held at bay by the farmer and his workers, but their position is perilous. If combat moves into the barn, every round there is a 1-in-6 (non-cumulative) chance that something bumps either an oil lamp or torch and starts a fire. The fire spreads fairly quickly, as the weather has been reasonably dry.

If a fire starts it takes ten rounds to reach the hayloft or to begin threatening the animals within. If the hayloft catches fire, fifteen rounds later, the roof catches fire. Twenty rounds after the roof catches fire the barn is a total loss. There is a pond close to the barn and a line passing buckets of water slows the spread by a factor of three (thirty rounds instead of ten). If the fire is contained inside before the loft catches fire (a bucket line is set up) it can be doused in twenty rounds. If the loft catches fire but a bucket line is setup before the roof catches fire the fire can be doused in forty rounds. If the roof catches fire and a bucket line is set up the entire thing can be doused in fifty rounds. When the fire starts, the farmers move as quickly as possible to save the barn if the characters have engaged the undead. After the fight, if any of the characters are injured and none of the farm hands need tending, Lorryth's wife Nyria has some healing skill. Lorryth, his four sons, and the six farm hands living at the farm are involved in the combat initially and then work to control the fire once it starts. In combat the NPCs seek primarily to defend the farm and animals and do not actively attack the undead hoping instead that the characters attack them and the men can herd the undead. They are all armed with long spears.

This is not the first time this has occurred, last week about a dozen skeletons clawed their way up out of the north field; the week before that, it was half a dozen zombies in the chicken coop. The farmers quickly dispatched them. Lorryth is a former sergeant in the army and has trained his hands to fight when such occurrences happen. The farm is atop an old battleground and these occurrences are not unheard of, but have not happened for several years.

ENCOUNTER 2: A FEAST IN YOUR HONOR

Provided the characters live through the encounter and did assist the farmers as much as could be expected, Lorryth invites them to stay with him and his family for the evening. He offers the characters room in the main house and stables their horses in his corral. Lorryth owns a fairly successful farm and has several hands that assist

him in maintaining the land. He was formerly a soldier in the Greyhawk wars and his farm was given to him following his service in that dread war. The farm itself was a battlefield at one time and he has a box in the barn that contains several weapons, shields, and partial suits of armor that he has dug up in his fields during plow seasons. These he sells to the characters for half the value listed in the *Player's Handbook*. All are old, rusted, and in need of repair in order to be fully useful. He does have a forge if anyone asks. Lorryth, his wife, their four sons (ages 23, 21, 20, 19) and their wives; their daughters (ages 17, 15, 7), their five grandchildren, and six hired hands brought in during plowing and harvesting seasons, tend the farm. His house is well appointed as farmhouses go, though not opulent.

Like all farmers though, they all enjoy good stories told by adventurers. Lorryth's wife Nyria is an excellent cook and a feast is prepared to honor the adventurers. After dinner, Lorryth asks the characters to share some of their exploits. As the farmers listen to the characters stories the youngest daughter (Myri, age 7) blurts out that they've seen an evil wizard all dressed in black recently, and that he made some horses die and the monsters come. If the characters inquire further, Lorryth relays the following:

Indeed, about two, maybe three weeks ago a man was here. All dressed in black, he looked very much like his own shadow, save that direct sunlight did not destroy him. When he first approached the house my wife ran to call me in from my work. He did not knock, but rather waited for me to open the door. When I did so, he did not speak, so I asked him what his business was. He replied in a dry rasping voice that he needed a horse, perhaps two. I could see that he had a horse out by the road and asked him about that and he said that the horse was weak from hard riding and asked if he could exchange it and some gold for two fresh riding horses. I considered for a moment whether the offer might be too good to be true, but the man was impatient. I agreed and sent Seth, my oldest son, to fetch two good riding horses. I asked the man to show me his gold, he waived his hand and a black pouch of coins flew from his belt to the table next to where I stood. He bade me take what I need and enough to cover two loaves of bread and jerky if I could spare it. While I sent Nyria to fetch the bread and jerky he turned, made a single gesture and the horse began to plod towards the side of the house where the coral is. I was a little nervous about reaching into another man's money pouch, especially a wizard's pouch, but he turned on me and instructed me that I should take a fair price and give him back his pouch so that he could be on his way. I took enough to cover the price of one horse and some rations. No sooner had I started close the bag than it shot from my hand to his belt. He tuned, spoke some words, and his saddle and tack moved from his tired old horse to the new one that Seth brought out. He tied the lead rope of the second to the saddle of the first, mounted and left. I looked down at the ground, in the spot where he had been standing and there were no marks from his boots. His gold was real enough though, real enough for me to buy another horse when his died three days later. I examined the horse myself, the horse just looked tired. His hooves were cracked and there were stones in his shoes that made it difficult for him to walk. I cleaned out his hooves

