

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®

COMPUTER PRODUCT

CURSE OF THE AZURE BONDS

A FORGOTTEN REALMS™ Fantasy Role-Playing Epic, Vol. II

CLUE BOOK



STRATEGIC SIMULATIONS, INC.®

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INTRODUCTION

CURSE OF THE AZURE BONDS continues Strategic Simulations, Inc.'s ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® computer role-playing games which began with POOL OF RADIANCE. Like its predecessors, CURSE OF THE AZURE BONDS has its own original story line, encounters and objectives set in the towns and countryside of the FORGOTTEN REALMS™ game world. This story line is outlined in the Adventurer's Journal included with the game.

When you play CURSE OF THE AZURE BONDS, your primary objective is to eliminate the five azure bonds that the New Alliance has placed on your adventurers' arms. In the process of freeing your party from these bonds, you weaken the New Alliance and destroy its evil strangle-hold on the Forgotten Realms.

The New Alliance has imprinted glowing symbols (bonds or sigils) on each character's forearm. These bonds permit the New Alliance to override the will of your characters. Each bond forces the party to carry out deeds which further the ambitions of an Alliance member. The members of the New Alliance are scattered through the Dalelands region of the Forgotten Realms, ranging from Tilverton through the towns of the Overland, and the ruined city of Myth Drannor.

In Tilverton, you encounter the Fire Knives. Defeating their leader in the Fire Knife Hideout releases the first bond placed on your party. Since the Fire Knives' bond had forced you to attack King Azoun's carriage, he expels you into the Overlands. The punishment is mild because an impostor had actually occupied the carriage!

Travelling through the Overland, you may enter Hap where you encounter the rogue wizard Dracandros' and a host of dragons. Reaching the Wizard's Tower, you foil Dracandros' plans, release the second bond, and gain possession of the first of three crucial artifacts — Helm of Dragons — that will help you defeat Tyranthraxus (see the following section for more details on the individual members of the New Alliance).

Note on the Artifacts: The artifacts are not useable by the characters during the course of the game. Therefore, these items will not be listed as equipment on any of the characters.

In Yulash, High Priestess Mogion seeks to use the party to release the God Moander from the vile Pit. When you overcome Mogion and her determined Cult of Moander, the third bond is released. In addition, you receive the second key artifact — the Gauntlet of Moander.

At Zhentil Keep, you face Fzoul Chembryl and his Black Network of Zhentrim. Fzoul, a High Priest of Bane gone bad, has placed the fourth bond upon the party. Defeat Fzoul to release the bond and defeat Dexam the Beholder to gain the Amulet of Lythander, the third and final artifact you'll need against Tyranthraxus.

To release the final bond from your party, you travel to the ancient city of Myth Drannor. You'll need all of your accumulated experience (and the three artifacts) to best Tyranthraxus, the malignant champion of The New Alliance. Tyranthraxus draws his power from the Pool of Radiance. Destroy him and remove the last of the azure bonds. The party is completely free of the bonds' curse!

The background for the game's story line is taken from the many ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game publications by TSR. Of particular interest is the novel, *Azure Bonds*, by Kate Novak and Jeff Grubb.

Note: Characters from POOL OF RADIANCE and HILLSFAR may be used in CURSE OF THE AZURE BONDS. If you have either game, you may transfer characters from them to CURSE OF THE AZURE BONDS (see the Quick Start card and the rule book for more information).

MEMBERS OF THE NEW ALLIANCE

The New Alliance consists of five separate groups which have joined forces to achieve different evil objectives. Each group in the alliance has placed one of the five azure bonds upon your party. Each plans to force your party to perform malevolent deeds which will help them to attain their own selfish goals.

The members of the New Alliance are:

The Fire Knives, based in Tilverton. The Knives have placed their bond on the party to force it to slay King Azoun of Cormyr. To release the bond, the party must locate the Fire Knife Hideout and capture or kill the Knives' leader.

Dracandros, a rogue red wizard of Thay, residing in the Wizard's Tower near the village of Hap. Dracandros' bond is set on the party to provoke a group of dragons into another Flight of the Dragons (a sudden migration of dragons who destroy all in their path). When the party defeats Dracandros, it receives the artifact called the Helm of Dragons — the key to finding Tyranthraxus.

The Cult of Moander, led by High Priestess Mogion and based in Yulash. From her base in the Pit of Moander, Mogion intends to use her bond's extra-dimensional powers to open a gate and release Moander, the Slime-God. When the party defeats Moander, it finds the Gauntlet of Moander. This artifact helps you to destroy the Pool of Radiance, the source of Tyranthraxus' power.

The Black Network of the Zhentrim, located in Zhentil Keep. The Black Network uses its bond to force good people into evil acts. You must slay Fzoul Chembryl, High Priest of Bane, to release the Zhentrim bond and obtain the Amulet of Lythander, the final artifact. You'll need the Amulet to damage Tyranthraxus in the game's final battle.

Tyranthraxus, a demon of possession, resides in the ruined city of Myth Drannor. The party can reach Tyranthraxus' base in the ancient temple only when it has defeated the other members of the New Alliance. Tyranthraxus hopes to gather and destroy the dangerous artifacts and then possess the character's bodies. The demon's death releases the last of the Azure Bonds, freeing your characters.

The following sections provide strategy tips for assembling a successful adventurers' party, combat, and spell use.

CREATING A CHARACTER

Stats:

The simplest way to get a powerful party is to modify the characters so that they have the maximum number in all of their stats. Frankly, we consider this to be something of a cheat.

Use the following as a guide:

Strength: Most important for a fighter. If 16 or higher, fighters receive a bonus of 10% additional experience points. Paladins with a 16 or higher strength receive the experience point bonus if their wisdom is also 16 or higher. Non-human fighters will have a lower maximum level if their strength is less than 18. The higher a character's strength, the more he can carry, the more likely he is to hit in melee combat, and the more damage he will do when he does hit.

Intelligence: Magic-users with an intelligence of 16 or higher receive a 10 percent experience point bonus. Non-human magic-users will have a lower maximum level if their intelligence is less than 18. Rangers must have both intelligence and wisdom of 16 or higher to receive a 10 percent experience point bonus.

Wisdom: Clerics get the 10 percent experience bonus if their wisdom is 16 or higher. Clerics with a wisdom of 14 or higher receive additional low level spells. Paladins must have both strength and wisdom at 16 or higher to receive a 10 percent experience point bonus. Rangers must have both intelligence and wisdom of 16 or higher to receive a 10 percent experience point bonus.

Constitution: Fighters receive one extra hit point per hit die for each point of constitution above 14. Non-fighters receive similar benefits except they receive a maximum of two extra hit points per level (no hp benefits for constitutions above 16).

Dexterity: Thieves receive a 10 percent experience benefit if their dexterity is 16 or higher. For every dexterity point between 15 and 18, a character receives a corresponding one point improvement in his armor class. For every dexterity point between 16 and 18, a character receives a one point improvement on his ability to hit with missile weapons. It is

strongly recommended that all characters have a high dexterity. This is considered essential for magic-users and thieves.

Charisma: The higher a character's charisma, the more positive reaction he will receive during parlay. For this reason, the character with the highest charisma should normally be chosen as the active character during parlay.

BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL PARTY

Forming a strong and adaptable party is a key to success in *CURSE OF THE AZURE BONDS*. You may place up to six characters in your party. It is recommended that you use all six characters. A smaller party is less powerful and more likely to be eliminated by your enemies.

In choosing which characters to include in the party, it is wise to include a variety of classes: clerics, magic-users, thieves, and fighters. At least one party member should be female so you may gain the assistance of Silk the Swanmay when engaged against the Drow of Hap.

One suggested sample party includes:

- Two Human Paladins
- One Elf Fighter/Magic-User
- One Dwarf Fighter/Thief
- Two Human Clerics

A variant of this party adds a third paladin and drops one of the clerics.

Another suggested sample party includes:

- Two Human Paladins
- One Human Ranger
- Two Human Magic-Users
- One Human Cleric

A variant of this party makes one of the magic-users an elf.

An alternative party might include:

- Two Human Paladins
- Two Human Rangers
- One Human Cleric
- One Human Magic-User

Note: Before dual-classing the characters, this party is very weak in spell casting ability.

WHY THESE GUYS?

Paladin:

Paladins are valuable in combat, since they are usually very strong. They also offer protection to any adjacent party members during combat (a Paladin has permanent Protection from Evil that extends in a 10-foot radius). Paladins also have the ability to heal wounds and cure diseases. They can cast cleric spells at high levels.

Paladins who reach the 7th level, should be converted to a dual-class magic-user. Note: Paladin's can't cast spells in combat if they are wearing armor. Characters converted to dual-class, cannot use the abilities of their original class until the new class level is at least one level higher than the old one.

Fighter/Magic-User:

The fighter/magic-user may cast spells while wearing armor. This split class can fight as well as a fighter and receives more hit points than a pure magic-user. Due to the restrictions placed on magic-users, it is recommended that only elves be fighter/magic-users.

Fighter/Thief:

A fighter/thief has more hit points and a better armor class than a pure thief. A fighter/thief has a good THACO rating and is eligible for percentile strength points. The thief status permits the powerful back stab attack which works as follows:

A back stab occurs automatically when a thief attacks a medium size or smaller opponent directly from behind. To get the back stab benefit, the thief cannot be wearing any armor heavier than leather (with the exception of elfin chain) and must be using a one-handed sword.

It is not always obvious which way a monster is facing. A monster will always face the first opponent to attack him in a combat round. Once a monster's facing is set, it remains set until the monster attacks, or until a new combat round occurs. Any time a monster's facing is not set, it will be set to face the first opponent to attack it.

To be sure of a back stab, the thief must attack the monster while its facing is set. The thief must attack from a square that is directly opposite the one occupied by the attacker who set the monster's facing. Successful back stabs cause multiple damage based on the level of the thief as follows: double damage for levels 1 to 4; triple damage for levels 5 to 8; and quadruple damage for levels 9 to 12.

Cleric:

A cleric is essential for healing the party after an engagement. The most efficient way to heal is to Encamp and select Fix (you can issue this command several times while encamping). Fix works as follows:

If a cleric is in the party, all available cure spells are cast until all characters are healed. If the party has taken more damage than clerics have cure spells, the Fix option may be used again. If a cleric is not in the party, 24 hours of rest must pass for each hit point a character heals. When Fix is used, characters at the top of the list will be healed before the characters below them.

Once a cleric reaches level 9, he has access to all the clerical spells in this game. At this point, if you have two or more clerics in your party, make one a dual-class magic-user. Once this character reaches level 10, he will have access to all cleric and magic-user spells in the game.

Ranger:

Rangers normally start the game with more hit points than other fighter types. They do extra damage versus giant type monsters. At high levels, they can cast druidic and magic-user spells. Rangers are the only humans who can cast magic-user spells in combat while wearing armor. A ranger who is made a dual-class magic-user at level 9, will be able to cast all available magic-user spells while in armor once he reaches level 10.

COMBAT

The makeup of your party affects your combat strategy throughout the game. Loading your party with clerics and magic-users increases the importance of spell casting both before and during a battle. An emphasis on paladins and rangers makes your hand-to-hand combat skills that much more important.

At the beginning of the game, as soon as you exit the inn (after you have memorized your spells), go to the Armor Shop in Tilverton. Pool your money and purchase the following equipment:

For Fighters, Rangers, Paladins, and split class Fighters:

- Banded Mail (some prefer plate)
- Shield
- Long Sword
- Two-Handed Sword
- Long Bow
- 80 Arrows
- Sling

For Thieves:

- Leather Armor
- Long Sword
- Short Bow
- 80 Arrows
- Sling

For Clerics:

- Banded Mail (some prefer plate)
- Shield
- Flail
- Staff Sling

For Magic-Users:

- Quarter Staff
- 100 Darts

After purchasing the equipment, Share (retrieves money from pool) and Ready the equipment just purchased. To start, ready the melee weapons (swords, flails, quarter staffs) instead of the missile weapons (bows, slings, darts). Be sure to ready the arrows. Note: two-handed swords are best against large monsters. Against medium and small monsters, long swords do almost as much damage and they permit you to use a shield.

COMBAT STRATEGY

Throughout CURSE OF THE AZURE BONDS, your party engages a colorful collection of foes. At times, you may elect to avoid a confrontation, choosing conversation or flight instead. More often, however, your characters must stand and fight.

To succeed in combat, a skilled player deploys his party well, casts effective spells before and during combat, maneuvers his characters into advantageous position, and attacks using his most powerful characters and weapons.

Deploying the party: When a battle begins, your party is automatically positioned based on the existing order of the characters. Characters near the top of the order will be in the front lines and vulnerable to attack. To change the deployment, change the order: Encamp, select Alter, and then Order. Shift the heavily-armored fighters up the list and the vulnerable magic-users and thieves down the list.

When battle begins, your party may be placed in a bad position. If you wish to be defensive, move your characters to anchor your flanks on an obstacle such as a wall or tree. Keep your magic-users behind the front line. Setting up behind a doorway that your enemies have to move through makes for a very strong defensive position.

Characters who are seriously injured should be moved out of the front lines if possible. Be warned, if you move away from an adjacent enemy, he will get a free attack at your back. Back attacks have an improved chance to hit.

Missile weapons cannot be fired if there is an adjacent opponent. If you want to fire missiles, make sure you keep away from the enemy. If you want to stop enemy missile fire, move someone next to the opponent.

Exploit your opponent's weaknesses by directing attacks against helpless enemy characters. Gang up on isolated foes.

Concentrate your attacks to eliminate one opponent rather than injure many (Exception: enemy spell casters). A foe with one hit point remaining attacks as powerfully as an uninjured one.

A spell caster who takes damage cannot cast a spell that round. If the spell caster had started to cast and was hit, he will lose that spell from memory. Therefore, try to injure all enemy spell casters every round even if it is only for one point of damage. Conversely, if you want to cast spells, make sure your spell casters are protected.

SPELLS

Spell casting: Both clerics and magic-users may cast spells which assist the party in combat. Preparatory spells just before a battle can protect and strengthen characters. During battle, your spells will damage your opponents and help your party.

Memorizing Spells: Spells should be memorized as soon as possible after they are used. This is most likely to happen after combat. Encamp, have your spell casters Memorize spells, select Rest, and select Rest again. Note: an alternate technique is to memorize your spells and then choose the Fix command. You will then be memorizing spells while your party is being healed. This technique is most valuable when you have a limited amount of time to rest. Note: after resting, it is a good idea to save your game. We advise you to save your game after every tough combat.

Tips on Spell Casting: Clerics, magic-users and higher level paladins and rangers cast spells. High level thieves may cast magic-user spells from scrolls. We find the following spells most useful.

Clerical Spells:

Cure Light Wounds: Absolutely necessary to recover hit points lost during combat.

Bless and Prayer: The best combat preparation spells. Use during the first rounds of a moderate or tougher fight or just prior to a battle. Both spells are brief in duration. Bless won't affect any character adjacent to an enemy at the time it is cast.

Hold Person: Especially effective against humans. Works fairly well on Drows. Hold Person is a short-range spell.

Poison: Effective only against target in an adjacent square. Poison works against any opposing creature except those which are magic resistant.

Dispel Magic: A recuperation spell for any of the party that has been held, slowed or made nauseous.

Slay Living: A powerful spell with a short range. Guaranteed to damage or kill opposing creatures except those which are magic resistant.

Magic-Users' Spells

1st Level:

Magic Missile: Will damage target within its range unless target is magic resistant or has certain magical protection. Casts instantaneously.

Enlarge: Increases the recipient's damage bonus for several battles. Recommended casting time: before you leave Camp.

Charm Person: Works best against humans in Tilverton scenarios. In later sections of the game, it is less effective.

2nd Level:

Stinking Cloud: Possessed of a very short range, Stinking Cloud is especially effective in trapping enemy forces that must pass through it. The area affected is a 2 by 2 square. Where you aim the spell will be the upper left corner of this square. Be careful not to harm your own characters.

3rd Level:

Fireball: A slow-casting spell, Fireball's power demands that you target carefully. Otherwise, you may inadvertently destroy party characters. When indoors, the only safe area on the screen at the time you target the spells are the squares in each corner of the screen and the squares directly above, below and next to these corner squares (12 squares total, 3 in each corner). Be sure to center to determine who will be in the area of effect. Outdoors the spell has a five square diameter.

Lightning Bolt: For best results, move the spell caster to send the bolt down a row of opponents. It will attack all opponents in a straight line within its range. Target the first creature in the row (closest to caster). Lightning bolts will reflect off walls back toward the spell caster. This permits targets adjacent or close to a wall to be hit twice by the same bolt. Be careful the caster isn't hit by the reflected bolt. Refer to the rule book, page 25, for ranges.

Haste: Doubles the movement and attack turns of your characters. Its short span means you should wait until a fight is imminent to cast Haste. Warning: each time a haste spell is cast on a character, that character ages one year.

