

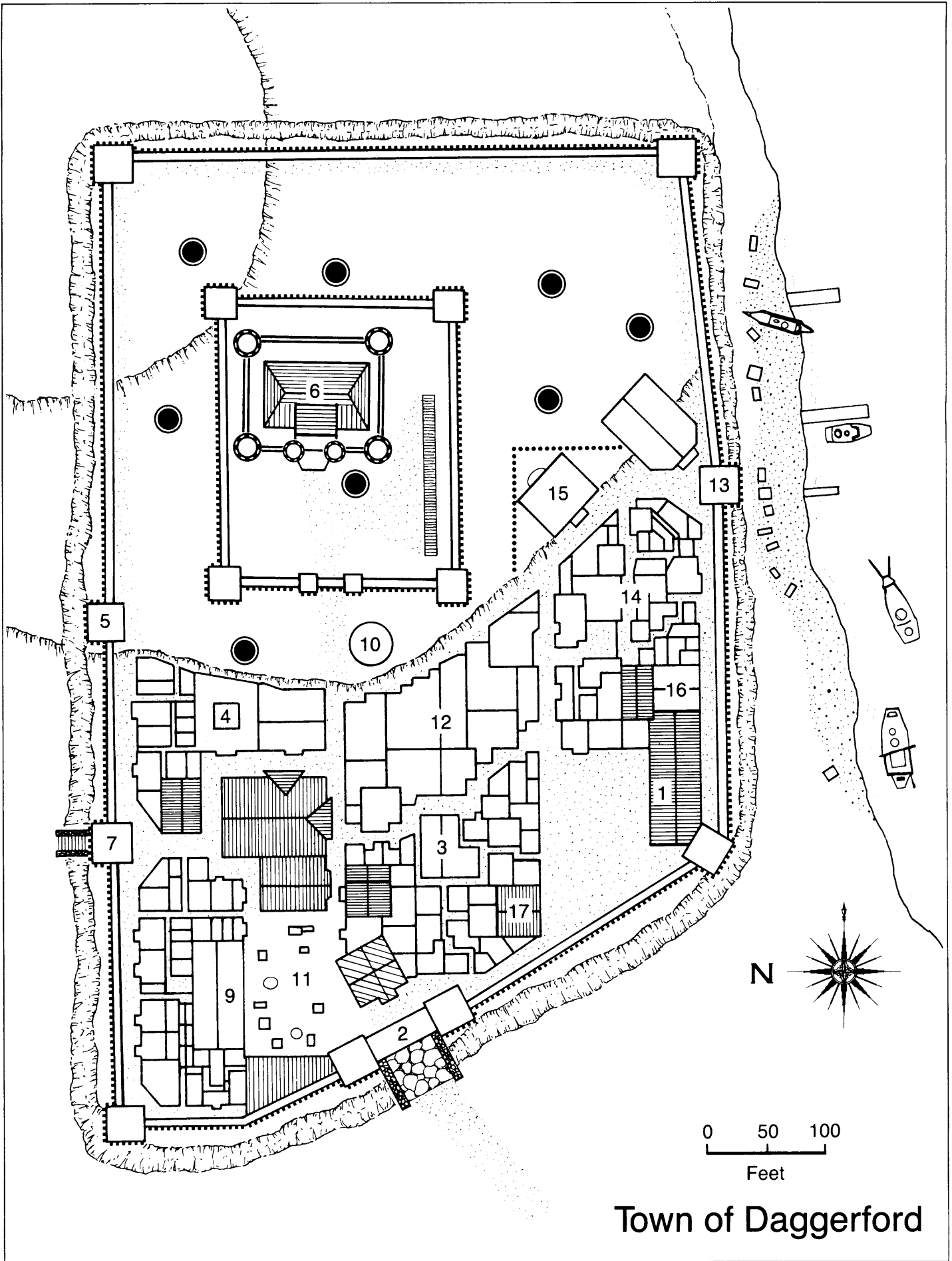
FORGOTTEN REALMS[®]

Official Game Adventure

Hordes of
Dragonspear

by William W. Connors





Town of Daggerford



HORDES OF DRAGONSPEAR

An Adventure for Characters of Levels 10-12

Table of Contents

Introduction	2	The Druid's Council	18
Plot Synopsis	2	The Roaring Deep	20
The Hordes	4	Under the Castle	22
BATTLESYSTEM™ Statistics	5	Labyrinth Map	23
The Allies	6	Return to the Inn	24
BATTLESYSTEM Statistics	7	Against the Hordes	26
The Town of Daggerford	8	BATTLESYSTEM game map	27
Places of Interest	8	Aftermath	28
The Army of Daggerford	10	Appendix: Monstrous Compendium	29
Council of War	12	Baatezu, General	29
Battle at the Way Inn	14	Baatezu, Greater—Cornugon	30
BATTLESYSTEM game map	15	Baatezu, Greater—Pit Fiend	31
Into the Misty Forest	16	Baatezu, Lesser—Barbazú	32

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INTRODUCTION

Mark my words, there is something dark there. Some evil force grows at the heart of that ruin. For now, it is content to dwell in the darkness for it fears the light of day. Soon, however, it will grow so powerful that not even the shadows can contain it.

*Dauravyn Redbeard
Keeper of The Way Inn*

All who live within several hundred miles have heard the name of Dragonspear Castle and know its import. Once home to the proud and brave, the castle is now a ruin cloaked behind a history of murder and diabolic plots. Few go there, for the only reward to be garnered is death.

Actually the problem is not Dragonspear itself. The old ruined castle, though rumored to have a portal to the sinister planes, is only a symbol for the evils that surge out of the wastes of the High Moor. Once, not too many years ago, the orcs and trolls of the High Moor ruled from that broken keep, rampaging throughout the area, cutting the Trade Way, and threatening the good people from Daggerford to Boarskyr Bridge.

The armies of Waterdeep and Baldur's Gate ended the reign of terror when they laid siege to the moldering fortress. By the time Piergeiron Paladinson's soldiers and Khelben Blackstaff's magic had shattered the castle gate and annihilated the occupants, the might of Dragonspear was broken. A temple was established to ward against further evil rising from the castle's cellars, where the gate to the planes was rumored to exist.

So things went for many years. By the Time of Troubles, the temple and its clergy had long since disappeared. Perhaps the priests had grown lax in their task or perhaps something darker happened—it seems of no consequence to this day for no further reports of evil have come from Dragonspear.

Still, one never knows.

Plot Synopsis

This adventure begins with the heroes at Daggerford when word comes of a great force of goblins and kobolds moving out of the Misty Forest. The local militia is setting out at once to counter this new threat to the Trade Way. When the militia's leader is injured, the PCs are called on to take charge of these green troops.

With the heroes in charge, the Army of Daggerford heads south. They come across the humanoids at the Way Inn. Here, they join with a group of mercenaries, battle the Marauders, and, with a little luck, defeat them. Much to their horror, they discover a cornugon (Vrag) at the head of the horde.

Leaving the massed forces behind in the care of their new leader, the PCs enter the Misty Forest. Here, they come across a wild elf living like a beast in the wilderness. He is quite insane. The heroes cure him and learn several things. First, they learn that his tribe was destroyed by an army of humanoids that came down from the High Moors. (He was the leader of his tribe and was taken prisoner. In chains, he was brought to Dragonspear Castle.) Second, they learn that the leader of the entire horde is a pit fiend who has based his troops in that same castle. Lastly, they learn that the dragon who serves this fiend is doing so under duress; one of the cornugons that heads the enemy has a magical hold over the reptile. If that hold were broken, the dragon would certainly abandon the cause that he currently fights for or even turn upon his "master."

With the aid of a druid who lives nearby, the heroes learn that the dragon must obey the cornugon Vesarius because of the enchanted spear that the latter crafted from the former's horn. The druid informs the heroes that the destruction of the spear will free the dragon from its mental servitude. The spear can be destroyed only by the acidic spittle of the



dragon itself. The spear is hidden at the heart of Dragonspear Castle, however, so recovering it will not be easy.

The elf points out that the route he used to escape the castle might allow the heroes access to it. He refuses to return there himself, but offers to start the PCs on their way and then go and spread word of the menace that looms. He will have all of the allies await word of the heroes' fate at the Way Inn. He warns them to be quick, though, for men have not the patience of elves and will long to move quickly against the enemy.

The elf leads the PCs to a narrow cavern that goes down into darkness. The PCs enter and find that it provides access to an underground river. This river flows southward but turns east briefly and passes directly under the castle. The elf is certain that the hordes don't know of its existence or his escape would not have been possible.

The PCs head down the river and soon reach the castle. They make their way into the catacombs beneath the main tower, fight some bad guys, and recover the spear. They escape via the river and return to the Way Inn.

Here they find that the dragon has attacked and destroyed the Inn. The army has moved south, hoping to strike a fatal blow to the enemy before the dragon returns to finish them. The heroes must hurry if they are to rejoin the allied army and save it from destruction by the Hordes of Dragonspear.

The heroes arrive as the big battle is in progress. The dragon is clearly a foe too powerful to be countered by the massed forces opposing the hordes. Things look dark indeed. The heroes join the battle and bring the spear into a position where the dragon can see it. With a roar, the beast dives at the weapon and lets loose a stream of acid at it. The spear is destroyed, and the dragon is freed of its influence.

The dragon, now able to do as it will, turns on its former master. The day is won and the heroes are . . . well, heroes.

DUNGEON MASTER'S NOTES

Hordes of Dragonspear is a high-level adventure. It assumes that the heroes are generally of 10th- to 12th-level and five or six in number. If this is not the case, the DM will want to alter some of the encounters in this book to make it more appropriate.

At several points in this adventure, the stage is set for a grand battle. For readers who play the BATTLESYSTEM™ miniatures rules, complete game information is provided on the opposing forces. For those without the time or interest to resolve the battles in this manner, information is provided that allows the battles to be resolved with the mass combat system presented in DMGR2: The Castle Guide. Lastly, for people who don't want to resolve the battles at all, a brief synopsis of the probable outcome of the battle is provided.

The next few pages of this text detail the armies that have been gathered around Dragonspear Castle. First the hordes themselves are presented, and then the various forces allied against them.





The Hordes

Despite their chaotic name, the Hordes of Dragonspear have a fairly stable military structure. This is the direct result of the pit fiend Baazka who commands them. While the humanoid that he has brought together would, on their own, dissolve into a quarreling, bickering mass, the fear that they have of Baazka and his three cornugon lieutenants is enough to keep the Hordes in line.

This humanoid horde is composed of three distinct armies, each of which is commanded by a cornugon. Among these lieutenants there is a great deal of political rivalry and competition. As a rule, Baazka sends each of the units out on its own to accomplish a specific mission. Thus, the entire horde is seldom encountered at once.

The Marauders

Despite their ominous sounding name, the Marauders are the least of Baazka's units. It is commanded by Vrag, a cornugon who is far from happy with this assignment. He recognizes that his force is looked down upon by all the others. In an effort to prove himself to Baazka, Vrag often commits the Marauders to dangerous and glorious assaults. So far, he has been lucky. The Marauders have actually proven themselves to be a competent military unit. How much of this is skill, talent, or savagery and how much is fear of their leader is open to speculation.

The Marauders are composed of two forces. The first is an assembly of some 500 kobolds. Fighting under the banner of a particularly cruel and evil chieftain named Wolg, these troops are the lowest in the horde's hierarchy. If there is a suicidal or distasteful assignment to be taken, it's almost sure to fall to the kobolds.

The other element of the Marauders is a band of 500 goblins under the command of Pruj. A chieftain of great renown among the goblin folk, Pruj is unusually

brave for a member of this cowardly race. It is quite possible that he is mentally unstable and subject to delusions of grandeur.