and removed the bent shoes and put him out to pasture so that he could rest and recover. He seemed to be doing better for a couple of days. Then on the third day, I came out to check on him and he was lying in the bottom of his stable. I lifted his head and checked his mouth and quite nearly threw up. The horse's breath was the most rancid thing I had ever smelled, kind of like rotten eggs, only worse. He died that afternoon, his stomach all swollen up and bloated. We were afraid to split it open for fear that whatever killed it might get to the others. We dug a pit in the south fields and burned him there. I hope the flames destroyed whatever killed that poor beast, and I certainly hope I never see the likes of him again.

The horse died as a result of worms. The worms were at first nearly dormant due to the horse's gaunt condition and poor diet. Once the horse began to get healthy, the worms revived and were so numerous that the horse succumbed to them quickly.

ENCOUNTER 3: A STRANGER COMES CALLING

An uncomfortable moment of silence follows Lorryth's story. Then the young man known as Jurig stands and says "Well, Aphilia, it is time we get the children to bed." With that several young children begin to whine and complain as they are ushered up the stairs and down the hall to their rooms. After the last of the young children have filed through in a barrage of excuses and good night kisses and some of the others have retired to bed you sit about the room with Lorryth, his wife, and his two eldest sons. Just as Lorryth opens his mouth to say something, there comes a knock on the door.

The person at the door is Daelnik, an elf wizard who is seeking out something in the area. He is not the Man In Black. He is dressed in a bright blue traveling cloak that shows some wear, a floppy hat, and travel stained pants. He stands awkwardly and walks with a profound limp, this is the product of a horribly twisted knee and ankle that will not heal. A *heal* spell or a *regeneration* spell corrects the problem.

☞ **Daelnik:** Male elf Wiz7/Rog2; hp 30; see Appendix I.

Daelnik apologizes to Lorryth for disturbing him on this pleasant evening and asks about an old abandoned mine on the property. Lorryth assures him that there is such a place on the Northwest corner of the property, though he does not go out there because something about it makes him uneasy and the land is no good for farming anyway, too much rock. Daelnik then asks if he can stay the night here and set out to view the area in the morning. Lorryth agrees and charges him 3 silver pieces for lodging, stabling, and breakfast. Daelnik pulls down a small pack and a rather large rectangular package off the back of his packhorse. The package is a 3'x4' silvered scrying mirror of fine quality. He scries for the party if he feels it will get him into their good graces; they have to ask though.

Daelnik is friendly with the party and tries to find out if they also are on the trail of this evil that seems to be plaguing the area. He admits that he is not doing all he could because he is trying to track down his father's adventuring journal; it may have some spells in it. It holds deep personal significance for him and is a family heirloom.

Daelnik tries to convince the characters that it would be to their mutual benefit if all of them were to work together. His scrying and divination has led him to believe that the evil and the spell book are in the same area, and that his father may have actually been combating the same evil when he died. If this doesn't work, he does all he can to pull on the heartstrings of the characters to recover the book for him. He is unable to pay the characters as he doesn't have a great deal of money, but he does know that there is some old gear, some of it reportedly pretty good, as his father died during a raid on the caverns at this old base camp.

He admits that there may be a couple of spells in the journal he would like to have if anybody mentions it. If there are wizards in the party, and they ask, he agrees to let them copy a couple of spells from the book after he has looked at it, he doesn't know what they may be though. The last four entries of the journal are included as Player Handout 1.

ENCOUNTER 4: DESCENT INTO DARKNESS

The following morning arrives without fanfare or trouble. Nyria has prepared a solid breakfast of eggs, meat, fresh-baked bread, and milk for the party and Lorryth insists they eat well. He thanks them again for all they have done and prays for blessings upon the party as they venture forth into the unknown. He is happy to continue to stable the party's horses until they return from the mine, assuming that is what they decide to do. Daelnik takes his riding horse, as it is difficult for him to walk the long distance.

The mine is a short distance from the farmhouse, a little over one-half mile. The ground immediately around it is hilly and rocky and not suitable for farming. The mine falls just inside Lorryth's property line. The fence built around the area is designed to keep out small animals (goats, rabbits, the occasional stray chicken) but cannot deter a reasonable effort to enter the area.

The fence surrounds the mine at a twenty-foot distance. A single raven sits upon the fence post; it caws once and flies over to Daelnik as the party approaches. Daelnik and Mather converse briefly in Aurran. If asked, Daelnik says he did not bring Mather in because a man with a raven makes farm folk nervous.

☞ **Mather:** Raven familiar; hp 15; see Appendix I.

