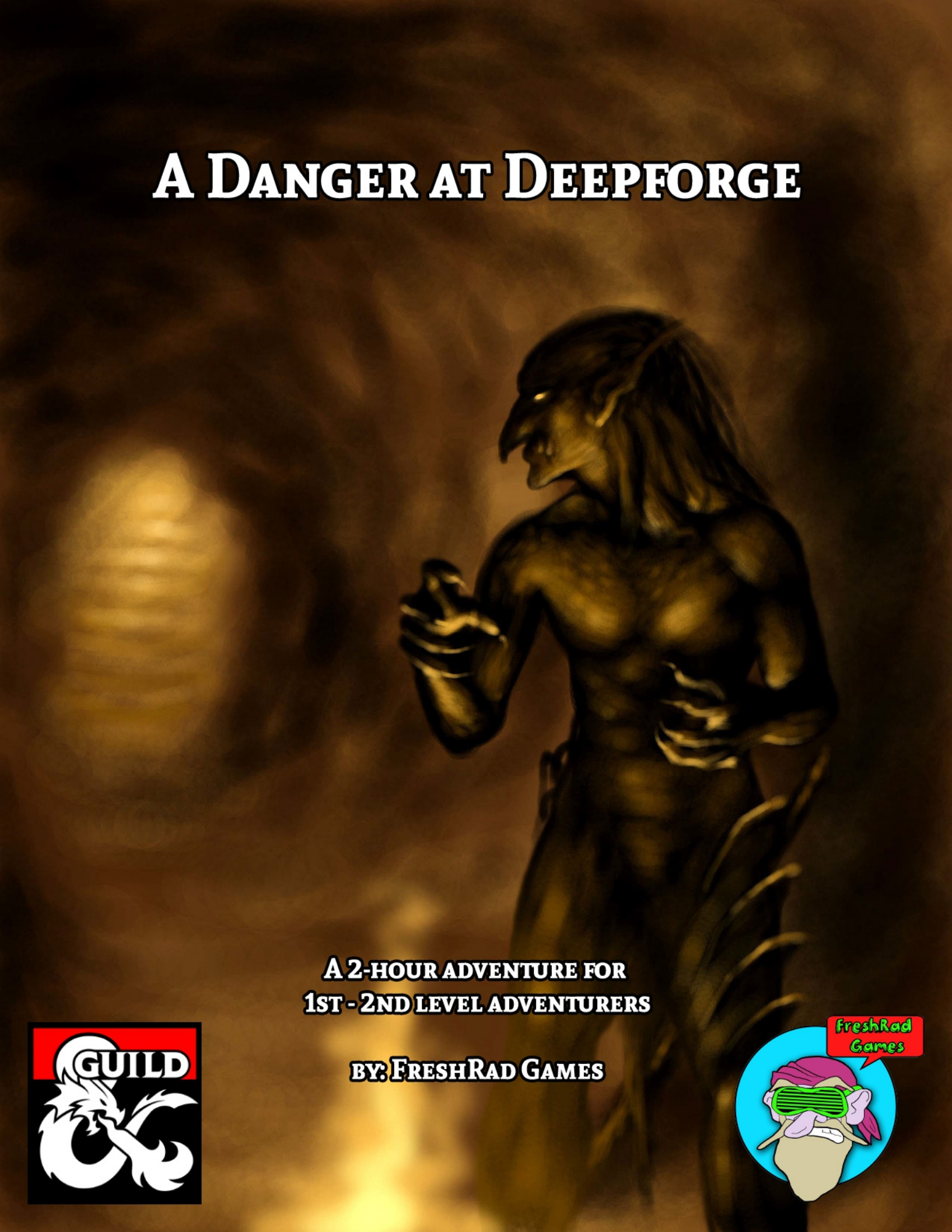
A Danger at Deepforge



A 2-hour adventure for
1st - 2nd level adventurers

By: FreshRad Games

A Danger at Deepforge

A dwarven noble tasks the adventurers with recovering a priceless heat pump from Deepforge, a once-prosperous mine that was sacked by a drow-led army.

A 2-Hour Adventure for 1st - 2nd Level Characters

BY: FreshRad Games

With Special Thanks to: Jerry U, Chris C, Nate C, James W, Jess W, and Zytan





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Introduction

Welcome to *A Danger at Deepforge,* a Dungeons and Dragons adventure. It is designed for three to seven 1st or 2nd level characters, and is optimized for five 1st level characters.

Adjusting the Adventure

Throughout the adventure, sidebars will contain recommendations to adjust encounters to accommodate the size of the party and the characters' levels. Each sidebar references the **party strength**, which is outlined in the following table:

Party Size and Average Level	Party Strength
3-4 PCs, majority are level 1	Weak
3-4 PCs, majority are level 2	Average
5 PCs, majority are level 1	Average
5 PCs, majority are level 2	Strong
6-7 PCs, majority are level 1	Strong
6-7 PCs, majority are level 2	Very Strong

Adventure Background

Deepforge was a small dwarven mine in the Earthspur Mountains, approximately 30 miles south by southeast of the Impilturan town of Laviguer. It was founded as a colony of the dwarven city of Earthfast approximately 100 years ago. The dwarves mined the rich iron and gold deposits in the range, and Deepforge was wholly unremarkable except for one asset; it had a unique heat pump system that used the magma flows from the depths of the mountains to heat its great forge.

50 years ago an expedition from the drow confederation of Undrek'Thoz discovered Deepforge. Gathering their kobold slaves and recruiting local stone giants, the drow assaulted the citadel, slaying all within and sealing the entrance. The dwarves of Earthfast attempted to retake Deepforge but could not breach the entrance. Over the years, Earthfast's attention was turned elsewhere and the memory of Deepforge's heat pump was lost. The region grew wild without the dwarves, and the mountain glens eventually came under the control of the Warpweft clan, a small group of goblins with delusions of grandeur.

A few months ago the dwarf Samnall mac Rand was studying in the Earthfast library and found the journal of the first Ironlord of Deepforge. After reading about the heat pump he became obsessed with finding it. He traveled to Laviguer, the nearest town to the ruins of Deepforge, in an attempt to hire adventurers to find and recover the heat pump.

Adventure Overview

The adventure begins in the Broken Tongs, a tavern in the mining town of Laviguer. There, the adventurers meet Samnall mac Rand, who offers them a job; travel to the ruins of Deepforge and recover the heat pump.

While traveling to the dwarven mine, the adventurers encounter goblins from the Warpweft clan. The goblins bar the way unless the adventurers pay the toll.

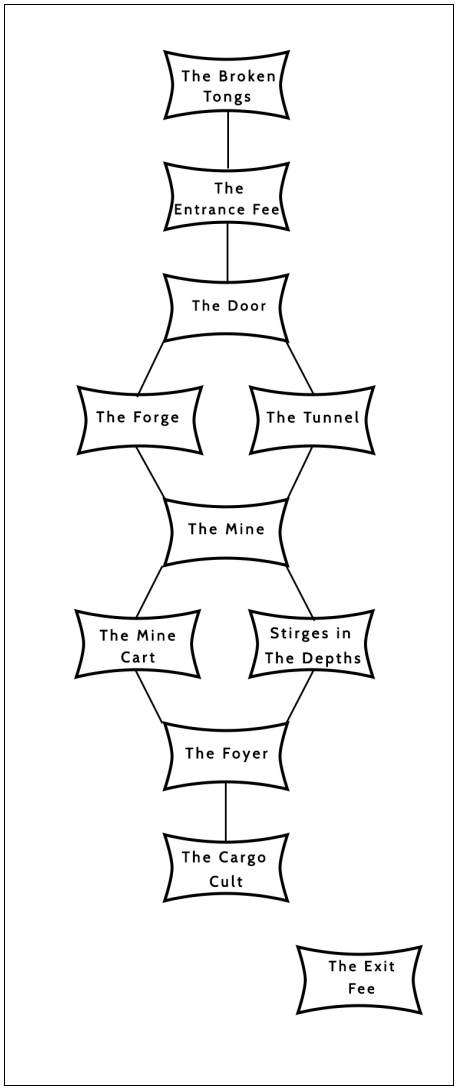
Once the adventurers reach the entrance to Deepforge they must find a way to enter the mine. Navigating the mine, the party eventually finds the heat pump, but it is kept by a group of kobolds who believe they will be granted wealth by the gods simply by recreating a facsimile of the forge.