Slow: Slow cuts movement and attacks in half. Great against any high-damage creature. Only affects the side opposing the spell caster.

Invisibility (10' radius): Makes the party invisible to its enemies at the start of a fight. Use it to set up a battle line while the bad guys seek you out. Characters lose invisibility if they do anything but move. Some monsters can see invisible creatures.

4th Level:

Minor Globe of Invulnerability: A short-duration spell which protects the caster from first through third level spells. Is very effective when used in combination with Fire Shield.

Fire Shield: Ideal for a spell caster with high hit points. Fire Shield will inflict double damage back on meleeing enemies who are not magic resistant (if they hit you, they take twice the damage you do). However, its effects are brief.

Confusion: Powerful attack spell. Most effective when used against a large number of enemies. Confusion can affect everyone in an area.

Ice Storm: Damages enemy forces protected by Minor Globes, including Zhentrim Marauders and Dracandros.

Dimension Door: Lets the caster target a square, cast the spell and be transported to the target square. Magic-users can use it for quick escapes. Fighter/magic-users use the "Door" to reach the opposition's rear area.

5th Level:

Hold Monster: Its considerable range lets you target up to four monsters, possibly turning them helpless. Of special value against Bits Of Moander.

Cloudkill: Short-range spell of great effect against 6th level creatures and below. Deadly against Drows, but also hazardous for any character in your party who is low level such as those you've just shifted to dual-class status.

THE ACTION BEGINS

In CURSE OF THE AZURE BONDS, your party travels through the towns and overland of the Dalelands. The characters you've assembled begin in Tilverton City, then fight their way into the overlands, visiting important towns such as Hap, Yulash and Zhentil Keep. With each engagement, you gain valuable experience (and loot). You release each of the azure bonds one by one until you reach Myth Drannor, scene of the climactic battle with Tyranthraxus. Only his malicious will and power, embodied in the Pool of Radiance, stand between you and the removal of the final azure bond...

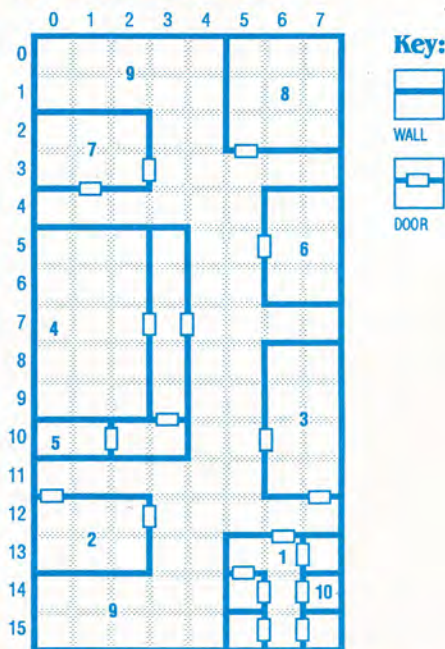
A. TILVERTON CITY

Synopsis: The characters awake and discover their items and most of their money have been stolen. Mysterious blue sigils cling to their forearms. After wandering the town for a while, the partymembers discover that the bonds are not easily removed.

When the king's coach arrives in the city, the bonds force the party to attack it. Though the occupants of the king's coach escape this attack, the royal guard hunt the party and attempt to eradicate its members. A thief hiding in the back alleys guides the party to the temporary safety of the Thieves' Guild. If the party surrenders



A. TILVERTON CITY:



to the guards, its members are hustled away to a cell. A thief then helps the characters to escape.

Where You Can Rest: Before the party attacks the coach, it may rest at the inn for free. Once the royal guards sound the alarm, there is no place to rest.

Map Locations

- 1 Tilverton Inn.** Here the party starts the game. It is safe to rest anywhere within the inn. However, once the alarm sounds, the party is barred from entry. The first thing the party should do when it awakens in the inn is have its spell casters memorize their spells.
- 2 Armor Shop.** The doors are blocked after the king is attacked, so the party should equip itself before the confrontation. The party should head here as soon as it exits the inn.
- 3 'Curse' Tavern.** This is Tilverton's only bar — an ideal source of gossip

and brawls. It is off-limits once you attack the coach. The first time the players refuse a tip from the bartender, they observe a young lady arriving. Soon, they hear an altercation in the adjacent alleyway. Fire Knives have abducted Princess Nicacia, who has returned to Tilverton at the urging of her former lover, Gharri of Gond. By the time the party reaches the scene, all that remains is a Fire Knife's dagger.

Brawling in the tavern is the only way to gain experience points prior to the party's assault on the king's carriage. A fight here is of particular help to characters who are just a few experience points short of rising another level (this only occurs if the characters are transferred into the game from Pool of Radiance or Hillsfar. Such characters should go to the Training Hall, location 8, as soon as possible).

4 Temple of Gond. Here the party can be healed. Once the party attacks the coach, the temple closes its doors. If the characters wander among the pews, they join the audience to listen to a sermon. Its message and the congregation's response reveal a town divided over the Cormyran occupation.

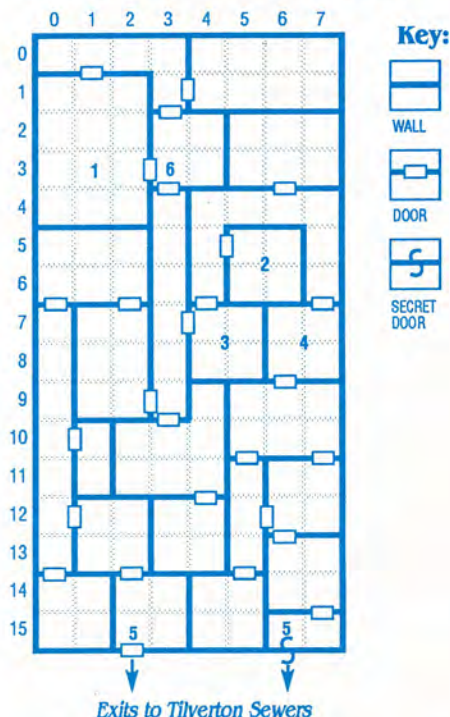
5 High Priest's Chamber. The priest attempts to remove the bonds from the party, but his powers are insufficient for this purpose.

6 Offices of Julynn the Sage. She'll provide the characters useful background information on the bonds. Julynn's fee is half of the party's money. Be sure to buy all your equipment and undergo training before visiting the sage. Her office closes once the coach is attacked.

7 The Tilverton General Store. Useful for stocking nonweapon items, it too closes once the coach is attacked.

8 The Training Hall. Off-limits once the party attacks the coach. Training is an option only if you've transferred

B. TILVERTON THIEVES' GUILD:

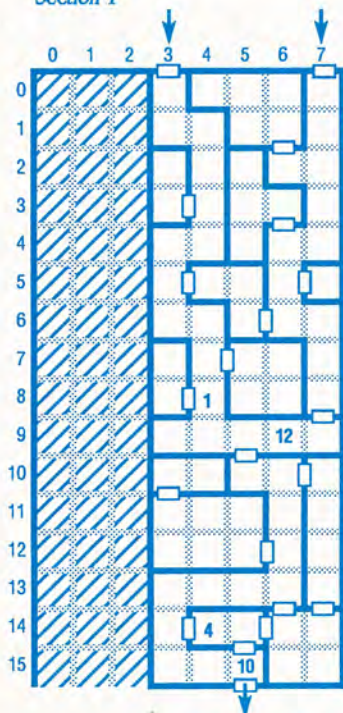


characters from Pool of Radiance or Hillsfar; otherwise, your characters lack the required experience points to raise a level. See pages 26 and 27 of the rule book for more information.

9 Carriage Encounter. Guards restrain the party here, telling you that the king's carriage is arriving. If the party has visited locations 2 and 6, and has tried to pass 9 twice, the king's carriage arrives. You attack it against your will. Though its occupants escape, the royal guard attacks. After the party defeats the first wave of guards, Fire Knives grab the carriage occupant (a king impostor). The guards will continue to seek out your party and attack it. Since the number of guards is limitless, your party

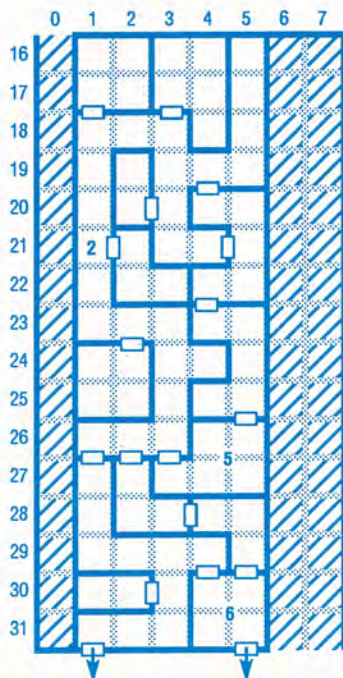
C. TILVERTON SEWERS:

Section 1



continued in section 2

Section 2



continued in section 3

should go into one of the alleyways (between any of the buildings) for safety. There, a thief will contact and escort the party to the Thieves' Guild.

Note: If you surrender to the guards during battle, the party is carried away to prison. Luckily, thieves rescue and take it to the guild.

10 Madman's Nightmare. A man lies here gripped in a nightmare. He's lain here since townspeople found him near the sewer outfall on the same night the party was brought to the inn.

B. TILVERTON THIEVES' GUILD

Synopsis: The thief whom you met in Tilvertton escorts the party to the Guildmaster. He begins to explain that the

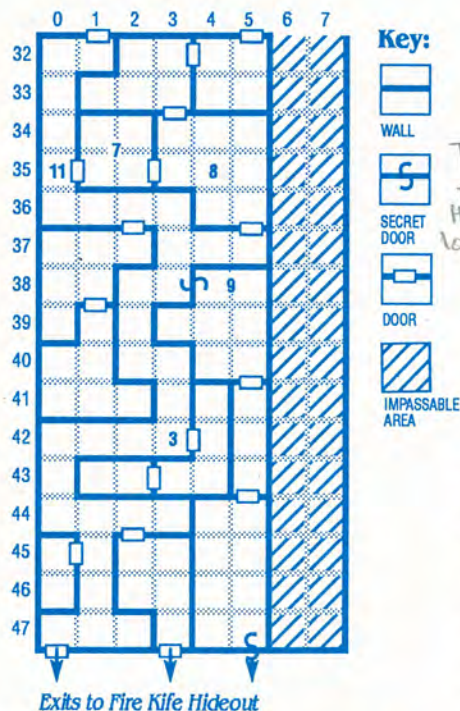
Fire Knives, a group of assassins, forced the characters to attack the king's carriage. The Guildmaster doesn't give direct aid to the party, but he does reveal the location of the Fire Knives' Hideout. Suddenly, the Fire Knives burst in and kill the Guildmaster. The party must fight its way to the sewers, with occasional help from the thieves.

Where You Can Rest: The Guildmaster lets the party rest when it first enters the guild. The only other guaranteed rest place is the treasure room. Once the fighting starts, the party may try to rest throughout the guild. Its rest may be disturbed at anytime.

Map Locations (See map, p. 8)

1 Guildmaster. When the party enters, it is escorted to the Guildmaster. He reveals that the Fire Knives, who are responsible for the characters' attack on the king's carriage, hold the cap-

Section 3



tured Princess Nicacia. In the midst of the Guildmaster's revelation, the Fire Knives and their supporters burst in on the meeting, killing the guildmaster in the melee. You find a map of the sewers on his body.

2 Treasure Room. Here are the thieves' magic items. The door is wizard-locked. To break in, have a magic-user cast Knock or hope that a strong character's lucky roll does the trick. Save the dust until you really need it. The ioun stone will raise the dexterity of the character who readies it by one point (up to a maximum of dexterity 18).

3 Dog Kennels. Home to a pack of ravenous dogs. The Sleep spell may be used against them.

4 Monkey Cages. This room held the monkeys until the alarm was sounded. Now they are loose. They have been trained to use slings. Sleep works against them as well.

5 Exit to Sewers.

6 Guest Book. The Guild's guest book includes the last entry by an O. Ruskettle, Bard of the Realms. This is a halfling character you will encounter later in the game.

C. SILVERTON SEWERS

Synopsis: The party has come from the Thieves' Guild into the dank tunnels of the Sewers. It must find its way through the stink and shadow to reach the Fire Knives' Hideout. Along the way, it confronts the various denizens of the underground.

Note: You may return to the Sewers after completing the Hideout.

Where You Can Rest: The sewers are constantly patrolled, but there is a chance that the party can rest for a while. It is safe to rest in monster lairs and within the hidden chambers.

Map Locations

- 1 Fire Knife Checkpoint.** If the party surrenders, the Fire Knives rob your characters, then pass them on ahead.
- 2 Another Checkpoint.**
- 3 Remains of a Checkpoint.** This Fire Knife strong point has been eliminated by Gharri of Gond and a Knight of Myth Drannor (Gharri has discovered the planned abduction and is attempting a rescue). The Knight lets the party pass if it claims allegiance to the princess, or to no one. If the party refuses, the knight restrains its members. He'll send them ahead later to distract the Knives.

4 Otyugh Lair. The otyughs are powerful creatures who may attack three times per turn. Cast preparatory spells before going into battle against them. In battle: Stinking Cloud may render the otyughs helpless. Fireballs are also effective.

5 Otyugh Lair with Hidden Gold. A gold ring hides among the filth. The otyughs are willing to trade the ring for some garbage belonging to their comrades in location 6. The jewelry is marked with the symbol of the Zhentrim. The best tactic to pursue is to Parlay with the Otyughs and agree to their demands.

6 Filthy Otyugh Lair. Defeat the otyughs here and return to Location 5 to gain gems and jewelry. This is a tough battle. Cast Prayer before you enter the location. Cast Stinking Clouds to slow up the otyughs. If you can retreat through the doorway in combat, you will have a good defensive position. Cast fireballs.

7 Troll/Crocodile Lair. Some trolls are feeding their crocodiles here. Trolls are dangerous creatures which regenerate after absorbing seemingly fatal damage. However, the trolls are vulnerable to fire. If your magic-users cast Fireball, the creatures should crisp nicely. If a party member is standing on either square that a troll had occupied before it went down, it will stop the troll from reappearing.

8 Troll Lair. The denizens have several magic items of interest. It's recommended that you keep your party tightly grouped.

9 Hidden Chambers. It is safe to rest here. The thieves used it as a secret training hall. Your characters are allowed to train here.

10 Princess' Cloth Remnant. The party decides that the assassins carried the princess past here, for a bit of her clothing is caught on the doorjamb.

11 Symbol of Moander. A group of worshippers of Moander held services here while the party was being bonded.

12 Site of Second Remnant. Through a trap door in this room's ceiling, the Fire Knives brought the princess into the sewer. A bit of her clothing was caught in the door, which is too solidly jammed to open. However, a thief wearing proper armor can climb up to the trap door and spy the remnants of the royal garb.

D. THE FIRE KNIFE HIDEOUT

Synopsis: The party seeks to locate the master of the Fire Knives and force him to release his bond. To accomplish this, the characters must save the princess. Once they free themselves of the bond, the characters meet the true King. After the intercession of his daughter, he exiles the party from the lands of Cormyr. The party is then escorted to the wilderness.

Where You Can Rest: The only safe place to rest is in the hidden passage, which the Fire Knives have not discovered.

Map Key

1 Destroyed Checkpoint. The Fire Knives manning this checkpoint were slaughtered by Gharri of Gond as he began his rescue attempt. The sewer doors are just now being sealed, preventing your party's retreat into the sewer.

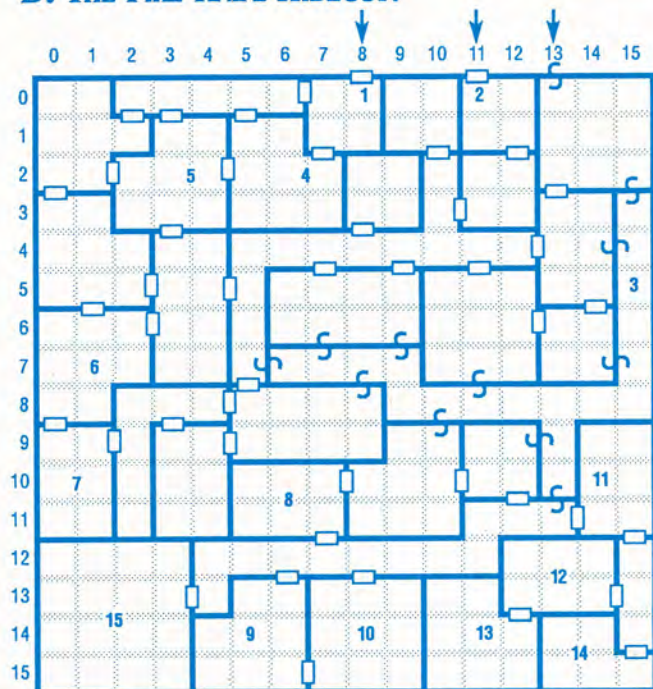
2 Abandoned Checkpoint. Abandoned as the local Fire Knives rushed to stop Gharri. The door to the sewers is being sealed to prevent others from entering.