The Blood Guard

The next unit in Baazka's army is the dangerous Blood Guard. This force is composed of 300 orcs and 200 hobgoblins. Although they are not nearly as numerous as the Marauders, the Blood Guard is the main force of the horde. Whenever there is an assault to be made or a village to be raided, it's a good bet that the Blood Guard will get the assignment. The commander of this force, the cornugon Vooka, is perhaps the most intelligent of Baazka's lieutenants. While he desires to impress Baazka as much as either of the other cornugons, he is determined to do it through his cunning and intelligence. He is a master of military strategy and has Baazka's ear on all matters of the campaign.

The orcs are under the command of Dahrgash. There is a great deal of infighting and bickering among the orcs, more than in any other unit. Still, Dahrgash is brutal and fierce enough to keep the orcs in line.

The hobgoblins have taken to the military life quite quickly. They are by far the most professional of Baazka's force. There is an unusual amount of cooperation within the hobgoblin ranks, due primarily to the loyalty which Skarr, their chieftain, commands.

The Storm

The final element of Baazka's army is the most dangerous. Known as the Storm, it is composed of 100 ogres, 100 bugbears, and the dreaded Maelestor Rex—an ancient black dragon. The Storm's commander, Vesarius, is a brutal, militaristic beast. He demands strict obedience from



those in his command and is a harsh taskmaster. He looks upon both Vooka and Vrag as worthless inferiors. His contempt blinds him to the former's keen mind and the latter's shrewd courage.

The Storm's ogres are commanded by Oorok. While he is not the smartest or bravest of the ogres, he is the biggest and the meanest. In ogre society, that makes him the boss. He is brutal and cruel, something Vesarius finds admirable.

The bugbears are under the hand of the particularly cunning and evil Ghorashk. He attained his present position of power by the assassination of the two bugbears above him when the army was formed. Ghorashk makes no secret of the fact that he is more than willing to use underhanded tactics in both mass combat and individual melees.

The last element of the Storm is by far the most terrible. Maelestor Rex, a 1,250 year-old black dragon, acts under the direct orders of Vesarius. He is contemptuous of all the other elements of the horde and serves in it only under duress.

Centuries ago, Maelestor Rex struck a bargain with the fiendish Vesarius. In exchange for one of his horns, Vesarius gave the dragon knowledge of several unique magical spells. Vesarius took the horn and fashioned it into a great, barbed spear. By means of a powerful incantation that he wove while creating the weapon, Vesarius has forced the dragon to obey him. If the spear were destroyed or lost, it is certain that Maelestor Rex would turn in vengeance upon the Hordes of Dragonspear and its diabolical commanders.

Unit	#	AD	AR	Hits	ML	MV	Range	Remarks
Wolg's Kobolds	500	4	8	½	9	6	na	a b
Pruj's Goblins	500	6	8	1	11	6	na	a b c d
Dahrgash's Orcs	300	6	8	1	11	9	na	a c d e
Skarr's Hobgoblins	200	8/6	7	1	11	9	7/14/21	e f
Ghorashk's Bugbears	100	8	7	2	12	9	na	h i
Oorok's Ogres	100	10	7	2	12	9	na	d e g h

a. -1 bonus to enemy AR in daylight	f. Equipped with bows
b. Hate gnomes	g. Hate halfings
c. -1 penalty to Morale in daylight	h. Irregular only
d. Hate dwarves	i. Chaotic
e. Hate elves	

Individuals	AD	AR	Hits	CD	MV	Range	Remarks
Wolg	4	8	1	9	6	na	None
Pruj	6	8	1	11	6	na	None
Dahrgash	6	8	1	11	9	na	None
Skarr	8/6	7	1	11	9	7/14/21	None
Ghorashk	8	7	2	12	9	na	None
Oorok	10	7	2	12	9	na	None
Vrag	See Inside Back Cover						
Vooka	See Inside Back Cover						
Vesarius	See Inside Back Cover						
Baazka	See Inside Back Cover						
Maelstor Rex	See Inside Back Cover						



The Allies of Daggerford

Allied against the Hordes of Dragonspear is a rough confederation of troops, some of them more capable than others. It may be that some of the units listed below will be unavailable to the player characters, depending upon the course of the role-playing portions of this adventure.

The Army of Daggerford

While the dedication and devotion of these troops are not to be doubted, their value as anything other than fodder is subject to debate. The army has been formed from the militia, watch, and farmers of Daggerford and its environs. While they are not well-trained or well-equipped, they are fighting in defense of their homes and are highly motivated.

The majority of this force is a unit of 300 peasants. For the most part, these are simple folk who have banded together to fight the enemy with whatever weapons they might have at hand.

The second of the army's three elements is composed of 200 former members of various armed forces. Because the people in this unit have all had some actual military experience, it seems probable that they will fare better than the larger force of peasant rabble. Still, few of these individuals have seen actual combat.

The final element of the army is a group of 100 young men and women who have not only received military training, but actually served in combat. While their combined experience might not be great, it is enough to qualify them as *light infantry*.

Unless the player characters come forward to command the Army of Daggerford, they will be led by the capable, but not outstanding, Dauravyn Redbeard. This former adventurer and current keeper of the Way Inn will be primarily concerned with keeping these simple folk from being slaughtered in battle.

3rd Company, High Guards of Waterdeep

This is a unit of 100 regular military men (*medium infantry*) who happened to be patrolling the regions south of Waterdeep when the call for aid went forth. They are a solid unit, with combat experience and decent equipment. The 3rd Company ought to be able to hold its own in any battle with the Hordes of Dragonspear.

The commander of this unit is Frey Silverblade. While she is a clever and cunning warrior, she will follow the lead of a player character who seems more experienced in the art of war.

Uhmbriek's Ranger

This band of 50 mounted mercenaries is swept up into the conflict when they are attacked at the Way Inn. Although they will attempt to find someone to pay them for fighting the Hordes, they're determined to have revenge for the men they lost at the Way Inn and will carry on without pay. The rangers are classed as *medium cavalry*.

Uhmbriek's troops are loyal to him, but will also follow another with his blessing. If a suitable player character is in the group of heroes, Uhmbriek can be killed or wounded and the PC can take his place.

Knights of Ilmater

These 50 men are paladins who ride together under the grey and red banner of the god Ilmater. The Knights are a truly deadly force, being classed as *ultra-heavy cavalry*. The Knights believe that it is their place to travel from battle to battle, surviving without the comforts of home or the security of a steady base of operations. They are always on the watch for a worthy cause to adopt.

The leader of these brave warriors is almost maniacal-Korr of Ilmater. He is brave, reckless, and (some say) suicidal.



Misty Forest Elves

When word of the peril reached the elves of the Misty Forest and Laughing Hollow, they decided that their race must play some part in the coming clash. Thus, 100 of their number have left their secluded homelands to join the alliance against Dragonspear. This force is grouped into two units, each made up of 50 elves. The first group is simply elven infantry, very capable but not greatly noteworthy. The second element, however, is a team of 50 elvish longbowmen.

The leader of the elves is Sylyndyrryl Moonspinner a lovely young woman who is so slender that she looks almost frail; she is far from it. She might allow a PC command of one element of her troops, but only if that hero were an elf.

Dwarves of Illefarn

When the race of dwarves recently began to reclaim the ruins of Illefarn, they vowed never to be driven from those halls again. Thus, when the danger of Dragonspear presented itself, they were quick to take up arms and join the allied forces. Like the elves, the dwarvish forces are composed of two units of 50 troops each. One group is a band of stern dwarven infantry, a force not to be taken lightly. The other is a team of 50 dwarven crossbowmen, a valuable addition to the allied forces.

The dwarves are led by Cyrag Hammerbone, a tough and determined veteran who has faced the beasts of the High Moors before and seems more than willing to battle them again. Like Moonspinner, he might trust a PC with the command of one unit, but only if that hero were a dwarf.

Unit	#	AD	AR	Hits	ML	MV	Range	Remarks
Misty Forest Elves	50	8	7	1	13	12	na	f g
Elvish Longbowmen	50	6/8	7	1	13	12	7/14/21	f g
Dwarves of Illefarn	50	6	7	1	12	6	na	a b c d e
Dwarvish Crossbowmen	50	6	8	1	13	6	6/12/18	a b c d e
Daggerford Peasants	300	4	9	1	7	12	na	h
Daggerford Militia	200	6	9	1	10	12	na	h
Daggerford Infantry	100	6	8	1	11	12	na	
3rd Company	100	6	7	1	11	12	na	
Uhmbriek's Rangers	50	8	7	2	12	18	na	
Knights of Ilmater	50	12/8	5	4	15	12	na	

a. Favor rough or rocky ground	e. -2 AR vs. giants, ogres, & trolls
b. Hate goblins	f. Favor woods
c. Hate orcs	g. Chaotic
d. Hate hobgoblins	h. Irregular only

Individuals	AD	AR	Hits	CD	MV	Remarks
Dauravyn Redbeard	10	4	2	8	9	
Sylyndyrryl Moonspinner	8/8	5	2	16	12	
Cyrag Hammerbone	10/6	5	2	12	9	
Frey Silverblade	8	6	2	8	9	
Uhmbriek of Cormyr	8/8	5	4	16	12	
Korr of Ilmater	12	3	8	16	12	



The Town of Daggerford

The town of Daggerford is located on the northern banks of the Delimbiyr (or *shining river*). It is connected with Waterdeep some 80 miles to the north by means of the High Road. South of the village, on the opposite bank of the river, the Trade Way runs south past the famous Way Inn and the dreaded Dragonspear Castle, connecting at last with the cities of Baldur's Gate, Elturel, and Scornubel on the banks of the river Chionthar.

Daggerford is a walled city with three major geographical divisions. The first area is the town itself, which fills the western half of the walls. The second region is somewhat higher than the town and is known as The Commons. This is a large pasture intended primarily for the grazing of animals during times of trouble. The third area, located at the center of The Commons, is the castle of the Duke of Daggerford. Much of the castle has been recently rebuilt by a family of dwarves, making it somewhat more majestic and splendid than might be expected of a town the size of Daggerford.

The People of Daggerford

The population of Daggerford itself is just over 300 persons. However, a number of scattered hamlets in the surrounding countryside fall under the rule of Daggerford's government. The true population of the city is approximately 1,000 people, the vast majority being human; a small percentage are also halfling. Dwarves, elves, and other demihuman races make up only a minute fraction of this total.

When a crisis is at hand, the town has two elements for defending itself. The first is the local militia. Because of the occasional menace from the Lizard Marshes to the west and the High Moors to the east, this militia is fairly large and reasonably well-trained. Still, this group is only the second line of defense. The main force

that can be directed at an enemy is the 3rd Company, High Guards of Waterdeep. This band of 100 skilled warriors is stationed in Daggerford, but spends most of its time abroad, patrolling the countryside. The 3rd Company is theoretically under the command of the Duke of Daggerford, but owes fealty to the Lords of Waterdeep itself (a fact known by all).

The town of Daggerford is ruled by a Council of Guilds, much as the City of Waterdeep is. This council holds a charter from the Duke of Daggerford (Pwyll Greatshout) and is fairly free to do as it pleases, although the duke has a fair bit of influence over their actions and decisions.

People & Places of Interest

There are several areas that might be important to the adventurers during their time in Daggerford. This listing is an abbreviated version of the one presented in adventure *N5: Under Illefarn*. The companion map to this key is printed on the inside of the front cover.