The opening to the shaft is approximately 30 ft. wide and upon closer inspection appears to be about 75 ft. deep.

The sound of dripping water can be heard coming up from the depths. Due to the angle of the hill and the hole, it is difficult to see the bottom. Those with darkvision can attempt to make a Spot check (DC 17) to notice the water in the bottom of the pit. Those without darkvision need to make a successful Spot check (DC 27) to notice the water. It is 75 ft. to the surface of the water, and another 20 ft. to the bottom. If the *detect evil* spell or ability is directed toward the pit, it reveals a strong evil emanating from the pit, specifically from the southern edge and about 60 ft. below the top of the pit.

Climbing down into the pit without assistance requires a successful Climb check (DC 20). Using a secured rope lowers the DC to 5. Remember that all climb checks are made at -1 for each 5 pounds of gear carried by the character. Failing a Climb check by 5 or more causes the character to fall from the wall or rope if they are not secured, and fall to the water below. If they land in the water, they take no damage from falling. However they must then make swim checks (DC 10) to tread water each round. Remember, all swim checks are at -1 for every 5 pounds of gear carried. If a character fails by 5 or more, they go underwater and start to drown. While in the water, any character that makes a successful Spot check (DC 15) notices something in the corner of the pool. That something is the body of a long dead half-elf warrior, his armor is but rust on his body and his sword is worthless. However, the bow he carries is in tact and usable if allowed to dry out for a couple of days and treated properly. The bow is a non-magical, but very well constructed masterwork mighty composite longbow (+2).

Climbing down the pit there are 3 levels radiating out from the pit. (DM Reference 2).

ENCOUNTER 5: OH, THE CARNAGE

Approximately twenty-five feet below the top of the pit, is a dark ominous cave-like opening in the shaft wall. As you enter the cave that represents the first layer of the mine, you realize that this must have been the site of a fairly serious battle, because there are bodies everywhere. Broken weapons and mangled skeletons lie everywhere. Orcs, goblins, kobolds, bugbears, and some you don't even recognize are smashed against walls, lying atop one another. The walls are scorched and pitted. Ahead, the stillness of the air speaks volumes to the silence of the dead.

The skeletons are all scattered bits and pieces of creatures in amongst broken weaponry and tattered armor. None of it is worth keeping or selling. The carnage gets worse as the characters head toward chamber B. Dwarves who actively search are allowed to use their stonemasonry in conjunction with Profession (miner) or Knowledge (mining) (DC 10) or a Search check (DC 15) to realize that this shaft is not yet mined out.

Chamber A

There is considerably less carnage here than in the main hallway and other chambers. The bulk of the bodies appear to be gathered on the south wall just in front of a partial cave-in. The cave-in conceals a 4-foot wide passage to chamber B. Spot check (DC 18) or Search check (DC 10). Be sure that dwarf characters add their bonus for stonemasonry.

Chamber B

This room is obviously where the main battle took place. The floor is littered with bodies. About halfway across the room is a tripwire, that when triggered, collapses the earth and stone wall, opening up Chamber C, and releasing the undead there, into Chamber B. The creatures immediately enter the area and attack the characters. Shortly after tripping the mechanism, the undead in Chamber B rise to challenge the characters as well, something that the undead also do if the characters manage to bypass the tripwire, and move past it into Chamber B.

➤ **Tripwire:** collapses wall, releasing undead into the area; Spot (DC 25); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20).

It takes one round for the undead coming from Chamber C to arrive, however the skeletons in this chamber rise immediately, after the tripwire is triggered, and begin firing longbows at the characters.

Characters coming from Chamber A via the concealed passageway do not trip this trigger, though they may still trip it on the way out. The concealed passageway may be spotted in the north wall of Chamber B with a successful Spot check (DC 18) or a successful Search check (DC 10).

The skeletons in Chamber B have cover in the southeast portion of the room. Assume each has a supply of 40 arrows and 50% cover. The clutter they are firing from behind can be tipped over on top of them, though the pile is reasonably stable. Any given pile falls over if it is dealt 25 hp of damage, or with a successful Strength check (DC 15).

Hidden in the boxes and barrels making up the pile of clutter is the money hoard of House of Dragons, (see treasure summary for the amount of gold). In the southeast corner of the room behind the pile of clutter, several younger members of House of Dragons made a valiant attempt to hold their position as the hoards fell upon them. There are a fair number of (non-Orc) character-race skeletons in amongst the monsters. The weapons and armor of these is in no better condition than that of the humanoid hordes, with a couple of exceptions. One of the bodies is has a *potion of cat's grace*, and the bows and arrows used by the skeletal archers are salvageable.

APL 4 (EL 4)

Chamber B

➤ **Medium-size Skeleton Archers (6):** hp 6 each; see Appendix I.