After recovering the heat pump, the adventurers may be visited by the Warpweft clan chief who plans to extort more from them.

If the adventurers return to Samnall with the lost heat pump, they are welcomed and praised for a job well done.

Adventure Flowchart

The following flowchart provides a guide to how the adventure can unfold depending on the players' choices. Each box lists a section's title, and the lines indicate the resulting section based on the players' choice.



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Adventure Hooks

The adventure begins as the party meets Samnall mac Rand in the Broken Tongs tavern. Samnall seeks adventurers to travel to Deepforge and recover the stolen heat pump.

Noble background. Your family has had many dealings with the dwarves of Earthfast. To strengthen those ties, you are instructed to make your way to Laviguer to assist Samnall mac Rand in recovering the heat pump.

Merchant background. Your guild is always looking for a competitive edge, and you've heard of this secret heat pump system the dwarves used in Deepforge. Perhaps if you recover it you can discover it's inner workings, with or without Samnall's permission?

Hermit background. You were traveling through the lower arms of the Earthspurs when you happened across Samnall mac Rand on his way to the town of Laviguer. The dwarf persuaded you to help recover the heat pump.

Looking for Work. Laviguer has a reputation for being a rough and tumble town on the edge of the wilds, and so you traveled there hoping to find some work. With few leads, you find yourself in a dingy tavern called the Broken Tongs.

The Broken Tongs

Read or paraphrase the following:

> The Broken Tongs is in just as bad a shape as its namesake. Threading through the throng of locals you crunch your way across a floor littered with moldering old peanut shells and take a seat at one of the few tables that still has all its legs. The hot, still air stinks of sweat and old beer.
>
> An overweight dwarf in ill-fitting mail walks towards your table, nervously trying, and mostly succeeding, in dodging the drunken louts that crowd the tavern. He smiles at you, and over the din of raucous laughter and slurred conversation you barely hear him say "Haven't seen you around here before. You must be adventurers, then. Looking for a bit of work?"

Role-playing Samnall mac Rand

Samnall is a young dwarf with long, fine black hair and a short beard. He is taller and wider than average, and is bow legged. He is very serious and measured of speech. Despite his calm veneer, Samnall is filled with nervous excitement which makes him fidget.

Samnall offers the party a job. He needs them to travel to Deepforge, enter the mine, find the heat pump, and bring it back to him. In exchange, Samnall will pay the group 100 gp. In addition to the information found in the Adventure Background section, Samnall can offer the following information:

- Samnall recently found the journal of the first Ironlord of Deepforge that detailed the technological marvels of the heat pump. It is not magical, but it could revolutionize forge-work. It's small enough that a strong person could carry it on their back. It looks like a pair of large pistons attached to a barrel-shaped mechanism, and it is made of mithril. The heat pump was a secret closely guarded by the dwarves of Deepforge and there are no records of the internal workings of the mechanisms anywhere.
- Samnall is more a bookworm than a fighter. He attempted to raise an army of his Earthfast brethren to retake Deepforge, but the generals told him he was overstating the importance of the heat pump. He has therefore turned to adventurers for aid in recovering it.
- Samnall assumes the lands around Deepforge have grown wild and dangerous in the years since the dwarves were wiped out.
- Deepforge consisted of a series of low-roofed homes outside a great gate in the side of a mountain. The gate leads into the forge room. A lift in the forge room leads down to the mines. When the drow attacked, their stone giant minions blocked the gate with huge boulders.
- Samnall has precise directions to reach Deepforge which he readily provides. He produces a map, tracing the route through the mountains, past Deepforge's boundary wall, and eventually up to the mine entrance itself. Once the party gets there, they'll have to find their own way inside.

The Entrance Fee

Read or paraphrase the following:

> Traveling among the soaring peaks of the Earthspur range, you enter a canyon between two steep mountains. A twenty foot tall curtain wall crosses the canyon up ahead. According to Samnall's map, the wall marks the border of the lands once held by Deepforge. Although the wall is crumbling due to lack of maintenance, the stonework is well-fitted and expertly cut. What remains of the rusty portcullis is bent out and away from the passage through the wall. A low barrier of stones and boulders have been piled in front of the passage.
>
> Furtive voices echo off the mountainsides. The small, sickly-green faces of several goblins peep over the wall's crenelations as you approach. The least emaciated one cracks a toothless smile as he locks eyes with each of you in turn. "I am Herringbone, captain of the great

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Warpweft Clan. You want to cross into our lands? Give me 10! No, 50! No, 100 gold pieces!" The rest of the goblins quickly string their shortbows.

Role-playing Herringbone

Herringbone is middle aged and considered stout for a goblin, with more hair coming from his ears than his scalp. He tries to belittle and cheat anyone he can, as he feels this will increase his status among the Warpwefts. He resents that his sister, Houndstooth, is the chief of the clan, and thinks he should be chief. Despite his narcissism, Herringbone is no smarter or stronger than the average goblin.

5 Goblins guard the wall; 3 atop it with shortbows trained on the adventurers, and 2 attempting to hide in the passage.

The wall is 20-feet tall, with sheer mountainsides on either end. The crenelations along the wall grant half cover to the Goblins atop it. The passage through the wall is 10-feet wide and 10-feet tall. The rocks in front of it vary in size; the largest boulder is 5-feet tall. They count as Difficult Terrain and provide Half Cover to those within the passage. As an action, an adventurer may make a **DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check** to climb the largest boulder and pull himself onto the wall.

The large boulders on the adventurers' side of the canyon provide total cover from both the top of the wall and the passage.

Adjusting the Encounter

- **Weak party:** remove **1 Goblin.**
- **Strong party:** add **2 Goblins** to the group manning the top of the wall.
- **Very Strong party:** add **3 Goblins** to the group manning the top of the wall, and **2 Goblins** to the group in the passage.

Herringbone can be bought off with 100 GP. A successful **DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) or Charisma (Deception) check** can reduce this to 20 GP, or 10 GP if the adventurers succeed by 5 or more.

If the adventurers pay for passage through the wall, Herringbone can offer the following information:

- The Warpweft clan is large and powerful (This is false).
- They have no idea how to enter Deepforge. They've tried to get through the wall but couldn't break any of the rocks (This is true).
- The adventurers have safe passage through the Warpweft's realm for a week. The goblins won't bother them if they don't bother the goblins (This is false. As soon as they're out of eyesight, Herringbone will go to tell his sister, Chief Houndstooth, about the adventurers and suggest the goblins attack them).
- If the adventurers succeeded in haggling by 5 or more, Herringbone tells them that there is a tunnel in the ground in one of the ruins near the entrance, but the goblins don't go by it because it smells of death (This is true).

If the adventurers ignore Herringbone or refuse to pay the toll, the goblins immediately attack using their shortbows.

Tactics

The goblins will use their shortbows as much as possible and try to avoid melee combat. If an adventurer gets too close to the goblins in the passage, they'll retreat, climb the ladder to get onto the wall, and pull the ladder up.

Treasure

The goblins carry a total of 30 GP between them. Herringbone has a *Tortured Marionette* strapped to his belt by a little noose.

Developments

If the party let any of the goblins go free, they will tell Chief Houndstooth about the adventurers. The goblins will wait outside Deepforge and attack the adventurers as they exit the mine, as outlined in the section entitled The Exit Fee.

The Door

Read or paraphrase the following:

It's another 10 miles before you finally reach Deepforge's entrance; a wide fissure in the base of a mountain deep in the Earthspurs. Low, crumbling buildings line the weed-choked path leading to the entrance, their shale roofs collapsed and their wooden doors rotten. The brisk mountain air carries the scent of mildew and decay.

A wall of boulders block the fissure. The huge rocks range from the size of a barrel to twice the size of a man. Although they seem inexpertly placed, you see no gaps that would allow you to sneak into the mine.

Although the wall has no gaps, the boulders have settled and there are a few loose ones. A successful **DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check** will identify a few that could be removed without disturbing the integrity of the wall. Removing them requires a successful **DC 14 Strength check**. This will provide a hole that allows medium-sized or smaller creatures to wiggle through single file and enter the Forge.