- 1. Barracks:** This large structure houses the militia (and the 3rd company when they are in town). It overlooks a large drill field.
- 2. Caravan Gate:** This is the largest of the city's three gates. It is normally kept closed, except when a merchant caravan or company of entertainers is parked outside.
- 3. Caravan Quarter:** This place serves as a station for travelling merchants and traders who want to set up shop for a time in Daggerford.
- 4. Temple of Chauntea:** This shrine to the Great Mother is of great importance to all the farmers and ranchers of the Daggerford area. The keeper of the temple is



Maerovyna, an 8th-level priest (also a *priest* in BATTLESYSTEM™ game terms).

5. Delfen's Tower: Delfen is a wizard who came to Daggerford several years ago. In exchange for a promise to aid the city in times of crisis (and a large "donation" to the treasury), he was given this tower as a home. Delfen is an 8th-level wizard (a *minor wizard* in BATTLESYSTEM game terms) who has grown to love his adopted city and will join the militia in its defense.

6. The Castle: This is the home of the Duke of Daggerford and his family. It is of fine construction and quite splendid to look upon.

Duke Greatshout, a 5th-level warrior, is a retired adventurer, as is his sister Bronwyn, a 5th-level wizard. The duke qualifies as a *knight hero* in BATTLESYSTEM game terms and Bronwyn is a *minor wizard*. Both will act to defend the city if it falls under attack, but feel compelled to remain behind and protect it when the militia and 3rd company ride forth. Another hero, Lord Llewellyn Long-Hand, serves as the head of the military and will march with it when it leaves town. Llewellyn is an 8th-level warrior (*knight hero*) who is interested in proving himself as he has eyes on the Duke's charter himself.

7. Farmers' Gate: This is the most commonly used of the city's three gates. It is left open, unless there is some menace about.

8. Farmers' Quarter: This region of the city is inhabited by the farmers who work the fields north of town. It is a crowded place, full of people and animals.

9. Guildmasters' Hall: This large building is the center of the town's government and houses the headquarters of each of the city's numerous guilds.

10. Temple of Lathlander: This is the largest religious center in the town and is directly supported by the Duke and his family. The head of the temple is Liam Sunmist, a 9th-level priest (a *priest* in BATTLESYSTEM game terms).

11. The Marketplace: This is an open air market that is filled with small shops of all kinds.

12. The Money Quarter: This is the wealthy part of Daggerford. All of the homes here are of excellent quality and well-maintained.

13. The River Gate: This is the 3rd of the city's three gates and provides access to the Delimbiyr and waterfront district. It is normally open during the day and closed at night.

14. Rivermen's Quarter: This area of town is dominated by those people who make their living from the Delimbiyr-fisherman, dock workers, rivermen, and the like.

15. Stables: This is the livery area for the town. The civilian populace, militia, and 3rd Company all stable their horses here.

16. Shrine of Tempus: This is a small temple dedicated to the worship of the Lord of Battles. It is tended to by Baergon Bluesword, a 5th-level fighter-priest. In BATTLESYSTEM game terms, he is a *priest*.

17. Shrine of Tymora: Located just off of the drill field, this is a minor temple dedicated to the worship of Lady Luck. The keeper of the shrine is a 6th-level halfling priest named Bando the Lamé. Because he depends upon a crutch to get along, he has no place in a the battle against Dragonspear.



The Army of Daggerford

This adventure begins with the heroes arriving in Daggerford. The DM will need to arrange some reason for the party to travel near this town. The mission must be such that the players are able to cast it aside, either permanently or temporarily, to come to the aid of the people of Daggerford. Also, because this adventure revolves around a growing menace in the area around Dragonspear Castle, the PCs route of travel should not be such that it brings them through these contested regions.

No One Home

As the player characters draw close to the town of Daggerford, they will begin to pass through farm country. Here and there, they will come across small farm homes which have been abandoned and locked up. There are no signs of violence and no evidence as to why the farms may have been deserted.

In truth, these are the homes of able-bodied folk who have answered the call to arms and made their way to Daggerford. Fearing that there may be dark times ahead, they have taken their families with them to the protection of the walled city. There is no foul play afoot here, but the DM may want to present these encounters with an air of mystery to them.

Nearing Daggerford

Things become more hectic as the party approaches Daggerford. They will meet more refugees trying to escape from the region before the storm of war erupts across the countryside. The folks they pass will gladly talk to heroes who claim to be headed south to join in the defense of Daggerford and its environs. From these travellers, the PCs can learn something of what has been going on.

Recently, they will discover, goblins and kobolds have begun to mass along the Trade Way south of The Way Inn. All trade south of the city has been disrupted and

many caravans raided and destroyed. In response, Duke Greatshout, ruler of Daggerford, has issued a call for all able-bodied men and women to join with the militia and drive off these foul creatures before they pose a threat to Daggerford itself. The militia of Daggerford has already been reinforced by a company of infantry that patrols the area on behalf of the Lords of Waterdeep, but anyone who can swing a sword or cast a spell is needed in defense of the region.

Entering Daggerford

When the heroes arrive at Daggerford, they will find that the only way in is through the Farmers' Gate. A short line of people is moving slowly through the gate, identifying themselves to the guards as they enter the town. The heroes can join the line and make their way into the city, but they are asked to give their names as they pass through the gate. If they ask why, they'll be told that the village is officially under a state of siege and that the Duke and Council want a complete roster of everyone in town.

Even a brief conversation with the guards will reveal to the PCs that their aid is needed desperately. The Army of Daggerford is short of trained troops, and heroes of their caliber will certainly be a great boon to the city. While the guards are not in a position to offer any terms to the PCs, they can refer them to Lord Llewellyn Long-Hand, the head of the Army of Daggerford.

If the PCs are not interested in pursuing a conversation, the guards will report their entrance into the city and Long-hand will send for them. In any event the PCs will soon find themselves meeting with Llewellyn.

Lord Llewellyn Long-hand

The PCs will meet with Long-hand at his office in the Duke's castle. The lord's



chambers are austere, kept very tidy and with the air of a military man. Various decorative weapons hang on the walls, along with banners and heraldry from Llewellyn's family.

Their host begins by offering refreshments. As these are provided by a serving girl, he starts his recruitment speech. He begins with flowery praise, complimenting the heroes on their obviously great skills in combat, magic, and so forth. After several minutes of this and the exchange of great stories, he gets to the point.

He explains that the Army of Daggerford has been assembled and is a unit to be proud of. Although the troops may be of inferior quality, their morale is high and their loyalty absolute. Despite this, the enemy is likely to be fierce. It could well be that the nerve of his troops will break in combat, for they have never faced the horrors of a goblin charge be-

fore. What he needs are heroes to lead the militia into battle. Men and women who will inspire the troops to greatness.

In exchange for their help, he will see to it that each of them is given a share in whatever spoils the army might claim from the enemy. As he obviously has no clear idea of what these might be, he will make no definite promise of a set reward. Even if the battle goes poorly, the heroes are sure to be remembered and rewarded by the Duke of Daggerford, who is himself a former adventurer.

The DM should make it quite clear to the players that, without the help of their characters, the army has a good chance of being routed (at best) or crushed. If this isn't enough to persuade them to help (and it ought to be, they're supposed to be heroes), the DM is free to resort to whatever means he must in order to recruit them into the service of Daggerford.



Council of War

When the heroes have accepted the offer of employment, Lord Long-hand will review the troops with them. He will introduce them to each of the important NPCs mentioned in the description of Daggerford (pages 8 & 9).

Ambush

As they tour the town, the group is attacked. Their first indication that something is amiss comes when Long-hand clutches at his chest and topples over dead. When he hits the ground, the cause of death becomes clear—a black-shafted spear now protrudes from his back.

Whirling, the heroes will catch a glimpse of a dark figure on top of a building they have just passed. Because the sun is almost directly behind the assassin, they will see only the silhouette of a twisted and horrible humanoid. With a blood-chilling howl, the beast, and two just like it, spring down from the building and attack the PCs directly.

As soon as the creatures draw near, the PCs may recognize them as barbazu (one of the lesser baatezu that serve as the soldiers for the fiends that rule the Nine Hells). These barbazu have been sent to Daggerford by the cornugon Vrag (leader of the Marauders) to scout out the town and assassinate the leader of its military. The sight of Long-hand's blood, however, has driven them into a berserk battle frenzy, and they have no purpose now but to kill.

Barbazu (3): AC 3, MV 15, HD 6 + 6, hp 40, 37, 32; # AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1-2/1-2/1-8 or 2-12; SA Glaive, disease, battle frenzy, spells; SD +1 or better to hit; ML 12; AL LE; THAC0 15; (refer to MC8).

The barbazu will fight until they are slain. They will show no mercy and never need to check morale. They are filled with a wild bloodlust that nothing can break.

The Duke Responds

Once the battle with the barbazu is done, the heroes will have time to turn their attentions to the fallen Long-hand. Unfortunately, there is little that can be done for him. The weapon that struck him down was a specially prepared one. Arcane enchantments were woven upon it by Vrag to make it something of a bane weapon. When it struck down the Lord, it did great harm to his life force as well as his body. While Llewellyn can be saved, with prompt clerical attention, he will be comatose for some time. In short, he is out of action for the duration of this adventure.

Word of this tragedy will quickly reach the Duke. Recognizing the peril of this situation, he will send for the heroes. They will be contacted by a messenger and asked to travel to the Duke's castle at once. One assumes that they will not turn down this invitation. If they are foolish enough to do so, a more forceful method will be employed to bring them before the Duke.

They will meet with Greatshout in the Duke's private chambers. He begins by thanking them for their efforts on behalf of the town. Although he regrets that they were unable to prevent the attack that so grievously injured Llewellyn, he is pleased that they dealt with the fiends before they could wreak greater havoc.

Putting aside these preliminary matters, Greatshout will move on to the business at hand. His army is now leaderless. His duties and obligations prevent him from leading the force himself, and he is reluctant to send his sister in his place. He offers the heroes a commission and a chance to command the Army of Daggerford. He will offer almost anything to entice the heroes to aid him, for he recognizes the danger that his subjects now face. Still, the DM should keep in mind that this is not a very wealthy town and that it has spent a good deal of cash in getting ready for the upcoming battles.



Reviewing The Troops

Once the deal is done, Greatshout will turn the preparations for battle over to the heroes. At this point, they have command of the 300 Daggerford peasants who have volunteered for service, the 200 members of the Daggerford militia, and the 100 citizens with past military experience who make up the Daggerford infantry. In addition, the 100 members of the 3rd Company of Guards will travel with them and obey their orders. (The statistics for all these units can be found on page 7.)

If the players wish to, they may assign one of the characters to act as the leader for each unit. A new commander can be assigned to the 3rd Company, although its current commander, Frey Silverblade, will remain as an assistant.

Shortly after the players have made these decisions and become familiar with their units, the Duke calls for them again.

Call To Arms

The heroes will meet with the Duke in his private quarters. A winded and tattered looking messenger stands in the Duke's company. He is introduced as Geoffry, an apprentice to the keeper of the Way Inn to the south. The Duke bids him tell his story to the PCs.

The young man's story is short and alarming. Although he is quite shaken, having ridden at his fastest pace to reach town, he speaks fairly calmly and without wandering from the point. Early this morning, word came to his master that an army of goblins was moving north. Within a day, they would reach the Way Inn. He was dispatched immediately to seek help.

As soon as Geoffry finishes his tale, the Duke turns to his new commanders. "There is nothing else to say," he says, "you'll head south at once. Redbeard is a good friend. Don't fail him or this war may be over before it has begun."





BATTLE at The Way INN

Travelling to the Way Inn is hard work. Even though the Trade Way is a well-maintained road, the pace that the heroes must set for their troops is very demanding. Shortly before sunrise, they reach their destination. There is barely enough time to set up watches and give the troops a break before the alarm is sounded. The enemy has been sighted.