Chamber C

➤ **Medium-size Skeletons (6):** hp 6 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 6 (EL 6)

Chamber B

➤ **Large Skeleton Archers (5):** hp 13 each; see Appendix I: NPCs.

Chamber C

➤ **Wight:** hp 26; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 8 (EL 8)

Chamber B

➤ **Large Skeleton Archers (7):** hp 13 each; see Appendix I.

Chamber C

➤ **Wights (2):** hp 26 each; see *Monster Manual*.

ENCOUNTER 6: ALWAYS ROOM FOR JELL-O

The entrance to level two of the mine is approximately 40 ft. below the top of the pit. The tight twisting passages of this level hold no treasure unless the characters are willing to commit months to mining out this portion. The only item of note on this level is the gelatinous cube that has squeezed itself into the passage between the entry hall and the main gallery. He currently carries no treasure or remains. Characters not paying attention may inadvertently walk right into him.

APL 4 (EL 3)

➤ **Gelatinous Cube:** hp 58; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 6 (EL 5)

➤ **Gelatinous Cube, advanced:** hp 90; see Appendix I.

APL 8 (EL 7)

➤ **Gelatinous Cube, advanced:** hp 115; see Appendix I.

ENCOUNTER 7: HEART OF DARKNESS

Sixty feet below the surface, this level is dark and oppressive. Here the shadows are deep and the air heavy and dank. A sour taste hangs in your mouth from breathing the air. In the shadows ahead of you, there is the skittering of rats over stones. Your toe stubs against something metal, looking down it is helmet, the side of which is crushed in. If there was a head within when the blow struck it probably didn't survive.

Down on this level lies the insidious evil that is animating the undead in the area. Down here is where the original members of House of Dragons met their untimely end. This cavern is relatively clean. The only bones down here are those of the five fallen members of HoD. A few rats scurry about, insulted that someone would dare to bring light into their cavern. The rats have eaten everything they can off of the bodies: leather armor, cloth, scabbards, belts, etc. The armor of the two fighters in the front rank is rent and crushed, their weapons broken and rusted. Behind them, the wizard's body is folded and broken, a slightly rusted metal box lies upon his back. The box contains the journal Daelnik is looking for. A scroll case lies under the wizard, still sealed. Within is a *scroll of blur*. Lying by the Northeast wall, an elven woman's skeleton is crushed in several spots, a rusted rapier in each hand. In the southeast corner lies the desiccated body of a dwarf. His skeletal hand still powerfully grips his Holy symbol of Moradin. Embedded in his ribs is a fine looking shield. It has weathered the poor conditions well; even the enameled emblem of five dragons coming out of a castle on its face is intact. The leather straps are gone, but otherwise it is usable.

Opposite the cleric, embedded in the wall, is a large black stone emanating strong evil. If any person of non-evil alignment approaches within 20 feet of the stone it will protect itself by summoning an earth-based creature to attack the party. The cleric is 20 feet from the stone.

The Heart of Darkness is a stone of semi-sentient evil. It was uncovered when this mine was active some 200 years ago, and led to the abandoning of this mine. It can be destroyed if two different divine spellcasters of different religions cast *bleed* on it. It may also be destroyed if either a dwarven or gnomish divine spell caster casts *consecrate* on it. The stone may be destroyed by brute force. It has a hardness of 20 and 40 hp. While submerging the stone in holy water does not destroy it, it does render the stone powerless. Removing it from the wall does not destroy any undead or guardians it has called. It may only summon a guardian 1/day. It can animate dead in the earth in the area so long as it is not removed from its natural resting-place. If removed from the wall and submerged in water it is unable to summon guardians or animate undead until reburied in the earth. The stone is a piece of smoky quartz roughly 6 inches in diameter. It has no resale value.

When the characters enter this chamber, the stone summons a guardian as detailed below, to defend it.

APL 4 (EL 6)

➤ **Average Xorn:** hp 45; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 6 (EL 8)

➤ **Umbler Hulk, advanced:** hp 85; see Appendix I.

APL 8 (EL 10)

➤ **Greater Earth Elemental:** hp 199; see *Monster Manual*.

CONCLUSION: I MUST BE GOING NOW

party have it is the least he can do for them. He invites them in for another fine meal and to stay the night again.

The End

The following encounter occurs, whether the party recovers the Journal or not. This scene is important to the continuing arc of this story, so if possible the box text should be presented to the players even if time is short. If the journal is not recovered, Daelnik still expresses concern about the party and what was down there, the Man In Black should still appear.

