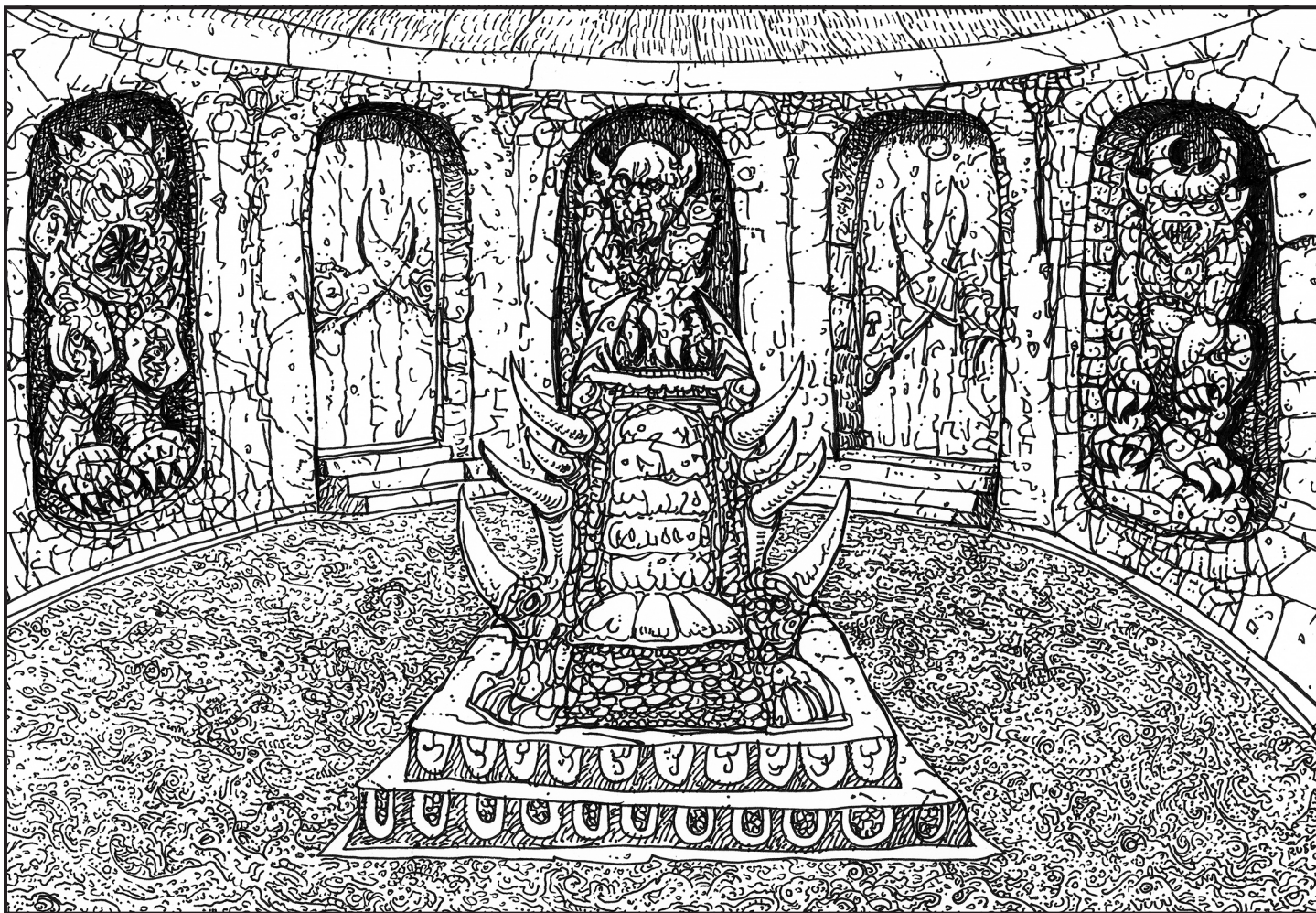


DUNGEON DELVE ADVENTURE #1

TOWER OF THE BLACK SORCERERS

by R. Nelson Bailey

A FIRST EDITION ADVENTURE FOR 5-7 CHARACTERS LEVELS 5-8



The black sorcerers have dwelled within their baleful tower for hundreds of years. Now something evil stirs in the town of Bal-Curz—strange manifestations of malefic magic and people disappearing in the night. The fearful townsfolk whisper that the source of these evils lies within the Black Tower. Perhaps a few bold heroes could investigate the tower, uncover its secrets, and put an end to this unseen terror?