Alternatively, an adventurer could collapse the wall by identifying a load-bearing boulder with a successful **DC 10 Intelligence check**. The boulder could be shifted with a **DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check**, however any adventurer that

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attempts the check and fails by 5 or more must succeed on a **DC 12 Dexterity save** or take 2d6 bludgeoning damage as the collapsing wall rains down on them. Once the wall is collapsed, the adventurers can enter the Forge.

If an adventurer succeeds on a **DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check**, or if an adventurer actively searches the crumbling buildings, they find a 10 foot wide, smooth-sided tunnel in the floor of the home nearest the entrance to Deepforge. It appears to lead under the mountain, and emits a smell like rotten meat. Entering leads to the Tunnel.

The Forge

If the characters tunnel through or collapse the wall, read or paraphrase the following:

> You find yourself in a soaring octagonal room with rows of anvils and workbenches encircling a forge's wide stone hearth. Metal tubes protrude from the side of the hearth, their ends twisted and bent as if something was ripped from them. Rails lead from the hearth to a wide lift made of moldering wood.
> A wet slurping sound from a corner to your right draws your attention. You see what appears to be a stone giant's corpse in the corner. Oozes drape the corpse, quivering as they slowly digest its remaining flesh.

Two **Gray Ooze** go about their meal. If the adventurers did not collapse the boulder wall at the entrance to Deepforge, allow the adventurers to make Stealth checks if they so choose. If they collapsed the wall, stray boulders struck the Oozes, dealing 7 damage to each. The Gray Oozes, thus distracted from their meal, are aware of the adventurers and move to attack immediately.

Adjusting the Encounter

- **Weak party:** remove **1 Gray Ooze.**
- **Strong party:** add **1 Gray Ooze.**
- **Very Strong party:** add **4 Gray Ooze.**

Tactics

The oozes are very stupid, so they will move to attack the nearest adventurer with no regard for tactics.

Treasure

Chips of obsidian worth 30 gp total can be found in a partially digested leather bag on the giant's belt.

Developments

The only exits from the Forge are the main entrance and the lift. The lift is 10' x 15' and although its boards are soft, it will support the party's weight. It can be lowered to the Mine using the ceiling-mounted hoist's long, rusty chain.

The Tunnel

If the adventurers follow the tunnel, read or paraphrase the following:

> The muddy tunnel gradually spirals deeper below the ground. As you continue down the tunnel the smell of decay grows stronger. You hear a low chittering noise echoing from a branch in the tunnel's wall.

An **Ankheg** nests in the tunnel. It is currently tending to its eggs. The dirt surrounding its clutch of eggs as well as the western side of its lair is wet and cloying. Several kobold and a few drow corpses are partially submerged in the thick layer of mud on the western side of its lair.

Adjusting the Encounter

- **Weak party:** The **Ankheg** can't use it's acid spray and does not grapple. Reduce it's slashing damage to 4.
- **Strong party:** Some of the eggs have hatched. add **1 Swarm of Insects.**
- **Very Strong party:** Some of the eggs have hatched. add **3 Swarms of Insects.**

Tactics

The Ankheg's main goal is to protect its eggs. If the adventurers flee its lair, the Ankheg will not pursue.

Treasure

Ankheg eggs are rare. The clutch of eggs is worth 100 gp to the right buyer.

Developments

The thick mud on the western side of the lair and surrounding the eggs counts as difficult terrain. The main tunnel continues spiraling downward and exits into The Mine.

The Mine

The adventurers can enter the mine either via the lift that leads from the Forge or the Tunnel that leads outside. Cart rails lead from the lift down the length of the main tunnel.

General Features

Ceilings. The ceilings in the mines are rounded and approximately 10 feet in height. Aside from the occasional scratch from an errant mattock strike, they are nearly smooth.

Light. The mines are in complete darkness. There are unlit sconces fastened to the walls at regular intervals.

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Sounds. Occasionally the adventurers will hear the fluttering of wings or light scratching sounds, as the mines are haunted by stirges and rats. As the adventurers near the kobolds' lair, they will hear the sound of muffled voices echo off the walls.

Floor. The floors are straight and even, with a cart track running along their center. Orderly piles of stone and iron ore are stacked along the walls.

Wandering Monsters. Various creatures call the mines home. At the end of each hour that the adventurers spend in the mines, roll a d20 and consult the table below:

Roll	Encounter
1-15	No encounter.
16	A small lizard scrabbles across the floor. **2 Darkmantles** descend from the ceiling, intent on catching the lizard. They spy the party, and divert to attack them.
17	A chittering echoes through the cavern as **3 Swarms of Rats** scrabble through a small crack in the far wall and cascade down to the floor.
18	The webs suspended from a patch of stalactites begin to quiver as **1 Giant Spider** creeps closer to the party.
19	Rats and lizards scramble for cover as **4 Giant Bats** fly into the cavern, screeching as they search for prey.
20	**4 Giant Lizards** lick their eyes and bare their teeth as they silently watch the party from a cleft in the side wall.

After familiarizing yourself with the features of the mine, read or paraphrase the following:

> The main artery of the mine stretches east into the gloom. The rails of a cart track are mere ripples in the thick coating of dust that blankets the arrow-straight corridor. You can just barely make out a mine cart stopped on the track further up ahead.
> A worked side-tunnel branches off to the north, while a smooth-sided, perfectly cylindrical tunnel is bored into the southern wall a few feet off the ground.
> Decaying dwarf and drow corpses, picked clean of any metal they may have carried, are piled along the sides of the tunnel. You notice large clumps of bluecap mushrooms blooming from the remains.

A successful **DC 10 Intelligence (Nature) check** determines that bluecap mushrooms are edible once they're ground into flour.

If an adventurer looks at the mushrooms and passes a **DC 8 Intelligence (Investigation) check**, they recognize that many of the stalks have been picked.

If an adventurer searches the area and passes a **DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check** (taken with **advantage** if it's attempted after the party recognizes that some of the mushrooms have been picked), they see several kobold footprints in the rock dust. The footprints are all either going to or leading from the side-tunnel in the northern wall, and terminate at the corpses. A subsequent successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check** indicates that some of the tracks are only a few days old.

If the party looks into the side-tunnel, it contains piles of tools that have had their metal heads removed.

There is a track that runs down the middle of the main tunnel, with a large rusty cart stopped a hundred feet from the corpses.

If the adventurers walk down the side-tunnel to the north, proceed to the section entitled Stirges in the Depths. If they investigate the mine cart, proceed to the section entitled The Mine Cart.

The tunnel in the southern wall is 10 feet wide and perfectly cylindrical. The smell of rotten meat wafts from within. This leads to the section entitled The Tunnel.

The Mine Cart

The mine cart is a large, wheeled platform made of rusted iron with a steam-powered engine attached to the back. The machine is not currently working, and must be restored before the adventurers can use it. A lever that controls acceleration projects from the front of the engine. Near the cart is a dwarf corpse sprawled over a bucket of coal, with six pieces of the engine scattered around it.; a Chimney, a Piston, a Steam Pipe, a Boiler, a Throttle Valve, and a Firebox. The dwarf was repairing the cart and had already installed the Water Reservoir when he was ambushed by the invaders.

Next to the pile of parts is a blood-splattered manual. Provide your players with ***Handout 1: The Manual***.

The adventurers must solve this puzzle if they wish to use the mine cart. In order to do so, they must reinstall the six remaining parts in the correct order. The clues to the puzzle are contained in the manual. The correct order is (from left to right): Water Reservoir, Firebox, Boiler, Throttle Valve, Steam Pipe, Piston, Chimney. Note that the dwarf had already installed the Water Reservoir when he was slain.

Once the adventurers install the remaining parts in the proper order, the steam engine sputters to life and is ready to move the cart down the tracks.

If the adventurers drive the mine cart, the tracks lead into a narrow corridor and the cart barely fits. They will encounter a series of Events during their journey on the cart. Several Events are listed below. Each one provides information on what the adventurers encounter, possible effects, and possible solutions. The solutions are by no means the only way to handle the Events; encourage role-play over the roll of the dice. Choose a

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number of Events equal to the number of adventurers, and have them encounter the Events in any order you choose. It's suggested that you include the Reliefs of Dwarven Gods Event early on, but if you don't particularly like your players, then feel free to exclude it altogether.