Daelnik is overjoyed at your return, and does what he can to help you back to the surface. He eagerly asks after the book and looks longingly at the box's metal surface. As he opens the box the sun glints off its surface. He reaches in and pulls the book from its resting-place. Opening it, he flips through it, going to the last entry and reading it aloud. He seems disappointed that it does not tell what happened to his father, but is pleased at its return none-the-less. Suddenly a shout breaks the peaceful reverie. "Daelnik!" a raspy voice shouts.

Daelnik looks up, a look of horror and shock crossing his face. "You," he hisses in response, "I found it, you cannot have it, or me." Tossing a handful of dust in the air Daelnik disappears in a cloud of smoke that drifts quickly across the open fields. His horse follows.

"Son of a...!!!" A man dressed all in black sits astride a plain riding horse. Another horse is lashed to the saddle. Cutting the second horse loose he bolts across the fields in pursuit of the cloud, but is unable to catch it. The freed horse stamps his foot nervously as the Man in Black disappears around the hill in the distance.

The extra horse does bear the mark of Lorryth's farm. If the party wants to chase down the two men, they can try. The Man in Black is a poor horseman but is light enough that the horse can run at full speed with him. Catching him should be a matter of extraordinary effort. Daelnik does get away. If the party catches up to the Man in Black and stops him, he introduces himself irritably as Moliktar, a half-elf wizard and brother to Daelnik.

He states that he is tracking down Daelnik, as he is wanted for murder. If questioned about the animals, Moliktar admits to being a poor horseman and that he knows nothing about caring for them. He feels bad that the other horses have died, but it was not dark magic or an insidious plot. As to an explanation of his outfit and mannerisms, he has found that people leave him alone when they fear him. However, if he dresses like an adventuring wizard, people expect him to solve their problems, which quite frankly he doesn't care about, or have time to deal with.

Killing Moliktar should be considered the same as killing a good aligned NPC, he is a wizard in good standing with the Wizards Guild of Greyhawk. Moliktar is of lawful neutral alignment.

Lorryth keeps Daelnik's other horse assuming he returns to claim it and his other possessions. Lorryth does not take the other horse back, insisting that letting the

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the experience award. Award the total value to each character.

Encounter 1: Heroes for a Day

Defeat the undead

APL 4	180 XP
APL 6	240 XP
APL 8	300 XP

Encounter 2/3: A Feast in Your Honor/A Stranger Comes Calling

Good roleplay and storytelling

APL 4	60 XP
APL 6	90 XP
APL 8	150 XP

Encounter 5: Oh, the Carnage

Defeat the undead

APL 4	90 XP
APL 6	180 XP
APL 8	240 XP

Encounter 6: Always Room for Jell-O

Defeat gelatinous cube

APL 4	90 XP
APL 6	150 XP
APL 8	210 XP

Encounter 7: Heart of Darkness

Defeat guardian of the stone

APL 4	180 XP
APL 6	240 XP
APL 8	300 XP

Total Possible Experience

APL 4	600 XP
APL 6	900 XP
APL 8	1200 XP

TREASURE SUMMARY

During an adventure, characters encounter treasure, usually finding it in the possession of their foes. Every encounter that features treasure has a "treasure" section within the encounter description, giving information about the loot, coins, and magic items that make up the encounter's treasurer.

The loot total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if the foes are plundered of all their earthly possessions. Looting the bodies takes at least 10 minute per every 5 enemies, and if the characters cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that characters can go back to loot the bodies, and those bodies are there (that

is., not carted off by dungeon scavengers, removed from the scene by the local watch, and so on), characters may return to retrieve loot. If the characters do not loot the body, the gold piece value for the loot is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

The coin total is the number of gold piece each character gains if they take the coin available. A normal adventuring party can usually gather this wealth in a round or so. If for some reason they pass up this treasure, the coin total is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

Next, the magic items are listed. Magic item treasure is the hardest to adjudicate, because they are varied and because characters may want to use them during the adventure. Many times characters must cast *identify*, *analyze dweomer*, or similar spell to determine what the item does, and how to activate it. Other times they may attempt to use the item blindly. If the magic item is consumable (a potion, scroll, magic bolts, etc.) and the item is used before the end of the adventure, its total is subtracted from the adventure totals below.

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasures from each encounter add it up and that is number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the Gp Gained field of the adventure certificate.

TREASURE KEY:

L = Looted gear from enemy; C = Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables; M = Magic Items.

Encounter 4: Descent into Darkness

L: Retrieve masterwork mighty composite longbow (+2) at bottom of the shaft.

APL 4: L: 60 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0

APL 6: L: 60 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0

APL 8: L: 60 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0

Encounter 5: Oh, the Carnage

L: Defeat undead and retrieve their bows.

C: Find cache of gold.

M: Find potion of *cat's grace*.