3 Hidden Passage. This hideout has been under Fire Knife control only for a few years, and the passage is undiscovered. It is a safe place to rest.

4 Blade Barrier. Gharri used a blade barrier in this room and the spell is just about to end. If the party waits, they see the blades slow, then dissipate.

5 Held Fire Knives. Gharri finally fell in battle here, not long before the party arrived. The room is still littered with

D. THE FIRE KNIFE HIDEOUT:



Key:



WALL



DOOR



SECRET
DOOR

held Fire Knives. The party can learn something about the hideout by interrogating the held assassins.

6 Fire Knife Dead. The Knives, recently engaged in numerous combats, have come here to gather their dead. They've divided them into two groups — those to be raised and those to be buried. Nothing of value is in the room.

7 Torture Chamber. Gharri is here, undergoing the Knives' "hospitality." The party can rescue him, though he is too badly wounded to help in the upcoming battle.

8 Storage Room. If the party searches, it can find the tables and some of the offending instruments used to place the bonds on their arms.

9 The Fire Knives' Armory. It's mostly bare now that the assassins are engaged in battles. Some recently stolen magic weapons may be found here if the party searches. Don't ready the bracers, they are cursed.

10 Hospital. This room has been converted to a hospital. None of its inhabitants are strong enough to hinder the party.

11 Office of Kybor. The Fire Knives' magic-user. If your adventurers search the area, they may find interesting documents in his desk, plus some money and magic items.

12 Kybor's Library. Just a burnt-out husk. Kybor lays on the floor, burnt to death. A piece of paper is clutched in his hand. On it is some information about Tyranthraxus, who's wreaked the havoc here in order to halt Kybor's research efforts.

13 Kybor's Laboratory. Like the library, it too has fallen victim to Tyranthraxus.

14 Kybor's Bedroom. Unseen servants keep it in perfect order. There is nothing of value here.

15 Final Confrontation. Here the final battle with the Fire Knives takes place. Their leader has captured the princess and Glogi Wyvernspur, the King's impersonator, and is holding them here. When the party arrives, the characters are paralyzed by the Fire Knife bond. The princess slips her bonds and knocks out the leader. Freed of its compulsion, the party is able to fight the assassins. If the party defeats them, the princess forces the Fire Knife leader to permanently remove the Fire Knife sigil from the party.

The king arrives and thanks the characters for saving his daughter. However, he banishes them from Cormyr — punishment for their attempt to kill him. The party is then escorted to the city limits and released to its fate.

The Final Confrontation with the Knives is a demanding battle. Rest before engaging the enemy, and let your cleric(s) fix damaged party members. Cast preparatory spells before the battle — Bless, Enlarge, Haste are good examples. Cast attack spells to hold or cripple the enemy.

Your party's fighters (paladins, rangers, fighters...) should engage in close-in combat, taking care to assault damaged foes before the attack spells wear off. Isolate the enemy while keeping thieves and magic-users away from direct combat. In later rounds, your clerics should heal characters that have taken damage during the

fight. Cut off the Knives' lines of retreat, since they may attempt to flee. Good Luck!

This is the first of five major parts of the game. Upon completing this section, the characters are asked to choose their next destination. We recommend that the party head for HAP. To get there, the characters travel through the Overland. Alternately, the party may reenter the sewers to train characters. Be warned! The sewers are tougher the second time through.

Note: For more information on landmarks and encounters you'll experience travelling between the key towns, see the Overland section that follows the Ruins of Myth Drannor.

E. THE VILLAGE OF HAPTOOTH

Synopsis: Both Dark Elves (Drow) and Efreet have terrorized this small village. The citizens keep to their houses and try to avoid detection. Only Akabar Bel Akash, a merchant adventurer, is willing to stand up to the horde of opponents. The final confrontation unfolds in the barn at the south end of town. Once the party dispatches the Efreet and Drow, the villagers express their joy by helping the party. The characters find a map on the slain Efreet showing the way to the Cave of the Dracolich.

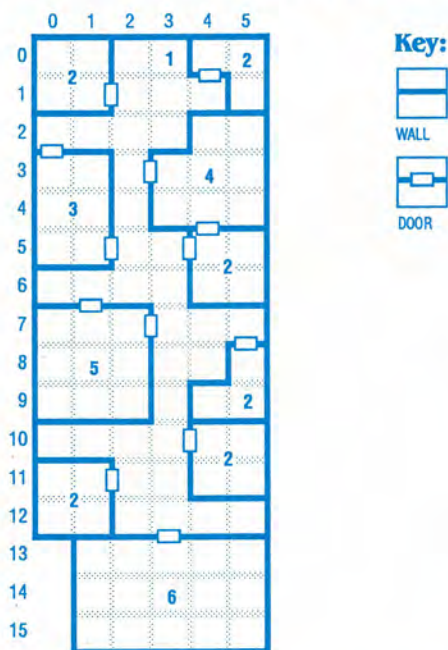
Where You Can Rest: At the inn or temple before you have defeated the Efreet; anywhere at all afterward.

The Patrols: There are four patrols who will join the Efreet in the final battle if you haven't eliminated them previously. If the party Parlays and acts Nice or Meek, the patrols will assume they are peasants and send them on their way. Other actions will result in combat. It is recommended you eliminate the four patrols before you go to the final battle. The Dark Elves fight poorly in sunlight, so fight them during the day.

Note: Akabar may insult the Dark Elves if he is in the party.



E. THE VILLAGE OF HAPTOOTH:



Note: We recommend that the party fight at least four patrols before entering the barn to engage Efreet. Otherwise, the Efreet's force is very powerful.

F. THE CAVE OF THE DRACOLICH

Synopsis: The caves are the only known entrance to the Wizard's Tower. Dracandros has recruited Dark Elves, Efreeti, Salamanders and a Dracolich to guard this passage. Luckily for the party, Dracandros needs the characters alive. Only the Dracolich escorts the party; other monsters allow the characters to pass — minus some money and items.

A renegade Dark Elf named Silk leads a band of female adventurers called the Swanmays. She has been contracted to collect a part of a black dragon. Since Dracandros has already gathered all the dragons in the area, Silk needs someone to chase the dragons out — or kill them. She agrees to make a female character an associate member of the Swanmays in return for the party's help.

Some of the cave's guards are members of her old family and will let Swanmays through the lines. But Crimdrac is interested only in getting the party to Dracandros. After Dracandros' death, the caves are patrolled by hostile Drow, whose ranks are replenished each time the party leaves the caves.

Where You Can Rest: Once the party defeats 10 random patrols or defeats Dracandros, it may rest anywhere. Before that, the characters can rest for several hours inside the caves. Each time the party leaves the caves, patrols are reinforced.

Map Locations (See map, p. 15)

1 Arrow/West. While searching, the party finds an arrow pointing west here. Silk left it to guide potential allies to her.

2 Arrow/South. If the party searches, it discovers an arrow pointing south — another of Silk's clues.

Map Locations

1 Entry Gate.

2 Peasant Hovels. Rejoice that you're merely a visitor. The peasant inhabitants are full of tears and dread before the Efreet's downfall. Afterwards, they are welcoming and friendly.

3 General Store. It is closed tight until the Efreet is killed.

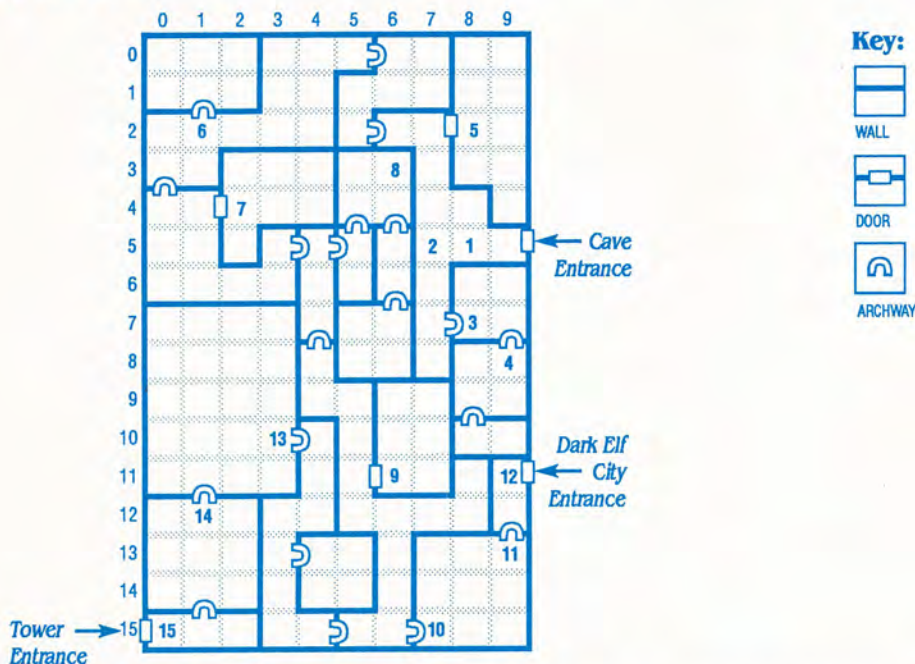
4 Village Inn. Here you have a chance to meet Akabar and join forces with the brave merchant. You may rest here for free.

5 The Temple of Sune. Keepers provide healing after the Efreet has been killed. The party can rest and meet and join Akabar here.

6 Barn. It's been converted into the Efreet's headquarters. He will attack whoever disturbs him. On his body is a map leading to the Caves of the Dracolich.



F. THE CAVE OF THE DRACOLICH:



3 Silk's Honor Guard. A group of female Dark Elves waits here to present Silk's offer to the party. Accept and your characters are taken to meet Silk. The Dark Elves will flee if the party tries to attack.

4 Silk. The current leader of the Swanmays will offer an associate membership to one female in the party. She expresses her regrets if no females are present. If the party leaves the caves and recruits a female before slaying Dracandros, Silk renews the offer. With Silk's mark, some patrols let the party pass unhindered.

5 Elf Barracks. The dark elves resident here are hostile and sure to give you a ferocious battle.

6 Salamander Cavern. The archway to the north opens onto a geyser-filled cavern, occupied by Salamanders and some fireproof casks containing treasure. If the party Parlays in Sly, it can raid the treasure casks without defeating the Salamanders. If you engage the Salamanders, be sure to attack to the doorway. You must control the doorway to prevent a mass of slithering Salamanders from swarming through.

Note: The treasure found here is valuable when you reach the Wizard's Tower, especially if you should attack the Black Dragons (which we don't recommend). The long sword is a sword of dragon slaying (triple damage vs Black Dragons) and the scroll provides protection from dragon breath.

Note: Characters who enter the cavern without fire resistance take

damage. Further, the great heat may prevent them from reaching the casks.

- 7 Cleric Barracks.** The barracks for the dark elf clerics, who will oppose you ferociously. If the party has a Swanmay character (female character accepted by Silk) in its ranks, the clerics let them retreat and avoid combat.

If you engage the clerics, be advised that they possess a barrage of spells which makes them quite formidable. Their 50% magic resistance reduces the value of Area Effect spells. Best suited to fight the clerics are fighter\magic-users and dual class magic-user and fighter types (fighter, paladin, ranger). All other characters should retreat out of sight for the first several rounds of combat. The fighter\magic-users should cast Minor Globe of Invulnerability on themselves, then attack the Drows with swords.

The Drow spells should have no effect on your magic-users if they are protected by Minor Globes of Invulnerability. Once the enemy clerics have cast most of their dangerous spells, the remainder of your party can charge and finish off the enemy.

- 8 Ankhhegs.** Some Dark elves have taken control of Ankhhegs and have housed them here. Since this is a private elf power play, the Ankhhegs attack on sight and give no quarter.

- 9 Mage Barracks.** Home to dark elf magic-users, who react to the party's intrusion by putting up a stiff fight. Having a Swanmay in your party will allow you to retreat and avoid combat here. Fighting this group is not recommended. If you do fight, use the same tactics as outlined for location 7.

- 10 Patrol in Archway.** The patrol seeks to prevent people from reaching the entrance to the dark elfin city at 12.

- 11 Collapsing Tunnel.** When the players reach this point, the elves will collapse the tunnel.

- 12 Blocked City Entrance.** This is the entrance to the dark elfin city. When the party reaches it, rubble blocks the way.

- 13 Fixed Patrol.** The scouts are led by Salamanders.

- 14 Crimdrac's Lair.** He only attacks the party if the characters resist. Once he is dead, none of the patrols will accept surrender.

If you are going to fight Crimdrac, cast prayer and other protection spells just before entering this location. Crimdrac's high armor class makes it difficult to hit him with weapons and his fiery breath is most deadly to your party if its members cluster. The party should spread out inside the lair.

Among attack spells, only Fireball and Magic Missile are effective against Crimdrac. Magic Missile is recommended, for its user may cast it immediately. A magic-user casting Fireball may be hit before the casting is completed.

- 15 Wizard's Tower Entrance.** Silk will be here to greet the party if it returns with a character bearing her mark. If the party has brought with it the dragon egg or heart, she gives the characters a large reward. Silk thanks the entire group and disappears.

G. THE WIZARD'S TOWER

Synopsis: Dracandros, a renegade Red Wizard of Thay, is trying to stir a renewed Flight of the Dragons to rain destruction on the civilized areas of the Realms. He has gathered all the nearby Black Dragons for a conference atop his tower. Dracandros' bond forces the party to destroy an illusionary dragon, convincing the watching dragons of Man's enmity. The skeptical dragons ask that Dracandros remove his control over the party to test the party's supposed hostility. The party may either attack the dragons or convince the creatures that they mean no harm. The

characters then must force their way down the Tower and confront Dracandros in the courtyard below. In the wake of victory, the party finds the Helm of Dragons, the artifact which reveals Tyranthraxus' location.

Where You Can Rest: The party can rest only on the roof and in the courtyard. However, you can rest anywhere after defeating four patrols — until Dracandros is killed or the party searches his bedroom.

Map Locations

1 Tower Entrance and Exit. When the party first enters, it meets Dracandros here. He invokes the bonds to paralyze them, then transports them to location 2.

2 Tower Roof. Dracandros teleports the party to the roof, where a horde of dragons has gathered. He forces the party to destroy an illusionary dragon. However, in order to convince the dragons that the party is actually hostile to them, Dracandros removes the sigils from the characters' arms.

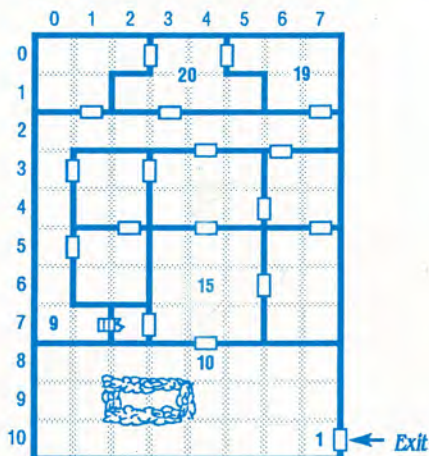
At this point, the party has four choices: Attack the Dragons, Attack Dracandros, Flee, or Parlay. To avoid fighting the dragons, the party must choose to attack Dracandros or Parlay with the Dragons. Be Nice or Meek to them. Fleeing or Attacking the dragons results in a fight with 14 Black Dragons.

We advise against fighting the dragons. If you do, we advise the following: One of your fighters needs the Dragonslayer Sword and the Scroll of Protection (you should have collected these as treasure from the Salamander Cavern). Prior to entering the tower, read the scroll and cast preparatory spells such as Haste and Enlarge. When the battle begins, charge the protected fighter into the dragon horde. Keep other fighters at range, where they can use missile weapons. Magic-users can cast Confusion and Fireball.

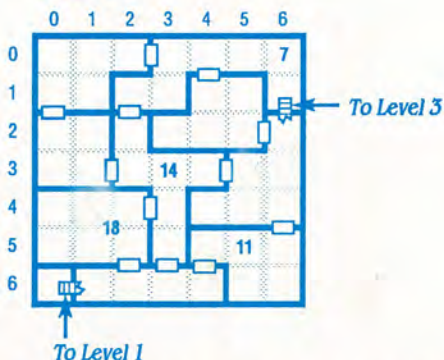


G. THE WIZARD'S TOWER:

LEVEL 1



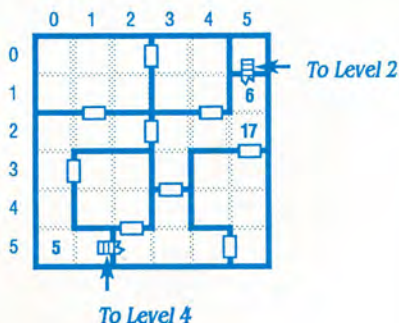
LEVEL 2



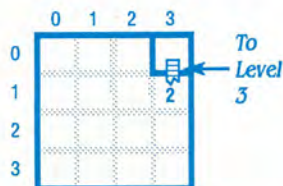
If the party has made a deal with Silk the Swanmay, the characters can carry off a dragon's heart (Silk will pay handsomely for this). But the dragon's acidic blood sprays the characters, and may damage them.