Into Combat

At this point in the adventure, those Dungeon Masters who plan to use the BATTLESYSTEM™ game rules to resolve large scale combats should set up the units for this fight. On the next page there is a map that shows the deployment areas for the troops of both Daggerford and Dragonspear.

The Army of Daggerford

The Army of Daggerford sets up first. All of the figures representing the forces of good must be set up in the marked area near the Way Inn. The players should have a little while to discuss defensive strategies before they deploy their units.

The Hordes of Dragonspear

The DM, who is assumed to be running the Hordes of Dragonspear, places the Marauders on the area shown in the diagram on page 15. The Marauders are being led by Vrag, who makes the most of his horrible presence to instill fear and terror in the hearts of the Daggerford troops and heroes.

The Way Inn

The Way Inn is assumed to have an outer wall composed of stone that is 5 feet high. The courtyard measures 180 feet wide and 120 feet deep. Within that region is a courtyard and, at the northern most end, the inn itself. The actual building is assumed to be a two-story stone structure that is some 30 feet high. The gate in the

outer wall is heavy and can take 20 points of damage. The door to the inn itself is far less stable; it will take only 10 points of damage before collapsing.

Victory

For the Army of Daggerford, this is an all or nothing fight. The enemy will show no quarter, for the cruel general Vrag will accept no surrender. He will be satisfied only with the complete and absolute destruction of the defenders.

Of course, this is a role-playing adventure and not a simple miniatures game. The heroes are meant to win this fight, perhaps even killing Vrag in the process. There are a number of steps that can be taken by the DM to ensure that the players emerge triumphant without appearing to throw the fight.

First, the players know that Redbeard has sent out calls for help. If the battle is going poorly, they can be informed that they hear horns sounding in the distance, no doubt indicating the arrival of goblin and kobold reinforcements. Imagine their surprise when, after a round or two to build tension, the DM places a unit of human infantry (the mercenaries) on the map. These mercenaries have benefited from Redbeard's advice and hospitality many times in the past, making them only too happy to come to his aid now.

A second method by which the players can win, even if the battle is going against them, is by slaying Vrag. If the fiend is destroyed, the DM is free to rule that all morale breaks in the goblin and kobold ranks, causing the whole of The Marauders to scatter in panicked retreat.

Alternate Resolutions

If the DM does not wish to use the BATTLESYSTEM game rules to resolve this battle, the quick resolution system described in *DMGR2: The Castle Guide* can easily take its place.

When this system is used, the attacking



and defending sides are reduced to point pools. The value of the Army of Daggerford is 300 points for the peasants, 600 points for the militia, and 400 points for the infantry. The 3rd Company is composed of medium infantry worth 500 points, bringing the Army's point total to 1,800. If they are reinforced by the rangers (50 medium cavalry), they gain an extra 2,000 points. The Marauders are worth 1,000 points for the kobolds and 1,500 points for the goblins, making them truly dangerous foes with a total strength of 2,500 points.

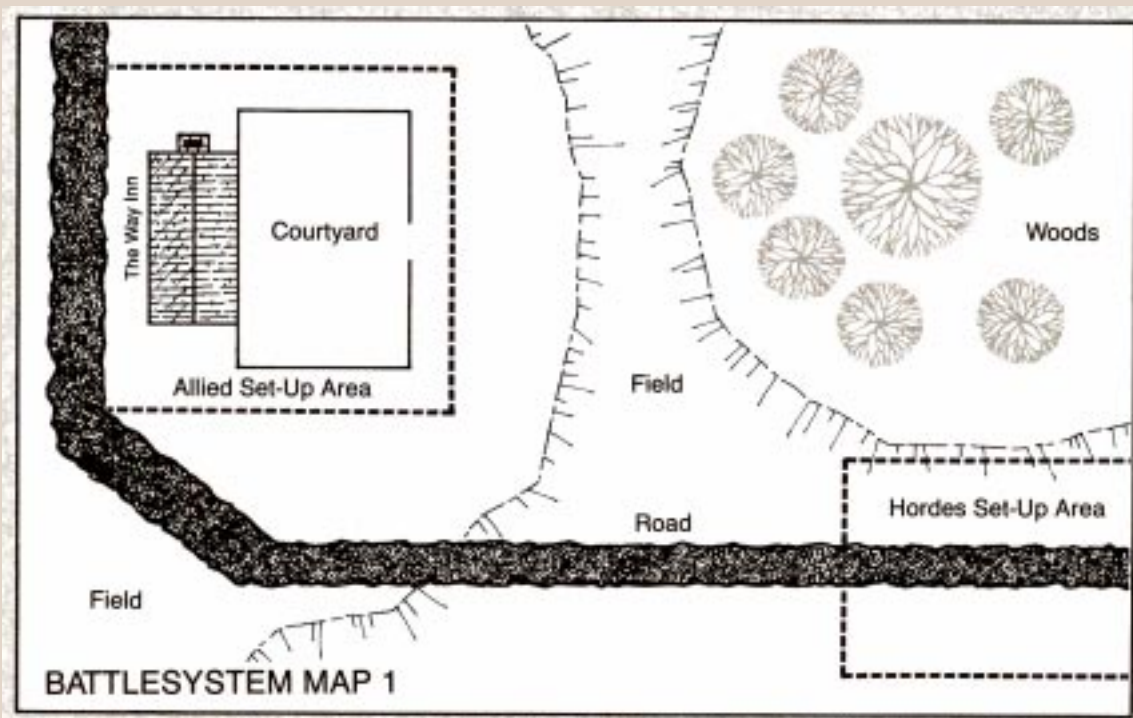
This battle should be resolved with the siege rules, with the Army of Daggerford being treated as the defenders. Thus, while the point totals for the defenders are far lower than the point totals for the attackers, their better position gives them a good chance of coming through this battle alive and triumphant.

If the DM and players do not wish to resolve the battle using either of the above methods, they should feel free to role-play

the crucial elements of the conflict. In fact, those who use the Castle Guide rules ought to consider doing this as well because of the added flavor it will give the battle.

As the battle rages on around the Way Inn, Vrag will recognize the nature of his enemies. He sees that the heroes are leading these pathetic villagers to a victory that they should not achieve. Thus, he vows to destroy them personally. By means of magic, he appears before one or two of the heroes and, after an appropriate "I'm so evil you don't have a chance" speech, he attacks. The resolution of this melee will set the mood for the battle in general.

The DM should feel free to allow Vrag to gate in some additional forces if things seem to be too easy for the heroes. Remember, Vrag is supposed to lose, but it's not supposed to be an easy victory for the Army of Daggerford. By the same token, if the heroes are unusually powerful or lucky, the DM may want to reinforce the Marauders.





Into The Misty Forest

Once the battle has been fought, the heroes will have time to discuss recent events with the locals in and around the Way Inn. At this point, they will have a chance to meet Redbeard and get to know him better. His amiable personality and store of both practical and entertaining knowledge makes him a fine companion.

At this time, Uhmbrick's Rangers will arrive, if they have not done so already. It will be clear by their attitudes that they are a mercenary unit, but that they are willing to join this battle out of indebtedness to their old friend Redbeard. Uhmbrick is less likable than the keeper of the Way Inn, tending to be silent and withdrawn. He is, however, a masterful strategist and will offer advice when asked for it.

Redbeard will be quick to offer his own opinion about the future. He feels certain that this was but the first wave of evil to come from the High Moors. It won't be long, he is certain, before an even greater and more dangerous army pours out of that vile swamp. Further, Redbeard will say that he has no information about what is going on in the High Moors, for it has been months since anyone that he knows of has gone to scout the area. Clearly he thinks that should be the next step. "In order to best our enemy," he says, "we'll have to know who that enemy is." Uhmbrick agrees.

The Scouting Party

Of course, the PCs are the heroes of this story and must, therefore, be the ones to undertake the exploration of the High Moors. Since Uhmbrick's men are cavalry, and not trained for this sort of thing, he refuses to send them. The 3rd Company has people who might be able to scout, but none as powerful as the heroes. In the end, the only logical choice is to send the PCs to undertake this investigation.

Redbeard will be glad to help, sketching out a rough map of the paths through the

Misty Forest and up into the High Moors beyond. He advises the heroes to be cautious in the woods, for there are many savage beasts and wild elves living there. The elves should prove no problem, as long as their forest is respected and their people unmolested. The animals and monsters, on the other hand, may be another matter altogether.

The TROLLS

The heroes come upon the edges of the Misty Forest fairly quickly after leaving the Way Inn behind. At first, the wood seems friendly enough, but it quickly begins to grow thicker and more wild. If the DM wishes to introduce a wilderness encounter with some wild beast, this is the time to do it.

The path which the PCs are taking will lead them into an area inhabited by Dorig, a foul, two-headed troll. Dorig has a few common trolls who follow him and recognize him as their leader. The exact number of followers is up to the DM, being based upon the relative strength of the party.

Dorig (1): AC 4; MV 12; HD 10; hp 65; #AT 4; Dmg 1d4 +4/1d4 +4/1d12/1d12; SA Nil; SD Regenerate; ML 16; AL CE; THAC0 11.

Trolls (?): AC 4; MV 12; HD 6 + 6; hp 40 ea; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4 + 4/1d6 + 6; SA Nil; SD Regenerate; ML 14; AL CE; THAC0 13.

Something in The Mists

After the trolls have been dealt with, the heroes can continue on their way. Before long, however, they will come to the distinct conclusion that something is tracking them. Every so often, they catch a glimpse of something in the mists of the forest around them. Here and there, they will hear sounds that seem just a bit out of place.

When the PCs have been alerted to the



presence of their unexpected companion, they will no doubt take steps to discover the nature of this stranger and confront it. That shouldn't be too difficult to do, for they are being tracked by a wild elf. Ordinarily, it would be almost impossible to detect the presence of such a creature in the woods where it makes its home, but this one is sick, hungry, and terrified. When the PCs attempt to encounter him, he will panic and howl in terror. If any sort of fight breaks out or he is forced to flee, his weakened condition will prove too much for him and he will collapse.

If the PCs don't attempt to capture or confront the elf, they will come across him by accident. The poor fellow, almost lost to madness, is making his way through the treetops above the party when a branch beneath him gives way. He falls heavily before them and then lies still, overcome by fatigue and the impact.

With a little effort (and some magic, no doubt) the PCs are able to revive the elf. Once he is fed, rested, and his wounds tended, he will be more himself. His name is Florfindyn and he was born and raised in these woods. Indeed, he'll be more than willing to tell the heroes his story.

Florfindyn's Tale

Several months ago, a horde of goblins and kobolds poured down into the forest from the High Moors. A great battle erupted, but the elves and druids of the woods drove the horrible creatures back. This seemed to end the matter, for no sign of the beasts was seen for many weeks. Then things got worse.

This time, the goblins and kobolds returned in the company of a force of ogres and bugbears. Again, the elves and druids made ready to combat their hated foes. The battle was joined, and it seemed as if the inhabitants of the forest would win, although the battle might indeed be a long and costly one. Then, a great darkness fell

across the woods. In horror, the elves looked up and saw the terrible shape of a dragon diving out of the sky at them. In seconds, their ranks were broken. The great beast spit jets of acid into the trees, annihilating the last bastions of elven resistance. Almost as soon as it had come, the dragon left, circling and heading away to the south. In its wake it left a victorious force of humanoids to hunt down and slaughter the survivors.

Florfindyn was captured. He was about to be killed when a creature more foul than any he had ever seen before stepped up. Although he did not know it at the time, this was the vile Vesarius himself. Recognizing the elf as a prince among his people, the cornugon ordered him spared. Beaten and wounded, Florfindyn was bound and carried off by an immense ogre.