APL 4: L: 46 gp; C: 555 gp; M: *potion of cat's grace* (30 gp each character)

APL 6: L: 301 gp; C: 955 gp; M: *potion of cat's grace* (30 gp each character)

APL 8: L: 421 gp; C: 1655 gp; M: *potion of cat's grace* (30 gp each character)

Encounter 7: Heart of Darkness

L: Recover masterwork spiked shield.

M: Find scroll of blur.

APL 4: L: 17 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *scroll of blur* (15 gp each character)

APL 6: L: 17 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *scroll of blur* (15 gp each character)

APL 8: L: 17 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *scroll of blur* (15 gp each character)

Total Possible Treasure

APL 4: 723 gp

APL 6: 1378 gp

APL 8: 1698 gp

APPENDIX I: NPCS

☞ **Daelnik**: Male elf Wiz7/Rog2; CR 9; Medium-size humanoid; HD 7d4+2d6; hp 30; Spd 20 ft.; Init +2 (Dex); AC 15 (touch 12, flat-footed 13); Atk +4 melee (1d4/19-20, dagger) or +7 ranged (1d8/x3, composite longbow); SA Spells, sneak attack; SQ Immunity to magic sleep spells and effects, +2 racial bonus to saves against Enchantment spells and effects, low-light vision, proficient with long sword and bows, evasion; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +7; Will +7.

Str 10, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 17, Wis 14, Cha 16 (20)

Skills and Feats: Bluff +14 (+16), Concentration +12, Decipher Script +10, Diplomacy +15 (+17), Disguise +7 (+9), Gather Information +8 (+10), Knowledge (arcana) +8, Listen +6, Ride +8, Scry +12, Spellcraft +12; Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Scribe Scroll, Spell Mastery (*charm person*, *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *dispel magic*, *summon monster I*), Spell Penetration, Weapon Focus (composite longbow).

Languages: Common, Elven, Auran, Undercommon, Gnomish

Possessions: ring of protection +3, cloak of charisma (+4), silver scrying mirror (value: 1000 gp), spell component pouch, composite longbow, 20 arrows, dagger, spellbook, riding horse, pack horse, pack with general supplies (clothing, writing implements, bedroll, rations, water)

Spells Prepared (4/5/4/3/1; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0 – daze, detect magic, read magic, resistance; 1st – charm person, color spray, mage armor, spider climb, summon monster I; 2nd – cat's grace (2), detect magic, detect thoughts, Melf's acid arrow; 3rd – clairaudience/clairvoyance, dispel magic, gaseous form; 4th – scrying.

Familiar: **Mather**: Raven familiar; Tiny magical beast; HD 9d8; hp 15; Spd 10 ft., fly 40 ft. (average); Init +2 (Dex); AC 18 (touch 14, flat-footed 16); Atk +6 melee (1d2-5, claws); SQ Alertness, improved evasion, share spells, empathic link, touch, speak with master, speak with animals of its type; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +7.

Str 1, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 9, Wis 14, Cha 6

Skills and Feats: Listen +6, Spot +6; Weapon Finesse (claws)

☞ **Medium-size Skeleton Archer**: CR 1/3; Medium-size undead; HD 1d12; hp 6 each; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (touch 11, flat-footed 12); Atks +0 melee (1d4, 2 claws) or +1 ranged (1d8/x3, longbow); SQ Undead, immunities; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +2.

Str 10, Dex 12, Con –, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 11

Feats: Improved Initiative

Possessions: longbow, 40 arrows

☞ **Large Skeleton Archer**: CR 1; Large undead; HD 2d12; hp 13 each; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 40 ft.; AC 13 (touch 10, flat-footed 12); Atks +2 melee (1d6+2, 2 claws) or +2 ranged (1d8+2/x3,

mighty composite longbow); SQ Undead, immunities; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +3.

Str 14, Dex 14, Con –, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 11

Feats: Improved Initiative

Possessions: mighty composite longbow (+2), 40 arrows

☞ **Gelatinous Cube, advanced, 8 HD**: CR 5; Huge ooze; HD 8d10+32; hp 90; Init –5 (Dex); Spd 15 ft.; AC 3 (touch 3, flat-footed 3); Atk +4 melee (1d6+4 and 1d6 acid, slam); Face/Reach 10 ft. by 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Engulf, paralysis, acid; SQ Blindsight, transparent, electricity immunity, ooze; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref –3, Will –3.

Str 10, Dex 1, Con 19, Int –, Wis 1, Cha 1

☞ **Gelatinous Cube, advanced, 12 HD**: CR 7; Huge ooze; HD 12d10+48; hp 115; Init –5 (Dex); Spd 15 ft.; AC 3 (touch 3, flat-footed 3); Atk +7 melee (1d6+4 and 1d6 acid, slam); Face/Reach 10 ft. by 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Engulf, paralysis, acid; SQ Blindsight, transparent, electricity immunity, ooze; AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref –1, Will –1.

