

THE SCIMITAR SPIRES



*A Forgotten Realms
Adventure for Levels 7-11*



BY ***BEN HOLSCLAW***

The Scimitar Spires

A Forgotten Realms adventure for Levels 7-11

Introduction: A plot by a group of Netherese wizards has been uncovered. If there's any hope of stopping it, the adventurers must find the wizards' base of operations and investigate their activities in the Scimitar Spires range.

By BEN HOLSCLAW

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, Wizards of the Coast, Forgotten Realms, the dragon ampersand, *Player's Handbook*, *Monster Manual*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, D&D Adventurers League, all other Wizards of the Coast product names, and their respective logos are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast in the USA and other countries. All characters and their distinctive likenesses are property of Wizards of the Coast. This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of Wizards of the Coast.

©2016 Wizards of the Coast LLC, PO Box 707, Renton, WA 98057-0707, USA. Manufactured by Hasbro SA, Rue Emile-Boéchat 31, 2800 Delémont, CH. Represented by Hasbro Europe, 4 The Square, Stockley Park, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB11 1ET, UK.

All other original material in this work is copyright 2019 by Ben Holsclaw and published under the Community Content Agreement for Dungeon Masters Guild.

Contents

Notes	4
Area Map	5
Background	6
Key NPCs	8
The Ancient Relic of Netheril	10
Trigger Event	11
Part 1 - The Rasilith Rest	12
Part 2 - The Southern Scimitar Spires	13
The Caves	14
Part 3 - A Fork in the Road	23
Bestiary	24
Appendix A - Arqwyn's Story	34
Appendix B - Rasilith	35
Appendix C - Player Handouts	36
Credits	42

Notes

This adventure is recommended as a follow-up to the adventure *The Ancient Relic of Netheril*, though playing it as a standalone is also possible. Hooks are provided for either case, but playing *The Ancient Relic of Netheril* first will give the adventurers some additional background in the conflict in which they will become involved.

The original intent of these adventures was to provide a secondary storyline to a campaign I was running. The main goal was to allow one of the characters to stumble on something that would move him closer to fulfilling his life's ambition as he'd described it in his backstory. If there are similar opportunities for any of your group, feel free to make changes to any of the encounters or items within the adventure to suit your needs.

Players should be between levels 7 and 11 for this adventure. For reference, some of the background material from *The Ancient Relic of Netheril* has been included in the appendices.

Many of the monsters on this adventure come from the *Monster Manual* and *Volo's Guide*. NPCs important to the story are generally based on an entry in one of those two resources with some customization. The *Bestiary* section contains stat blocks for each that should allow you to run the adventure without additional reference materials. When in doubt, however, refer to the original material or make your own call on the behavior and powers of the NPCs and monsters.

As party and player capabilities vary widely, don't hesitate to adjust the monsters to adapt them to your players to keep the game fun.

References to Evereska, Anauroch, and Netheril are based off of several sources including the *Sword Coast Adventurer's Guide* and bits I can remember from various novels, adventures, older edition campaign settings, articles, and PC games I've encountered set in the *Forgotten Realms* over the decades. Any errors or omissions from canon are unintentional. Hopefully it all comes together to capture a feel for the area and its inhabitants that pulls the players in while enhancing your campaign.

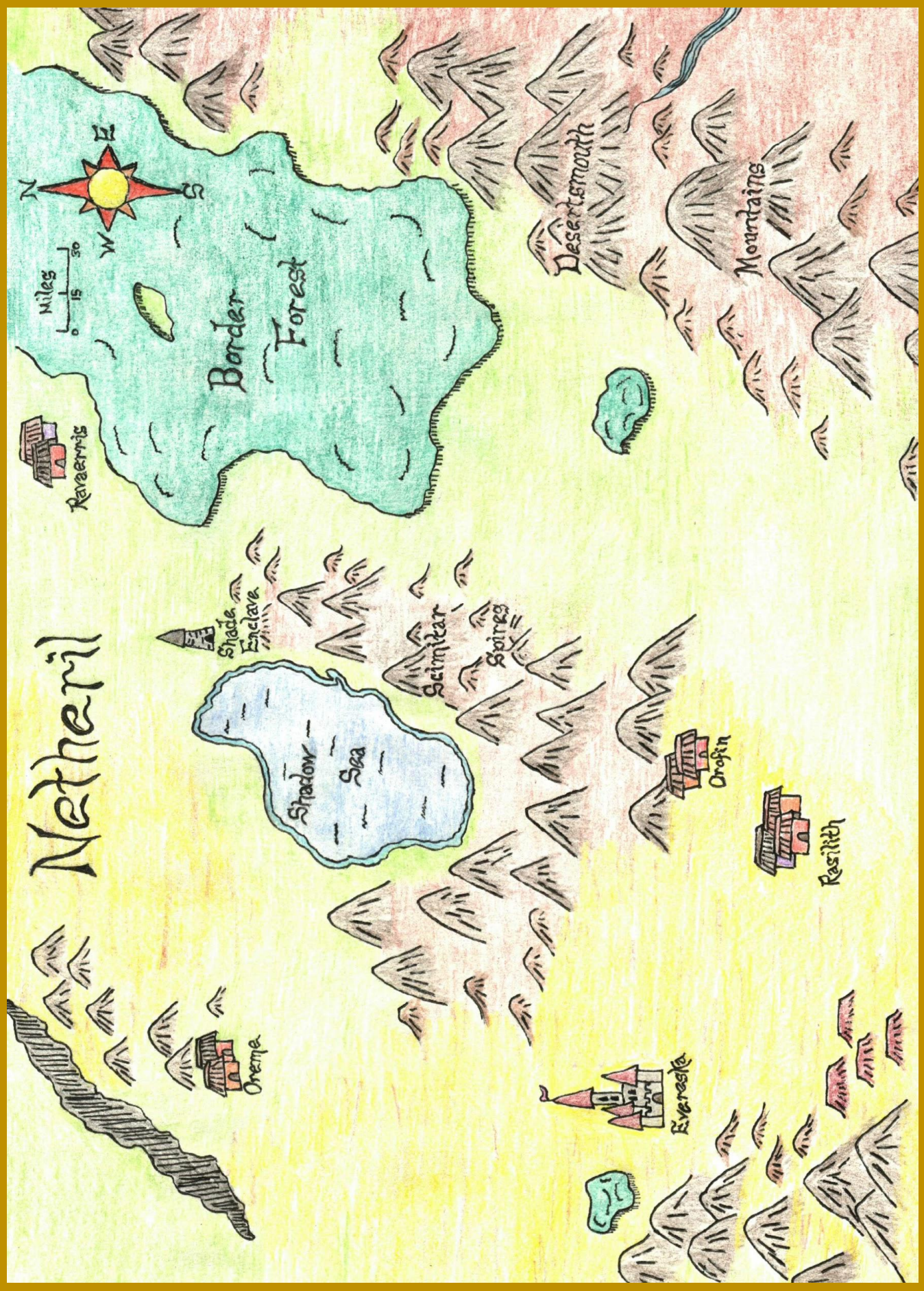
The events of this adventure will end with the party at a slight crossroads and still in the dark about a few things. I've delayed releasing this adventure to get a head start on the third installment of this arc, so if it is not available as you are reading this, it is coming soon.