The cart can move at three speeds; slow, normal, and fast. If an adventurer suggests turning the engine off, the cart can glide to a stop. Have the adventurers determine what speed they're going as this may help or hinder them in each Event.

The adventurers can choose to follow the cart rails on foot. If they do, have them encounter a combination of the following Events: Reliefs of the Dwarven Gods, Trapped Gas, Low Ceiling, Flock of Darkmantles, Gap in the Bridge.

Broken Engine

The cart strains as it trundles up a steep slope. With a crash, one of its flanges bursts, and steam starts leaking out. The cart slows noticeably.

Possible Effects: The cart can no longer accelerate or decelerate, it can only keep its current pace.

Possible Solutions: A *mending* spell will fix the flange, or a successful **DC 12 Intelligence Check** will repair it. Allow **advantage** if the adventurer has Vehicle (land) proficiency.

Trapped Gas

The cart is coming up to a bridge over a deep and wide cavern. A cloud of sickly-green gas stretches from the ceiling and envelops the bridge.

Possible Effects: Any adventurer that breathes in the gas must succeed on a **DC 12 Constitution Saving Throw** or is **Poisoned** for the duration of the trip on the mine cart.

Possible Solutions: An adventurer can hold their breath for a number of rounds equal to twice their Constitution score. It'll take two minutes (20 rounds) to cross the bridge at a normal pace, four minutes (40 rounds) at a slow pace, and one minute (10 rounds) at a fast pace. If the adventurers are walking, it'll take four minutes (40 rounds) to reach the far side. The adventurers could put wet rags over their mouths to get through the cloud, or a fire-based spell could burn off the gas before they reach it.

Switch and Damaged Rails

A second track splits off from the main course up ahead. Just past the fork, the main track's rails are bent and curled upwards at right angles. A switch lies in the crux of the fork, and you see it's currently set to send the cart down the main track.

Possible Effects: The cart hits the damaged rails and flips. All party members take 4 (1d6) bludgeoning damage, plus an additional 2 damage if the cart is moving fast. It will take some time to get the cart back on the tracks.

Possible Solutions: *Mage Hand* or a similar spell can flip the switch over to the other side, allowing the cart to go down the second track. Alternatively an adventurer can hit the switch with a ranged attack against an AC of 12 to knock it to the other side.

Debris on the Tracks

The tunnel's side wall has collapsed, strewing barrel-sized, glittering rocks across the tracks.

Possible Effects: The cart hits the rocks and flips. All party members take 4 (1d6) bludgeoning damage, plus an additional 2 damage if the cart is moving fast. The engine is damaged, so it can only propel the cart at a slow pace and can't accelerate.

Possible Solutions: If the adventurers accelerate they can slam through the rocks, but the force of impact may knock them off. Have all the adventurers make a **DC 10 Dexterity Saving Throw**. Any adventurers that fail fall off the cart, taking 4 (1d6) bludgeoning damage. If the cart isn't going at a fast pace, the party could also glide the cart to a stop and clear the debris by hand. If they do, they discover some of the loose stones contain quartz crystals. They can collect 100 GP worth of the gemstones.

Low Ceiling

The tunnel ceiling seems substantially lower up ahead. As you approach you see that the ceiling is actually ten feet above the rails, but a colony of purple shriekers is suspended from it. Already, the closest ones have begun to scream as you draw near.

Possible Effects: The adventurers are all **Deafened** for the duration of the trip on the mine cart. Any adventurer that doesn't go prone if they aren't cleared away takes 4 (1d6) bludgeoning damage as the adventurer's head slams into the mushrooms.

Possible Solutions: If the adventurers go prone, they won't take the damage but will still be Deafened. There are 4 shriekers total, so the party could attack them.

Flock of Darkmantles

The mine cart enters a tall, domed cavern with several stalactites hanging down. Suddenly a pair of the stalactites detach from the ceiling, and too late you realize they are darkmantles dropping towards you. They rotate in midair, revealing slavering beaks at the center of their wide, tentacle-framed membranous wings.

Possible Effects: Combat with two **Darkmantles**

Possible Solutions: Fight them, scare them off with fire or loud noises, or obscure the party with *fog cloud* or a similar spell.

Boiling Magma

The cart speeds into a wide room. The rails crisscross a winding channel of roiling magma. Jets of the molten rock irregularly squirt into the air and occasionally splash onto the tracks.

Possible Effects: If a jet of magma lands on the cart, all adventurers must pass a **DC 14 Dexterity Saving Throw,** taking 7 (2d6) fire damage on a failed save, and half on a successful one.

Possible Solutions: A **DC 10 Wisdom Check** can deduce a pattern to the jets and allow the cart to avoid it, or a character with a shield could make a **DC 10 Dexterity Check** to get their shield in front of a jet (possibly destroying the shield if it isn't made of metal).

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Impossibly Tight Turn

The track drops steeply. As you speed down the decline you see an incredibly sharp left turn at the bottom of the drop. As you take the turn, you can feel the cart tilting and the left wheels lifting off the rails.

Possible Effects: The cart rolls. Each adventurer must pass a **DC 12 Dexterity Saving Throw** or take 4 (1d6) bludgeoning damage from the cart falling on them, plus an additional 2 damage if the cart is moving fast or at a normal pace.

Possible Solutions: All party members move to the left side of the cart to restore the cart's balance. Since the turn is so sudden, slowing down enough to completely avoid the event is impossible.

Reliefs of Dwarven Gods

Expertly carved reliefs of the dwarven pantheon line the tunnel. The left wall is principally devoted to Dumathoin, the Keeper of Secrets Under the Mountain, while Sharindlar, Lady of Life and Mercy is the primary subject carved into the right.

Possible Effects: Any non-evil dwarf adventurer is under the effect of the *bless* spell for the remainder of the trip in the mine cart.

Possible Solutions: If the party kills the engine, the cart can stop and the adventurers can examine the carvings. If they do, they notice a thick, clear liquid in a large carved cup held by the relief of Sharindlar. The liquid glows softly. It is *Hearthmead*, and there is enough for each adventurer to fill their canteen.

Gap in the Bridge

The tracks arch upwards to form a bridge across a chasm choked with sulfurous smoke. As you approach the bridge, the vibration from your cart shivers up the rails and pops the rivets supporting the center of the bridge. The loose 10 foot section collapses and falls into the chasm.

Possible Effects: The cart is irreparably damaged if it falls to the chasm floor. Adventurers can attempt to jump from the falling cart to grab the far ledge with a successful **DC 10 Strength (Athletics) Check**. The chasm is 20 feet deep, so any that fall take 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage.

Possible Solutions: Accelerate to jump the gap. Get out and jump across, walking the remainder of the way. Lash some 10 foot poles across the gap to make temporary rails.

Developments

The rails terminate at a small cavern that has only been briefly mined. Thick veins of iron striate the walls. One wall is breached by a narrow crack. It leads to a dark tunnel, and the adventurers can hear voices echoing from within.

Once the adventurers continue down the tunnel, read or paraphrase the following:

> The tunnel is no more than a jagged triangle. You struggle on, and eventually it widens into a small cavern before narrowing again on the far side. Flickering light and muffled chanting stream from a crack in one wall of the cavern.

The tunnel leads on to the twelve foot high lip in the section entitled Stirges in the Depths, while the crack leads to the section entitled The Foyer.

Stirges in the Depths

Once the adventurers follow the side-tunnel with the kobold tracks, read or paraphrase the following:

> You follow the tunnel for some time. Eventually the tunnel narrows and you notice the excavated walls give way to natural, striated formations. You pass a slight bend and see the floor ahead of you has collapsed. A slope of loose stone and gravel pours into the fallen stretch of tunnel. The collapsed section is canted at an angle. A nearly vertical wall twelve feet in height marks where the tunnel floor sheared when it collapsed. The tunnel continues for a few hundred feet beyond the shearing point before turning sharply. You hear the sound of low chanting coming from beyond the bend.

The source of the chanting is too far away for the adventurers to make out what they're saying.

A flock of **7 stirges** lairs in the nooks and crannies of the loose stone slope that leads down into the collapsed section of tunnel. They wait for all the adventurers to move past their nest before attacking.

Once the party reaches the collapsed section of the tunnel, any adventurers with a **passive Perception of 13 or better** notices the stirges and are not surprised by them. All other adventurers are surprised by the creatures.