The next thing that he knew, Florfindyn was in the dungeons of a twisted and evil castle. He knows now that this was Castle Dragonspear to the south. Here, he was brought before the pit fiend Baazka and questioned. He was tortured and beaten, but refused to betray the secrets of his kin in the Laughing Hollow, the dwarves of Illefarn, or the men of Daggerford. At last, the fiend ordered him destroyed.

Thinking him broken, the executioner let his guard down for a moment. Florfindyn escaped, fleeing into the catacombs beneath the castle. At long last, he came to an underground river. With a howling pack of horrible creatures behind him, he dove into the water and swam. Although his first instinct was to drift with the current, he knew that his enemies would expect that. Thus, he swam against the flow of the river. Before long, he was able to leave the water and travel along its banks.

In time, he found his way back to the surface and, indeed, at the edge of the Misty Forest. Since then, he has lived like a mindless beast in the wilds.



The Druid's Council

When Florfindyn finishes his story, he will collapse into unconsciousness. The ordeal that he has been through would have killed a lesser man, and the fact that he still draws breath is a tribute to his willpower and determination.

Just as this happens, when all attention is focused on the fallen elf, a soft female voice speaks from behind the party. "Perhaps I can be of service." Whirling about, the PCs will find themselves facing a druid. Like Florfindyn, she makes her home in these woods and has suffered greatly from the wrath of the dragon and hordes of humanoids. She has been watching the party, but has not known what to make of them until their encounter with the elf prince. Now, she is convinced of their good intentions.

The Druid's Account

The druid introduces herself as the "keeper of these woods." She claims no name for herself, having long ago given up all ties to the artificial things of mankind in favor of being one with the wilderness. All in all, she has very little interest in anything that has to do with the outside world. The violence of this attack upon her forest, however, has left her no choice but to aid the PCs. As it stands now, her careful nurturing can restore the poisoned and burned regions where the dragon struck. Another such attack, however, and she fears that the Misty Forest will become a ruined waste unfit for any living creature.

When the dragon attacked, she attempted to communicate with it. She recognized the beast as Maelestor Rex, a great and horrible wyrm that, so far as she knew, never travelled away from its lair in the center of the high moors. The keeper's magic revealed to her that the dragon was not attacking out of spite, greed, or any similar motivation (oddly enough). Indeed, Maelestor Rex seemed to have no interest in the battle at all and was acting under an outside influence. In fact, the

dragon seemed to hold a great animosity for the creatures that it was forced to aid.

Since the attack, she has devoted her time and magic to healing the forest and has had no time to delve further into the mystery. Thus, she has no idea as to the nature of the controlling spell or the entity that is exercising it.

Reigns of Darkness

At this point, most players will want to investigate the nature of this control. There are two means of doing so: traveling to the lair of the wyrm at the heart of the High Moors or using magic. Only the latter method is practical at this time, however, for the time required to reach the dragon's lair and the danger involved in the journey is prohibitive. Thus, magic is the only alternative.

This adventure assumes that the heroes will have access to spells like *contact other plane* and *divination*. Depending upon the way in which these spells are used, the exact information acquired may vary. In the end, however, they will be able to learn quite a few things. The Keeper will lend her magical talents to the effort, filling in any gaps or holes that the PCs might leave unexplored.

Maelestor Rex is an ancient and powerful black dragon. Indeed, he seems far more intelligent than most of his breed and has a great interest in magical spells and devices. Long ago, in an effort to learn more powerful wizardry, he sought out a means to contact the forces of the outer planes. He did manage to communicate with the cornugon Vesarius, who was impressed by the intelligence and resourcefulness of the dragon.

In exchange for the spells and knowledge that the dragon wanted, Vesarius demanded one of the dragon's great horns. The beast agreed and the deal was done. As the years rolled by, the dragon all but forgot his encounter with the fiend.

Recently, however, Vesarius reappeared to the dragon. He had crafted a long and



deadly magical spear from the horn of the black dragon. Into this object, he wove numerous spells that allowed him (and him alone) to command the dragon. Maelestor Rex must now obey Vesarius in every matter and cannot turn against him. The dragon desires nothing so much as to be released from its servitude and exact revenge upon the cornugon. Alas, the only way in which he can escape his curse is through the destruction of the spear.

Recognizing the fact that Maelestor Rex is crucial to the success of his armies in the Forgotten Realms, Baazka has ordered Vesarius to hide the weapon away in the deepest catacombs beneath Dragonspear Castle. Only by recovering the spear and seeing it destroyed can the allies hope to defeat the hordes of Dragonspear.

FLORFINDYN'S PLAN

At this point, the players have been presented with enough information to decide

that their next logical course of action is an exploration of the castle itself. By all accounts, however, a direct approach to the castle is certainly suicidal.

There is, however, a way in. If the player's don't think of this, Florfindyn will mention it. The underground river which he used to escape could also provide a means of entry into the castle. Although Florfindyn will not willingly travel this way, he will direct the heroes to the river's entrance. He marked the point at which he reached the river with a rune on the wall, so the heroes will be able to find it.

Once they are on their way, he will travel as quickly as he can to spread word of the enemy and its nature. If the heroes make it back, they can all meet at the Way Inn and make plans for the final assault on Castle Dragonspear.





The Roaring Deep

After the PCs have made whatever preparations they like, Florfindyn will lead them to a narrow cave in the eastern reaches of the Misty Forest. The first hundred feet or so of the passage is tight and requires some effort to pass through. Beyond that point, however, it opens up into a fairly comfortable cavern that snakes downward until it opens into a wide grotto.

The chamber is a low, conical structure without a natural source of illumination. The lights of the party will glimmer and shine on the smooth rock of the cave walls, making even a single torch more than bright enough to see the whole chamber. Half of the cavern is filled by a racing torrent of clear, but bone-chilling water. The noise of this underground river sends vibrations through the walls and floor and makes conversation difficult. The water pours into the room from a narrow fissure to the north and exits it by a somewhat larger opening to the south.

A small forest of giant mushrooms has taken root here, growing well in the chilly, humid chamber. Their caps and stems are brilliantly colored, some gleaming as if covered in a thin layer of liquid. There is no sign of animal life in the cave.

Thinking Caps

None of these mushrooms is animate or dangerous. They are not toxic if eaten, but taste like chlorine bleach. It would be almost impossible for an adventurer to sustain himself by eating these foul things. They do, however, serve a useful role in the adventure. If removed carefully, the caps of these mushrooms can be used as rafts for the journey down the river. Cutting down a mushroom and making it ready for use in this manner takes about two hours. During this time, the DM may want to toss in an encounter with some myconids or similar fungus-like creatures, but this is not required.

Down River

If the heroes make use of the mushroom caps or some other form of boat, the trip down river will not be hard. If, however, they elect to try swimming, they will be in deadly peril.

The primary danger involved in traveling the underground river is the cold. The water temperature is just above freezing, and swimming in it can quickly prove fatal. Any character spending time in the water without the use of some manner of magical protection (a resist cold spell or the like) will lose 1d10 hit points per turn. In addition, a saving throw versus paralysis is required to avoid losing consciousness. Unconscious characters stand an excellent chance of drowning.

If boats are used to make the journey, the cold is not a problem. Similarly, magical means can overcome this threat.

The Journey

As the characters begin to move down the river, they pass through an everchanging series of vistas. For the most part, the caves around them are narrow and smooth, carved by the action of the river over the course of several centuries. Every so often, however, the spaces around the river open into wide chambers and galleries. Some are quite spectacular glittering with crystal and mineral deposits, others are bland regions of sand stone. The pace of the river changes from a rapid torrent to a sluggish crawl.

After the party has passed through several such areas, they will find themselves entering a darker and more dangerous domain: the regions around Dragonspear Castle. Here, the foul influences of the *gate* to the dreaded outer planes have released a steady taint of evil magic. Over the centuries, this dark contamination has imbued the very stones with its sinister emanations.



The Hermit

At one point in the underground passage, the river takes a slow turn and then begins to descend at a slight angle. The incline is just sharp enough to set up a fair current, causing the boats of the PCs to pick up a good deal of speed. This happens gradually and will not be noticed unless a player happens to be keeping an eye on such things.

Suddenly, the party's boats fetch up against a line that runs just below the surface of the water. A quick examination will show that this line is the top part of a fishing net that has been spread across the river. The speed of their travel makes this stop a sudden one, so that all aboard the boats must make a Dexterity check or be stunned for one round. Characters who were standing or were in some otherwise vulnerable position will find themselves pitched into

the water if they fail their rolls.

As suddenly as all this happens, the heroes will be attacked. This is the lair of Sallissi, an evil and very hungry morkoth.

Morkoth (1): AC 3, MV Sw18, HD 7, hp 45; # AT 1; Dmg 1-10; SA hypnosis; SD spell reflection; ML 14; AL CE; THAC0 13.

If Sallissi is defeated, for he will make no peace with his prey, the party may find some treasure by searching his lair. The treasure, however, is found scattered on the river bed and will require diving or similar actions to recover it. Obviously, such actions are difficult because of the chilling water and darkness of the cavern. Each successful dive will recover 5% of the beast's horde. The total treasure consists of 14,000 gold coins and 2,000 platinum coins. Thus, each dive will allow a hero to recover 700 gp and 100 pp.





Under The Castle

After the heroes have dealt with the morkoth, they can complete their journey in relative peace. Still, the looming evil of Dragonspear Castle hangs heavy in the air and the characters will find it harder and harder to throw off feelings of despair and lethargy.

Florfindyn's Mark

Several hours after the PCs leave behind the lair of the morkoth, they will come into a wide gallery of gleaming stalactites and arched ceilings. Dozens of holes mark possible exits from this area, one of which is marked with the glyph that Florfindyn left behind him in his flight from Dragonspear.

If the PCs attempt to explore any of the other tunnels, they will wander aimlessly, be attacked by horrible monsters of the DM's choice, and, if they survive, make their way back to this same chamber after 2d6 hours have passed.

The Labyrinth

Florfindyn's path through the twisting tunnels beneath Dragonspear was a fortunate one. Not only did it bring him safely out of the evil clutches of Baazka and his hordes, but it also revealed to him the hiding place of the Dragonspear itself. Unfortunately, this artifact was hidden at the center of a great twisting maze, designed by Vesarius to keep his treasure safe from the agents of Maelestor Rex.

The map on the facing page shows the path which brought Florfindyn through this subterranean maze. Because he was on the run from the minions of Baazka, the elf had no time to mark his path. The heroes will have to explore the place on their own, facing its dangers and perils anew.

As the heroes move through the maze, they will be forced to confront many terrible monsters. These creatures are all, for one reason or another, in the service of Baazka. His dark power is such that they

cannot betray him and will fight to the death in service of their master. Ordinarily, the pit fiend would be instantly aware of the heroes' presence in the labyrinth. However, his attention is now focused on his armies and he is too distracted to sense them.

The Heart of The Maze

At the center of the labyrinth is a great cubical chamber some 75 feet across. This immense room has been cut from the rock by magical forces and polished until its coal-black walls gleam brightly at the touch of any light source.

At the center of this room, floating 35 feet above the floor, is a sphere of absolute blackness. Within this magical cocoon, the Dragonspear floats in timeless suspension. This barrier can only be punctured by powerful magic or resourceful thinking.

The area of darkness is a minor fold in the fabric of space. Any physical object, living or inanimate, that strikes the blackness will simply appear on the other side of it without passing through it. In essence, the universe is wrapped around the spear and it cannot be affected until the barrier is broken.