Str 10, Dex 1, Con 19, Int –, Wis 1, Cha 1

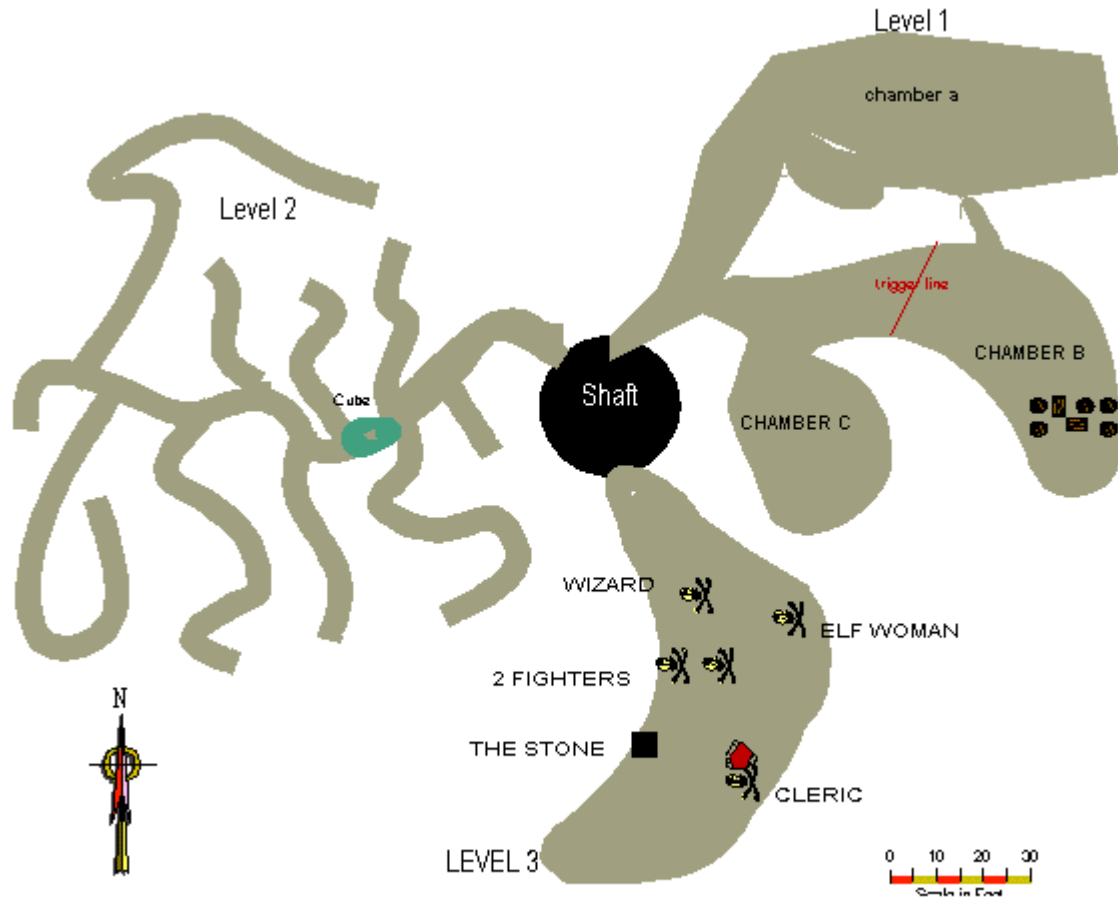
☞ **Umbur Hulk, advanced, 11 HD**: CR 8; Large aberration; HD 11d8+44; hp 85; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft., burrow 20 ft.; AC 17 (touch 10, flat-footed 16); Atks +13 melee (2d4+6, 2 claws) and +11 (2d8+3, bite); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.; SA Confusing gaze; SQ Tremorsense; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +7.

Str 23, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 9, Wis 11, Cha 13

Skills and Feats: Climb +18, Jump +15, Listen +12; Multiattack

DM REFERENCE # 1

MAP OF THE MINE FOR ENCOUNTERS 4-7



DM REFERENCE 2: SELECT ENCOUNTERS FROM WHAT LIES BENEATH

Only for use if you plan to adapt *Descent into Darkness* as a sequel.