If you enjoy this adventure or have suggestions on how it could be improved, please leave a review or drop a note on this product's page on dmsguild.com.

Happy hunting.

-Ben Holsclaw

Netheril



Background

The Netherese Plot

After suffering a crushing defeat by the kingdom of Cormyr which, in effect, destroyed the resurgent empire of Netheril, those still loyal to the ancient kingdom of magic fled to their original homelands and into the desolation of what is now the Anauroch Desert. With their influence and power in The Realms just a shell of what it was, they seek to rebuild.

Reflecting on history and the origins of their magical dominance, a group of Netherese wizards has come up with a plan to increase their own power while plundering and crippling their former teachers--the elves. These wizards discovered a centuries old plan that had failed in which the Netherese had tried to create their own *mythal*. They reasoned that they could accomplish this feat using The Nether Scrolls, which they believed would provide them the path to the power and methods needed to create the artifact that was previously exclusive to elven magic.

The Mythal

The ancient Netherese were already familiar with enchantments that could make their buildings fly, and they worked to imbue their *mythal* with the power to keep a fortress airborne, just as their much larger *mythallars* had previously done during the empire's zenith. In addition, the *mythal* was to repel elves. Success would mean easy conquest of major elven cities whose populations generally shun non-elven visitors. The Netherese fortress powered by the *mythal* would both put the attackers in proximity with an elven city under siege and empty it of most its defenders.

The ancient wizards met with only partial success. The fruit of their efforts was indeed able to keep a fortress aloft, but it did not have the quality of repelling elves. Instead of using

it to power a flying fortress, the failed attempt at a *mythal* was brought to a temple of Azuth, a lesser god of wizards. During massive disruption to The Weave, the magic of the artifact faltered, sending the temple crashing to the ground, where it was buried and forgotten for centuries.

The New Plan

Fleeing a large contingent of The Purple Dragon Knights from Cormyr, a group of Netherese wizards and soldiers sought refuge in the southern portion of the Scimitar Spires range southeast of The Shadow Sea. They came upon a series of caves that housed Drenir, a blue dragon. The dragon, not quite fully an adult, looked at the large group of wizards and soldiers who appeared to be no stranger to battle and decided to parlay rather than try to destroy them for intruding.

The dialog revealed that the dragon and the humans had some goals and values that aligned. Both, for their own reasons, wanted to deal a blow to the elves of Evereska. The Netherese told Drenir of their plan, and he agreed to help them. When the wizards mentioned the temple of Azuth and its failed *mythal*, he realized that he was familiar with that temple and that it was buried near the town of Rasilith. Soon after, one of the wizards headed to Rasilith to seek the temple.

These wizards weren't the only ones who knew about the temple, however. Arqwyn Raptis'triskal, one of the few non-elven scholars of Evereska, had discovered the location of the temple and the existence of the *mythal* through research in her mentor's great library. The dragonborn woman immediately set out for Rasilith as well, where she hired a party of adventurers to help her obtain the ancient *mythal* for her own research. These events make up the predecessor to this adventure, The Ancient Relic of Netheril.

Although the Netherese wizard who left to retrieve the artifact failed, the other wizards were able to complete their needed research to attempt creation of a new *mythal* that can both power the flight of a fortress and repel elves. Setting up shop near Drenir's lair, their research combined with Drenir's shared knowledge has led them, unbeknownst to the party, to success in creating the artifact. It is not only dangerous to Evereska, but it can also threaten any of the other elven population centers.

Mythal or Not?

Some scholars might argue that the artifact in question cannot be a true *mythal*, as it does not have an elven origin. In Arqwyn's research, the source in which she discovered the original's existence referred to the item as a *mythal*. It is important to note that that source was written by humans, not elves. That said, this group of Netherese wizard refers to the item as a *mythal*, as their ancient predecessors were taught magic by the elves to begin with. *Mythal* or not, this item presents a powerful threat to peace across the continent.



Key NPCs (stats available in the Bestiary section of this adventure)

The following NPCs play an important part in the adventure. The antagonists described here can be used either strictly for combat against the party or could be developed into adversaries of the party that could turn up later in your campaign. Some basic personality information is included, but as always, feel free to adjust to fit your campaign's needs.

Arqwyn Raptis'triskal, Evereskan Agent

Arqwyn is the party's main contact with Evereska. She is a dragonborn wizard who is much smaller than most others of her species. She discovered the location of the Azuth temple and kicked off the events of The Ancient Relic of Netheril (see Appendix A for more detail)..

Drenir, Blue Dragon

Drenir is a blue dragon who is almost a full adult. While unsubstantiated, he claims to be the offspring of the great blue dragon of Anauroch, Iymrith. Perhaps this is how he knew the location of an ancient ruined temple such as the Temple of Azuth. Based on his chosen locale and the fact the Iymrith has almost certainly allowed him to remain in the area, his claim seems to have some merit.

Regardless of its merits, he has sold the Netherese on his heritage claim, and they have allied with him in their quest to create an artifact of great power. He resides in his own chamber near where the Netherese have successfully created their mythal.

Drenir is somewhat insecure and might be talked out of combat in the right circumstances. For reasons only he knows,

Drenir holds a deep hatred for the elves of Evereska and would greatly enjoy seeing them suffer.

Erderick, Netherese Wizard

Erderick is the ranking Netherese wizard still in the area of Drenir's lair. His dedication to Netheril is fanatical, and in combat he's a deadly abjurer. He will stop at nothing to forward his cause and will offer no information to the party.

Hillbron, Netherese Ghost

When the new *mythal* was successfully created, a massive magical event caused several different effects, including the killing and cursing of several of the wizards involved in the ritual to create the item. Hillbron's body was disintegrated, and his spirit now roams the area around Drenir's lair. Knowing that the ritual caused his death, he is extremely bitter toward those Netherese who survived the event and seeks to stop them. While not benevolent by any means, he will be eager to help the adventurers as he sees them as a means to get his revenge. He is familiar with the Netherese plan as described previously and will share details with the party.

Jonnel, Proprietor of The Rasilith Rest

Jonnel is a human friend of Arqwyn who has gotten to know her well as his establishment, The Rasilith Rest, has become her base of operations when carrying out research in Rasilith. He frequently communicates with Arqwyn directly, even when she is in Evereska. Once Arqwyn realized she could trust him, she shared several sets of *sending stones* with him to facilitate easy and fast communication. Through these sending stones, Arqwyn has passed her recent findings about the mythal and her theories of the Netherese plan. Jonnel will (or has, depending on the party's starting location) let Arqwyn know of the magical column of light in the Scimitar Spires that was visible miles away in Rasilith.

