

DUNGEON DELVE SPECIAL #2

LABYRINTH OF THE DWELLER

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A FIRST EDITION ADVENTURE FOR 5-7 CHARACTERS LEVELS 6-8



Wise seers and learned sages believe the Caverns of Azek-Vhool hold a great and powerful treasure. They say that the *Gate of the Gods* — created at the dawn of time and hidden from the eyes of mortals for eons — lies within its deepest pit. Finding it is no simple matter, as hordes of giants, ogres, and worse dwell within these benighted caves. The labyrinth only gives up its dark secrets and fabulous treasures to those bold and lucky enough to survive its terrors.

This challenging module contains two dungeon levels, two maps, and nine new monsters. Detailed notes, encounter descriptions, player handouts, and optional game play rules are included for the Game Master.

DUNGEON DELVE SPECIAL 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 BECMI ("Basic") games, and most old-school renaissance (OSR) role-playing systems.

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LABYRINTH OF THE DWELLER is an adventure designed for 5 to 7 characters of levels 6 to 8 (about 40 levels in total). The characters will explore the Caverns of Azek-Vhool — a vast cave system home to a tribe of hill giants and their allies. The **player characters' (PCs)** ultimate goal, however, is to locate a fabled artifact called the **Gate of the Gods**. Before commencing play, the **Game Master (GM)** should read the entirety of the module to familiarize themself with the denizens of the caves, its traps and tricks, and the adventure's basic plot and structure. At least two fighter-type characters, optimally one a ranger or paladin, and one or two clerics are essential to ensure that the players have a chance to survive. Additionally, the party must contain at least one magic-user to overcome the **Gate's** magical wards.

Introduction

Long ago, in that golden age when the footsteps of the gods still shook the land, the exultant ones took rest and surveyed the newly-formed world. Delighting in their handiwork, they conceived of a gift to bestow on their most favored creation — humankind. This gift, so they believed, would be of inestimable benefit to the humans who populated its lands. Combining their divine knowledge, the great immortals created a magic portal of unparalleled potency — called by some the "**Gate of the Gods**". The artifact allowed mortals to summon beings from other planes, or to travel the multiverse. Humanity, however, soon showed it lacked the wisdom to use this gift for the greater good. Instead, they exploited its powers only for selfish purposes, using it to dominate and clash with their own kind and other races. In their insensate rage, the gods smote the ground under which their creation rested. The earth swiftly swallowed the gate, hiding it from those who would misuse its power. The secreted portal came to rest in the bowels of a lightless cave system — the Caverns of Azek-Vhool. With it, the gods placed formidable wards to thwart those foolish enough to seek out the Wondrous Gate.

In the intervening millennia, the tales of the **Gate of the Gods** survived, though much knowledge concerning its powers was lost. Kings and rogues, sorcerers and adventurers, all sought after this legendary artifact. Sages spent decades studying tomes of forgotten lore for a mere passing mention that could shed light on its whereabouts. Countless fortunes were gambled and lives were risked on these fruitless pursuits for power and glory. None, however, were successful in their efforts to find the gate.

In recent years, a number of enterprising individuals and parties have sought after the Wondrous Gate in earnest. Enough clues have been pieced together to provide those bold enough a location to start their search. It is believed that the Gate's hiding place lies somewhere within a range of inhospitable hills beyond the civilized lands of humankind. These forlorn crags have a reputation for harboring fell monsters — humanoids, giants, dragons, and more. However, few who have ventured into these desolate hills have ever returned to tell their tales.

BACKGROUND & NOTES FOR THE GAME MASTER

Innumerable creatures and races have inhabited the caverns of Azek-Vhool in the many years since the gate first appeared there. The most recent residents are a tribe of hill giants. These fearsome monsters dominate the upper cave system (**MAP I**), along with their ogre and troglodyte allies.

The lower level of the complex (**MAP II**, p. 22) is a vast labyrinth of twisting passages and gloomy caves. An yg'nalath demon, named Asumu, rules over this maze. Hordes of undead and mi-

nor demons that dwell in this black pit serve as its legions. Herein also lies the **Gate of the Gods**. It consists of the **Three Veils** (AREA 49) that prevent access to the chamber of the **Tetrahedron Monolith** in AREA 50.