Nalik the tavern keep

Aye, I'm tellin ya, it was that accursed demon sorcerer that caused all this. Came in from nasty storm he did, looked like a shadow walkin' in here. Covered from head to toe in a cloak so black it could have been cut from the night itself. Walks right up here to the bar and in a quiet raspy voice he asks me for something hot to drink. I reluctantly serve him up a mug of hot, spiced cider and start to tell him it will be two coppers when suddenly he moves his hand, and poof, a pouch of coins appears on the counter. Then he tells me, take what I need to cover a full dinner, a decanter of hot cider, and a room. Now I don't traffic with sorcerers an all, so I'm not so sure, but I can see as he ain't gonna get it out, and I ain't gonna go poor. So I takes 10 silvers, and he tells me to take it again, and have a serving girl bring his food and show him to his room. So I takes another 10 and tells Morweena to take it up for 'im. Then poof, just like that the bag is gone again, he never even moved. She comes back down quickly enough and returns to work after collecting her tip from me. About 4 hours later he comes down, asks where he can buy a good riding horse. I tells him that the only good horse in town belongs to Father Turim, who lives in the temple at the edge of town. He says nuthin' and just walks out. Never once saw his face.

Nalik can tell the characters that the visitor looked to be about 5'2" tall and very slight of build. The visitor's clothes were all black and finely crafted, right down the spurs on his boots. Gloves hid his hands and the cowl of his robe completely hid his face from view. The man stayed in the tavern for about 4-5 hours and left in the middle of the night. The visitor then went to see the former priest, Father Turim.

Morweena is an older tavern girl, maybe in her mid 20's. She is kind of stocky and pretty in a plain sort of way. Her brown hair falls to her shoulder blades. She speaks with a slight stutter, which becomes more pronounced if she is embarrassed. If she is asked about the stranger she recalls some information about him.

Well, he didn't say anything to me. I led him up to his room, opened the door, he indicated with his hand that he wanted his food on the table by the window, then dismissed me by turning his back on me. As I left the room, I literally lost track of him in the shadows; it was the strangest thing. The next morning I checked his room, and all was exactly as it had been when he arrived, save that the roast fowl was gone as well as the cider. The bed hadn't been slept in; there were no water spots where he should have hung his cloak. It was as though someone had eaten there, but nothing else.

Galamar is a late middle-aged man (late 40's) of medium build and strong presence. He is a recent initiate to the priesthood. Previously, he was a wood carver and

furniture builder who did much work in the church. Father Turim was a good friend of his whom is recently deceased by way of a heart attack. Galamar had taken oaths of service to Pelor at the request of his friend some years earlier, and though pious, he is by no means an adventurous man. His experience with undead is limited to the folklore he has learned over the years. He is a solemn and quiet man; even his sermons are more to encourage people to righteousness than attempts to call down the power of his deity. If asked what he knows about the dark stranger he relays the following information:

I visited Father Turim the morning following the stranger's visit. He told me that the man had come late in the night, and pounded on the door of the church until he was admitted. The man told him he needed to buy a good horse, and he would pay fair market for the horse as well as leaving his own horse that was too tired to continue at the pace he needed to travel. Turim agreed, though somewhat reluctantly. He felt the man was honest, but the man's demeanor challenged this perception. The man turned over good gold, saddled the horse with his own gear and was off at a breakneck speed. It was a sham though; the other horse died 3 days later of lung rot. Father Turim knew almost nothing about horses, so it's no wonder he didn't notice the lung rot. He was a good man—the best. He probably did it as much to help the common man as anything.

Player Handout 1

Last four journal entries in the log of Daelnik the Elder

Entry 1

War is coming, we all know that now. House of Dragons is preparing a base of operations so that we can launch small raids against the enemy when the time comes. It is a dangerous time, but we have found a good base. An old abandoned mine near a good road. The mine is 3 levels deep and from what we can tell it looks like it was abandoned fairly quickly. Maybe later we'll have a chance to further explore and find out if it is indeed played out. Time to get moving, supplies have arrived.

Entry 2

There is something disturbing in those caves. I'm not quite sure what it is. Everybody just says I'm superstitious or teases me about being scarred of the dark, but its more than that. I talked to Rhodry about it, and he said not to worry about it and that later today we can go down and he will bless the caverns and sanctify them in Moradin's name. I probably am just being overly nervous. I'll feel much better tomorrow when Jhayenine returns. Man I miss her. Well, I've got potions to brew so I'd better get back to work.

Entry 3

WOW! I'm going to be a father. This is incredible. Jhayenine suggested that if it's a boy we name it Daelnik, but I don't know if I want my son to be a junior. Oh well, WOW! I can barely write I am so excited. Time to break out the wine.

Entry 4

I was right; there is something down there. We're putting together party to go in and clean it out in the morning. Whatever it is, its evil and it doesn't want to leave. Rhodry says he has a thundering headache after trying to sanctify that third level. I think I'm going to try some scrying tonight while Rhodry tries to divine the nature of this beast. I've got to get some rest so I can prep spells in the morning.