Jonnel will do what he can to help the party once they agree to investigate the Scimitar Spires including offering free rooms and opening The Rasilith Rest as a base of operations if needed.

Ryonn, Netherese Champion

A talented warrior and military strategist, Ryonn is a mercenary who was hired by Erderick to manage the Netherese plotters' small contingent of soldiers. In addition to his military responsibilities, he acts as a bodyguard to Erderick and Trallo.

Tarryl Stormbender, Evereskan Wizard

Tarryl is Arqwyn's mentor and the reason she's allowed to live within the walls of Evereska. Tarryl serves on the Council of Evereska and oversees security of the elven city. If Arqwyn died during the events of The Ancient Relic of Netheril, he will provide Jonnel the information that Arqwyn would otherwise provide.

Trallo, Netherese Wizard

Trallo owes his rank with the Netherese to Erderick, who saw him as an important piece that could aid in his own ascent to power among the wizards. Because of this, Trallo is most loyal to Erderick and shares some of his fanatical views. At his base, however, he seeks to increase his own power, and that thirst is his primary driver.

The Ancient Relic of Netheril

Whether or not the adventurers have played through The Ancient Relic of Netheril (TARoN), the events in that adventure will have occurred in some form or another.

To quickly sum up the major events of TARoN:

- A dragonborn wizard, Arqwyn, working for Evereska (backstory included in Appendix A) discovered the location of a temple containing what turned out to house an early attempt by the Netherese to create their own *mythal*. The *mythal* was a powerful artifact that kept the temple airborne.
- Several outcomes were possible. Assuming Arqwyn survived and the party didn't keep the *mythal*, she's now studied it and found out what its intended properties were.. It was indeed used to keep the temple flying, but the Netherese were also trying to imbue it with the power to repel elves. She'll have discovered this through studying the artifact, or through further study in her mentor Taryll's library if the party kept the artifact.
- During the party's exploration of the temple, they may have encountered a Netherese wizard discussing an alliance with the yuan-ti that had settled in the lower level of the temple.
- If Arqwyn died during TARoN, her mentor, Taryll, will reach out to the party for help to kick off the events of The Scimitar Spires.
- If the party was unsuccessful in getting the artifact, Arqwyn (or Taryll) will have found another way into the temple and gotten the *mythal* without the party's help.
- If the party kept the artifact, Arqwyn or Taryll will have figured out its purpose through research in Taryll's library.

Adventure Hooks if the party played The Ancient Relic of Netheril

If the party has just finished TARoN and are still in the area or Rasilith, they may be witness to an unknown magical event. Two or three weeks after TARoN, a loud hum will permeate the air in the town. It will persist for several minutes, and people will see a thick beam of amber light rising from one of the peaks in the southern part of the Scimitar Spires mountain range to the north.

Arqwyn (or Taryll), who will have returned to her lab in Evereska to either study the relic or search Taryll's library for more information, will be informed via *sending stones* by Jonnel in Rasilith of the event.

At this point Arqwyn (or Taryll) will contact the adventurers wherever they are with a *sending* spell of her (or his) own saying the following:

[Adjust as needed to entice your group of fit with their experience with TARoN.]

"You've helped our cause before, please do so again. Return to Rasilith, speak to Jonnel at Rasilith Rest about the Spires."

The important part is that they get to Rasilith Rest (the inn in Rasilith) and speak to Jonnel.

Adventure Hooks if the party did not play The Ancient Relic of Netheril

The party will receive a letter from Arqwyn, who requests that the adventurers speak to Jonnel at The Rasilith Rest in Rasilith in the Anauroch Desert. If the party is successful with the task put to them by Jonnel, there will be a substantial reward. The party should be somewhere close to the region, or perhaps Arqwyn's heard of the party's exploits and come to seek them out elsewhere.

Alternately, the party can witness the event if they are near the Scimitar Spires or in Rasilith. At this point, Jonnel himself will request to talk to the adventurers in his inn.

Trigger Event

Unless the players are in or around the town of Rasilith or the Scimitar Spires range, they will hear of the event that ultimately reveals the location of the Netherese ritual chamber when they speak with Jonnel. The Netherese wizards have completed the ritual to create their *mythal*, but several side effects also occurred. Most visible was the shaft of light that emanated from the southern Scimitar Spires and was accompanied by a low buzzing sound. The light and sound persisted for several hours, and the buzzing sound left ears ringing for those who were exposed.

Understandably so, the event caused panic among many of those who live near enough to have witnessed the event. Anyone in Rasilith who managed to keep a cool head might've noticed Jonnel dart out of The Rasilith Rest with a map and a quill in hand, eyes intent on the beam of light as he tried to pinpoint the event's location.

If the party is in Rasilith during the trigger event described previously, they may see Jonnel in the middle of the road that runs through Rasilith marking his map as closely as he can to where he thinks the magical beam originates. If the party recognizes him and approaches him, he'll let them know that he wants to speak with them back at his inn.

If the party is in the area during the event, read the following to them:

As you go about your business, you suddenly feel a vibration in your ears and hear a low pitched ringing.

[If the party is inside a building] You follow an urge to find the source of the sound outside.

Your gaze is drawn to the mountains in the distance that cut a jagged desert horizon. As the sound grows, you turn your head and see a sickly ochre glow near one of the peaks slowly creeping skyward. The glow then grows in intensity and becomes a beam that shoots straight up and into the sky. You are miles away, yet the sound and light are powerful enough to be prevalent even here. You're not sure what, but something major is happening...

While the light finally fades and the sound becomes inaudible hours later, there is plenty of time for Jonnel (and perhaps the party) to figure out roughly where the event took place.

Part One - The Rasilith Rest

Several adventure hooks were provided in the Background section of this adventure to try to cover several of the outcomes possible from The Ancient Relic of Netheril or if the players are entering the story with this adventure. If those do not fit into your campaign, there are any number of other reasons the players might find themselves in Rasilith. Be creative. This portion of the adventure assumes the party has decided to seek out Jonnel, the proprietor of The Rasilith Rest, which serves as the main inn for Rasilith.