The hill giants revere Asumu — whom they call the "**Dweller in the Pit**" — as the protective spirit of their clan. They supply this demon with the victims it desires, and keep interlopers from locating its sanctuary. Periodically, these giants descend from their hilly redoubt to raid human settlements in the lowlands. When they do, they always return with a prize of human and demi-human captives to present to the Dweller as an offering.

Getting Started

This work provides no predetermined scenario to get the PCs involved in the expedition to the caverns. Instead, the GM should design one that best fits their own campaign needs. A few starting possibilities include:

- 1) A benefactor hires the PCs to locate the **Gate of the Gods**.
- 2) The PCs hear rumors of the giants attacking human settlements and head out to battle them.
- 3) The party stumbles across the caverns whilst traveling to another locale.

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's intelligence rating; **AL** = alignment; **L** = large size; **M** = medium size; **S** = small size; **xp** = experience point value; **THACO** = the number to hit AC 0; **C** = chaotic; **L** = lawful; **E** = evil; **G** = good; **N** = neutral; **F** = Fighter; **MU** = Magic-User; **C** = Cleric; **T** = Thief; **S** = Strength, **I** = Intelligence, **W** = Wisdom, **D** = Dexterity, **C** = Constitution, **CH** = Charisma; **d**=type of die; **rd/rds**=round/rounds; **cp**=copperpiece; **sp**=silver piece; **ep**=electrum piece; **gp**=gold piece; **pp**=platinum piece.

RESIDENTS OF THE CAVERNS

Giants & Their Allies: The current tribe's chief, an ambitious hill giant named Mjemmorg, seeks to expand the influence of his folk beyond the caves of Azek-Vhool. The hill giants' numbers are greatly increased by the presence of many ogre and mogruan allies — the latter being a hybrid of ogre and hill giant parentage (see the "**New Monsters**" section, pp. 26-27). Furthermore, the chief has the vassalage of a tribe of troglodytes. Bolstered with these additional forces, Mjemmorg plans to eliminate all neighboring groups of giants and humanoids who compete with his clan for treasure and food. He also believes that additional sacrifices to Asumu will help the giants overcome their enemies in battle.

When humans or demi-humans are encountered, the hill giants and their allies attempt to capture as many as possible. They do this by pummeling the PCs unconscious, or by grappling and overbearing them with their greater strength. However, being thick-headed brutes, these monsters only think to do this in 50% of all encounters with the party.

Adult combatant giants, mogruans, and ogres who reside in the caverns carry a variety of weapons. Roll 1d20 and consult the following table to determine what type of arms each individual wields in combat. Optional rules provided in this work to scale specific weapon type damage to a monster's size. See **APPENDIX: SCALED WEAPON DAMAGE**, p. 28, for these rules.

1d20	Result
1-3	Axe, battle
4	Axe, great*
5-6	Axe, hand
7-11	Club
12	Flail, footman's
13	Mace, footman's
14-17	Morning star
18-20	Spear

* Treat as a halberd.

Most of the adult hill giants possess some sort of personal treasure. Juveniles and young never have any. Roll 1d12 on the table below to determine the type and amount each individual carries on their person, typically in a large sack:

1d12	Result
1-4	None
5-6	1d6 x 100 sp, 1d3 x 100 ep
7-9	1d4 x 100 gp
10	1d4 x 100 gp, 1d4 x 100 ep
11	1d4 x 100 gp, 1d4 base 10 gp gems
12	1d4 x 100 gp, 1d3 pieces of 50 gp jewelry

Adult ogres typically carry 2d12 gp each on their persons, while each mogruan has 5d12 gp each. In addition to coinage, there is a 20% chance that each individual mogruan also carries 1d6 base 10 gp gems.

If an alarm has yet to be raised by the giants and their allies, these dim-witted monsters might mistake the PCs for guests or visitors. That the chief is currently hosting guests in AREA 28 (q.v.) lends credence to this assumption. Giants have a 30% chance to misidentify the party as such, while the ogres, mogruans, or trolls have a 50% chance to do so. Reduce chances by 20% if dwarves are present in the party. Monsters that believe the PCs are guests refrain from attacking them. However, they still might bully, harass, or intimidate the party for food, treasure, and/or fun. This ruse no longer succeeds once the giants are aware of intruders in their home.