Adjusting the Encounter

- **Weak party:** remove **2 stirges.**
- **Strong party:** add **3 stirges.**
- **Very Strong party:** replace the stirges with **7 swarms of bats.**

Tactics

The stirges will initially attempt to focus their attacks on those who do not wear heavy armor. Once a stirge attaches to an adventurer, the others will go into a frenzy; any stirge that isn't already in melee combat with an adventurer will target an adventurer that has a stirge attached.

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Developments

Once the stirges are defeated, the adventurers are free to search the area. Any adventurer that searches the nests will succeed with a **DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check or a DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check**. On a success, they will discover the withered corpse of a kobold. A successful **DC 10 Wisdom (Medicine) check** finds that although the corpse is only a few days old, it has been completely drained of its blood. The corpse carries two bluecap mushrooms, a full water skin, and a small onyx statuette of a spider worth 25 gp.

Once the adventurers climb the wall and continue down the tunnel, read or paraphrase the following:

> The corridor bends sharply to the right before widening. It narrows into a cramped triangle on the far side. The glow of firelight and muffled chanting stream from a crack in one wall.

The corridor leads on to the cart tracks' terminus at the small cavern in the section entitled The Mine Cart, while the crack leads to the section entitled The Foyer.

The Foyer

Once the adventurers enter the fissure, read or paraphrase the following:

> The crack leads to a circular cavern, approximately 40 feet in diameter. Water drips off clusters of stalactites hanging from the ceiling to fall on the caps of towering, tree-like mushrooms sprouting from the center of the cavern. Narrow paths lined with various smaller mushrooms hug the circumference of the cavern and lead to a fissure on the far side. Chanting and the glow of firelight emanate from within the fissure, but it has a sharp turn which prevents you from spying their source.

The mushrooms that grow on the left path are poisonous Death Caps and Webcaps. The mushrooms on the right path are *Blue Spidercaps* (see below) and appear almost identical to the Webcaps. The large mushrooms in the center of the cavern are Zurkhwood. When dried, Zurkhwood stalks are used as a wood substitute among the denizens of the Underdark. A successful **DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check** identifies the poisonous mushrooms and the Zurkhwood. If the adventurer succeeds by 5 or more, or if they succeed on a **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check**, they also identify that the Blue Spidercaps aren't Webcaps.

The Kobolds take the left path to reach their lair, knowing that the Death Caps and Webcaps can't hurt them as long as they don't eat them. They keep both paths clear of debris to hide their tracks, however they know not to get too close to the Blue Spidercaps, resulting in a dusting of spores around the mushrooms. A successful **DC 12 Wisdom (Survival) check** will allow an adventurer to recognize there are no footprints in the blanket of spores around the Blue Spidercaps.

The Zurkhwood grow in a dense thicket. Their moist skin easily sloughs away, but they can be climbed with a successful **DC 16 Strength (Athletics) check.** Failing by 5 or more results in 4 (1d6) falling damage.

Blue Spidercaps

Blue Spidercaps grow in the darkest caverns. Their stalks and the tops of their caps are a rusty brown color, however the web-like underside of the caps are an iridescent blue covered in frost. The Spidercaps are attracted to motion. Whenever something moves past the mushroom, it releases a cloud of freezing spores in a 15-foot cube originating from the mushroom. Any creature in the area must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take 6 (1d10) cold damage and suffer one level of exhaustion.

If an adventurer wishes to listen closely to the chanting, they must make a **Wisdom (Perception) check,** and then consult the following table:

Check Result	Information
≤ 8	The adventurer can glean no information about the voices
9-12	The adventurer can tell that the voices are speaking in draconic.
13-19	As 9-12 above, plus the adventurer can tell they are kobolds and believes there are at least 10 individual chanters.
20+	As 13-19 above, plus the adventurer knows there are exactly 15 kobolds that are taking part in the chant.

If an adventurer rolled at least a 9 and speaks draconic, they know the chant translates roughly as "Gods, give us the gold that you once gave the dwarves."

The fissure leads to the section entitled The Cargo Cult.

The Cargo Cult

Any adventurers may attempt to sneak through the fissure by passing a **DC 12 Dexterity (Stealth) check,** taken with Advantage since the kobolds don't expect any outsiders.

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When the adventurers enter the fissure, read or paraphrase the following:

> You shimmy through the narrow fissure and enter a small, irregularly shaped cavern. Piles of old wood and chips of mushroom stems act as communal beds, while a campfire burns beside a stand of fungus of various sizes. Further inside the cavern you see a curious sight; fourteen kobolds, some very young, others very old, kneel prostrate before a crude model of the dwarves' forge carved from mushroom stems. An older kobold, dressed in rusted dwarven chainmail, stands with either foot atop the gleaming mithril pistons of the dwarves' heat pump, using his feet to pump first one piston and then the other in time with the kobolds' chants.

If an adventurer fails the stealth check, or if an adventurer enters without making a stealth check, read or paraphrase the following:

> The old kobold atop the heat pump stops chanting and points at you, his eyes wide and his mouth agape. One by one the other kobolds stop chanting and turn to stare. The leader lets out a loud whoop and begins hopping from piston to piston, his yell in common of "I knew it would work!" barely audible over the cheers of the other kobolds. "You bring gold, yes? Make us dwarf-rich?"

Of the 15 kobolds, **6 kobolds** (including the old leader) are capable of fighting the adventurers. The remainder will cower or run off if it comes to fighting.

Adjusting the Encounter

- **Weak party:** change **1 kobold** from a combatant to a non-combatant**.**
- **Strong party:** change the combatant kobolds into **Winged Kobolds.**
- **Very Strong party:** Replace all 6 Kobolds with **10 Winged Kobolds**

The kobolds will not initially attack the adventurers. They believe the adventurers were brought to them by the kobold god Kurtulmak to "make them rich, like the dwarves."

The old kobold clan leader is named Hursihz. He and the adult kobolds were slaves to the drow, and took part in the assault on Deepforge. They were supposed to take the heat pump back to the drow of Undrek'Thoz, but they slew their handlers and fled, finding this cavern. Hursihz was convinced that if they made a shrine that looked just like the great forge, or as he calls it the 'dwarf gold-shrine,' the power of the heat pump would bring them riches. He believes the party is the answer to their prayers.

Role-playing Hursihz *(Her-SEEZ)*

Hursihz is very eager to talk to the adventurers. His demeanor is placating, but at the same time adamant the party is supposed to bring them riches.

Hursihz constantly rubs his thumbs across his fingers and his eye twitches.

Developments

If the adventurers tell the kobolds they were not sent by the gods, Hursihz accuses them of coming to steal the dwarf magic for themselves, and the kobolds attack.

The party can attempt to deceive Hursihz, playing along that they were sent by the gods, and attempt to persuade him to give the pump to them. However, the kobold won't even discuss the idea without being given riches first. The kobolds are not interested in copper or silver coins, however 25 gold pieces (or a combination of any weapons or armor worth 25 gold pieces in selling price) will be enough to convince them the party was sent by the gods. Once the riches are given over, an adventurer can persuade Hursihz to give the heat pump to the party by passing a **DC 12 Charisma (Deception) check** using a plausible story explaining why the gods would want it. If the check fails by less than 5, the adventurers may retry with **Disadvantage.** If the check fails by 5 or more, Hursihz sees through the ruse. He exclaims that the adventurers were not sent by Kurtulmak and that they've come to steal the dwarf magic for themselves, and the kobolds attack.

The Exit Fee

If the adventurers let any of the goblins manning the wall go free, Chief Houndstooth will be waiting for them in the ruins outside Deepforge.

Once the adventurers leave Deepforge, read or paraphrase the following:

> You exit Deepforge and are momentarily dazzled as your eyes adjust to the sunlight. Footfalls among the ruined outbuildings announce that you are not alone. You blink as you see several goblins flanking a larger female goblin swathed in several high quality cloth scarves and wearing an ornate bandanna. She points an accusatory finger at you as she shouts "You trespass upon the realm of clan Warpweft! I am Chief Houndstooth, and that dwarf warren is part of my domain. Anything taken from within is mine! Give it to me, now!"

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Role-playing Houndstooth

Chief Houndstooth is middle aged, but strong and lithe. She wears layers of well made clothing in various clashing patterns. She maintains her control of the clan by crushing any dissent among her ranks. When she makes a decision she will not debate it, and cuts down any who disagree.