Read the following to the players as they enter the inn:

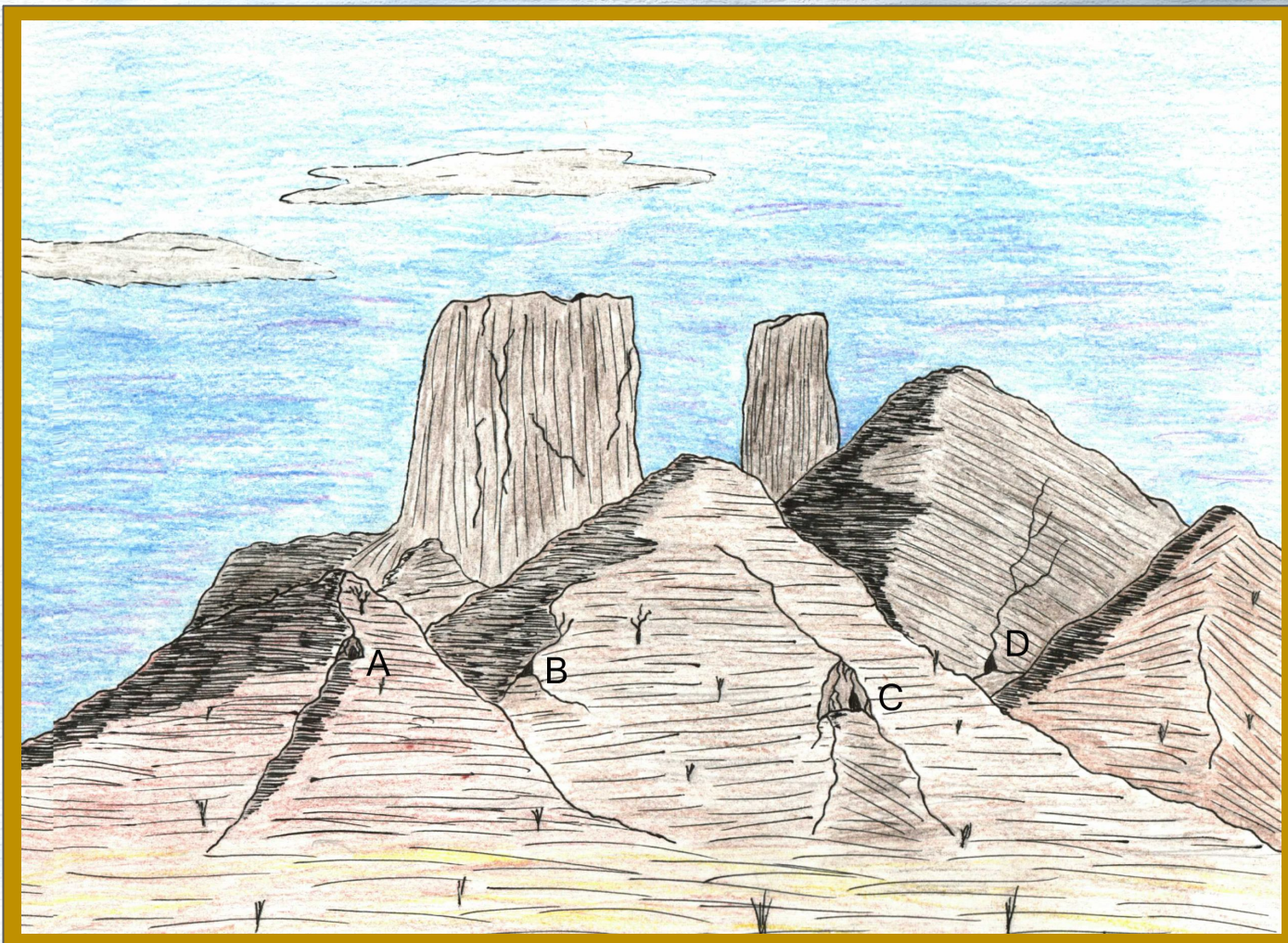
An eerie quiet blankets the inn. The eyes of the patrons scarcely leave their drinks to look up and quickly return to them as you enter the common room. The tension in the air is palpable, and the only audible conversation is a soft muttering. You pick up bits of the low conversations and realize that these people wonder what will come next, and whatever it is they are terrified of it.

Your gaze moves over to the bar to a human whose brown hair is losing its battle with grey. He eyes you and beckons you over to the bar.

"Well met," says Jonnel, the man behind the bar. "I believe I've been expecting you. Let's talk in the back room away from others."

As the party talks with Jonnel, he'll want to make sure they know the following:

- He's working with the Evereskan agent (either Arqwyn or Taryll) and believes he knows what caused the massive magical event in the Scimitar Spires. His contact in Evereska has informed him that help would be on the way.
- He's familiar with Arqwyn's theory about the Netherese wizards attempting to perfect the *mythal* that would allow a fortress to fly while repelling elves, and he believes that the light on the mountain was the result of an attempt, possibly a successful one, to create the artifact.
- He can offer a reward on behalf of Evereska (5,000 gp or something suitable for your campaign) for proof of the successful derailment of the Netherese plot or the recovery of the artifact the Netherese have created if they were successful.
- After studying the horizon on which the beam of light appeared, he can provide directions to the general area and will request that the party investigate to either find the artifact, substantiate that its creation failed, or figure out what the Netherese wizards' next steps will be.
- He's genuinely eager to help the adventurers and will offer The Rasilith Rest up as a base of operation for them including free room and board while they are in the area and working against the Netherese.



Part 2 - The Southern Scimitar Spires

Following Jonnel's directions will lead the adventurers north out of Rasilith and onto the hot and dusty road toward the Scimitar Spires range.

On their way to their destination, they will encounter a group of 6 *Bedine warriors*. They view outsiders (anyone who is not Bedine is an outsider) with suspicion and are easily offended. If provoked, they will attack. A peaceful end to the meeting is possible if the players show respect and do not challenge them in any way. A DC 18 Persuasion check will get one of the Bedine to point north to a cluster of craggy hills and let the party know the beam of light came from that direction. If the party has not offended the warriors by this time, they will tell the party to move on. They carry nothing of value.

Read the following out loud to the party:

Finally, you near the mountain range. You are getting close to the hills that Jonnel said were the source of the magical light.

Suddenly, whipping around a rocky outcrop come several robed and veiled figures on horseback. Before you can react, they bring their horses to a halt in front of you.

One removes his veil, revealing a tan face framed by a thick dark beard. While they do not attack, each of the men rests a hand on the hilt of his sword.

"Well, jackals?" says the man who revealed his face. "Why do you intrude in our lands?"

The Caves

Continuing into the mountains after encountering the Bedine group, the party will come upon the area Jonnel has indicated. At the base of a cluster of mountains, four cave entrances are visible.

The party could also conceivably climb the mountains to a point where they can see the open area on the map titled "The Grove", but it is surrounded by vertical cliff walls and would be very difficult to reach without magical means. Use your discretion as to whether or not you will allow that. It may be impossible to see from the peaks of the mountains if the angle isn't right.

Once deep into the caves, there is no natural light, so darkvision or some other light will be needed.

Random Encounters

Random encounters can be used in a variety of situations in and around the caves. All (or none) may apply to your campaign's style. In the areas that list possible random encounters, use them as you see fit. If you feel your group needs some encouragement to make decisions more quickly, isn't being challenged enough, or is attempting to rest too often, these can be used to add a wrinkle. Note that once cleared, Cave A is a safe place to rest.