3 Burly and the Symbol of Pain. Dracandros' personal guard, Burly is a Dark Elf (Drow) and plenty tough. He waits to confront the party. Burly uses several potions before the characters arrive, and his shield mounts a

LEVEL 3



ROOF



Key:



WALL



STAIRWAY

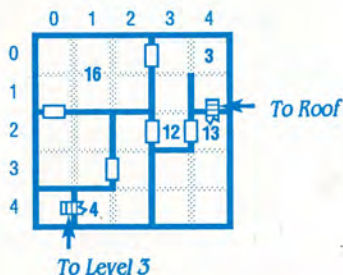


DOOR



HEDGE

LEVEL 4



6 Stairway. The passage to Level 2.

7 Paper/Explosive Rune. A piece of paper on the floor describes how to disarm the trap at 9. However, an explosive rune guards the paper. If the rune is not avoided, then the paper explodes before the information can be read. Magic-users are best suited to disarm the rune.

8 Stairway. To the 1st level.

9 Trap. The stairway goes flat and propels the party into a bed of spikes, doing nasty damage. It can only be avoided by successfully reading the note at 7.

10 Fight against Dracandros. Here the final battle with Dracandros and his minions takes place. Once the party triumphs, it gains the Helm of Dragons. Dracandros is protected by a Minor Globe, Protection from Normal Missiles and an Invisibility spell.

He'll cast Fire Shield given an opportunity to do so. His Efreeti and Drow guards are deadly in a melee.

Symbol of Pain to reduce the party's chance of hitting him.

Your magic-users should cast several preparatory spells before the party tangles with Burly: Haste and Enlarge are vital. During battle, have a thief try back stabbing. A magic-user should cast Magic Missile. Stinking Cloud may work occasionally. Good Luck!!

4 Stairway. It leads down to Level 3.

5 Burly's Illusion. An illusion of the body guard at 3 stands here and demands a bribe to let the party pass. If the characters refuse, they can then dispel the illusion with a single blow.

Your party's best chance lies in minimizing the number of spells Dracandros casts. Cast preparatory spells, especially Haste. During battle, cast Ice Storm to damage him, then rush a fighter up to Dracandros and attack. If you lack these spells, the party should move out of Dracandros' sight, then dispose of his guards.

Then send your fighters after Dracandros, but beware of his Fire Shield — especially if you are considering a timely back stab.

Note: Artifacts such as the Helm of Dragons do not appear in the items list, as they cannot be stolen or sold.

- 11 *Dracandros' Main Laboratory.*** The wizard's chief experiment involves the hatching of a Black Dragon's egg. The party can steal it safely. If you accepted Silk's earlier offer, she'll pay well for the egg.

- 12 *Entry to Trial of the Sphere.*** The party sees a sign over the east door stating 'Trial of the Sphere'. Only one member of the party at a time may enter. This character then moves into a fateful struggle at the next location.

- 13 *Sphere of Annihilation Duel.*** The chosen character faces a red wizard. Between the two is a Sphere of Annihilation. Only a magic-user can control the sphere. The outcome of the duel is determined by character level and intelligence. If neither side has control, then the sphere moves towards the stronger mage. If your character surrenders, he loses some items and money and is forced outside. A character touched by the sphere is permanently eliminated, along with his treasure.

Note: Using a character who's not a magic-user may work to your advantage since the sphere moves towards the stronger magic-user when it's not controlled.

If the sphere reaches the wizard, he uses a Rod of Cancellation to destroy it. However, destroying the sphere causes a tremendous explosion, killing the wizard and letting the party loot the room.

- 14 *Drow/Owlbear Patrol.***

- 15 *Wyvern Pens.*** The Wyverns roam this room, freed from their chains since Dracandros fled and undid their restraining locks. Your clerics should have Neutralize Poison memorized before entering the pens as poisoning enemies is a Wyvern specialty.

- 16 *More Wyverns.***

- 17 *Drow and Owlbear Reinforcements.***

- 18 *Dracandros' Bedroom.*** Signs of recent packing are unmistakable. If the characters search long enough, they will find a few trinkets the rogue Wizard left behind. However, this prowling gives Dracandros' guards time to organize more patrols.

- 19 *Dracandros' Library.*** Though it contains a wide variety of books, none are magical or particularly valuable.

- 20 *A Scroll Library.*** Dracandros has recently ransacked it on his way out.

This completes another of the five sections of CURSE OF THE AZURE BONDS. The party will have lost another azure bond and recovered one of the three key artifacts. We recommend that you select YULASH as your next destination. When you arrive in Yulash, you'll find the Red Plumes of Hillsfar in control of a partially ruined town. A deadly Cult will be lurking in the Pit of Moander...

H. YULASH

Synopsis: The city of Yulash is the historic battleground between the forces of Hillsfar and the troops of Zhentil Keep. Currently, the Red Plumes of Hillsfar control the city. However, the recent battles have left much of the town in ruins; only the Red Plume Headquarters section has been rebuilt. The party must get by the Red Plume patrols,

H. YULASH:



Key:



the Zhentil terror squads, the looters and the creatures of Moander to reach the Pit. Moander last entered this world from the Pit and rumors suggest that he'll return there soon.

Where You Can Rest: In Yulash, you may rest safely in the Barracks of the Red Plume Guards — if you have met the commander and he decides that you are not looters. You may be able to rest in any room once you've had an encounter there, but this isn't guaranteed.

Checkpoints: There are various checkpoints throughout the city. With the Commander's good will, you advance easily (if you choose parlay). If you have not met the commander, the guards demand that you follow them. If you fight the guards and lose, you wake up in prison. You are then taken to the commander, where you will be judged.

The Commander: You are first led into a waiting room. Should you move onto one of the two exit squares, a door bursts open and Zhentil Keep spies begin to run away from you. You can either fight them or let them escape. Then you are led in to see the Commander. He will judge your party based on your "performance" in these different areas:

- Fighting spies - the Commander judges you favorably only if you fought and fought well.
- Fighting Red Plumes - he frowns upon this.
- Sneaking past checkpoints - you earn his disapproval.
- Your response to a Parlay - he likes the haughty and the nice, but not the meek or the sly.

- E. The character's class - he favors paladins over thieves.
- F. The character's alignment - the Commander favors good over evil.
- G. Additions to the party - he approves of the Swanmay.
- H. Your prison record - the Commander frowns upon transgressors.

If all goes well, the Commander will give you a free pass through the city and a map. If not, he will brand you looters, forcing you to tackle him and the elite Red Plume guards. After the fight, you find the map in the Commander's desk.

Note: Once you fight the Commander, all subsequent Red Plume encounters lead to immediate combat.

Map Locations

- 1 *Checkpoints.*
- 2 *Mess hall.* If you have the goodwill of the Commander, you may drink and hear some tavern tales here.
- 3 *Barracks.* You may rest here if you have the goodwill of the Commander.
- 4 *Brig.* If you lose a battle with the Red Plumes before you meet the Commander, you wake up here. Try to leave and you're immediately marched to a rendezvous with the Commander.
- 5 *Waiting Room.* You wait here for the Commander to see you. If you walk into one of the eastern squares, a band of Zhentil Keep spies rushes into the room. You may either fight them or let them go, then meet the Commander.
- 6 You meet a group of Shambling Mounds carefully picking over the body of a cleric. Shambling Mounds are very nasty monsters, immune to most damage spells, though not to Magic Missile. They receive only half-damage from weapons. Shambling

Mounds enjoy engulfing a foe, which they can do in just two rounds. A character engulfed for several rounds can be suffocated and die. To avoid this fate, cast *Slow* against the Mounds. Shambling Mounds gain hit points when hit by lightning.

Note: Defeating them provides you with a Wand of Defoliation, a very useful item in the Pit of Moander. You also get a Wand of Lightning Bolts.

- 7 You find a destroyed checkpoint with the mark of Zhentil Keep smeared on the walls.
- 8 In addition to random encounters, you will meet Zhentil Keep Terrorists at these points.
- 9 *Looters.* In addition to random encounters, you meet looters at these points. The first group you meet will give you information about the city if you parlay with them. There is a chance that some of them may be Fire Knives in disguise.
- 10 *Pits.* If you have a dwarf or thief with you, they may notice that the ground here is weak. Their senses should lead you around the trouble; however, failure to detect leads to a ground collapse and damage to your characters.
- 11 *Falling Walls.* Same as pits.
- 12 *Take note.* This is the entrance to the Pit of Moander. It is a one-way entrance.

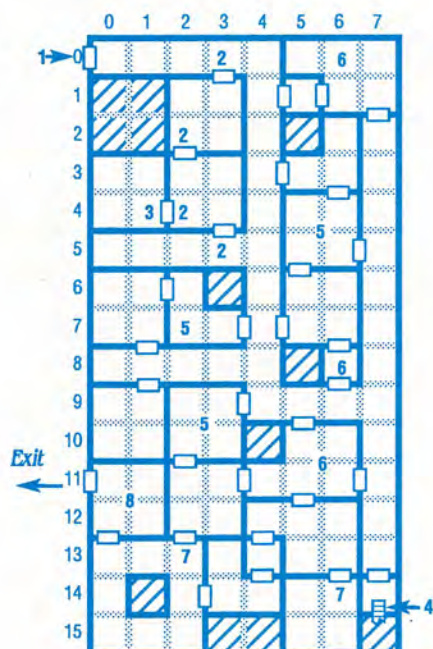
I. THE PIT OF MOANDER

Synopsis: The Pit has become the stronghold of the worshippers of Moander. The party starts at the top level and must work its way to the bottom. There, your characters confront the High Priestess Mogion, who controls one of the bonds. Along the way they meet the lovely Alias and her loyal companion, Dragonbait. The duo may join the party.

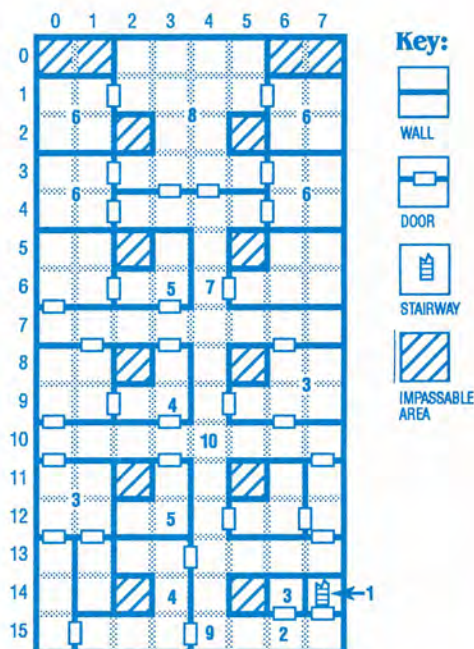
Once the characters reach the main temple, they fall under the power of Mogion's bond. She forces them to open a gateway to allow Moander to reenter the

I. THE PIT OF MOANDER:

LEVEL 1



LEVEL 2



world after a long absence. Opening the gate depletes the power of the bonds and sets the party free.

Now they must kill Mogion to shut the gate and defeat the parts of Moander which have emerged. When they accomplish these tasks, your characters discover the Gauntlet of Moander, one of the three artifacts necessary to defeat Tyranthraxus.

Where You Can Rest: It is safest to rest in any room where you have encountered and defeated your opponents. However, there is no guaranteed rest area.

Note on Encounters with Monsters in the Pit: If Mogion is alive, the monsters attempt to push you back into the corridor and then flee. If Mogion is already dead, they attack.

Level 1 Map Locations

- Entrance to the Pit.** Corpses litter the floor. A wounded cleric collapses the wall behind you, sealing you in. You can hear the sound of battle.
- Monster Remains.** Bodies of various monsters, all freshly killed or fatally wounded.
- Alias and Dragonbait.** You meet them here. If you tell your story, they offer to join you. If you are rude or refuse, they ask again. If you refuse a second time, the pair departs.
- Stairs to the lower level.**
- Vegepygmies.** They will try to push you back and flee if Mogion lives. If Mogion is dead, they'll simply attack. They are very vulnerable to attacks from the Wand of Defoliation.

6 *Shambling Mounds.* Their response also depends on Mogion's status. In combat, use the Wand of Defoliation against the Shamblers. It has only a 3 square range.

7 *Giant Slugs.* Kill them quickly. They spit acid for massive damage. Most of them can be quickly avoided.

8 *Final Battle and Exit.* If you've dispatched Mogion on the second level, then you fight the last remnant of her forces at this point. Use a variety of preparatory and attack spells. Enlarged and Hastened fighters are very effective. When you win, you can leave through the door to the west. Alias and Dragonbait will then leave, assuming you've let them join the party.

Level 2 Map Locations (See map, p. 22)

1 *Stairs to upper level.*

2 *Dead Zhentil Keeper.* A note from Fzoul to Mogion rests in his stilled hand.

3 *Vegepygmies.*

4 *Shambling Mounds.* Cast Enlarge to prepare for battle. The Wand of Defoliation is a superb weapon here.

5 *Giant Slugs.* Move on them quickly.

6 *Moander Fanatics.* They attack automatically if Mogion is dead.

7 *Alias.* Here you receive another chance to accept Alias and Dragonbait into your party. Refuse again and they leave forever.

8 *Mogion Appears.* You meet Mogion, who paralyzes the party through the bonds. Alias and Dragonbait (if present) are trapped by clinging vines. The energy from the bonds is used to open the dimension door that is Moander's entry to the world. As he starts to emerge, the paralysis disappears and you can fight again. Once you defeat Mogion and her minions,

you must crush the pseudo-pods of Moander. These are super-strength Shambling Mounds.

Winning delivers the Gauntlet of Moander into your hands. You then must return to the exit (just above #8 on level one) and bid farewell to Mogion's lair.

Cast preparatory spells before entering the battle. Then, cast a barrage of spells (Fireball is the best) to prevent Mogion and her cultists from casting spells. After defeating the spell casters, eliminate the Shambling Mounds. Against the Bits O' Moander a flurry of these spells is advised: Hold Monster, Charm Monster, Confusion, and Slow. Clerics should cast Slay Living and Poison spells. Send a squad of Enlarged/Hastened fighters to hack up the Bits. A character wielding the Wand of Defoliation is essential. If unable to win this battle any other way, you may use the Dust of Disappearance you picked up in the Thieves' Guild.

Use the Dust of Disappearance in camp before entering this location. Keep the invisible wielder of the Wand of Defoliation at least one square away from his opponents.

9 *Swanmays.* If Silk has made a member of the party a Swanmay, Alias (if she is in your party) now senses this. If you tell her the truth about your Swanmay companion's presence, she stays with you. Lie and Alias and Dragonbait leave to investigate Silk.

10 *Giant Slug Fest.* If Alias is with the party, you encounter a large number of cultists feeding a peasant to a giant slug. Alias and Dragonbait immediately attack, forcing you to join the battle.

When you exit the pit, your party will have completed another of the five sections of the game. You'll have acquired the second of three artifacts, the Gauntlet of Moander,

which will assist your characters in destroying the Pool of Radiance. You'll have rid the party of Mogion's bond. We suggest that you now advance to ZHENTIL KEEP.

J. ZHENTIL KEEP

Synopsis: The Zhentrim are worshippers of Bane, and their High Priest controls one of the bonds. Your goal here is to discover a way into the Shrine of Bane. The city's inhabitants are aware of the party, thanks to the lively tongue of Olive Ruskettle. Consequently, many people rudely point and mutter at the party. On the bright side, Olive knows of secret entrances into the Shrine and will aid the party.

Where You Can Rest: The inn (only).

Whom and What you meet:

Zhentil Keep Troopers (with some Magic-Users): If you respond MEEK during Parlay, they let you go. If you lose a battle, you wake up in the court. If you plead guilty while on trial, you are fined 90% of your money and stripped of 50% of your items. No matter what your plea, you are sent to the arena for trial by combat — to encounter Flightless Griffons, Ogres, Otyughs, Manticores or Gladiators. If you win, you are taken back out to the street.

Once you fight the troops, the Army becomes permanently hostile to the party, and spoils for a fight each time its troops encounter your characters.

Magic-Users (with some Troopers). If you respond SLY in parlay, they let you go. If you lose any battle, you are taken to the Magistrate as above. If you fight the magic-users, they become forever hostile, attacking at the sight of you.

Priests of Bane (with some Troopers). If you respond with NICE in parlay, they release you. If you lose a battle, you are taken to the Magistrate as above. Once you battle the clerics, they will attack you on sight thereafter.

Note: Priests cast powerful spells. Try at all costs to keep priests from casting by striking at them first. If a priest strikes a member of your party with a Hold Person spell, that character is helpless.