Houndstooth has heard of the dwarves' wealth. She covets the bounty of their labors, and can only be dissuaded with a successful **DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion), Charisma (Intimidation), or Charisma (Deception) check.** If the adventurers fail, her party will attack.

There are **2 Goblins** (one of which may be Herringbone, depending on how the adventurers dealt with him earlier) and **1 Goblin Boss** (Houndstooth). Houndstooth wields a *+1 Scimitar*.

Adjusting the Encounter

- **Weak party:** remove **1 Goblin.**
- **Strong party:** add **2 Goblins.**
- **Very Strong party:** add **4 Goblins.**

Tactics

The goblins are Houndstooth's personal guard; they stay adjacent to her. She will attempt to hide as often as possible, but prefers to use her *+1 Scimitar* over her javelins. The goblins will not fight to the death; if Houndstooth is reduced to less than 10 hit points, she will flee the combat. If she is slain, the remaining goblins will flee the combat.

Treasure

The goblins carry 25 GP total. Houndstooth carries a *+1 Scimitar*.

Conclusion

With the heat pump recovered, the party returns to Samnall. Read or paraphrase the following:

> You return to Samnall mac Rand with the heat pump in tow. He laughs and shakes the hand of each of you in turn. "Thank you for this, my friends. I know that with this piece of technology, Earthfast's steel production will be unmatched. Also, I'll be rich, so there's that."

Treasure

Upon receiving the heat pump, Samnall rewards the party with 100 gp, as promised. If the adventurers gave the kobolds 25 gp or equipment worth 25 gp, he reimburses them for those expenses.

Experience

All combat rewards are outlined in the enemies' Monster Manual entries. Reward the players by adding up the XP for each enemy encountered, and then dividing by the number of players, as normal.

In addition, reward each character with an additional 50 XP for each of the following:

- The party successfully negotiated with Herringbone.
- The party found the kobold tracks in the main tunnel.
- The party was able to restore the steam engine on the mine cart.
- The party was able to pass through The Foyer without triggering the Blue Spidercaps.
- The party got the heat pump from the kobolds without fighting them.
- The party successfully negotiated with Chief Houndstooth.

Magic Items

Tortured Puppet

Wondrous item, uncommon (requires attunement)

Once attuned, the Tortured Puppet changes to match your appearance. While the Tortured Puppet is in your possession, it allows you to ignore your first failed Death Saving Throw. Once this occurs roll a d20; on a 1, the Tortured Puppet is destroyed in a puff of oily smoke. The Tortured Puppet's ability may only be used once per Long Rest.

Hearthmead

Potion, uncommon

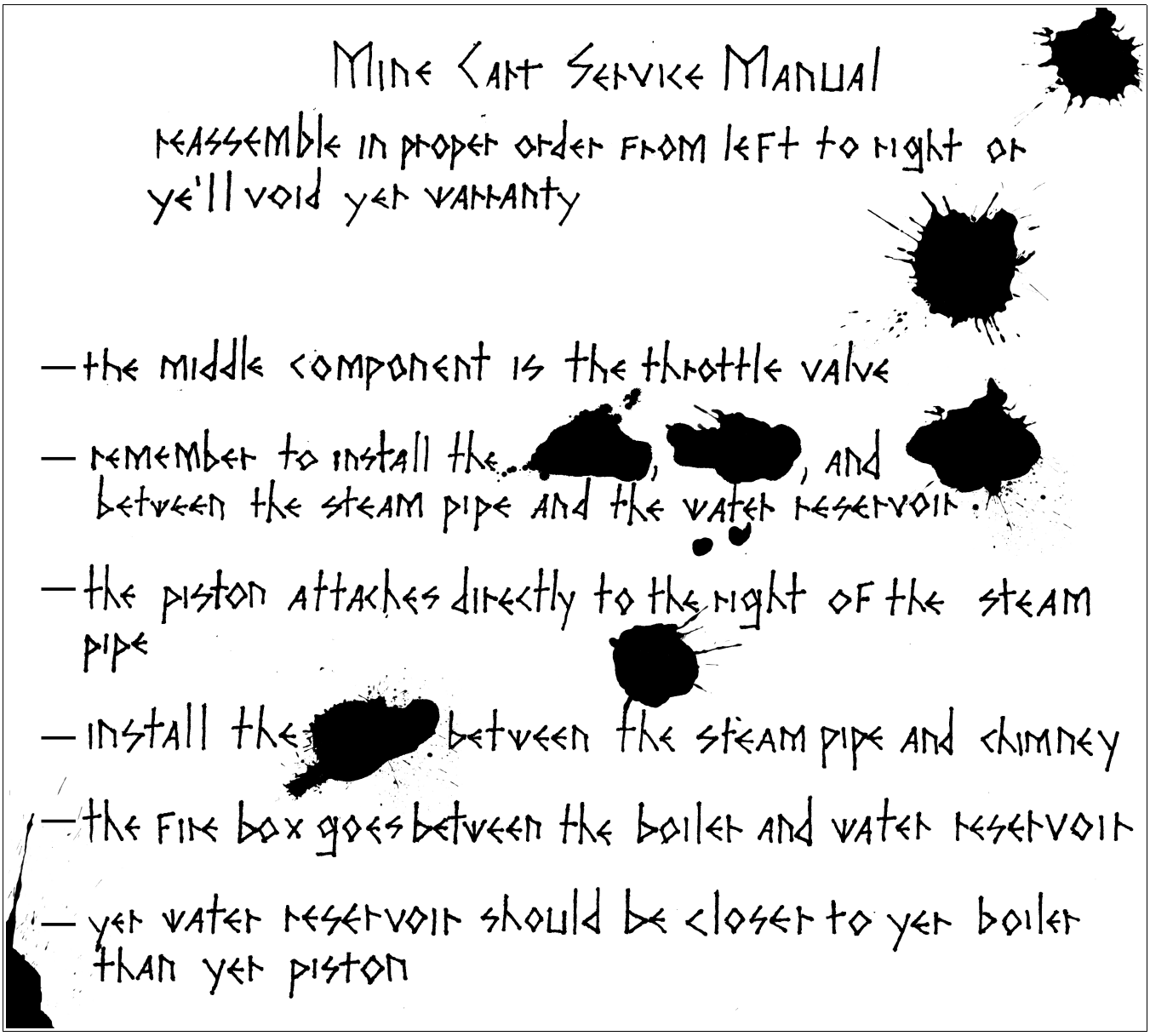
When you drink this potion during a short rest, you may restore an additional 1d4+2 hit points. The potion lets off a soft, warm glow.

+1 Scimitar

Weapon (scimitar), uncommon

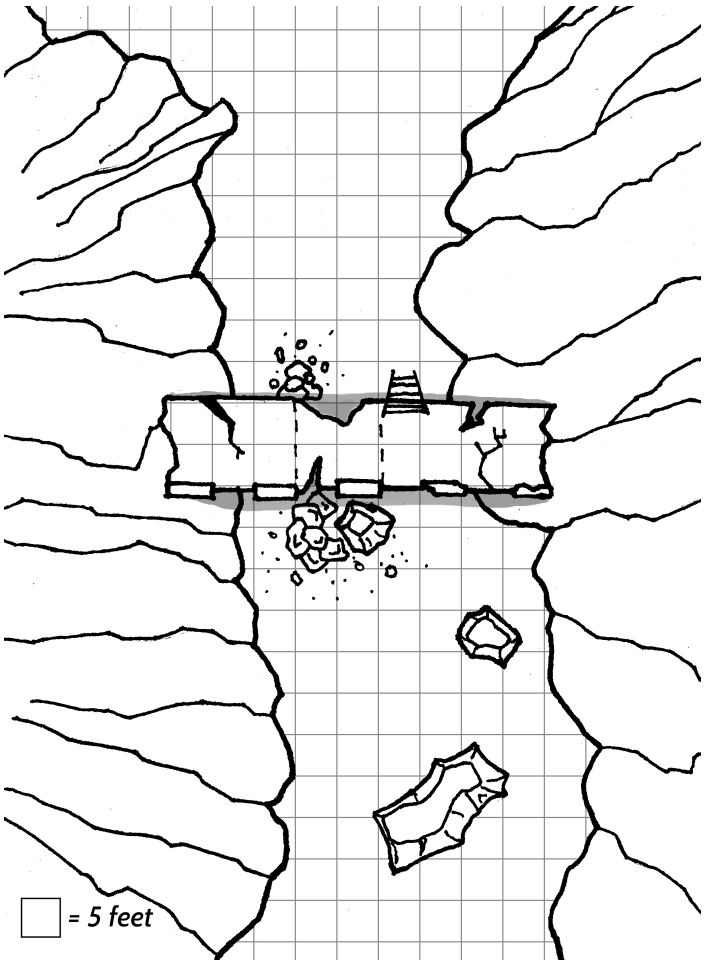
Houndstooth's scimitar is made of bronze. The lower half of its blade is saw-toothed, and it has an owl skull for a pommel. Several streamers of patterned cloth hang from the guard.