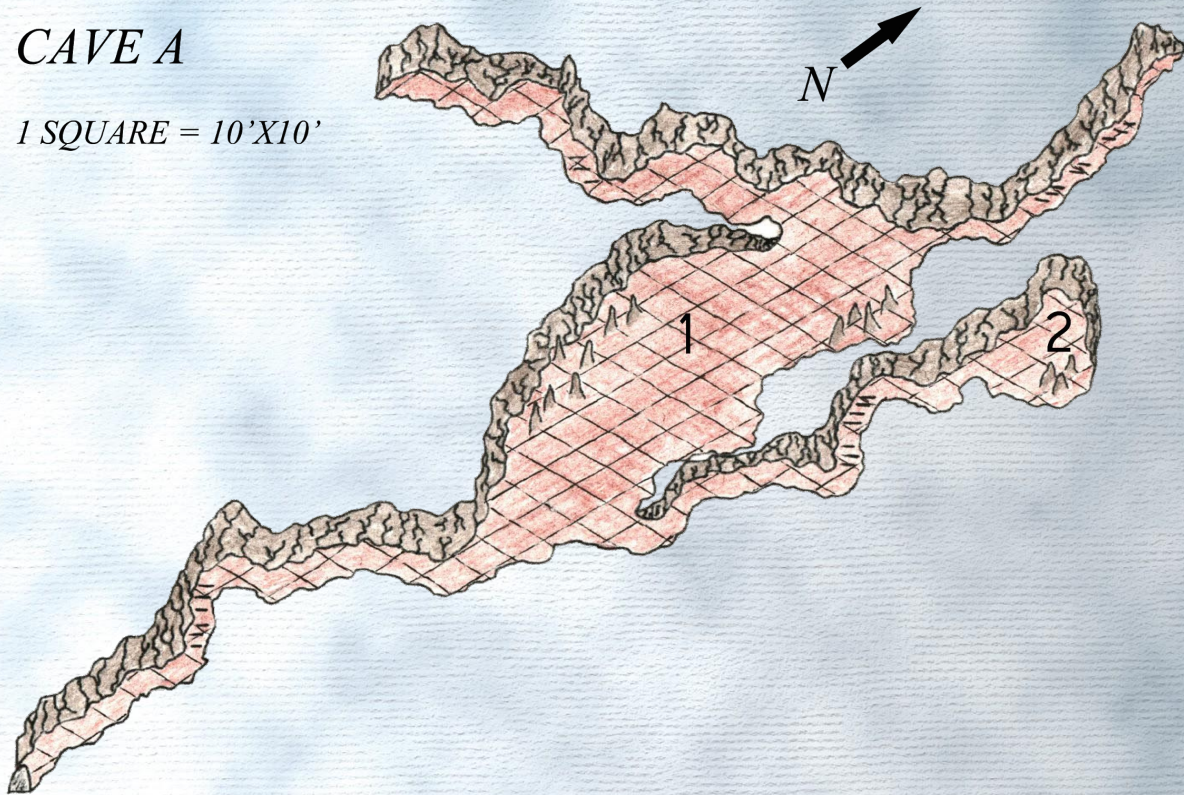
Each smaller area in which random encounters are possible contains two encounters. If you want them to be active while the party rests, roll percentile dice once for a short rest and twice for a long rest to decide on an encounter:

- 1-70: no encounter
- 71-85: use the first encounter listed
- 86-100: use the second encounter listed

You can make similar roles as needed while the party is not resting, as well, if it suits your game.

CAVE A

1 SQUARE = 10'X10'



Cave A

While the dominant creature in this region is Drenir, the blue dragon, this cave holds some flying terrors of its own. Drenir is aware of the presence of the wyverns in this cave, and rather than kill them or drive them out, he allows them to roost here, believing it will keep intruders out of the area.

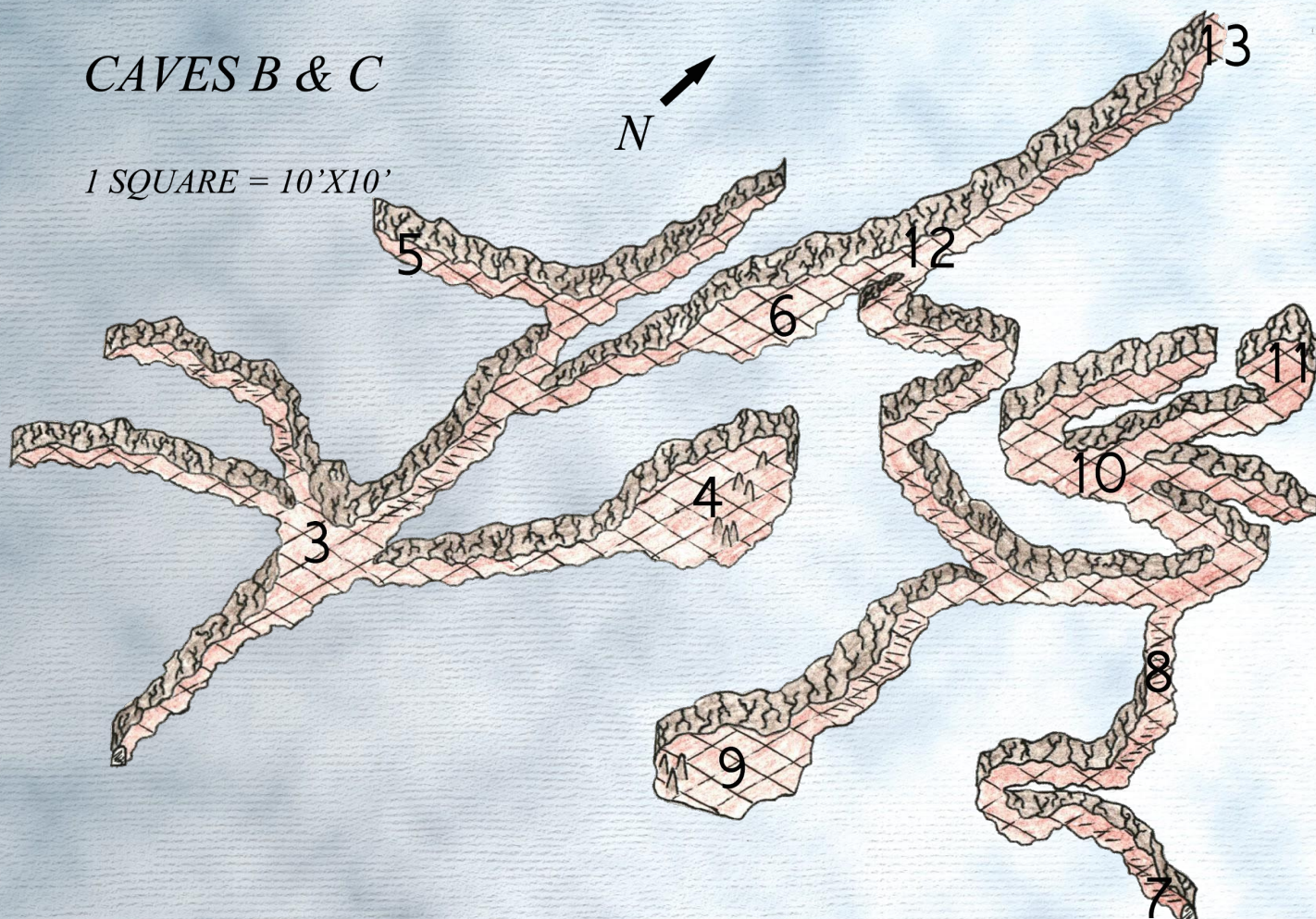
As the wyverns utilize most of the cave, there are no other creatures, and thus no random encounters in this area. Clearing the cave of the wyverns will essentially provide the party a safe place to rest.