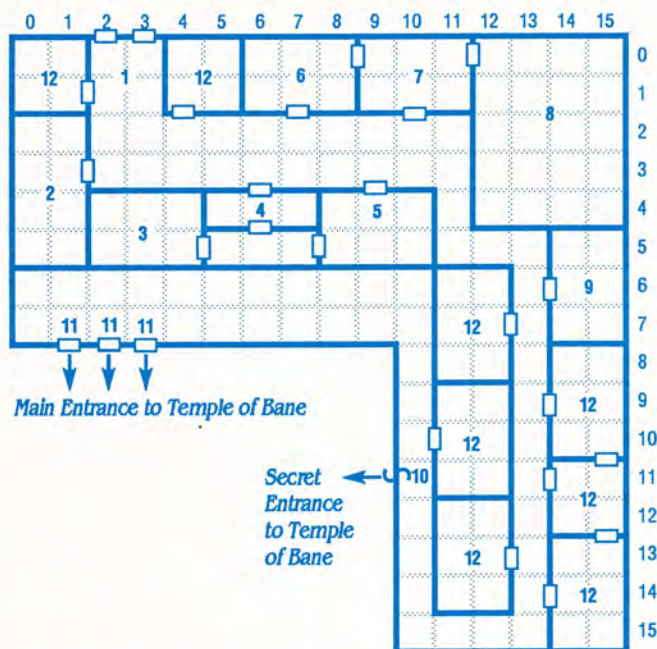
Olive Ruskettle may appear from time to time. She runs away until you meet alongside the Shrine. You also meet various townspeople and overhear remarks as you pass through the crowded environs of the city.

The Tavern: Here you may drink, overhear gossip, and bet on the arena combat matches. If you don't bet or drink you are forced to leave.

Map Locations (See map, p. 25)

- 1 *The Main Gates.* You will be stopped and questioned by the City Guards about your purpose in coming here. You also receive the first indication that you are expected.
- 2 *The Inn.* This is the only place where you can rest in Zhentil Keep.
- 3 *Weapons Shop.* You can buy weapons at inflated prices.
- 4 *Magic Shop.* You can buy magical items at inflated prices. Even so, you should at least buy some Darts of the Hornet's Nest and magic arrows. The scrolls are probably not worth buying. The wands and potions will be useful. You will probably not find anything more worthwhile on which to spend money so you may as well spend it here.
- 5 *Equipment Shop.* Equipment - at inflated prices.
- 6 *Magistrate's Office.* Should you not leave immediately, Zhentil Keep troopers fall upon you. Reinforcements appear if you win the first battle. Fighting either force turns the Zhentil Keep Army hostile for the remainder of the game.
- 7 *The Court.* If you walk in here, you'll find it empty. If you are brought here after losing a battle to the Zhentil Keep Army, you are tried as explained above.

J. ZHENTIL KEEP:



Key:



WALL



DOOR



SECRET
DOOR

8 The Arena. Wander about as much as you like (barring random encounters). If you lose a battle to the Zhentil Keep Army, you are eventually brought here to battle the Keep's "pets".

9 The Tavern. You can buy drinks and listen to tavern tales here. In addition, you may gamble on the Arena combats.

10 Olive's Secret Entrance. Olive Ruskettle offers to take you into the Shrine of Bane through a secret entrance she knows. Refusing this offer a second time blocks the entrance, forcing you to use the main entrance to the temple.

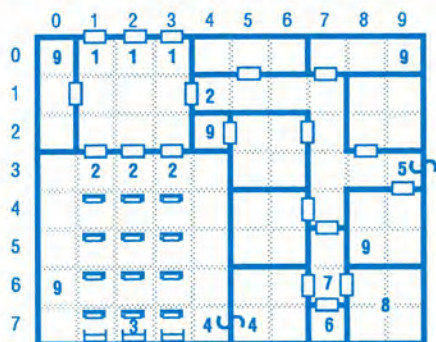
11 Temple of Bane. Main entrance. Priests of Bane rush out and demand

that you accompany them into the Shrine. If you refuse, they attack. If they win, they capture the party and take the characters to a dungeon in the Shrine. If you win, another group of Priests follows in the footsteps of the first. Defeat the reinforcements and win the right to enter the temple through the front doors. Any time you surrender, you are escorted into the dungeon.

Beware: Priests carry clubs which they can hurl at range at a party member under the effect of a Hold Person spell. You must move quickly to defuse their power.

12 Private Residences. If you break into these homes you receive fair warning. Try again and meet an aroused and angry detachment of Zhentil Keep Troops. You've also guaranteed the permanent hostility of the Army.

K. THE SHRINE OF BANE:



Key:



WALL



ALTAR



SECRET
DOOR



DOOR



PEWS

K. THE SHRINE OF BANE

Synopsis: The Banites are in turmoil in the wake of political maneuvering between High Priest Fzoul and Dexam the Beholder. Dexam is an Inquisitor searching for evidence that Fzoul is dabbling in magic. He has sent his lieutenant, a hooded woman (really a Medusa), into the Shrine to locate Dimswart, who has been captured by Fzoul. When the woman meets the party, she insists on taking the characters along to be interviewed. Agreeing to the request is the only way to enter the Caves of the Beholder.

As you move about inside the Shrine of Bane, you may run into wandering bands of Banite Clerics. Select NICE when engaged in a parlay and the clerics may let the party pass. Any other response and the clerics drag their feet until reinforcements arrive. Attack the reinforcements immediately to reduce the number of clerics you must fight later.

Where You Can Rest: The cell at #6. In other locations inside the Shrine, you have a chance of random encounters.

Map Locations

- 1 Main Temple Doors.** An old cleric appears with a crumbling scroll and seals the temple door so no one can leave.
- 2 Banite Clerics.** Automatic encounters unfold here. Beware of the Priests' spell casting powers and the clubs they like to hurl at Held persons.
- 3 Treasure/Trap:** Your party notices a trap door in the altar. If one of your magic-using characters possesses a detect trap spell, you discover that the door is trapped. If you try to disarm it and fail, the entire party is enveloped in a damaging cloud of gas. If all goes well, you find a treasure here.
- 4 Secret Door.** You'll find this door leading to and from the main chapel when the party searches.
- 5 Olive Ruskettle's Entry Point.** Where the party entered the Shrine if accompanied by Olive. The magic device that she used to get you through the walls disintegrates, closing off this opening as a possible exit route from the Shrine.
- 6 Dimswart the Sage.** This cell holds Dimswart the Sage. He will tell you his life-story and ask if he may accompany you. Reply with a "Yes" if you want to be sure that you can leave the Shrine.
- 7 Olive.** If you entered the Shrine through your own powers, Ruskettle materializes here and gives you more information. Olive points out the cell where Dimswart is being held and then disappears.

8 Slaying Room. This room is filled with mirrors. Fzoul uses it to spy on his enemies. Each mirror reveals the current whereabouts of a particular monster. Remember the location of the entry door, for it is invisible inside the room. Just walk through the west wall in the upper left hand corner.

9 Hooded Woman. If Dimswart is with you a hooded woman (Medusa) will "dimension-door" into these areas when you arrive. She offers to help the party escape the clutches of the Banite priests. If you refuse the hooded woman's help, she vanishes. In her place, a band of clerics appears to attack the characters (they have tracked down the powerful magic source of the dimension door).

Note: Each time you cross these squares, the woman offers to help. Saying Yes is the only way to leave the Shrine.

L. THE CAVE OF THE BEHOLDER

Synopsis: The woman takes the characters to meet Dexam, the Beholder. As the interview begins, Fzoul and his troops interrupt with hostile intent. Dexam slays him, and frees the party from the control of the Zhentrim bond. Now your characters must force their way out of the caves — through the battling factions. Once they defeat Dexam, they receive the valuable Amulet of Lythander, an artifact necessary to defeat Tyranthraxus. Once the party has passed through the caves, it's permanently blacklisted from Zhentil Keep.

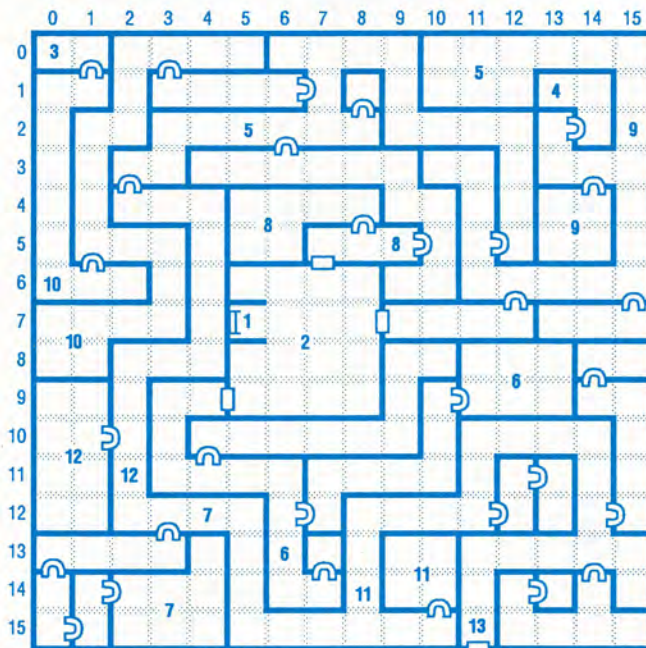
Where You Can Rest: Anywhere except the central altar area (where a battle is going on), but there is no guarantee rest won't be interrupted.

Map Locations

Note: During encounters that occur in the corridors, the monsters may attempt to flee (if the party is winning). In the lair, however, they will fight to the end. You will note that some numbers are indicated twice. Those numbers that are in a room are the lair encounters.

- 1 Dexam's Altar.** You arrive here with the hooded woman from the cave entrance. She then joins a band of armored minotaurs who snap to attention, indicating that she has some power over them.
- 2 Melee in the altar room.** A conflict breaks out between Fzoul's forces and the troops of Dexam after Fzoul's death. Both sides attack you on sight. You must fight your way to one of the altar exit doors to escape.
- 3 Teleporting square.** When you tread upon this square, you are violently teleported to the square at (4). The effect of the teleport is imperfect and slams your characters unmercifully against the wall, damaging them.
- 4 Dead Elf Fighter.** If the party walks into this square, or arrives by teleport, the characters discover a dead elf with a pouch. Inside the pouch is some money and a map showing an exit from the caves. If anyone can detect a trap, you may discover a trap. The party must remove the trap or gas envelopes everyone, causing certain damage.
- 5 Armored Minotaurs.**
- 6 Armored Minotaurs.**
- 7 More Minotaurs.**
- 8 Ogres.**
- 9 Otyughs.**
- 10 Flightless Griffons.**
- 11 Manticores.** These creatures will try to pincushion your characters by flinging spikes from their tails. Move close and attack them first.

L. THE CAVE OF THE BEHOLDER:



Key:



WALL



DOOR



ARCHWAY



ALTAR

12 Medusa, Dexam and Priests. The hooded woman reveals that she is a Medusa. If the party wins, it will recover the Amulet of Lythander from Dexam's body.

Dexam the Beholder is as tough as any monster you'll meet in the game. He is immune to spells and can kill up to three characters per round. To defeat him, your magic-users should cast Haste and Enlarge spells just before battle.

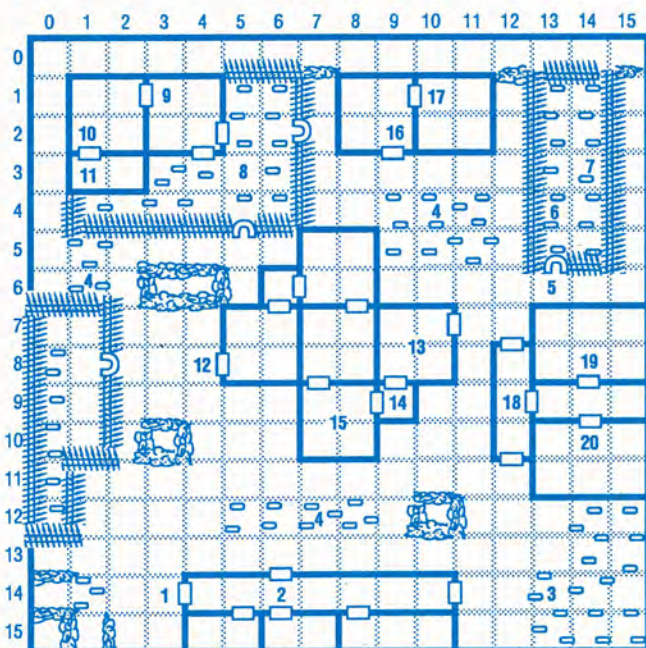
Once in combat, clear away the first rank of Minotaurs with swords or the Fireball attack spell. The remaining fighters should swarm on Dexam before he can attack. A Back Stab is the perfect weapon against the Beholder. After eliminating Dexam, dispatch the dangerous Medusa.

Should the party stumble into battle unprepared, retreat out of Dexam's sight. He is less effective at long range, and moves slowly. At this range, your missile weapons are your best bet for killing him.

13 Cave Exit. Olive will meet you to take Dimswart off your hands.

As it exits from the Cave of the Beholder, the party completes a section of the game. An azure bond is removed from the characters' arms. The third crucial artifact, the Amulet of Lythander, is now in the party's possession. It's time to move on to the meeting with Tyranthraxus in Myth Drannor.

M. THE BURIAL GLEN:



Key:



M. THE BURIAL GLEN

Synopsis: Myth Drannor was an ancient city of the elves. Abandoned long ago, it lies in ruins, overrun by looters and demons. The burial glen that the characters wander through was once reserved for nobility. Now Thri-kreen loot the rich tombs, enjoying their fiendish depredations. A few Rakshasa have also drifted into the glen, seeking gullible prey. Their illusionary and ESP powers make them accomplished beguilers.

Though the elvish spirits are very weak, they can hinder looters and aid protectors. Also present is Nameless, the bard who once created Alias. He tells the characters of the threat of Tyranthraxus and encourages them to hurry.

The Knights of Myth Drannor, who dislike the intrusion of the demons — and Tyranthraxus in particular — may arrange a helpful distraction when the party is in the

Temple. But that depends on your party first showing friendship to the Knights.

Random Encounters: The glen is patrolled by packs of insects. If the insects are led by a Thri-kreen, the party can avoid combat by choosing Parlay, then typing 'Tyranthraxus' when asked to identify their leader. The insects are wary of the powerful Tyranthraxus, who resides in the nearby temple.

Where You Can Rest: At first, nowhere at all. After 10 random encounters have taken place, rest anywhere.

Map Locations

- 1 False Elfin Spirit.** An elvish spirit appears before the party, though it is really Rakshasa in disguise. The deceiving Rakshasa aims to lure the party into the web at the next location.

The story it tells of Thri-kreen gaining great strength from the web is a lie. The Rakshasa flees if attacked.

- 2 *Glowing Red Web.*** This is a web and some wire snares covered by a Rakshasa illusion. The party has the option of speaking, entering, hacking the web up — or leaving. Selecting Speak causes the web to glow more brightly. Entering it entraps the party in its fibers and attracts some huge spiders. Once you've beaten the spiders, the Rakshasa arrives and attacks the party. If your characters hack the web, the spiders still come after you. The Rakshasa becomes frustrated and slips away.
- 3 *Princess Daemir's Spirit.*** If the party has been reburying — and not looting — skeletons it finds, Daemir offers to bless the characters. Accepting her blessing results in a gain of two THACO that is effective while the party is in Myth Drannor. Refusing the blessing incites Daemir's curse and causes a two-point drop in THACO. This curse cannot be removed, so don't refuse. Daemir offers to forgive the party for any grave robbing done, though she'll curse your adventurers for refusing forgiveness (two THACO loss).
- 4 *Thri-kreen Looting Scene.*** These are places where Thri-kreen may be excavating graves. Once you've crushed the insects, the party may either take its own turn at looting or choose to bury the aggrieved skeleton. The loot consists of jewelry, but the party's pillaging is sure to offend elvish spirits.
- 5 *Invitation to an Ambush.*** A Red Plume approaches the party and offers his family's ancient long bow in return for the character's help in rescuing his father's bones. He is actually a Rakshasa trying to lead the party into an ambush at 7. If you overcome the ambush, you acquire the magic long bow (+3).

Rakshasa are immune to your spells, and they cast damage spells. When encountering one or two Rakshasa,

rush them with fighters, damaging the creatures so they cannot cast. If you meet many Rakshasa at a location, retreat immediately to save unprotected characters from the Rakshasan spells (only characters with Minor Globe can hold their ground). Then attack them with magic weapons. The Blessed Crossbow Bolts found in the Burial Glen kill a Rakshasa instantly.