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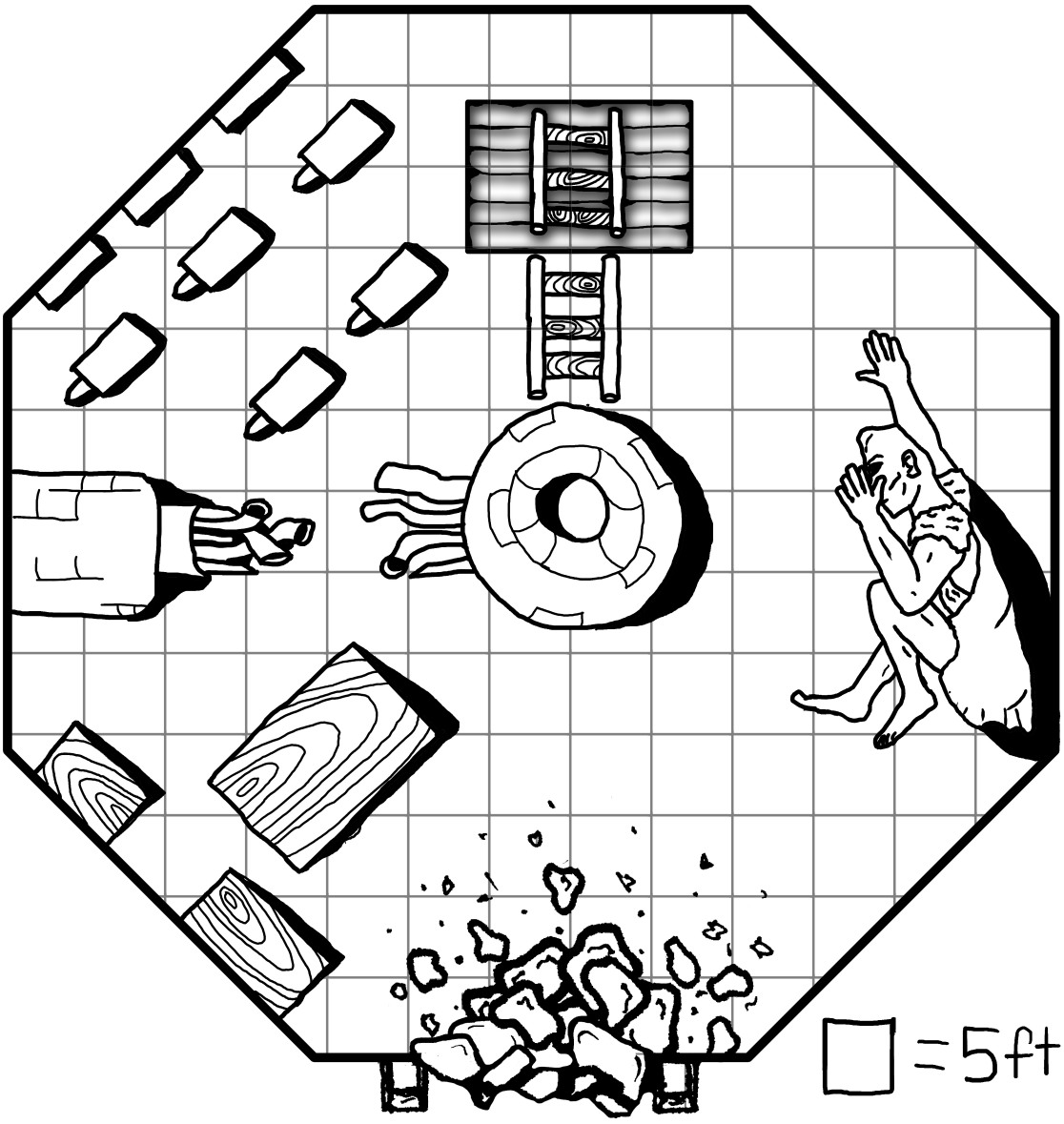
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Map 1: The Entrance Fee



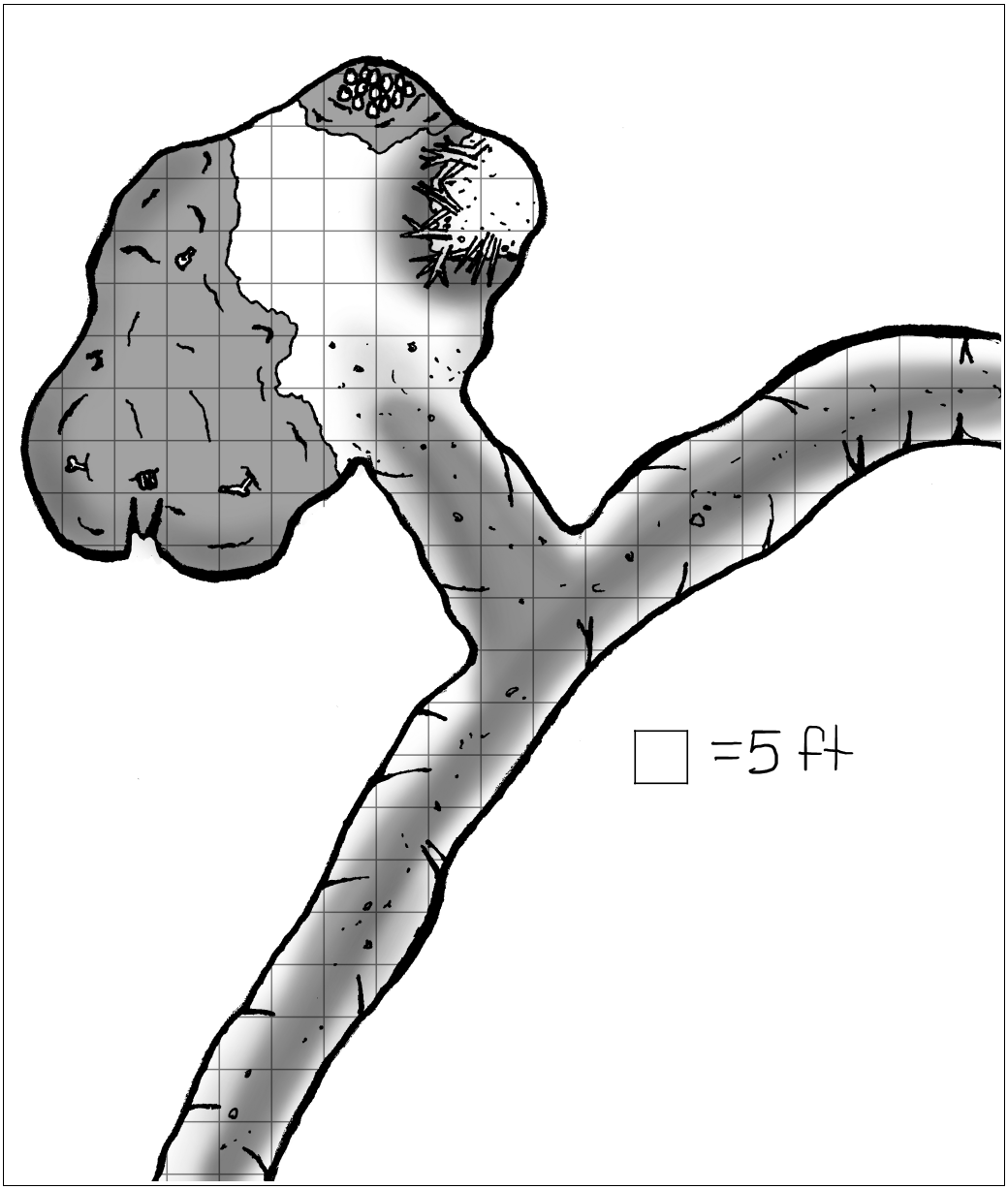
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Map 2: The Forge