Map Events

1. The adventurers will encounter the current inhabitants of the cave, and the 2 wyverns will defend their home immediately.
2. There is a *netherese soldier* here who has lost his mind. He is whimpering and muttering out loud about "the ritual" and will say "we didn't know what would happen. Trees began walking, many of us were cursed and died. Can't get the sound out of my head." He is not hostile unless attacked. There is also a small collection of treasure the wyverns have collected here. There are 2 *potions of healing*, a *dagger +1*, 650 gold pieces, and 4 *gems* worth 20 gold pieces each.

CAVES B & C

1 SQUARE = 10'X10'



Caves B and C

Random Encounters

- A small patrol of 4 *Netherese soldiers* attacks the party.
- 6 *wights* attack the party.

Whether the adventurers enter this set of tunnels through entrance B (map marker 3) or C (map marker 7), they will feel the cold emanating the area. Read the following to the players when they enter these tunnels.

Immediately upon stepping out of the desert sun and into the shade of the cavern your body cools down as the cavern air circulates around you. No, not cool...it is COLD here. Unnaturally so. Just as you notice the temperature your nose senses an undercurrent of decay under the smell of churned earth.

Map Events

3. This is the entrance through Cave B.
4. The party will encounter some of the undead *Netherese* force. If they've encountered the *Netherese* before observant party members will notice that the 2 *wights* and 1 *wraith* they face appear to wear the tattered rags of the *Netherese* military. The undead wordlessly attack.
5. As the adventurers investigate this dead end, a low rumble coming from behind the walls will be the only warning as 2 *umber hulks* rush through the walls and attack. After the battle, the party will note that the tunnels made by the beasts were unstable and have collapsed, leaving the area impassible once again.
6. Another group of unfortunate *Netherese*. As they see the party, one of the *wights* will mutter, "Sooooo hungryyyy...", as it prepares to attack. The adventurers face 2 *wights* and 2 *wraiths*.

7. The entrance from Cave C leads to an almost immediate incline. It will be very apparent that the cavern leads *up* as it goes farther into the mountain.
8. *2 wights* stand silently at the top of this near vertical 30' rise. The adventurers will need assistance in getting to the top, either through mundane or magical means. Anyone looking up in the dark to try to see how high the climb is should make a perception check with DC 13 (for those with darkvision) or DC 18 (for those without) to see if they notice the wights. There is still a small amount of light from the tunnel entrance, but it's getting very hard to see with normal vision. Whether they are discovered or not, the wights will try to slow the party's ascent by pushing rocks over the ledge as they ascend, cutting ropes, releasing grappling hooks, etc. A thrown rock at a climbing party member is thrown at a +2 to hit (1d6 bludgeoning damage). On a hit, the climber also makes a DEX save to avoid falling, taking an additional 1d6 points of damage per 10 feet.
9. This is the mostly disintegrated body of the Netherese wizard Hillbron. It is basically a pile of ash dressed in robes. A trail of ash extends back toward the corridor as if he'd run here to try to escape something before meeting his fate. If the party has not met his ghost, they will not know exactly who this is but might be able to identify him as Netherese. Tucked into his belt is what used to be a *wand of magic missiles*. It will be very easy to see that there is something wrong with it (Arcana check DC 8). Any attempt to use the wand will result in the missiles targeting the wielder and doing 1d4+1 force damage.
10. The party hears noises coming from the passage to the north. The clang of metal and guttural grunting are accompanied by the occasional low roar.
11. If the party investigates the noises, they'll come upon *6 wights* fighting an *umber hulk* that has been cornered in this tunnel. The combatants won't notice the party as they are heavily engaged. The adventurers can quietly leave, watch the battle, or join the fray. Any action to try to get the attention of any of the combatants will draw the party into the battle, with each faction attacking the closest enemy.
12. The party will encounter the ghost of *Hillbron*, one of the wizards who was killed in the fallout of the ritual to create the artifact, at whichever of these locations it finds first. Read the following out loud to the party:

As you move through the area you feel a chill in the air as a mist in front of you coalesces into a ghostly image. You sense a powerful hatred and fury coming from the image, though it remains still instead of attacking.

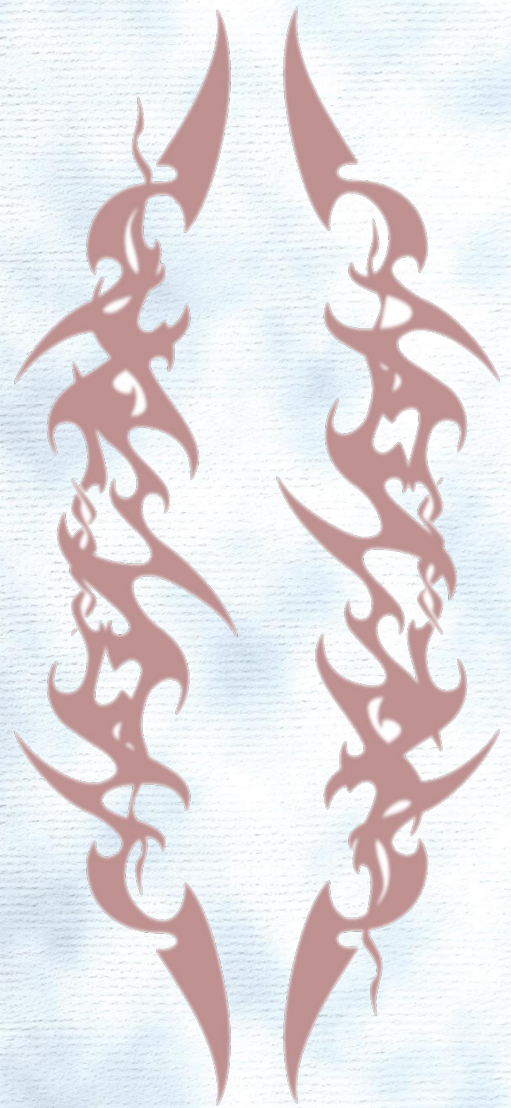
A raspy whisper fills the room as the shade speaks.