- 6 *Spirit's Warning.*** Once the party follows the Red Plume, a spirit appears to warn them of the ambush — providing they've been restoring graves and not looting them. The spirit is quickly silenced by the Rakshasa.
- 7 *Ambush.*** The Rakshasa has laid an ambush with phase spiders here. Cast Slow Poison and Neutralize Poison on characters afflicted by the spiders' poison.
- 8 *Guardian Spirit.*** The entrance to this tower is guarded by an elvish spirit. If the party has looted graves, he'll raise a wind and hurl stones at the party, then dissipate. If the party has been on good behavior, your characters are invited in to see the queen.
- 9 *Suits of Armor.*** Two suits of armor flank this stairway. They oppose the party's entrance if it fought its way past the Guardian spirit. However, their opposition is limited and they can only try to bar the passage with their spears. When attacked, they crumble to rust.
- 10 *Spirit Guardian.*** An elvish spirit here summons a party of Thri-kreen to fight the party if it has forced its way past 8 and 9. Otherwise, it merely invites them into the presence of the queen.
- 11 *Queen's Spirit.*** The spirit of the ancient queen of Myth Drannor resides here. If the spirit-guardian admitted the characters to her presence, she gives them a magical treasure, including some blessed

crossbow bolts that are useful in defeating the Rakshasas. In the event that the party used force to gain entry, the queen's spirit suggests a cursed treasure as a substitute. The party can refuse — at the price of a collapsed tower upon its head.

- 12 Nameless.** Here the party meets Nameless, who warns the characters about Tyranthraxus.
- 13 Thri-kreen Guards.** They're sure to be hostile. Your characters must kill the Thri-kreens quickly, for they attack with paralyzing venom. If a party member is affected, try to move him out of harm's way.
- 14 More Thri-kreen Guards.**
- 15 Main Thri-Kreen Detachment.** Guards from 14 and 15 respond to the noise of your arrival and reinforce the troops here.
- 16 Spiders.** Huge spiders occupy this room. Don't forget to have Neutralize Poison memorized in case a character is poisoned by one of these arachnids.
- 17 Spider Nests.** Hopefully, the spirits have warned your characters about this location, for these agile creatures guard their nests most fiercely.
- 18 Phase Spiders.** Will attack at anyone's approach.
- 19 Phase Spiders II.** More phase spiders live in this room.
- 20 Spiders and Bones.** Phase spiders have gathered some bones together to form a nest. The players can loot the bones or return them to the crypts. Of course, looting the dead offends the elvish spirits.

Note: To enter the ruins of Myth Drannor, move the party on a path that takes them off the eastern edge of the map. The eastern border of the Glen is the western boundary of the ruins.

N. THE RUINS OF MYTH DRANNOR

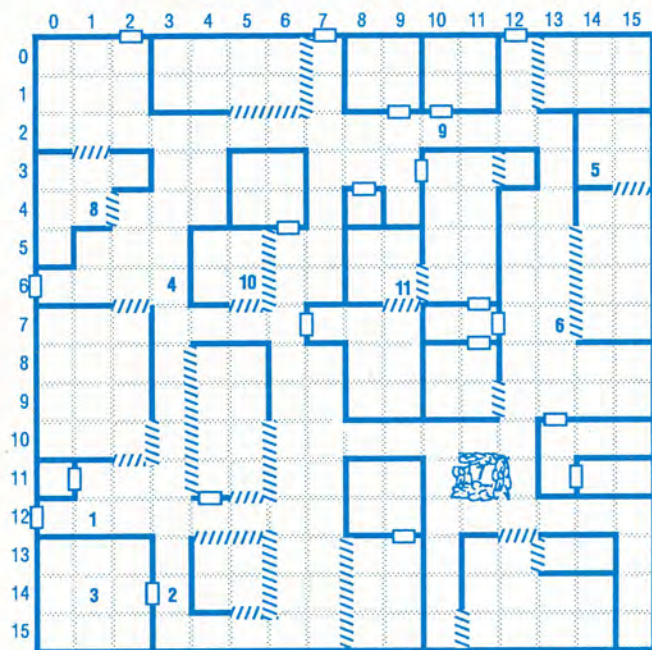
Synopsis: This area of the ruins is controlled by the Rakshasa and their minions, the Margoyles and Hell Hounds. The head Rakshasa is angry with Tyranthraxus for stealing his minions, so he tries to reclaim them when the party enters the Temple.

Where You Can Rest: No place is safe until the party has eliminated 10 random patrols. Then rest at will.

Map Locations

- 1 Unkempt Rakshasa.** A friendly Rakshasa with matted fur approaches the party. He offers to help them loot the Rakshasa's storehouse if the characters will help him break in. His purpose: to find proof that another Rakshasa had been cheating at gambling. He leads the party to location 2.
Once the party defeats the guards, another Rakshasa leads more troops against the first Rakshasa. The party can help either side in the battle. The characters can loot the storehouse if they've sided with the first Rakshasa. Otherwise, the storehouse guard is replaced.
- 2 Storehouse Guard.** Here the storehouse guard is stationed.
- 3 Rakshasa's Central Storeroom.** If the party should search the premises, it may find some valuables.
- 4 Hell Hound Chase.** A man captured by the Rakshasa has been sentenced to be on the receiving end of a hell hound hunt. The party sees the tail end of the chase. If your characters rescue the man, he reveals the location of his hidden treasure.
- 5 Hidden Treasure.** The party should search this location if it has rescued the man in 4.
- 6 Nameless.** This anonymous benefactor meets the party here and encourages it to confront Tyranthraxus.
- 7 Brushy Ambush.** The center of this courtyard is overgrown with brush. What seems to be a hobbit rushes into the thicket, pursued by a hungry

N. THE RUINS OF MYTH DRANNOR:



Key:



WALL



DOOR



HEDGE



RUBBLED WALL

hell hound. But the hobbit is actually a Rakshasa who has stationed hidden forces on the nearby rooftops. Should the party decide to rescue the forlorn "hobbit," the Rakshasa reveals himself and ambushes the party.

8 Gambling Den. This is a popular Rakshasan hangout. Refer to Invitation to an Ambush (BURIAL GLEN SECTION) for the best tactics to use against the Rakshasa.

9 Margoyles in Doorway. The party spots two margoyles torturing a small animal. If the party attacks, it can kill the margoyles.

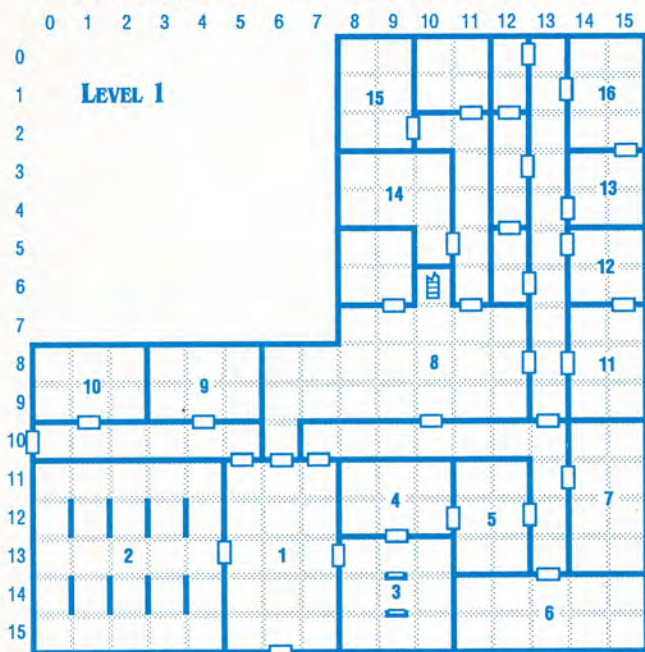
However, a Rakshasa has laid an ambush for anyone presuming to be a defender of small animals' rights. He collapses the doorway onto the party. If the party plays dead, the attacking Rakshasa can be surprised. Otherwise, he merely retreats.

10 Old Sewer Grate. This grate leads into the ruined temple. If the party enters through the grate, it can kill some of Tyranthraxus' minions before the climactic battle occurs.

11 Head Rakshasa. Here the chief Rakshasa holds court. If the party parleys and chooses haughty, he condescends to help the characters when they attack Tyranthraxus.

If you fight the chief Rakshasa, you'll face a large Rakshasan force. Cast preparatory spells before entering the battle. Magic-users should protect themselves with the Globe of Invulnerability and cast Haste and Enlarge on your fighters. A cleric's Prayer spell is also valuable. Keep unshielded characters away from the Rakshasan ranks, and utilize magic weapons against them. We recommend a Parlay with a Haughty response. Parlaying will also help you avoid Rakshasa patrols.

O. THE GRAND RUINED TEMPLE:



Key:



WALL



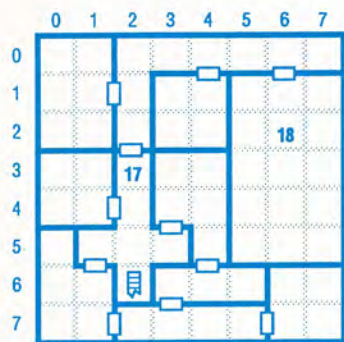
DOOR



STAIRCASE



PEWS



LEVEL 2

Tyranthraxus' minions and approach him. A cataclysmic battle ensues. The party closes the Pool of Radiance, kills Tyranthraxus — and is generously rewarded.

The party should hoard its strength and resources if it is to prevail in the final battle against Tyranthraxus.

Note: If you wish to fight the battles in Dagger Falls — including the fight against the Mulmaster Beholder Corps in Oxam's Tower — you must do so before eliminating Tyranthraxus. Once he's dead, you cannot return to the Falls. Also, once you enter the Temple, you may not leave.

Where You Can Rest: The party will be unable to rest anywhere in the temple.

O. THE GRAND RUINED TEMPLE

Synopsis: Here the characters have their final confrontation with Tyranthraxus. The most potent member of The New Alliance plan to use his bond to annex the characters' bodies. However, Nameless sacrifices himself to temporarily free the party. The characters can then slice their way through

Map Locations

1 Entry Hall. When the party enters the main entrance hall, the sigils on the characters' forearms force them ahead. Tyranthraxus presents himself and leads them into the chapel. There he prepares to use them as his new bodies, but Nameless temporarily frees the party from Tyranthraxus' control. He retreats and leaves his minions to battle the party.

2 Chapel to Bane.

3 Private Chapel to Bane. Run by a high priest unsympathetic to Tyranthraxus. His hostility doesn't help your characters, however, for the priest settles on their elimination as the best way to thwart Tyranthraxus. Attack and subdue the priest quickly, for he possesses multiple Hold Person spells. His Slay Living spell is deadly.

4 High Priest's Bedroom.

5 High Priest's Office.

6 Kitchen. The sewer from the ruins emerges here. It collapses once the party enters.

7 Priest Barracks. Empty after Tyranthraxus sounds the alarm.

8 Main Hall. This central hall contains the stairway to the second floor.

9 Margoye Barracks.

10 Hell Hound Kennel. More Creature quarters.

11 Meditation Chapel.

12 Priest Preparing Spell. The party's entrance disrupts his ceremony.

13 Food Storage Area.

14 Embalming Area.

15 Library.

16 Storage Area.

17 Final Door. It remains locked until the party has met Tyranthraxus at the Entry Hall.

18 Final Battle. Here the final battle with Tyranthraxus unfolds. High Priests and Margoyles support Tyranthraxus against your party, making the fight very difficult. As triumph nears, you may use the Gauntlet of Moander to destroy the Pool of Radiance. Tyranthraxus dies the true death and the curse of the final azure bond vanishes.

The battle against Tyranthraxus is the ultimate test for your party.

Tyranthraxus can use a devastating lightning bolt once a round. His Priests and Margoyles are also potent.

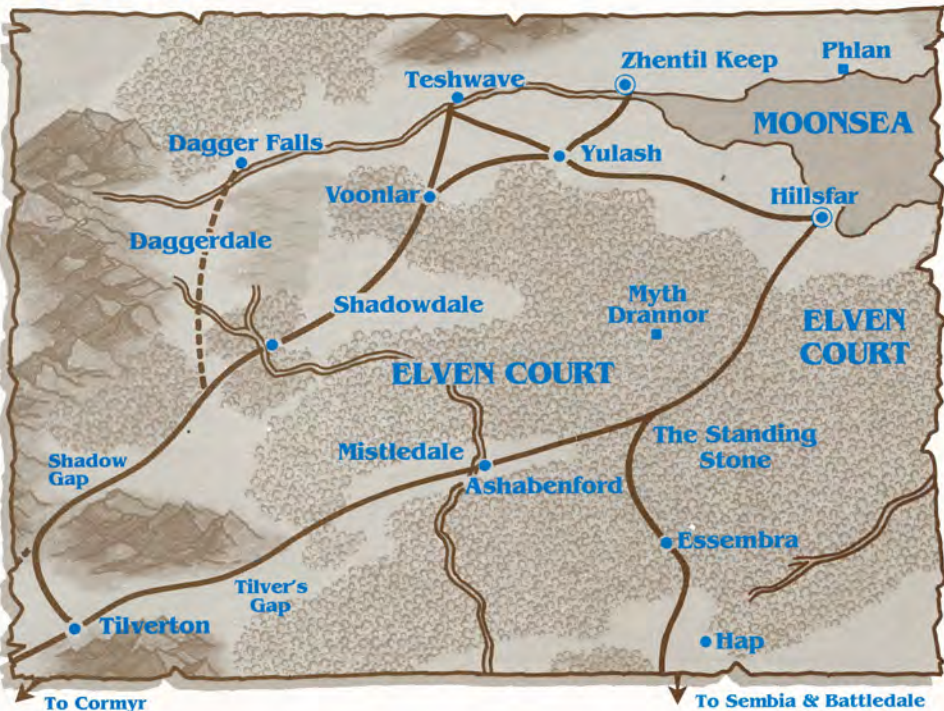
To win, have the party spread out and stay away from walls to avoid taking extra damage from lightning bolts. Magic-users should cast Fireballs and Lightning Bolts to eliminate the Margoyles and harm the High Priests before they cast spells. Confusion spells may turn enemy creatures against each other, thus drawing away enemy attacks from the party.

Your Hastened, Enlarged fighters should head straight for Tyranthraxus and try to kill him quickly. Magic-users should cast Hold Monster and Charm Monster against Tyranthraxus. If these spells work, your fighters' task will be eased. A high dexterity, Hastened fighter armed with Darts of the Hornets Nest will kill just about anything he can get close to.

Note: Rangers with magic armor and magic bows are especially effective against Tyranthraxus.

With Tyranthraxus' downfall, the fifth and final bond is released from your party. The characters have performed valiantly, releasing the hold of The New Alliance on the Forgotten Realms.

P. OVERLAND:



P. OVERLAND

Synopsis: While travelling overland, your party may pass from some areas to other specified areas. Different methods of travel may be used, depending upon where you are. Several trails feature special events to occupy your party's attention.

All towns have a Search Area option which allows entry into dungeons - but only after you've completed either Hap, Yulash or Zhentil Keep. You may leave any of the overland dungeons by searching for an exit at any point (with the exception of Oxam's Tower at Dagger Falls).

Where You Can Rest: You may rest anywhere, though there's a small chance of an encounter every few hours.

Tilverton. Once the party has been thrown out of Tilverton, it cannot return. Your characters may, however, visit the Sewers and fight the monsters within, or use the thieves' training facility.

Note: the Sewers can only be exited through their proper exit, you will not automatically find the way out if you search.

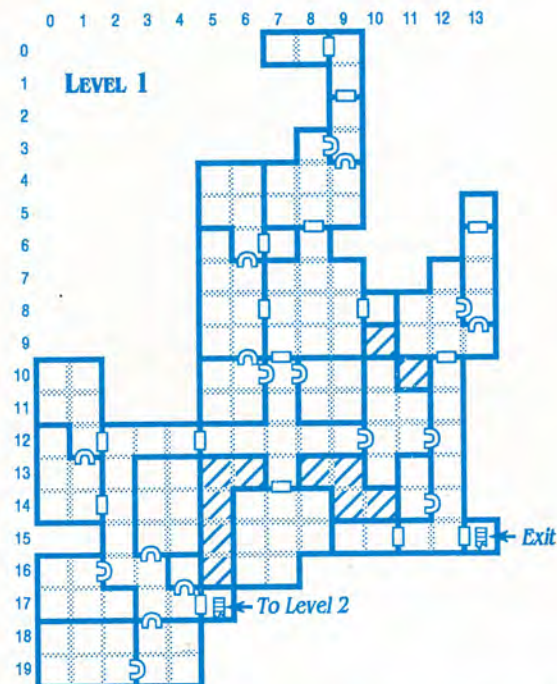
Shadow Gap. This pass on the road to Tilverton has a new inn. When the characters arrive, they find it under siege by Displacer Beasts.

Tilver's Gap. Hippogriffs guard this pass and attack anyone who dares pass through.