DUNGEON DELVE adventures by Dungeoneers Guild Games are classic-style modules designed to fit into any campaign for the Advanced 1st edition game. With little effort they can easily be adapted to most fantasy role-playing games, including the Advanced 2nd edition game, the Original game, the B/X and BECM I (“Basic”) games, and most old-school renaissance (OSR) role-playing systems.

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INTRODUCTION

Tower of the Black Sorcerers is an adventure for 5 to 7 characters at levels 5 to 8 (about 40 levels total). In this module, the **player characters (PCs)** will explore a tower inhabited by a cabal of evil magic-users. Nominally set in the town of Bal-Curz, the **Game Master (GM)** can easily place this tower in an urban location in any fantasy role-playing game world. A good mix of character types—i.e., fighters, clerics, thieves, and magic-users—will be most effective at thwarting the sorcerers' evil schemes. The party should also include one or more magic-user class player characters to deal with the many magical defenses in the tower.



BACKGROUND & NOTES FOR THE GAME MASTER

For as long as the citizens of Bal-Curz can remember, the ominous **Black Tower** has stood in the heart of their gleaming city like a rotten tooth. Situated among the shops and taverns of the merchant district, every arch-mage who has served the lords of Bal-Curz over the past four centuries has lived within its fuscous walls. The current arch-mage of the Tower, Basharn the Orotund, counsels the lord of the city on all matters concerning eldritch dweomercraft and theurgies. The sorcerers who reside in the Tower are a secretive and aloof lot, rarely interacting with ordinary folk.

Few citizens of Bal-Curz have ever been invited into the tower as guests; even fewer wish to set foot in it. Speculation about what goes on in the tower is rife among the townsfolk, with each rumor more fantastical than the last. Current rumors tell of unspeakable experiments and magics practiced by the sorcerers. Many citizens speak of furtive scratching sounds heard in their cellars and of seeing dark shadows creeping through the town's empty streets at

night. Over the last few years, numerous persons have disappeared from within the safety of their own homes, leaving no trace or sign of their fates. Others have been found dead in their homes or in the streets, slain by some mysterious creature and dying a quick, painful death from poison. All of these wild rumors suggest that some baleful work of the black wizards is afoot in Bal-Curz. To compound this problem, Ullvist, lord of Bal-Curz, has done little to assuage the concerns and fears of the townsfolk.

GETTING STARTED

This **DUNGEON DELVE** module contains little or no plot and has no predetermined adventure hook to engage players. This is by no means a design oversight. Instead, it is an intentional feature that allows you—the Game Master—to make playing this module a unique experience, tailoring it to your own campaign with little difficulty. The minimal plot lets you use this module as a standalone expedition or as an adventure integrated into an existing campaign. As the GM, you should first read the module in its entirety. Look for clues and hints to serve as seeds for a plot you can grow. Think of the adventure's text as the foundation and frame of a building that you side, shingle, and paint to fit your preferences and needs.