"If you are here to destroy them, then let us speak," it says.

If the party convinces Hillbron that they are indeed here to stop the Netherese plot (which should be easy), he will happily tell them what he knows. If not, he will attack. As one of the wizards who helped complete the ritual, though he lost his life in doing so, he knows of the plot to attack Evereska with a flying fortress that repels elves. He believes that Erderick knew that many of them would

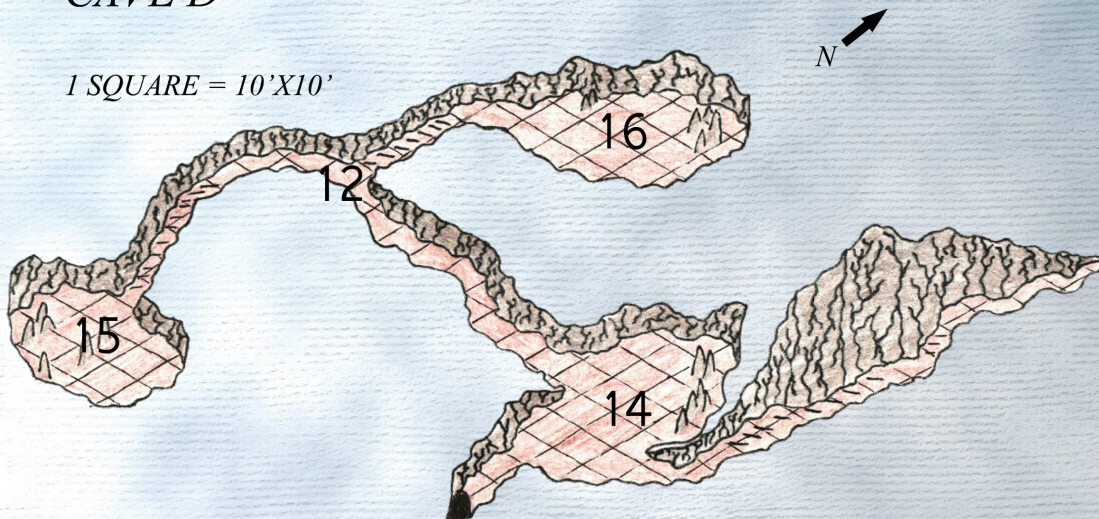
die during the ritual but withheld that information, and that is the source of his anger. He now needs revenge against Erderick and must see him fail before his spirit can move on. He is not able to call off the wights and wraiths of his brothers who also died. He will tell the party the undead have gone completely insane and are uncontrollable if they ask if he can do so. He also does not know what the Netherese have been doing since the ritual, but he did see Trallo, one of the wizards, and Ryonn, the force's greatest warrior, heading toward their location at map marker 15. He is surprised that they haven't all left the area yet. He can also let the party know that the ritual was performed in a chamber on the other side of what the wizards call The Grove, which can be reached through the northernmost passage in the central caves.

13. This path ends at a 25' vertical rock face to get the adventurers to The Grove. A rope ladder follows the rock wall up. The party will see sunlight filtering through at the top of the climb.



CAVE D

1 SQUARE = 10'X10'



Cave D

Random Encounters

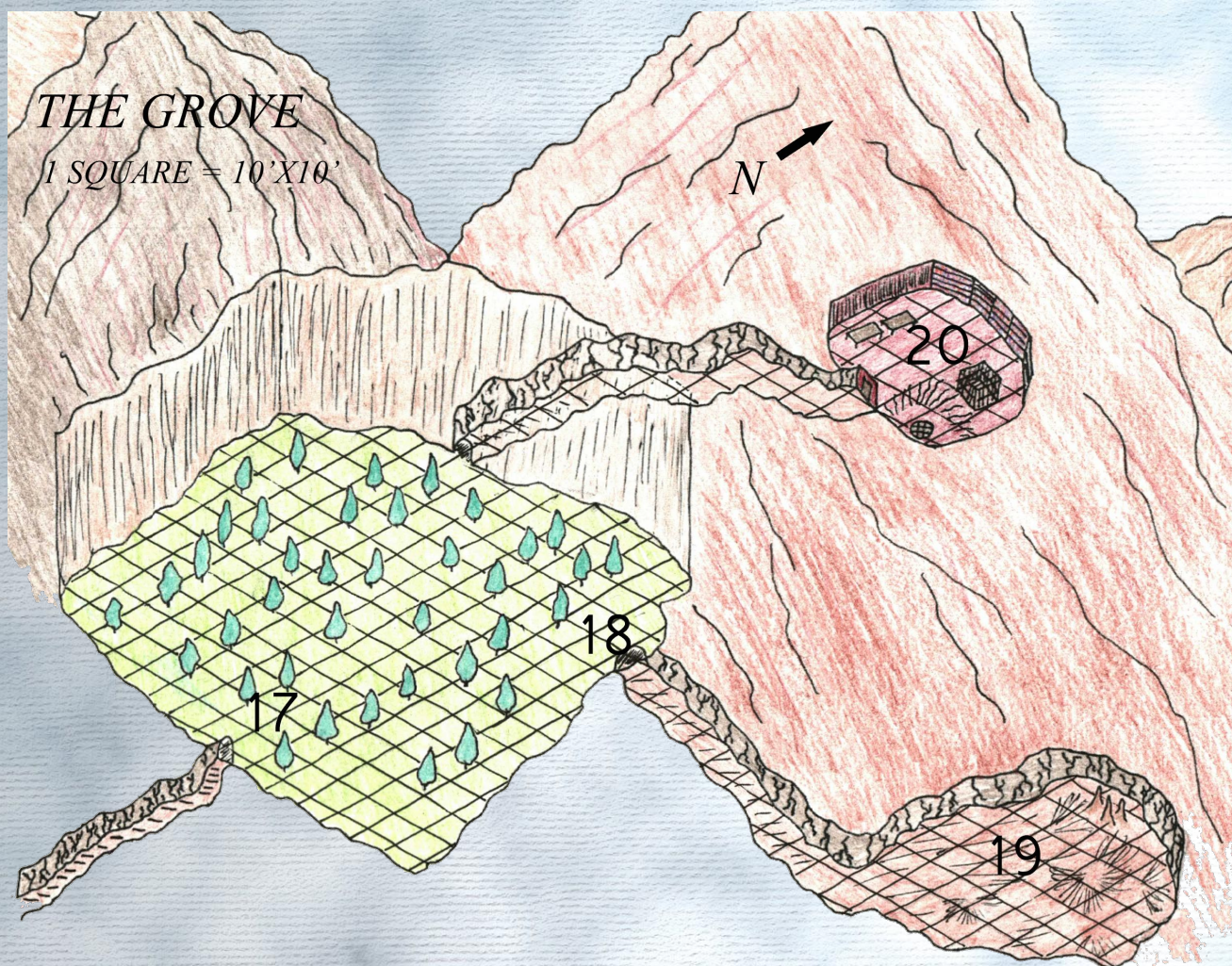
- An *umber hulk* bursts through the ground and attacks the party.
- Two *earth elementals* appear and attack. They will drop from the ceiling of the cave, one landing in front of the party and the other landing behind.