Dropping the shield requires some manner of space-folding spell similar to the one that created the darkness. Any manner of spell like *dimension door* or *plane shift* that causes the fabric of space to be altered can be used. The chance that any given spell will succeed is 10% per spell level. Thus, a 4th-level *dimension door* used to disrupt the field has a 40% chance of working. Numerous spells may have to be used before the barrier falls. In addition, psionic powers might prove effective in reaching the Dragonspear. The chance that an appropriate psionic power will succeed in disrupting the spell is 5% per level of the psionicist.



The Guardian

Because he expects Maelestor Rex to send agents in to claim the spear, Vesarius has stationed a greater guardian daemon here to protect his treasure. This creature is contained within the sphere of blackness and will attack the heroes as soon as that spell is interrupted.

Greater Guardian Daemon (1): AC -1, MV 9,Fl 9(D), HD 10, hp 70; # AT 3; Dmg 1-10/1-12/1-12; SA breath fire, *suggestion*; SD +2 or better to hit, immune to *charm*, *hold*, *sleep*, *polymorph*, and *fear* spells, cannot be harmed by acid or electricity; MI 18 AL NE: THAC0 11

Once the daemon has been defeated, the heroes can claim the Dragonspear. Of course, this assumes that they have some means of reaching it, as it still hovers some 35 feet off the floor.

With the weapon in hand, the heroes will have to retrace their steps through the maze. The whole while, of course, they will run the risk of fighting wandering monsters. If they use the Dragonspear in combat, they will find that it has all the powers of a javelin of piercing, scroll of protection from acid, and sword of wounding.

Dragonspear Labyrinth Map
1 Square = 25 feet

To the Underground River

Labyrinth Encounters

- Roll 1d6 every time the party reaches an intersection. A "6" indicates an encounter with a monster from the chart below:

Roll	Monster	No.
2	Barbazu	1d6
3	Barbazu	1d6
4	Barbazu	1d4
5	Barbazu	1d3
6	Xorn	1d4
7	Otyugh	1d2
8	Hell Hound	1d6
9	Cave Fisher	2d4
10	Carrion Crawler	1d4
11	Megalocentipede	1d6
12	Fomorian	1d2
13	Medusa	1d2
14	Roper	1d3
15	Umber Hulk	1d3
16	Cloaker	1d4
17	Barbazu	1d3
18	Barbazu	1d4
19	Barbazu	1d6
20	Barbazu	1d6



Return To The Inn

Once the heroes return to the river and begin to make their way upriver, they may or may not be pursued by the minions of Dragonspear.

The Getaway

If the player characters have been badly hurt by their battles in the labyrinth beneath the castle, then the DM will probably want to let them make the return trip fairly easily. In this case, it is a time for resting and recovery. In order to keep the escape from being too easy, however, the DM might drop in a minor hazard—something like a big cave-in or the ram-paging mate of the morkoth they fought earlier.

If the heroes have managed to reach the river in good shape and have not yet faced a truly challenging foe in the labyrinth, then they ought to be faced with a party of barbazu who have been sent to recover the Dragonspear and prevent their escape. The DM should base the number of these fiends on the strength of the party.

Barbazu (?): AC 3, MV 15, HD 6 + 6, hp 30 ea.; # AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1-2/1-2/1-8 or 2-12; SA Glaive, disease, battle frenzy, spells; SD +1 or better to hit; ML 12; AL LE; THAC0 15.

In either case, the current of the river is fast enough (or the walk down its banks rough enough) to make it an extremely tiring journey. When the heroes have reached the fissure that opens up in the Misty Forest, they will be in need of rest before they can continue.

The Misty Forest

When the heroes have recovered their strength, they'll certainly want to make haste. As they move through the Misty Forest, it will become clear to them that something is amiss. From far ahead, roughly in the direction of the Way Inn, is

a long plume of black smoke curling up into the sky. They can find no trace of the druid that they left behind in these woods and no sign of Florfindyn (although that is certainly to be expected).

Picking up The Pieces

When the characters return to the Way Inn, they will find that their army is gone. Indeed, so is the inn. The area is dotted with pools of acid and the bodies of several dozen soldiers. Florfindyn is here, having been left behind to tell the heroes what happened.

His story is simple enough. He carried their message to the armies gathered here and saw to it that the nature of the threat was fully understood. He'll mention that the army they left behind has been reinforced by several other groups, including his kin from the Laughing Hollow and the dwarves of Illefarn.

When the commanders of the army heard his news, they recognized their peril immediately. They headed south at once, determined to attack the enemy before it could be further reinforced by creatures drawn from the Nine Hells. Florfindyn and a company of men were left behind to escort the heroes to the front when they returned.

Not long after the army left, the dragon arrived. He swept back and forth above the Inn, spitting acid and ripping apart men with his teeth and talons. Florfindyn was himself injured in one of the first passes made by the beast, causing him to be left for dead when the dragon returned to its evil master in the south.

Of course, this leaves the heroes little choice but to race toward Dragonspear as fast as they can manage. With any luck, they won't be too late to join the battle and save their allies from death and destruction at the hands of Baazka and his minions.





Against The Hordes

The heroes reach Dragonspear Castle shortly after battle has been joined. Once again, this situation is an opportunity for the players to take charge of the combat and use the BATTLESYSTEM™ game rules to resolve the fight.

The Battle at Dragonspear

On the next page is a map that shows the battleground. Dungeon Masters who will be using the BATTLESYSTEM game rules to resolve this fight should set up an area similar to that shown in the diagram. The Dragonspear figures are set up first, then the Allied forces.

The Allies

At this point, the Army of Daggerford has been reinforced so that all of the units listed on page 7 are available. The player characters are not present at the start of the battle.

The Hordes of Dragonspear

By the same token, the entire army of Baazka is here. All of the units described on page 5 are available. Any units lost in the Battle at the Way Inn have been replaced. Maelestor Rex begins with his master, but will be free to move away from him as soon as the battle begins.

Victory

This is a battle to the death. Based on the strict force count, the good guys don't have a very good chance.

Turning The Tide

The only way that the allies will win the battle is to turn Maelestor Rex against his companions. Since he cannot do this as long as the Dragonspear exists, one possible way to accomplish this feat is to destroy the spear. The only thing that can destroy this magical artifact is Maelestor

Rex's own acidic spittle. It might also be possible to turn the tide of battle by killing Vesarius. Without his influence, Maelestor Rex is free to act as he will. In either case, he'll instantly turn on the Hordes of Dragonspear. With the addition of the Dragon to their forces, the Allies ought to be able to obliterate their enemies.

As with the first battle, the DM is reminded that this is all part of a role-playing adventure. Victory ought to be attainable for the heroes, but not easily so. The DM should hold back the arrival of the PCs until things look hopeless. The longer he waits, the more dramatic their victory will be. Pacing is the key to this scene.

ALTERNATE RESOLUTIONS

If the DM doesn't wish to use the BATTLESYSTEM game rules, the short-hand method described in *DMGR2: The Castle Guide* can be used. The armies at the battle have the following point values when this system is used:

The Hordes of Dragonspear

Wolg's Kobolds	1,000
Pruj's Goblins	1,500
Dahrgash's Orcs	1,500
Skarr's Hobgoblins	1,000
Ghorashk's Bugbears	1,300
Oorok's Ogres	1,300
Total	7,600

The Allies of Daggerford

Daggerford Peasants	300
Daggerford Militia	600
Daggerford Infantry	400
3rd Company	500
Uhmbriek's Rangers	1,000
Knights of Ilmater	2,000
Misty Forest Elves	350
Elvish Longbowmen	650
Dwarves of Illefarn	250
Dwarvish Crossbowmen	500
Total	6,550



Additional Units

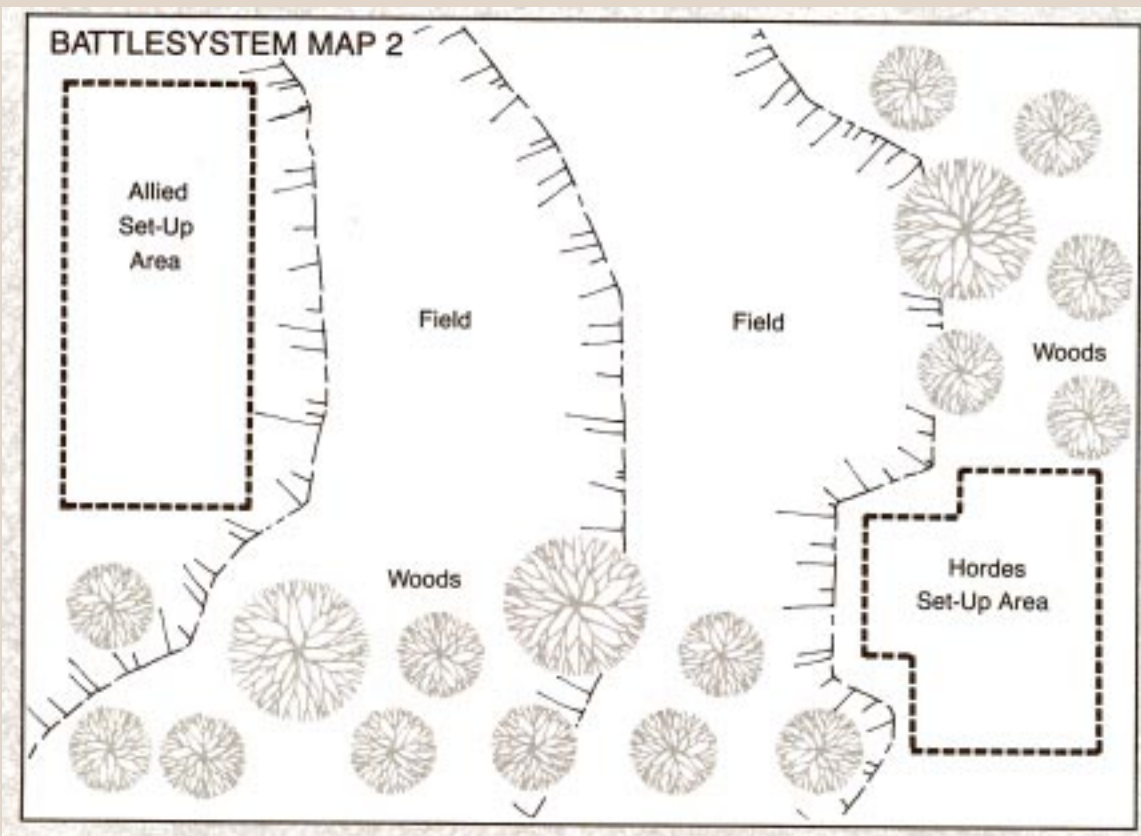
The point values above reflect only the armies themselves and not their leaders. For the purposes of simplicity, it is assumed that the leaders of the Allies and the masters of the Horde roughly balance out. If the DM wishes to add the Horde unit commanders to the scenario, they can be considered as simply another figure of the same type as the unit. Thus, Wolg would be as dangerous as 10 of his kobold followers.

The exceptions to this are Maelestor Rex and the fiends from the Outer Planes. As an ancient dragon, Maelestor Rex is roughly the equivalent of a small nuclear weapon when unleashed on the battlefield. The fiends, Baazka and his lieutenants, are not to be discounted either. The BATTLESYSTEM™ game stats of these characters are printed on the inside of the

back cover. In *Castle Guide* terms, Maelestor is worth 600 points, Baazka is worth 400, and each of the cornugons is worth 200. The DM will have to determine point values for the player characters based upon the examples presented in the BATTLESYSTEM game rules.