Below are a few plot suggestions to get you started:

1. The player characters hear rumors that the wizards in the tower possess an item they need, such as a magic item, book, or map. This item is required to complete another quest or adventure, or it will help solve a problem for the PCs. The characters will eventually approach the wizards to buy or trade for the item. However, they soon find that the price is too high to pay.
2. Fed up with the terror afflicting their town, a group of concerned citizens seeks to hire an adventuring party to investigate the tower. They have pooled their meager funds to offer a reward.
3. While visiting Bal-Curz, the party is attacked in their rooms at an inn by a number of huge spiders. A hidden trapdoor is soon discovered, leading to a narrow tunnel that disappears beneath the streets of the town. Thereafter, the player characters learn of the strange murders and disappearances plaguing the town. The fearful locals hesitantly indicate that the spiders are minions of the sorcerers of the **Black Tower**.
4. In a highly unconventional proclamation, Ullvist, lord of Bal-Curz, announces that the worthiest citizen will marry his only daughter, Suvonna. To determine who will take his daughter's hand in marriage and eventually become the new Lord of Bal-Curz, the potential suitors will race on foot en masse from the town gates to the keep while pursued by a rancorous giant boar. However, this is simply a scheme hatched by the black wizards to gain legitimate control of the town. They have entered their champion, Engharn, who is sure to win the race against the other lackluster contestants. One astute citizen who suspects foul play approaches the party to enter one of their own in the race. Of course, the wizards will use their magics to ensure that their champion wins. Furthermore, they will seek vengeance on anyone who bests him.



5. A local cleric approaches the party for help. He tells the player characters that over the past year, all the temples in town have closed—except his—because their priests have disappeared or been murdered. This coincides with the arrival of a new cult in town that worships a heretofore unknown god named Morraith. The cleric has heard rumors that the wizards in the tower worship this foul god and are behind this plot to rid the town of priests. Every night, unknown creatures creep through the darkness near the cleric's temple.

RUMORS

The party may wish to learn more about the sorcerers before investigating their tower. By asking the right people in town, the party can learn 1d4+1 of the following rumors. Roll a d12 or select as you see fit from the following rumors:

1d12 Rumor

- | 1d12 | Rumor |
|------|---|
| 1 | Basharn became the master of the Black Tower six years ago, following the previous master's mysterious disappearance. (True) |
| 2 | The wizards of the tower have joined forces with an assassins' guild that recently set up shop in the town. These killers are responsible for the murders and disappearances of the town's citizens. (False) |
| 3 | Powerful creatures summoned from other planes of existence guard the tower. (True) |
| 4 | The original master of the tower endures in undeath as a lich who lives deep beneath the tower. He is the true master of the tower; Basharn and the other wizards are merely servants who carry out his schemes. (False) |
| 5 | Over the past few months, Lord Ullvist has been acting strangely. He rarely leaves his keep and is indifferent to his people's needs. (True) |
| 6 | Recently, two young farmhands visiting town have disappeared, leaving their ox and cart abandoned in the streets. (True) |
| 7 | A few years ago, strange lights and a horrid wail were seen and heard coming from the tower. The wizards lost control of a powerful demon they had summoned from the Abyss. The demon slew all the wizards and now rules the tower. (False) |
| 8 | Some evenings, a sweet and mournful song issues from the tower. This song is from Basharn's ghostly lover, who haunts the tower. (Partially true) |
| 9 | Basharn's champion, the warrior Engharn, has sought the hand of Lord Ullvist's daughter and only heir, Su-vonna, in marriage. (True) |
| 10 | The townsfolk who disappeared or were murdered were agents of the wizards who threatened to betray their secrets. No doubt, these people deserved this gruesome fate. (False) |
| 11 | The sorcerers rarely leave their tower. Basharn, however, often speaks with Ullvist at Ullvist's keep. He uses magic to get there, since no one ever sees him enter or leave. (True) |

- 12 The wizards conduct ghastly experiments on those unfortunate souls who fall into their clutches. They seek to combine humans with the worst traits of demons to create their minions. (Partially true)

ADVENTURE SECTIONS

Each numbered area on the module's maps is keyed to a specific encounter description that includes one or more section headings detailing its contents and/or occupants. Each type of section heading is described below. Note that numbered areas include only the headings pertinent to the area. Thus, an area with no doors will not include a "**Door**" heading.