Troglodytes: The troglodyte clan that resides in the caverns serve as vassals to the hill giants. They provide military assistance by fighting the enemies of the giants when needed. They also perform menial tasks for their masters, and pay them tributes of food and treasure. However, resentment has grown amongst the troglodytes due to the unequal conditions of their servitude. In battles, they bear the brunt of attacks, suffering great losses. Furthermore, they must surrender 70% of any treasure and food they find to the hill giants. Enterprising characters could exploit this resentment by recruiting the troglodytes to help battle the giants. Characters have a 3% chance per point of Charisma to successfully persuade a group of troglodytes to join with them. Subtract 2% for each troglodyte the party has slain. Add 1% for each 100 gold pieces worth of tribute given to the humanoids to a maximum of 10%. If the party convinces Yuruz, the troglodyte chieftain (see AREA 3), to switch sides, he brings 50% to 80% (1d4+4 x 10%) of the tribe with him. If the chieftain is not involved in the negotiations, a single group of no more than 2d4 troglodytes at a time will defect.

Roll on the table below to determine the weapon type carried by a troglodyte warrior:

1d20	Result
1-6	No weapon carried
7-8	Axe, battle (stone)†
9-10	Club
11-15	Javelin-darts* (2)
16-17	Morning star (stone)†
18-19	Spear (stone)†
20	Sword**

† **Optional Rule:** Stone weapons are less durable than those fashioned from metal. As such, they shatter whenever a *natural* "1" is rolled on a d20 during melee. Broken weapons are useless for any further attacks.

* These weapons inflict 2d4 damage. Troglodytes gain a +3 'to hit' when throwing them.

** Roll 1d6 to determine the type of sword used: 1) bastard; 2-3) broad; 4-5) long; 6) two-handed.



Returning to the Caverns: If the party assaults the complex and then withdraws, the giants set an ambush in AREA 1. A great 20' x 30' weighted net is strung from the ceiling in the tunnel just east of this area; this net is stored in AREA 33. A mixed group consisting of 1d8+8 hill giants, ogres, mogruans, and/or troglodytes waits on the hidden shelf ("A"), in the side cave ("B"), and in the main passageway to the west of this area. The GM should determine the exact composition of the group based on the number of these monsters still living. The party has a base 25% chance plus 5% per individual present to spot the net. If not discovered, it is dropped on them as they walk under it. Each PC must save vs. Breath Weapon, or become pinned under the net. Trapped characters can extricate themselves, or other PCs, by cutting their way out. A total of 12 points of damage to the net with a small-sized slashing weapon, such as a dagger, will free a single PC. The ambush party attacks once the trap is sprung, starting with hurling boulders. Attacks on pinned PCs are +4 'to hit'. They also lose any Armor Class bonuses from Dexterity and cannot employ shields. Spells with somatic components fail 100% of the time. If possible, the giants attempt to capture the party members. Any PC who surrenders or is seized are stripped of their gear and taken to the stockade pen in AREA 33. Additional ambushes elsewhere in the caves as devised by the GM are encouraged. Incautious players who think they can just stroll back in after wreaking havoc are in for a rude awakening!

Physical Properties of the Caverns: The system of caves that makes up Azek-Vhool is formed from limestone. As such, flowstones, cave curtains, stalactites, and stalagmites are common in most areas. Loose boulders and scree often cover the floors. Fifty percent (50%) of individual caves have uneven floors. This makes hasty movement in these areas difficult, reducing a PC's Move Rate by one-third (33%) for safe movement. Ceiling height in passages ranges from 11' to 16' (1d6+10). Caves have ceiling heights from 12' to 22' high (2d6+10), with some larger caves having ceilings up to 25' or higher.

Entrance: A well-worn track runs up a rocky slope to the cave opening that serves as the entrance to the caverns. A vertical cliff face rises 60' above it. Thick brush and a few large shrubs flank the 30' high, 20' wide opening. The passage inside leads 50' to AREA 1. Tracks of giants, humanoids, and other monsters leading into and out of the entrance are plentiful.