Heroes To The Rescue

When the heroes arrive with the Dragonspear, they will need to present it to Maelestor Rex. Actually, this isn't too hard as they need only get it within 150 yards (15 inches) of the dragon. As soon as this is done, Maelestor roars with delight and dives at the hero holding the weapon. On the next round he will use his breath weapon to destroy the spear. As soon as the weapon or Vesarius is destroyed, the dragon will turn on the hordes and, quite probably, lead the allies on to victory.





Aftermath

Of course, the heroes are assumed to emerge triumphant from the strife of the great battle. If things are going poorly for them, the DM can introduce any number of last minute rescues. The most probable would be an elite group of cavalry from Waterdeep that arrives just in the nick of time. Similarly, the DM might just “fudge” a few morale rolls for the Hordes or strengthen the attack of Maelestor Rex when he changes sides. Whatever the mechanical fix is, the players ought to see their heroes taken to within an inch of absolute defeat and destruction before the last-minute rally that saves the day.

Wrapping It Up

When the battle is over, and all is said and done, the player characters will certainly be heroes. They will be able to request almost anything that it is within the power of Daggerford and its allies to grant. They will also have earned the favor the elves who live in Laughing Hollow and their kin who will be returning to the Misty Forest. Likewise, they will have proven their worth to the dwarves of Illefarn. They might also be able to earn the trust and respect of Uhmbrick’s Rangers and the Knights of Ilmater, two very valuable potential allies.

Of course, they’ve also made a lot of powerful enemies. The fiends that they defeated, or perhaps even destroyed, are sure to be avenged by their peers in the Nine Hells. After all, letting mere mortals show up these powerful creatures is bad for business.

For his part, Maelestor Rex has no great animosity for nor sense of indebtedness to the heroes. As far as he is concerned, the fact the he did his part to crush the Hordes of Dragonspear repays his debt to humanity. He will return to his home in the heart of the High Moors and, perhaps, assemble his own army of humanoids to someday challenge the men of Dagger-

ford. Whatever the case, he is not an immediate danger and cannot be counted on as an ally.

Sequel Possibilities

Once the last battle is fought, the heroes may want to push on into Dragonspear Castle and close the gate which still operates at its heart. This is certainly a noble venture and one that will have the support of everyone in the area.

Such a quest will be fraught with almost incomprehensible dangers. The DM should be advised that the dungeons beneath Dragonspear Castle are huge, sprawling affairs. The labyrinth presented in this adventure is but a tiny fragment of the whole created by Vesarius to protect the Dragonspear.

Dungeon Masters who wish to allow their players to explore these horrible recesses might consider using the maps in such products as *Ruins of Undermountain* or *Castle Greyhawk* as the basis of the complete catacomb structure.

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	The Nine Hells
FREQUENCY:	Rare
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Carnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Exceptional (15-16)
TREASURE:	V, Y
ALIGNMENT:	Lawful evil

NO. APPEARING:	1-2
ARMOR CLASS:	
MOVEMENT:	6, Fl 15 (C)
HIT DICE:	9
THACO:	11 (See below)
NO. OF ATTACKS:	1
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	2-8
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Energy channel, forget
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	+2 or better weapons to hit
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	50%
SIZE:	M (4' tall)
MORALE:	Elite (13-14)
XP VALUE:	32,500

The amnizu dwell primarily on Stygia, the fifth plane of the Nine Hells. They are often found on the upper layers of the Nine Hells, however, there to accomplish some unearthly mission.

The amnizu are rather gruesome and unseemly. They are short (about 4 feet in height) with elongated, bald heads. They have stubby legs and arms and large, leathery wings protruding from their backs. Amnizu have pug noses and large eyes. Their snarling mouths are filled with jagged, razor-sharp teeth.

Amnizu use telepathic communication.

Combat: The amnizu are greater baatezu and as such, prefer not to enter combat, but rather to leave that sort of thing to underlings. But if pressed into battle, the amnizu will prove able foes. Their touch alone is enough to cause 2-8 points of damage to any creature. Because this channeling of harmful energy precludes armor, the amnizu need only attack versus armor class 10 to cause damage. Any magical pluses of armor, shield, or protective device such as a ring of protection, will lower the "adjusted" armor class of the defender. Other magical items which give a base armor class are unaffected. For example, if an amnizu were attacking a foe wearing plate mail, it would only need to roll versus armor class 10 to hit. However, if the amnizu were attacking someone with *chain mail* +1 and *bracers of defense*, AC 4, it would need to attack versus armor class 3.

Because of the amnizu's close ties to the river Styx, their attacks also will have the affect of an extremely powerful forget spell, causing its opponent to forget one whole day's memory unless he saves vs. spells.

In addition to those available to all baatezu, an amnizu can use the following spell-like abilities, one per round, at will:

- *fireball*, 3 times per day
- *imprisonment*, 1 time per day

A *holy word* is required to drive an amnizu back to its own plane.

Amnizu can attempt to gate in the following: 2-20 abishai (50% chance, once per day) or 1-8 erinyes (30% chance, once per day).



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Habitat/Society: The amnizu are greater baatezu, and as such enjoy a nobility of sorts. Although not of the same station as the mighty pit fiends, the amnizu are part of the ruling class of the Nine Hells.

Amnizu are extremely hateful of outsiders to the Nine Hells and even of those creatures native to that plane. They will follow orders not so much because of their nature, but because of their desire to advance and their fear of the pit fiends. It is a commonly known fact that the higher one advances in the Nine Hells, the more closely one is observed by the Dark Eight. Given the opportunity, however, amnizu will order their minions to attack anything that enters the domain that is under the control of the Dark Eight. It is possible that an amnizu would even attack a pit fiend given sufficient reason and if it thought it could do so without being suspected.

The amnizu serve many purposes. First and foremost, they are the guardians of the river Styx. The mighty river enters the Nine Hells through Stygia as well as Avernus. This is rightly seen as a weak point of defense for the Nine Hells. The amnizu are entrusted with the important task of keeping foolish individuals out of the Nine Hells. Second, they are generals. A single amnizu will typically command a great army of thousands of abishai and erinyes. To their own perverse ends as well as the protection of Stygia, the amnizu deploy their massive armies.

Ecology: The amnizu are given the important task of bringing new souls to the Nine Hells, and thus they are given their power of imprisonment. Mortal men and women traveling to the Nine Hells from the Prime Material plane for the purpose of combating evil are generally fodder for the amnizu.

Baatezu, Greater-Cornugon

FRQ2

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	The Nine Hells
FREQUENCY:	Very rare
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Carnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Exceptional (15-16)
TREASURE:	D, S
ALIGNMENT:	Lawful evil
NO. APPEARING:	1-4
ARMOR CLASS:	-2
MOVEMENT:	9, Fl 18 (C)
HIT DICE:	10
THACO:	11
NO. OF ATTACKS:	4 or 1 + weapon
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1-4/1-4/2-5/1-3 or 1-3 + weapon +6 (strength bonus)
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Fear, wounding, stun
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Regeneration, +2 or better weapons to hit
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	50 %
SIZE:	L (9' tall)
MORALE:	Elite (13-14)
XP VALUE:	36,500

Cornugons are very powerful amongst the greater baatezu. It is their lot to find service in the elite defense forces of the Nine Hells. In appearance they are frightening enough to fulfill that role. Fully 9 feet tall, these creatures are a only vaguely humanoid, covered with grotesque scales. Their huge wings and snaking, prehensile tail add to their frightening demeanor. In combat, they favor a large barbed whip, but often carry other, more gruesome weapons.

Cornugons communicate telepathically.

Combat: Cornugons are fearless fighters, rarely retreating from combat even in the face of overwhelming odds. They have 18/00 strength (+6 damage adjustment). The cornugon will always attack with its tail, lashing out for 1-3 points of damage, creating a wound that will continue to bleed for 1 hit point of damage per round until treated. In addition, they will either attack with claws and bite or with a weapon. Their large, barbed whip deals out 1-6 points of damage on a successful hit and the victim must make a saving throw vs. paralysis, or be stunned for 1-4 melee rounds. Even unarmed, the beast is capable devastating attacks. It can attack with two claw attacks for 1-4 points of damage per hit and a bite for 2-5 points of damage per hit (plus its tail attack).

In addition to those available to all baatezu, cornugons can use any one of the following spell-like powers at will, once per round, at will:

- *detect magic*
- *ESP*
- *lightning bolt*, 3 times per day
- *produce flame*
- *pyrotechnics*
- *wall of fire*, 1 time per day

They can also attempt to *gate* in the following: 2-12 barbazu (50% chance, once per day), 2-16 abishai (35% chance, once per day) or 1-3 additional cornugons (20% chance, once per day).

All cornugons radiate a *fear* aura in a 5 foot radius. Anyone entering the fear radius must make a saving throw vs. rod, staff,



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or wand or flee in terror for 1-6 melee rounds. Cornugons also regenerate 2 hit points per melee round.

Habitat/Society: Cornugons are the elite fighting force in the Nine Hells. They are often formed into terrifying armies up to 2,000 strong! Only the mighty pit fiends may lead these hideous fighting forces into battle. The cornugons are prized personal guardians. As such, all pit fiends and gelugons try to obtain one or more cornugons as personal retainers. The Dark Eight have 106 cornugons as retinue.

The cornugon armies are usually formed only in the lower few layers of the Nine Hells. In the upper layers, individuals serve as generals to vast armies of lesser baatezu. This duty is the most desirable (and most subject to rapid advancement) second only to guardian duty among the Dark Eight.

Ecology: The cornugons are greater baatezu, and as such enjoy a certain amount of prestige across the Nine Hells. Of all the baatezu, the cornugons have the most rapid advancement. With several successful campaigns to their credit, more heroic cornugons will receive promotions to the upper layers of the Nine Hells where they command vast, gruesome legions of baatezu. From there, great action leads to promotion to gelugon, the ruthless baatezu inhabitants of the frigid layer of Caina. Although powerful and cunning, the cornugons are the baatezu least likely to display treachery amongst their ranks, due most likely to their militaristic nature. Their loyalty makes them something of an unusual asset in the Nine Hells. It is said that the 106 cornugons that guard the Dark Eight are completely loyal and would give their lives in defense of the council, behavior that is nearly unheard of in the Nine Hells. Whether this is due to genuine loyalty or fear of the almost limitless power of the pit fiends is unknown. What is known, however, is that never in the history of the Dark Eight has a cornugon guardian displayed traitorous behavior.

Baatezu, Greater-Pit Fiend

FRQ2

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	The Nine Hells
FREQUENCY:	Very rare
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Carnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Genius (17-18)
TREASURE:	G, W
ALIGNMENT:	Lawful evil

NO. APPEARING:	1-4
ARMOR CLASS:	- 5
MOVEMENT:	15, Fl 24 (C)
HIT DICE:	13
THACO:	7
NO. OF ATTACKS:	6
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1-4/1-4/1-6/1-6/2-12/2-8 or weapon +6 (strength bonus)
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Fear, poison, tail constriction
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Regeneration, +3 or better weapons to hit
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	50 %
SIZE:	L (12' tall)
MORALE:	Fearless (19-20)
XP VALUE:	57,500

The most terrible baatezu of the Nine Hells, pit fiends appear to be giant, winged humanoids, very gargoyleish in appearance. Their huge wings can wrap around their body in defense. Their fangs are large and dripping with vile, green liquid. Their bodies are red and scaly, often emitting flames when they are angered or excited.

In the rare instances they choose to communicate, they do so using telepathy.