Illumination: Notes the type of illumination in an area when first encountered by the PCs. Generally, the absence of this heading indicates that the area has no source of illumination.

Door(s): This section indicates whether any doors to the area are open, locked, or trapped when first encountered by the PCs. This might change on subsequent visits to the same area, so the GM should note any changes.

GM's Note: Alerts the GM to any special considerations in an area that might affect the PCs, occupants, or the environment.

Description: This section provides a physical description of an area as it appears when first encountered by the PCs. The GM should not read this section verbatim to the players but should instead paraphrase as they deem necessary. The area's description should be updated if its occupants or contents are destroyed, removed, or altered during the course of play.

Encounter: Any monsters or NPCs in the area are listed in this section.

Tactics: This section provides general notes on the tactics any monsters or NPCs use in combat when they first encounter the PCs.

Alert: This section informs the GM of any special considerations that may arise after the PCs enter the area.

Development: This section notes any consequences that might arise from PCs entering a particular area and that could later affect encounters in other areas.

Alarm! This section notifies the GM of any actions or developments in the area when a general alarm has been raised.

Treasure: Any treasure found in the area is detailed in this section.

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations appear throughout this module:

AC = Armor Class; **MV** = Move; **MC** = Maneuverability Class; **HD** = Hit Dice; **hp** = Hit Points; **#AT** = Number of Attacks; **Dmg** = Damage; **SA** = Special Attack; **SD** = Special Defense; **MR** = Magic Resistance; **INT** = monster Intelligence rating; **AL** = Alignment; **L** = Large size; **M** = Medium size; **S** = Small size; **xp** = Experience Point value; **THACO** = the number to hit AC 0; **PsA** = Psionic ability; **C** = Chaotic; **L** = Lawful; **E** = Evil; **G** = Good; **N** = Neutral; **S** = Strength; **I** = Intelligence; **W** = Wisdom; **D** = Dexterity; **C** = Constitution; **CH** = Charisma; **CM** = Comeliness; **d** = type of die; **rd/rds** = round/rounds; **cp** = copper piece; **sp** = silver piece; **ep** = electrum piece; **gp** = gold piece; **pp** = platinum piece



THE BLACK TOWER

PHYSICAL PROPERTIES OF THE BLACK TOWER

Courtyard: A 12'-high stone wall topped with iron spikes surrounds the tower's courtyard. A single 10'-wide wrought-iron gate provides access to this area. A few forlorn, stunted trees and patchy brown grass fill the courtyard.

Tower: The **Black Tower** stands 70' high, with 5'-high crenellations rising from its flat roof. The circular tower is 80' wide, with 5'-thick outer walls constructed of large, unmortared stones. A single door pierces this fell edifice at ground level, while four slender, shuttered, and barred embrasures look out over the town from the upper level. An enchantment laid on the tower's walls imbues it with 50% magic resistance.

The interior of the tower and the dungeon level below are lined with smoothed, mortared, yellowish-brown stones. The mortar contains gorgon and basilisk blood to ward against ethereal beings, plus powdered lead to prevent scrying attempts within the tower from outside its walls. Ceilings are 10' high unless otherwise noted.

Roof: The tower roof is accessed via a trapdoor in the ceiling of AREA 4. Security at this portal is lax because the arrogant sorcerers believe no one is foolish enough to enter their tower through it.

Dungeon: Unknown to most townsfolk, a dungeon level, cut from bedrock, lies 50' beneath the tower. Access to the DUNGEON LEVEL is via a teleporter in AREA 5. Ceilings are 10' high in passages and 15' in rooms unless otherwise noted. Wall-mounted oil lamps illuminate the most frequently used passages in the dungeon. The teleportation platform in AREA 5 ventilates this level by continuously drawing in fresh air.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

While the party explores the **Black Tower**, check for random encounters once every 3 turns. An encounter occurs on a roll of 1 on a d6. If the die indicates an encounter, roll 1d4 and consult the table below.