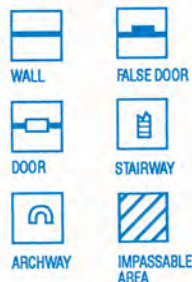
Q. SHADOWDALE

(See maps, pp.36 - 37) This is the home of Elminster the Sage, who is angry at Dracandros for using a symbol so similar

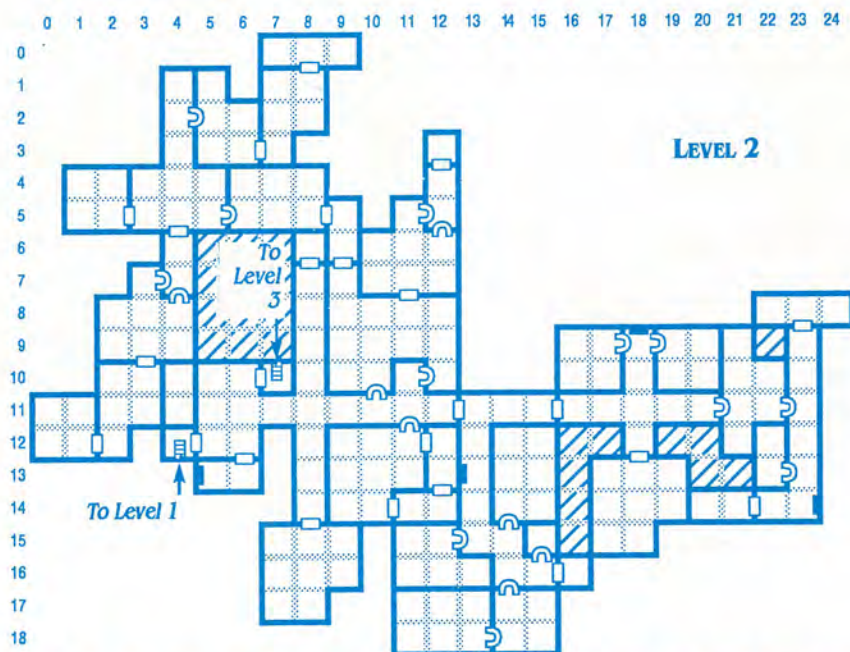
Q. SHADOWDALE DUNGEON:

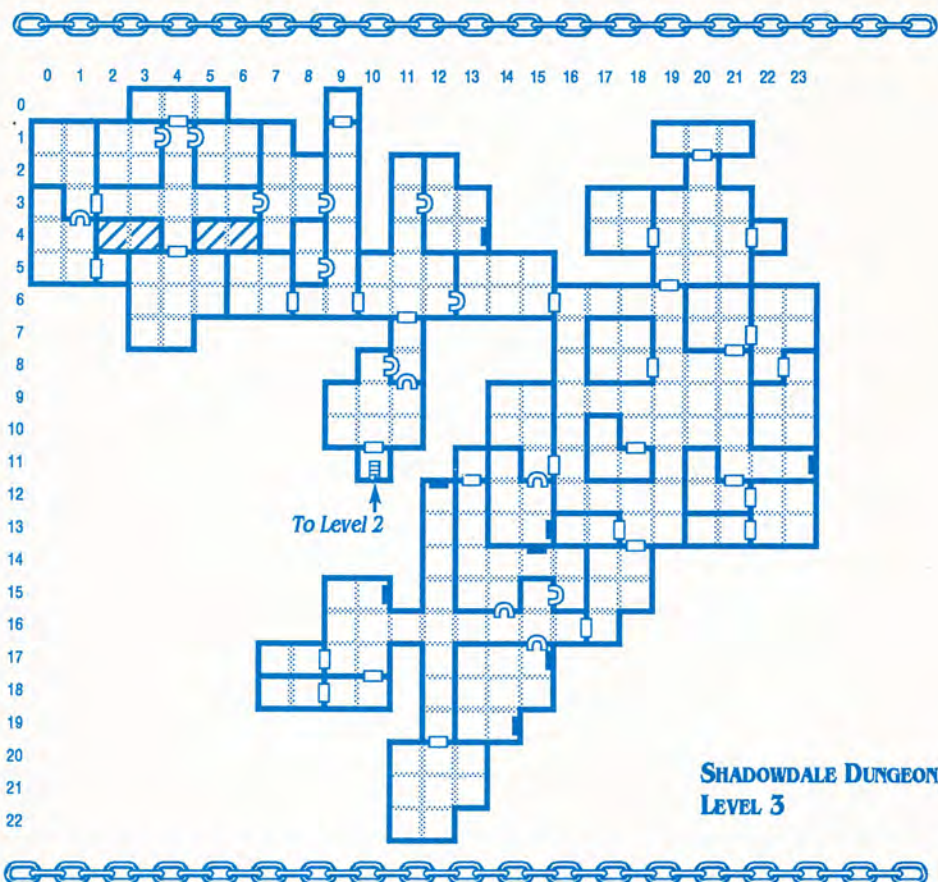


Key:



Note: All encounters in the Shadowdale Dungeon are random





SHADOWDALE DUNGEON LEVEL 3

to his own. If the party visits the bar here, Elminster appears in disguise and reveals information about Dracondros.

A three level dungeon lies below. The daughter of a wealthy magistrate awaits rescue within.

Note: The party need not enter these places. They are included mainly to challenge powerful parties. However, the battles you fight will add to your characters' experience points.

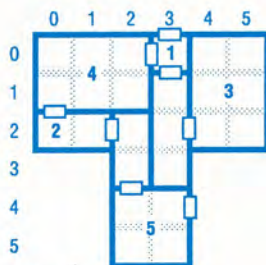
Dagger Falls. The Zhentrim bond the characters wear angers the Dagger Falls townsfolk, as the town is very hostile to anyone from Zhentil Keep. Dagger Falls folk may befriend the party if it has warned the town of the Bugbear army, or rescued a farm from marauding Ettin.

Your party's explorations should turn up a tower, with caverns below, and a magic shop. A Bane priest controls the tower, while the Mulmaster Beholder Corp has occupied the cavern. The Beholder Corps has called a meeting of the realms' most dangerous creatures to talk over the dangers of adventuring parties. Interrupting this conference provokes the deadliest fight in the game. The engagement challenges your high level characters. You need not prevail to succeed in your overall objectives.

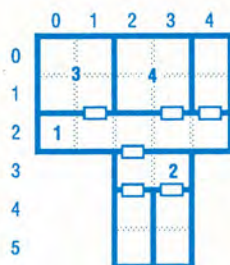
Note: To defeat the Beholder Corps, use the Dust of Disappearance on the party before the engagement.

R. OXAM'S TOWER:

LEVEL 1



LEVEL 2



LEVEL 3



LEVEL 4



LEVEL 5



LEVEL 6



LEVEL 7



Key:



WALL



DOOR

R. OXAM'S TOWER

Map Locations:

Level 1

- 1 The front door to Oxam's Tower.
- 2 Stairs up to the 2nd level.
- 3 Library filled with old books that crumble at your touch.
- 4 Sitting Room. Search here to find random treasure.
- 5 Battle with Minotaurs. The door to the east leads into the dungeons of Oxam.

Level 2

- 1 Stairs down.
- 2 Stairs up.
- 3 Bedroom.
- 4 Bedroom. Search to find random treasure.

Level 3

- 1 Stairs up/down.

Level 4

- 1 Stairs up/down. Image of High Priest of Bane. Otyugh fight.

Level 5

- 1 Stairs up/down. Manticore fight if you remain in room.

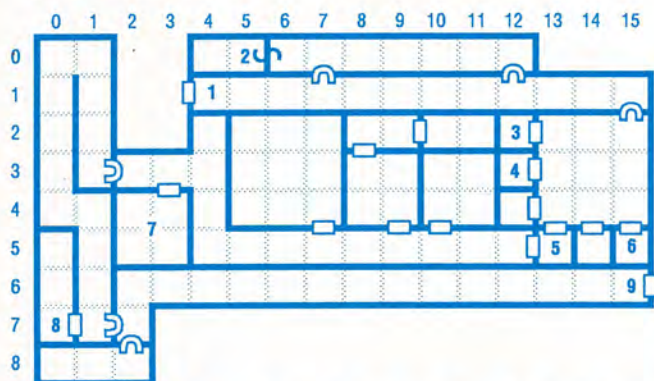
Level 6

- 1 Stairs up/down.

Level 7

- 1 Stairs down. Fight with High Priest of Bane, other priests, and otyughs.

S. DUNGEON:



Key:



WALL



DOOR



ARCHWAY



SECRET DOOR

S. DUNGEON

Map Locations

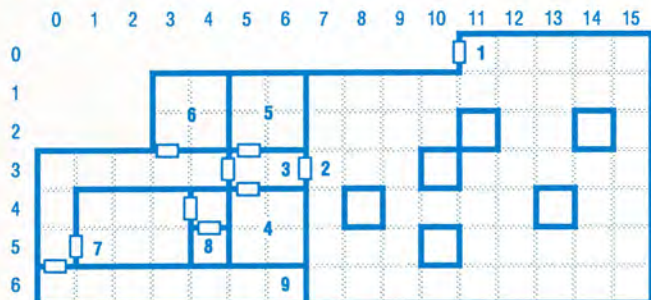
- 1 Entrance to Dungeon.
- 2 Medusa and Griffons. Treasure.
- 3 Arrow Trap.
- 4 Teleport to Entrance to Oxam's Tower (#1 on Level 1).
- 5 Otyugh fight.
- 6 Surprised by fighters.
- 7 Medusa.
- 8 Gas Spore.
- 9 Entrance to Caverns.

T. CAVERNS

Map Locations

- 1 Entrance to Caverns.
- 2 Entrance to Evil Convention Center.
- 3 Beholder.
- 4 Rakshasa disguised as Guards.
- 5 Drow Lords.
- 6 Three Beholders.
- 7 Mulmaster Beholder Corps.
- 8 Treasury.
- 9 Exit to the Overland Map.

T. CAVERNS:



Key:

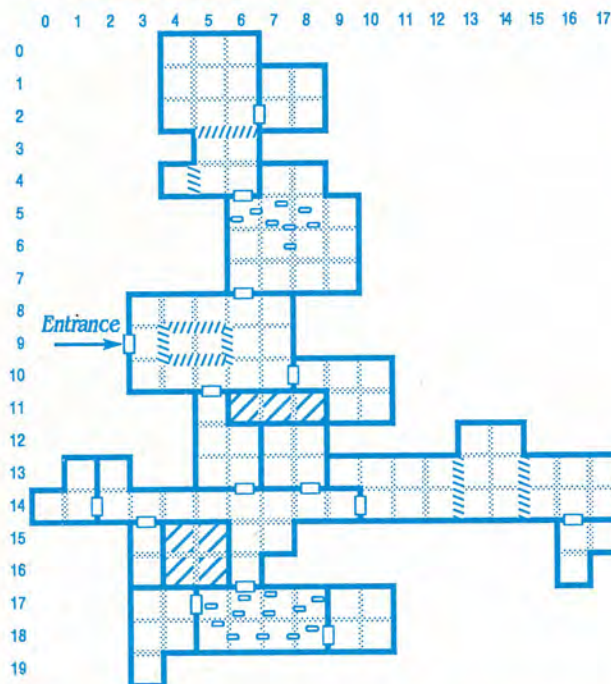


WALL



DOOR

U. HILLSFAR RUINS:



Key:



WALL



DOOR



IMPASSABLE
AREA



RUBBLED
WALL



HEADSTONES

Note: All encounters in the Hillsfar Ruins are random

U. HILLSFAR

This city is at war with Zhentil Keep. As a result, the party's entry bearing the Zhentrim sigil leads to rotten treatment. The innkeepers refuse your characters service. Everyone in the tavern picks fights with them.

Exploring reveals an area of ruins and graveyards. The party may surprise buccaneers looking for a place to bury their loot.

V. ASHABENFORD

(See map, p. 41) A two-level dungeon lies below this town. A madman has taken refuge here, protected by a mysterious item of summoning. This lets him call upon various hostile creatures if the party discovers him.

W. ESSEMBRA

(See map, p. 43) Another split-level dungeon lies below this town. The owl-bears which inhabit the dungeon worship a drow mage.

X. VOONLAR

(See map, p. 45) Exploring reveals an area of ruins where Cultists of Moander are performing a ritual.

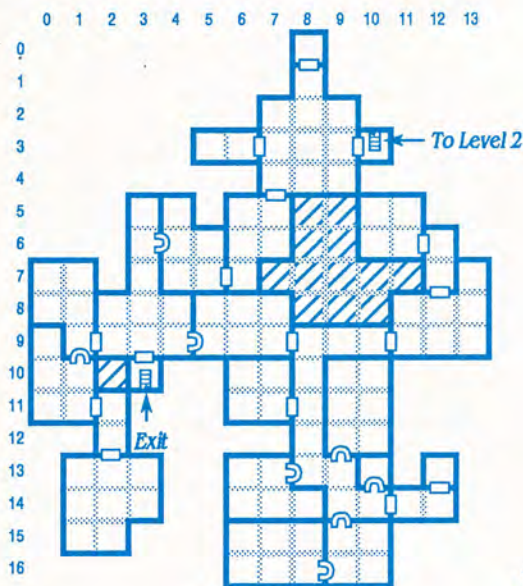
Y. TESHWAVE

(See map, p. 46) Exploring leads the party to an area of ruins and burial areas. River pirates are burying their loot here.

Z. PHILAN

(See map, p. 47) The party may find an area of ruins occupied by Red Plumes from Hillsfar and Zhentrim terror troops.

V. ASHABENFORD DUNGEON:



LEVEL 1

Key:



WALL



DOOR



ARCHWAY



STAIRWAY

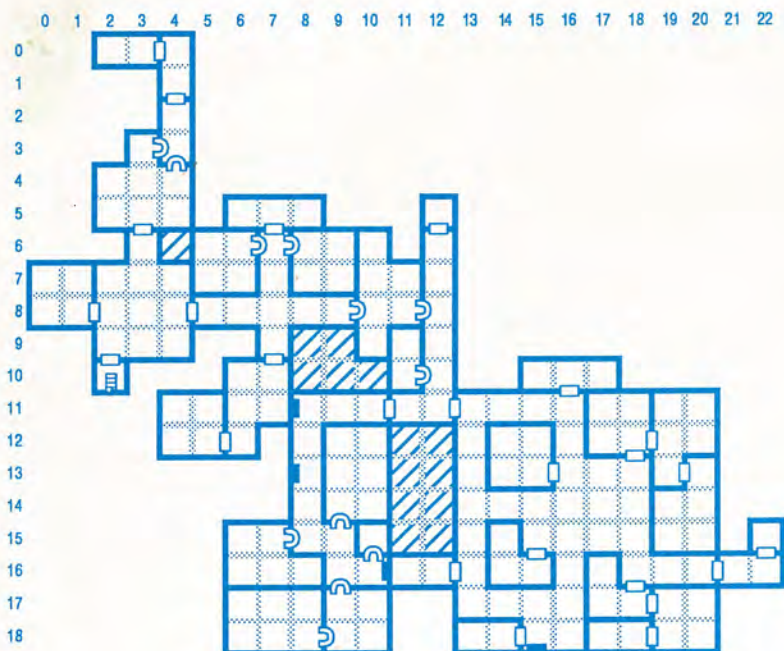


FALSE DOOR



IMPASSABLE AREA

Note: All encounters in the Ashabenford Dungeon are random



LEVEL 2

Wilderness between Shadowdale and Dagger Falls. Travelling by wilderness to Dagger Falls, the party comes upon a pack of Ettins raiding a farming community. Rescuing the farmers guarantees the party a favorable reaction upon arrival in Dagger Falls.

Wilderness between Teshwave and Dagger Falls. Along this trail, the party will discover a path leading into the mountains. There they learn that the Zhentrim have assembled an army of Bugbears and Wargs. The Zhentrim plan to send the army against Dagger Falls, then dispatch a 'rescue' force to save the city.

The party has arrived at a time when the Zhentrim were expecting a mercenary band. Their orders are to turn command over to the mercenaries and avoid responsibility for the intended assault. Once in charge, your characters can either slip away and warn Dagger Falls, march on Dagger Falls or Teshwave, or attack the Bugbear commanders. Warning Dagger Falls gives the city time to mobilize and thwart the offensive. Marching on Teshwave destroys the Zhentrim rescue force and the bugbear army. Marching on Dagger Falls starts a fight with the Bugbear commanders.

Boating. The rivers and inner sea are full of pirates, so embarking on a boat trip may well lead to an encounter with these freshwater Buccaneers. The only exception is the Ashaben River, kept clear by the Knights of Myth Drannor.

Wilderness between Mistedale and Shadowdale. The wetter areas along the river are infested with Lizard Men. In the drier sections, patrols of Knights of Myth Drannor will shadow the party. They are not hostile and will avoid combat.

The roads between Mistedale and Hillsfar. These roads cut through dense forest, perfect sites for ambush. Fire Knife assassins will attempt to waylay the party here.