Combat: No baatezu is more terrifying in combat than a mighty pit fiend. In physical combat, the pit fiend is capable of dealing out tremendous punishment, using its incredible 18/00 strength (+6 damage adjustment). They can attack six times in a single round, dividing its attacks against up to six different opponents. They can attack with two hard, scaly wing buffets for 1-4 points of damage per hit. Their powerful claws do 1-6 points of damage per successful attack. The bite of a pit fiend is dreadful indeed, causing any creature bitten to take 2-12 points of damage and receive a lethal dose of poison. A saving throw vs. poison is required or the victim will die in 1-4 rounds. The bite also is 100% likely to infect the victim with a disease whether he saves against the poison or not.

Pit fiends can also attack with their tail every round, inflicting 2-8 points of damage per hit. The tail can then hold and constrict the victim for a like amount of damage per round until the victim makes a successful strength check to break free. Pit fiends can also carry jagged-toothed clubs which inflict 7-12 points of damage per hit (this replaces one claw attack).

Once per round a pit fiend can use one of the following spell-powers, plus those available to all baatezu:

- *detect magic*
- *detect invisibility*
- *fireball*
- *hold person*
- *improved invisibility*
- *polymorph self*
- *produce flame*
- *pyrotechnics*
- *wall of fire*



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They can, once per year, cast a *wish* spell. They may always *gate* gate in two lesser baatezu, or one greater baatezu with a 100% chance of success, performing this action once per round. Once per day, a pit fiend can use a *symbol of pain* – the victim must save vs. rod, staff or wand or suffer a -4 penalty on attack dice and a -2 penalty to dexterity for 2-20 rounds.

They regenerate 2 hit points per round. Pit fiends also radiate a *fear* aura in a 20 foot radius (save versus rod, staff, or wand at a -3 penalty or flee in panic for 1-10 rounds).

Habitat/Society: Pit fiends are the lords of the Nine Hells. They are the baatezu with the greatest power and station. Pit fiends are found throughout the various layers of the Nine Hells, but are very rare on the upper layers. They also are not fond of the frigid coldness of Caina, the eighth layer. Pit fiends are very rare on Avernus, Dis, Minauros, and Caina. They are rare on Phlegethos, Stygia, Malbolge, and Maladomini. In the fearful realm of Nessus, however, the dreaded pit fiends are common.

Wherever they are found, these mighty lords hold a position of great authority and power. They sometimes will command vast legions consisting of dozens of complete armies, leading the hateful horde into battle against the Tanar'ri. These huge forces are terrifying to behold, and any non-native of the lower planes of less than 10 hit dice who sees them will flee in panic for 1-3 days. Those of 10 hit dice and greater must make a saving throw vs. rod, staff, or wand or flee in panic for 1-12 turns.

It is rumored that pit fiends are not the most powerful beings in the Nine Hells, but rather themselves servants of some greater power. If, in fact, there are some greater beings in the Nine Hells, certainly they are powerful enough to hide their presence from mere mortal sages.

Ecology: Pit fiends are spawned from the powerful gelugons of the Nine Hells' eighth layer. When those icy fiends are found worthy they are cast into the Pit of Flame for 1,001 days after which they emerge as a pit fiend (see Gelugon for more detail).

Baatezu, Lesser-Barbazu

FRQ2

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	The Nine Hells
FREQUENCY:	Common
ORGANIZATION:	Troupe
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Carnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Low (5-7)
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Lawful evil
NO. APPEARING:	20-100
ARMOR CLASS:	3
MOVEMENT:	15
HIT DICE:	6+6
THAC0:	13
NO. OF ATTACKS:	3 or 1 (weapon)
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1-2/1-2/1-8 or 2-12 (weapon)
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Glaive, disease, battle frenzy
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	+1 or better weapons to hit
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	30 %
SIZE:	M (6' tall)
MORALE:	Steady (11-12)
XP VALUE:	23,500

The barbazu is the most vile and effective soldier in the Nine Hells. They are employed in large numbers as shock elite troops.

A barbazu is a foul, humanoid creature with a long tail, clawed hands and feet, pointed ears, and a snaky, disgusting beard growing out of its face. Its skin is moist and scaly like a reptile. They are most often seen carrying a cruel, saw-toothed glaive, capable of great damage.

Though barbazu rarely find a need to communicate, they can do so using telepathy.

Combat: The barbazu are the most violent of the baatezu, taking advantage of any excuse to attack. This makes them unpopular amongst baatezu-kind and subject to frequent, harsh disciplinary measures. These same traits, however, make them excellent shock troops. They are deployed in large armies sometimes numbering in the thousands both to guard the middle layers of the Nine Hells and to launch devastating attacks against the tanar'ri. They are also popular among the more powerful Baatezu to guard personal treasure or one's demesne.

The barbazu attacks with a saw-toothed glaive. This terrible weapon not only inflicts 2-12 points of damage on a successful hit, but the wound caused by the weapon will continue to bleed each melee round until the wound is bound (or the victim dies). The victim will continue to suffer 2 points of damage per round until tended to. These bleeding glaive wounds are cumulative; 2 points of damage will be suffered per round per wound. If necessary, however, the barbazu is capable of powerful natural attacks. It can deal out two claw attacks for 1-2 points of damage each and an attack with its wire-like beard for 1-8 points of damage. If both claws manage to hit, the beard damage is an automatic hit for maximum damage. Also, when the beard hits, there is a 25% chance the victim will contract a disease from the foul attack.

At will, one at a time, one per round, a barbazu can use the following spell-like powers in addition to those available to all baatezu:

- *affect normal fires*
- *command*
- *fear, by touch*
- *produce flame*



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The barbazu can also attempt to *gate* in 2-12 abishai (50% chance, once per day) or 1-6 additional barbazu (35% chance, once per day).

All barbazu are subject to a battle frenzy. When in the heat of combat, a group of barbazu is 10% likely per melee round to go berserk. While berserk, the barbazu need not make morale checks. They will attack twice as many times per round at +2 on attack rolls and damage dice. Their armor class, however, will increase by 3. The roll is cumulative per melee round, so that if they are 20% likely to go berserk on the second round, 30% on the third, etc. Once berserk, they will stay that way until combat ceases.

Habitat/Society: The barbazu have no real internal society. They are bred for battle, which is what they do best. All other denizens of the Nine Hells know that barbazu are exceedingly cruel. Barbazu will rush into combat whenever possible, and often will not stop until either they or their opponent is dead. They are perhaps the most impetuous and chaotic of the baatezu, and thus have gained a very bad reputation among outsiders. However, even the pit fiends themselves cannot deny the barbazu's extreme value in combat.

Although the barbazu is a lesser baatezu, they are never found in command of their own armies. They are simply too chaotic and are unfit to lead. Often, though, a barbazu that has proven himself of exceptional worth will be promoted to an osyluth. Most, however, never survive to see promotion.

Ecology: As noted earlier, the barbazu serves only one function: fighting. They are bred for combat and combat alone; they have no other purpose and, therefore, no ecological structure other than military. They are the bulk of the army of the middle layers and the most common guards of the greater baatezu. They do not fight out of any particular loyalty or comradeship, but rather out of their violent need to hurt and kill.



THE SHINING SEA

The Shaar

Shaareach

Bandit Wastes

Mhairic Jungles

The Nath

Lapaliya

The Misty Vale

R. Calan

Lake Lhespen

Theymarsh

Yallasch

Orlpuit

Sheintalar

Lushpool

Ithmong

Usurn

Lapalgarb

Blaskattan

Lhespen

Rethman

Shaarmio

INNAR

The North Wall

Mt. Alue

Calathgarb

Mt. Calath

Alathil

Maerth



ardith

Torsch

Harbcastle

The Lawbrise

R. Shaar

The Great Rift

Sebben

Eantheard

Chanmathgate

Three Swords

Kholak

Underhome

Chamber's Way

Delzimmer

Westwatch

The Gate of the Iron Fang

Elveswatch

Velbon
Land of
Monsters



Azulbuth
(The Lake of Salt)

Council Hills

Eastern Shaar

Rolling Stone Gap

Wood of
Dark Trees

R. Madras

R. Panka

Turelve

Lastarr

Thruialiel
Mine

Ulara

Estagund

Great Traben's Way

Coatsquat Mountains

Thruibar

Kilonna

Zabbasz

The Long Forest

Luiren

Fasriul

Crimel

Shoun

Ammathlur

Velbon's
Land of
Monsters

Gundar Forest

Raurin (The Dust Desert)



Naarlith

N



The Stormfalls

Shipgrave Isles

The Red Giant



LAND OF MONSTERS

Ammathar

Fornaluil Range

The Swagbar (Outlaw Waste)

Wall

Granuin Forest

R. Ammath

Gnollwatch Mts.

Hills of the Dead Kings

Dolphin's Herath

Climb River

R. Caraguir

Dambrath

Rialuil Range

Cathyt

Hazuth

Ilmar

Prastuil

Luenath

Conaluil Range

Bay of Dancing Dolphins

Far Outpost

Kethis (The Great Swamp)

Hethar

Hethar Peninsula

Guilmari

Wan's Islands

Bothe

iant

Inc.



The
White
Rocks



ONE INCH = 60 miles

THE GREAT SEA

Far NEMOREE

To Zakhara

Maelestor Rex, Black Dragon

AD	1d12	BW	1 d 1 2
AR	2	SP	6/3/1
Hits	10	MR	4 5 %
ML	18		
MV	12, Fl 12 (C), Sw 12		

Maelestor Rex radiates an aura of awe that causes all enemies within 12" to make a morale check with a - 4 penalty. His primary tactic at the start of a battle is to swoop across the enemy lines in an attempt to shatter the morale of the other side.

Baazka's Lieutenants, Cornugons

AD	1d10	BW	Nil
AR	4	SP	Special
Hits	5	MR	50%
ML	14		
MV	9, Fl 18 (C)		

Vrag, Vooka, and Vesarius are Baazka's assistants. Each of them commands one of his armies. In addition to the abilities described above, each of them can use the following powers once per battle: *lightning bolt*, *wall of fire*, and *teleport*. They can be hit only by +2 or better weapons.

Baazka, Pit Fiend

AD	1d12	BW	Nil
AR	2	SP	Special
Hits	6	MR	50%
CD	20	MV	15, Fl 24 (C)

Baazka is the absolute commander of the Hordes of Dragonspear. If he falls, all Dragonspear units make their morale checks with a -2 penalty. Baazka has many spell-like abilities and is able to use the following powers once per battle: *fireball*, *wall of fire*, and *teleport*. Baazka can be injured only by +3 or better weapons.

Barbazzu

AD	1d8	BW	Nil
AR	6	SP	Special
Hits	3	MR	30%
ML	12		
MV	15		

In the event that the player characters are unusually tough, the DM might want to introduce a few of these fiends to make things more challenging. They can be hit only by +1 or better magical weapons and are able to use the following spells once per battle: *fear* and *teleport*.



Hordes of Dragonspear

by William W. Connors

Dragonspear Castle. All who live within several hundred miles have heard the name and know its import. Once home to the proud and the brave, it stands now a ruin, cloaked behind a history of murder and diabolic plots. Few go there, for the only reward to be found is death.

Rumors abound that Dragonspear holds a portal to the sinister planes, but until now those have been unfounded. Following a great battle against orcs and trolls from the High Moor who had taken possession of the castle, a temple to ward against further evil was established. However, by the Time of Troubles, that temple and its clergy had disappeared. Now, a horde of fiends and monsters has amassed at Dragonspear Castle, and is terrorizing the surrounding countryside.

The portal is active, that is for certain. The army of Daggerford needs reinforcements! Is your party made of the stuff of heroes?

Hordes of Dragonspear can be played using either the BATTLESYSTEM™ miniatures rules, or the quick combat resolution system found in DMGR2, *The Castle Guide*. Alternatively, a few simple changes render the entire module playable without any special rules.



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