Black Tower Encounter Table

1d4	Encounter	# Appearing
1	Balweeg	See below
2	Huge spider	1d3
3	Peasant lammikin	1d2
4	Steam mephit	1d2

1. BALWEEG

As the familiar of the magic-user Skewl (see AREA 16), this creature, Haffrue, usually occupies AREA 17. It frequently roams the tower and its dungeons while invisible. If it spots intruders, Haffrue uses *detect good* and *detect magic* on the PCs before returning to its master to report its findings. If Haffrue has been slain, treat this roll as "no encounter." See the "**New Monsters**" section, p. 17, for a complete description of the balweeg.

Haffrue, balweeg: AC 2; MV 15"; HD 3 + 2; hp 18; #AT 2; Dmg 1d3/1d3 claws; SA claw wounds heal only with magical healing, purr acts as *sleep* spell (3" range), spell-like abilities: *detect good*, *detect magic*, turn *invisible*, *hypnotic pattern* (1/day); SD +1

or better magic weapon needed to hit, **regenerates** 1 hp/rd., surprised only on a 1 on a d8, immune to cold, fire, and electrical-based attacks, save vs. Spells as a 7 HD monster; MR 25%; INT average (10); AL NE; Size S (2' long); xp 397; THAC0 15; New Monster.

2. HUGE SPIDER

These monsters readily attack anyone they encounter who is not a known inhabitant of the tower. Up to six huge spiders may be encountered at random.

Huge spider: AC 6; MV 18", leap up to 3"; HD 2 + 2; hp 14 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 bite + **poison** (save at +1; save vs. Poison or die); SA surprise opponents on 1-5 (1d6); INT animal (1); AL N; Size M; xp 187 each; THAC0 16; MM 90.

3. PEASANT LAMMIKIN

These horrors, humans altered by giant spiders, are creations of the wizard Basharn. They avoid confrontation unless cornered. Up to four peasant lammikins may be encountered at random. See the "New Monsters" section, pp. 18-19, for a full description of them.

Peasant lammikin: AC 7; MV 6"; HD 2 + 1; hp 12 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d3 bite; SD *climb walls* (90%); INT low (5-7); AL N; Size M; xp 71 each; THAC0 16; New Monster.

4. STEAM MEPHIT

No more than four steam mephits may be encountered at random.

Steam mephit: AC 7; MV 12"/24" (MC: B); HD 3 + 3; hp 18 each; #AT 2; Dmg 1d4/1d4 claws; SA *jet of scalding water* up to 20' every other round (automatically hits; 1d3 damage, no save, plus a 50% chance to *stun* victim for 1 rd.), *boiling rainstorm* (1/day; as *ice storm*, inflicting 2d6 damage, no save), *contaminate water* (1/hour; reverse of *purify water*), *gate* in 1d2 mephits (1/hour; 30% chance of success); SD touching a mephit with bare flesh inflicts 1 hp of heat damage and has a 50% chance to *stun* for 1 rd.; INT average (8-10); AL NE; Size M (5' tall); xp 247 each; THAC0 16; FF 64-66.

The GM should take care to note the locations of free-willed, intelligent creatures that might move around during the course of the adventure. Once it has been determined that intruders are in the complex, these creatures will take proactive steps to thwart the party, as noted in the "**Alarum!**" sections of the keyed encounters.

KEY TO THE GROUND FLOOR

(USE UPPER LEVELS MAP)

1. THE GREAT HALL

Illumination: Four *light stones* set along the walls illuminate this area. Each of these magical lights can adjust its brightness from a torch to a candle if commanded. Currently, they each provide dim lighting equal to a single candle.

Description: The tower's heavy wooden outer door opens into a 70'-wide circular room furnished with a throne mounted on a dais. The vaulted ceiling rises nearly 50' to a centrally located 10' circular opening. A half-dozen leering gargoyle statues mounted