DUNGEON LEVEL I — THE UPPER CAVERNS

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

A variety of monsters roam the upper cavern complex. They typically fall into one of two categories: vermin/scavengers (i.e., slimes, giant rats, giant beetles, etc.), or giants and their minions (i.e., ogres, mogruans, troglodytes, and trolls). The former category has a nearly unlimited number of each type the party can encounter. The latter category possesses a finite number of individuals that can appear randomly. No exact number of these monsters has been given in this text. However, as the party clears out areas, those types of monsters become less common with fewer numbers encountered. For instance, if the party has depopulated all or most of the troglodytes in the numbered areas, the GM can reduce their numbers by 50%, or choose to ignore that encounter altogether. Use your best judgment to determine if an encounter makes sense for the situation.

Check for random encounters once every three turns; encounters occur on a roll of a 1 on a d6. If the die indicates an encounter, roll a d20 and consult the table below to determine the type of creature and the number appearing.

1d20	Encounter	# Appearing
1-2	Troglodyte	2d4
3-4	Ogre/mogruan	1d6
5-6	Giant rat	4d4
7-8	Giant bat	2d4
9-10	Hill giant	1d3
11-12	Giant lizard	1d3
13	Giant boring beetle	1d3
14-15	Green slime	1d4
16	Troll	1d2
17-18	Stirge	1d6+1
19	Leucrotta	1d2
20	Boggart	1

1-2. TROGLODYTE

There is a 70% chance this is a group of males either transiting to a numbered area, patrolling the complex, or returning from a hunting expedition outside the complex. If the encounter consists of females (30% chance), they are either transiting to a numbered area, or heading out to gather food elsewhere in the caves.

Troglodyte: AC 5; MV 12"; HD 2 (females: 1 + 1); hp 10 each (females: 5 each); #AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1d3/1d3 claws, 1d4+1 bite, or by weapon type; SA **revulsion odor** (humans & demi-humans must save vs. Poison or lose 1 point of STR per rd. for 1d6 rds., lasts 10 rds.); SD surprise on 1-4 on a d6 when camouflaged; INT low (5-7); AL CE; Size M; xp 56 each (females: 38 each); THACO 16 (females: 18); MM 97.

3-4. OGRE/MOGRUAN

Of the 1d6 ogres encountered, there is a 50% chance that 1d2 of their number are actually mogruans. These monsters are most likely scavenging for food or looking for trouble to relieve their boredom. Sixty percent (60%) of these monsters are male, and 40% are female. See "**Giants & Their Allies**", p. 3, to determine any personal treasure they might carry.

Ogre: AC 5; MV 9"; HD 4 + 1; hp 20 each (females: 16 hp each); #AT 1; Dmg 1d10 or by weapon type +2 (females: 2d4); INT low (5-7); AL CE; Size L (9' + tall); xp 190 each (females: 170 each); THACO 15; MM 75.

Mogruan: AC 4; MV 12"; HD 6 + 3; hp 30 each; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6 or by weapon type +6; SA hurl rocks for 2d6 damage (**range:** S=5"/M=10"/L=15", min. 1"); INT low to average (5-8); AL CE; Size L (10' + tall); xp 590; THACO 13; New Monster.

5-6. GIANT RAT

An unlimited number of these large vermin roam the cave system looking for food. With the exception of fire, few things can frighten them away.

Giant rat: AC 7; MV 12"/6"; HD 1/2; hp 3 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d3 bite; SA bite inflicts disease (5% chance); INT semi- (2-4); AL N(E); Size S; xp 10 each; THACO 20; MM 81.

7-8. GIANT BAT

There is only a 30% chance that these bats will attack the party. Typically, they will make several close flybys to determine if the PCs are suitable as food before leaving. However, they defend themselves if attacked.

Giant bat: AC 8; MV 3"/18" (MC: C); HD 1; hp 5 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 bite; SD -3 'to hit' with missile weapons; INT non- (0); AL N; Size S (5'-6' wingspan); xp 15 each; THACO 19; FF 14.