Wilderness between the Standing Stones and Essembra. This walk leads through the Vale of Lost Voices, which is presently home to a community of

Centaur. They are friendly and will aid the party in its travels.

The Standing Stones. A projection of Tyranthraxus waits here, disguised as a robed human. He will give the characters hints to where the other members of the Alliance are. It is Tyranthraxus' intention to have the party defeat the others and bring him the artifacts. The party cannot harm him here.

The forest near the Standing Stones is filled with many dangerous creatures. Patrolling the forest allows the party to meet and combat these lurking foes. If you find lairs, you may discover magic items.

Wilderness near Yulash. The green robed cultists of Moander prowl the wilderness, keeping an eye out for the party. They will trail them to Yulash — but never attack. Once the party destroys the Cult of Moander, the cultists disappear.

Between Voonlar and Yulash. The party discovers the Road of Moander, left by the slime-god in his last incarnation. A pile of organic material, animated by Moander, lies at the end of this road.

This mass of garbage is now a monster-lair. Besides its noteworthy odor, nothing of value resides here.

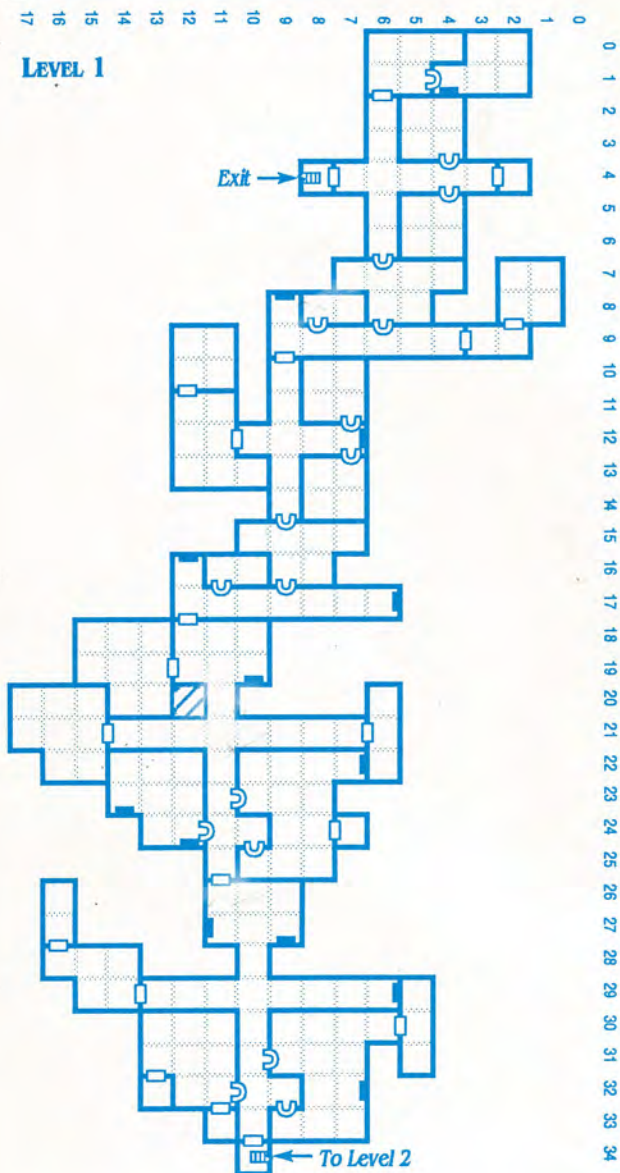
Roads under Zhentil Keep control. Troops patrol these roads heavily. They let the party pass if its members still bear the Zhentrim bond. Otherwise, they attack the party.

Road between Yulash and Hillsfar. Red Plume troops patrol this road and show great hostility to the characters if they bear the Zhentrim bond. Otherwise, they let the party pass.

Wilderness between Essembra and Hap. As the party approaches Hap for the first time, three Black Dragons confront it. Once the characters have defeated Dracandros in Hap, they meet Crimdrac the Dracolich here — unless Crimdrac was slain in the caves. Otherwise, they move on towards Essembra unhindered.

W. ESSEMBRA DUNGEON:

LEVEL 1



Key:



WALL



DOOR



ARCHWAY



STAIRWAY

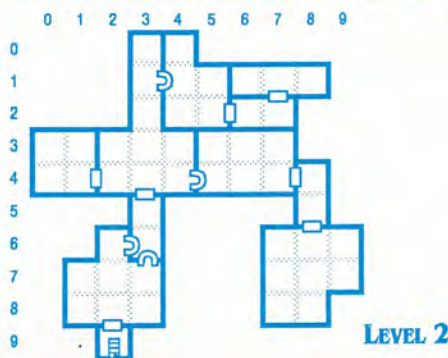


FALSE DOOR



IMPASSABLE
AREA

Note: All encounters in the Essembra Dungeon are random



LEVEL 2



SPECIAL ITEMS AND WHERE THEY CAN BE FOUND

Dust of Disappearance: Use this item just before a battle that you feel you cannot win any other way. Dust of Disappearance provides invisibility that has a greater duration than the regular invisibility spells and remains active even if you attack. This item can only be used once, and there is only one such item in the game. Use with caution. The Dust is found in the Thieves Guild Treasure Room.

Gauntlets of Dexterity: These increase the owners dexterity by 1 point (even in excess of 18) and allow the wearer to pick pockets or open locks as a 4th level thief. If the owner is already a thief, his ability to pick pockets and open locks is increased by 10%. This item is found in the Salamander Caverns (in the Drow Caves).

Necklace of Missiles: This item allows anyone to throw fireballs. It must be worn (readied) to be used. It is very good for clerics as they are often not as useful in melee and can't otherwise cast fireball. Found in the Fire Knives Armory.

Ring of Wizardry: This doubles the number of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd level spells that a magic-user may memorize. It can be found with Dracandros after his defeat.

Wand of Fireballs: This item casts a fireball. It can provide extra firepower if your Magic-User is low on spells. Found with Dracandros after his defeat.

Wand of Defoliation: Only effective against vegetable creatures such as the Shambling Mounds and Vegepygmies. Found on the cleric's body in Yulash.

Wand of Lightning: It allows the wielder to throw lightning bolts as in the spell. **WARNING:** Casting lightning against Shambling Mounds only makes them bigger! Found on the Cleric's body in Yulash.

Bracers AC4 and AC2: Your thieves and magic-users are extremely vulnerable because they cannot wear armor. Use the bracers to raise your base armor class. Bracers cannot be used in conjunction with armor. You can, however, use them in conjunction with other magical protection devices (such as Rings of Protection). The Bracers of AC4 can be found in the Troll Treasure in the Sewers of Tilverton. The Bracers of AC2 can be obtained from Zhentrim Marauders in Yulash.

Bracers of Defenselessness: These look exactly like Bracers of AC4. **WARNING:** This item is cursed! It drops the AC of the wearing character to AC10. Use a Remove Curse to get this item off. Found in the Fire Knives' Armory.

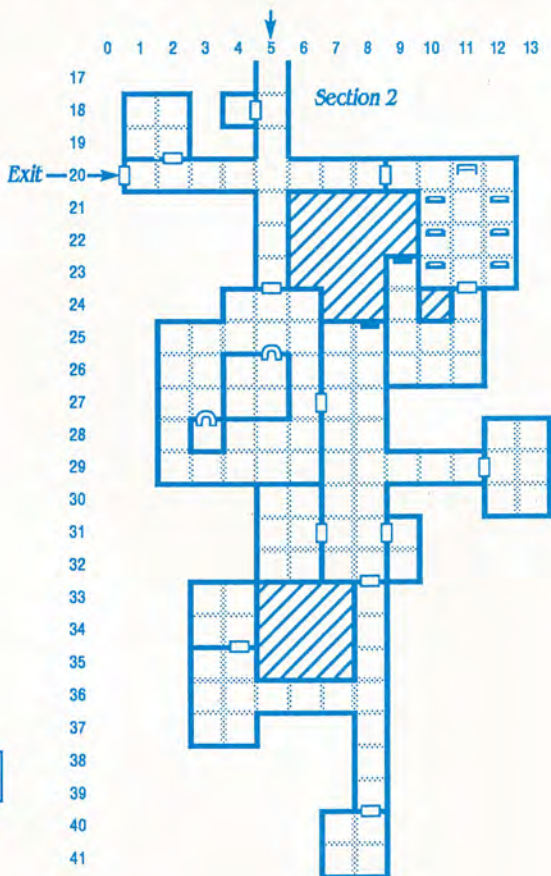
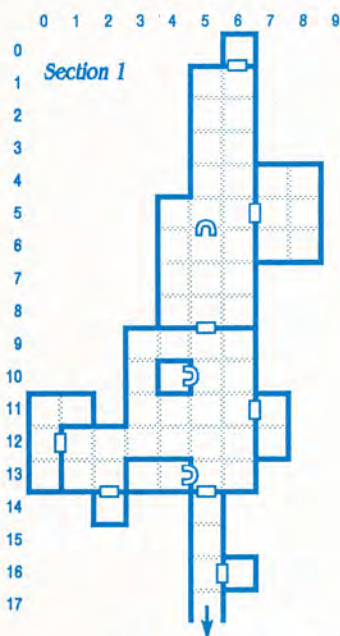
Cloak of Displacement: When worn (readied), it reduces the AC of the wearer by 2 (in addition to any other protections). It also makes the first attack directed at the wearer in a combat miss.

Robe of Powerlessness: **WARNING!!!!** This is a cursed item! This robe will reduce your intelligence and strength to 3. Use Remove Curse to get rid of the item. Found with Dracandros after you defeat him.

Elfin Chain: The only kind of armor (other than leather) that thieves can wear and still keep all of their thieving abilities. It is very light and does not affect encumbrance. Acts as normal chain-mail otherwise. Found in the Fire Knives' Armory.

Platemail +3: The best protection you can get. There is a set worn by the Dark Elf Lord in the Wizard's Tower and another worn by Mogion in the Pit of Moander.

X. VOONLAR RUINS:



Key:



Note: All encounters in the Voonlar Ruins are random

Sword +1, Flame Tongue: Great against trolls. Found in the Fire Knives' Armory.

Sword +3, Frost Brand: This sword is counted as +6 against fire-using or dwelling creatures. It works very well against Salamanders and is found in the Fire Knives Armory.

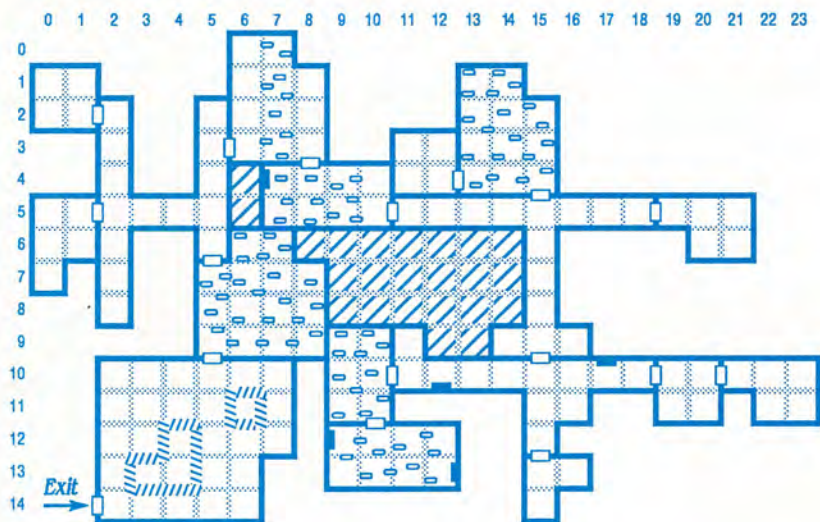
Mace +2, Flail +2: Handy for your clerics. Found in the Fire Knives' Armory.

Longsword +2 Draonslayer: When wielded against a Black Dragon, it does triple damage (3-36 +4 points of damage). Otherwise, it is just a regular +2 longsword. Found in the Salamander Caverns (in the Drow Caves).

Sword +2, Berserking: This sword forces the wielder to go berserk. He will attack the nearest target, friend or foe. It is CURSED, so use the Remove Curse spell to be rid of it. It can be found in the treasure in the Dark Shrine in Zhentil Keep.

Sword +3: This can be found in the dying man's treasure in Myth Drannor.

Y. TESHWAVE RUINS:



Key:



WALL



DOOR



HEADSTONES



RUBBLED
WALL



FALSE
DOOR



IMPASSABLE
AREA

Note: All encounters in the Teshwave Ruins are random

+12 to damage!!). This powerful item can be found in the dying man's treasure in Myth Drannor.

A final note on the ROYAL TREASURES of MYTH DRANNOR:

Respond correctly to the spirits of the Elves and you will receive a good treasure that includes:

RING OF INVISIBILITY
BLESSED CROSSBOW BOLTS (12) — effective against Rakshasa
CROSSBOW +5
RING OF PROTECTION +2
STAFF SLING +3

If you do not respond correctly, you will receive the following CURSED treasure:

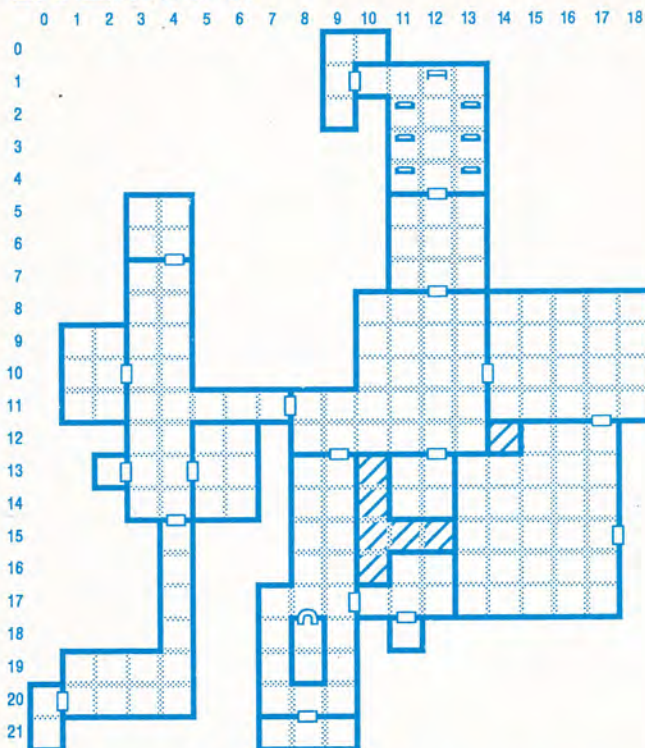
ARMOR OF VULNERABILITY
GAUNTLETS OF FUMBLING
BRACERS OF DEFENSELESSNESS
HAT OF STUPIDITY
ROBE OF POWERLESSNESS
ROBE OF VERMIN
SWORD -2, CURSED
SWORD +2, BERSERKING

Mace +3: Found in the Salamander Caverns (in the Drow Caves), this can be a very useful weapon for your cleric.

Drow Items: All of these items are of a magical nature. They include a +5 sword, a number of +3 swords, and many sets of +3 chainmail. However, all of these items will disappear and fade in the sun as soon as you exit the areas where the Drow are. They can be found on the Drow.

Girdle of Storm Giant Strength: The wearer of this item gains a strength of 24 and the appropriate hit and damage bonuses this gives (a +6 to hit bonus and a

Z. PHLAN RUINS:



Key:



WALL



DOOR



ARCHWAY



ALTAR



PEWS



IMPASSABLE
AREA

Note: All
encounters
in the
Phlan Ruins
are random

GENERAL HINTS:

After combat, loot your fallen opponents. Use the Detect Magic spell to find out if your foes had magic items. You can take a chance and have a character take an item and ready it. By comparing his THACO, AC, or DAMAGE before and after he readies the item, try to tell if there is something special about it. Some items are cursed, so keep a Remove Curse Spell handy if you do this.

To find out what an item is, take it to a shop and have it identified. There are shops in most minor towns in the Overland. Keep an eye on your spells. Big battles can occur at almost any time, so be prepared. Save your game often. Use multiple save games. Non-IBM users should have at least two separate save game disks and alternate between them.

CREDITS

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Break the curse of the Azure Bonds – regain control of your destiny!

Take heart, weary one, your search for the creators of the curse which ensnares your will is closer to an end than you think! This store of knowledge will tip the scales of power in your favor...

A complete player's guide to SSI's CURSE OF THE AZURE BONDS computer adventure game, this clue book is an invaluable aid to the avid player. It contains:

- Winning game strategies, including tips on choosing the best character classes and races for the optimum party.
- Hints on how to defeat each of the many powerful monsters that you will encounter, such as Shambling Mounds, Dracolichs and Beholders (to name just a few).
- Detailed maps to all the locations in the game with general guidelines on how to get started, and where to go.
- Secrets that will help you free yourself from each of the five accursed Azure Bonds!



All locations are mapped in great detail, making your quest for freedom a much more manageable task!

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