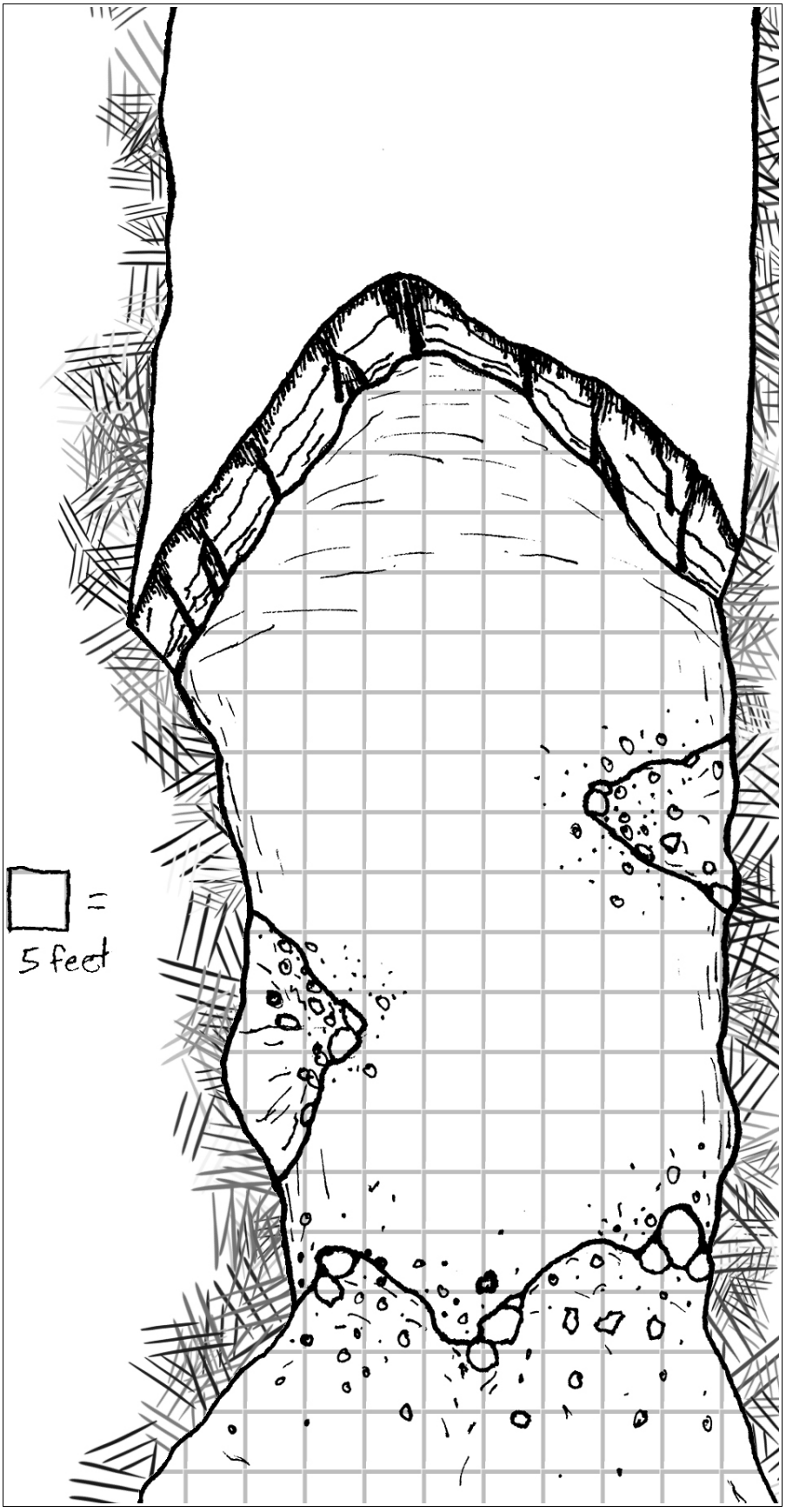
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Map 3: The Tunnel

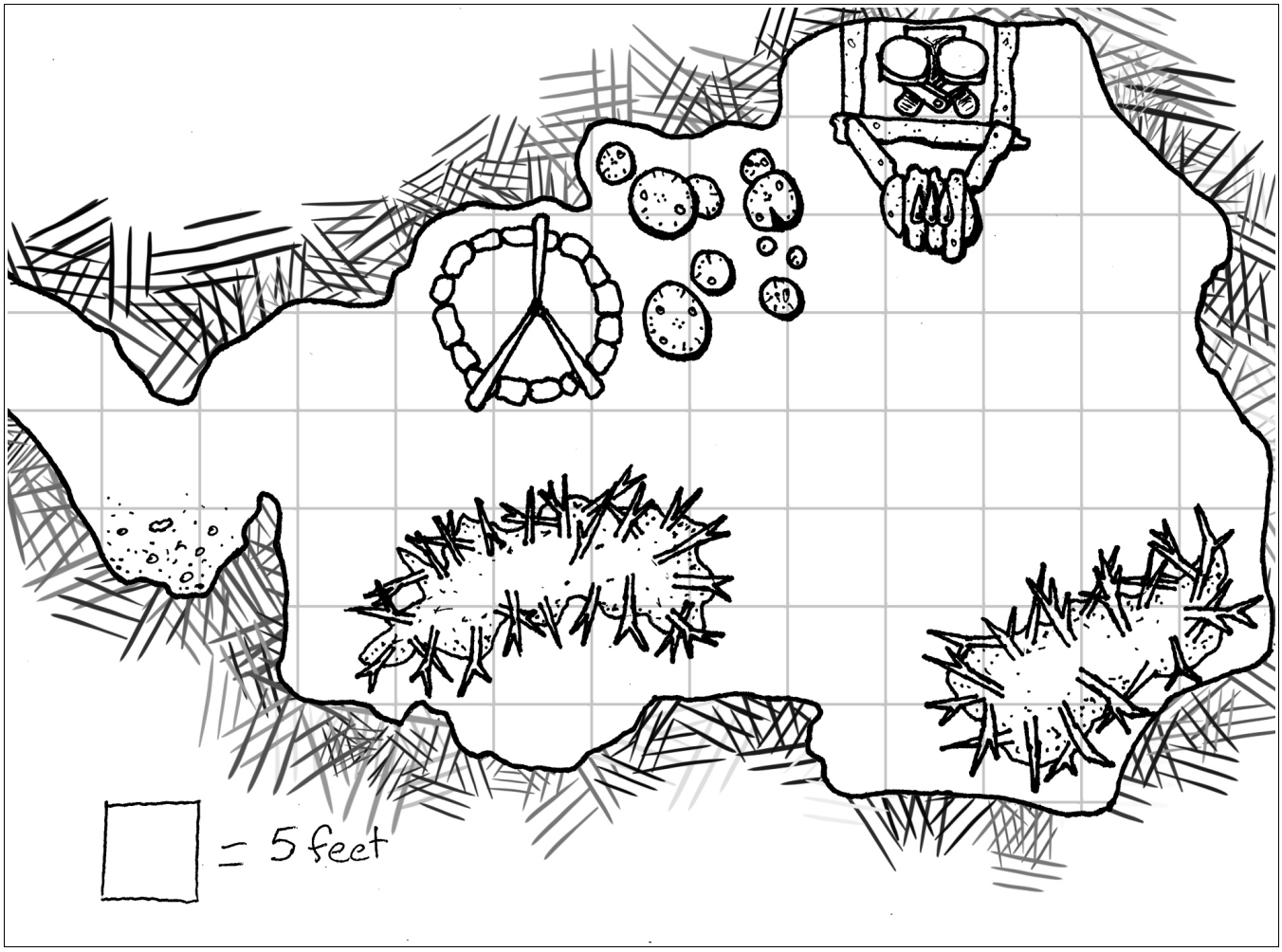


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Map 4: Stirges in the Depths



Map 5: The Cargo Cult



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