Map Events

14. An *earth elemental* erupts from the cavern floor in the middle of the party and attacks.
15. Ryonn and Trallo are here with some men, breaking camp and preparing for travel. They will attack as soon as they are aware of the party, who will face 3 *Netherese soldiers*, *Ryonn*, and *Trallo*. Trallo carries a letter from Erderick to an unknown group of Netherese and a hastily scrawled map showing their destination (see Player Handouts for both). The adventurers should be able to use the map to get to the Bhunda Oasis or the camp of the other group of Netherese once this adventure is finished.

Trallo and Ryonn do not know the location of the 'Althia' referred to in the letter and are to follow the other group of Netherese after they rendezvous with them.

16. Despite the walls of this area being solid rock, black burn marks adorn the walls like blood spatter. There is a faint smell of char in the air, as well. This chamber once served as a lair for Drenir, who has since moved up the mountain to location 19. A nature check (DC 12) will reveal that the burn marks weren't made from an explosion, but were more likely made lightning. A 15 or higher on the check will reveal that there are large draconic tracks still slightly visible through the dust that's settled here since the chamber's abandonment.



The Grove

Random Encounters

- 4 juniper guardians attack the party. If the this encounter comes up in the tunnel areas, no encounter occurs.
- 6 gargoyles fly (open area) or lumber (tunnels) toward the adventurers and attack.

Map Events

17. This area is what the Netherese wizards refer to as The Grove. It was affected by the magical fallout from the Netherese ritual, and much of the vegetation in the area has uprooted itself and now roams the area freely.

Read the following out loud to the adventurers.

As the tunnel ends and you gaze into the light, the scene resolves into something that seems very out of place in this desert. High vertical walls box in a large canyon floor on all four sides, casting a dusky light on the area. It still feels hot and dry here, and you don't see or hear a water source. Yet despite the lack of light and apparent lack of water, the area is truly verdant. Grass and evergreen shrubs are abundant. You quickly notice some of these plants are not rooted to the ground and are moving of their own accord.

As soon as the adventurers move into the area they will be attacked by 6 juniper

- guardians*. A nature check (DC 10) will reveal the shrubs as juniper bushes. A 15 on the check will reveal that juniper bushes contain a highly flammable and volatile oil that could become explosive.
18. *10 gargoyles* guard the entrance to Drenir's lair. Two rows of five line the entrance to the tunnel. They will remain still until the party is in their midst or until attacked. There is electricity in the air, which the party may figure out when they notice their hair stand up or that it smells like a storm right before lightning strikes.
19. This is the lair of the blue dragon, *Drenir*. See the notes in the Key NPCs section. A creative party might be able to persuade or intimidate (through a contested check against Drenir) him to not attack. Whether the encounter ends in combat or not, Drenir, in his insecurity and arrogance, will tell the party what he knows of the plot. If the party has successfully persuaded him not to attack, he'll also tell them that he was angered by the Netherese ritual as they did not successfully control the blast that resulted in the creation of their *mythal*, and he lost many of his gargoyle guardians as a result. He cannot be persuaded to turn against the Netherese, however. His lair contains a treasure of *3,000 gold pieces, 1,200 silver pieces, a potion of cure disease, many broken weapons and pieces of armor, and a quarterstaff +1*.

NOTE: This encounter is intended to show the party that they are up against powerful forces. Depending on player skill and character levels, this could easily turn into a TPK. Some options to make the encounter perilous without annihilation: modify Drenir as needed; Drenir flees if badly wounded; alternate ways to damage Drenir (i.e. collapse his lair).

17. Read the following out loud to the party as they enter this chamber:

You've arrived in a chamber that appears to be a study or a lab. You have a feeling that this is where the magical light came from that was visible for miles around...the room where the Netherese created their mythal. The two tables on your left have scorch marks lining their tops. The bookshelves that line the rear wall have visible burns, as well, though some of the books appear to have survived. A large cage sits on the right side of the room and appears almost to have been discarded. Inside it, a very alien body lies motionless. The body looks like a large, green, snakelike tube from which four arms sprout near what looks like a mouth that extends the entire diameter of the body. The mouth looks like a grotesque sunflower, the inside of which is lined with teeth. A wizard watches you warily from behind two humanoid figures.

The wizard shouts at the humanoid figures and says, "Kill the intruders!"

The party faces *Erderick* and two *clay golems*. *Erderick* wears a *ring of protection +1*. If the party takes *Erderick* alive, he will die before giving up information about the plot. If the players use some creative or magical means to get information out of him, he knows the details of the plot to attack *Evereska* with the flying fortress and that he was sending *Trallo* to rally allies. He also knows the location of the camp of the other Netherese group he hopes to recruit near *Bhunda Oasis*.

A search for the *mythal* will be fruitless. Soon after its creation, it was sent to the fortress as preparation for the attack.

The bookshelves contain some books that are not burnt. I used this area to put a book that would help one of my players find information tied to his back story. Prior to its burning, it was a small repository of this group of wizards' magical research, so there could be information on a number of topics. Also among the books is a *Tome of Clear Thought*.

The cage in the room holds the body of a phaerimm, a powerful magical creature and enemy of the Netherese. If the party describes the creature to Arqwyn or Taryll later, they will be able to identify it if they don't know what it is. Whether the wizards had captured it for study or use in the ritual is unclear, but it is certainly dead now. An arcana check (DC 14) will reveal to the players that the phaerimm are a race of powerful spellcasters from the Underdark around Anauroch. Known to become powerful enough to enthrall even beholders and illithids, they are an enemy of humanoid races. Even seeing a dead one will give any party member who recognizes it a sinking sensation in his or her stomach.



Part 3 - A Fork in the Road

After snooping around the area long enough, the adventurers should be aware of enough of the following to give them an idea of what they can do next.

- The Netherese plan to attack Evereska using a flying fortress of some sort kept aloft by the artifact they've created, which also may somehow repel elves.
- The ritual that resulted in the creation of the artifact wiped out a large number of the Netherese group that was encamped in the area.
- The Netherese seek to bolster their numbers prior to attacking Evereska, so it seems the heroes have some time to figure out how to stop the attack.
- If the heroes found the letter and map carried by Trallo, they'll be able to find the location of the second Netherese camp near Bhunda Oasis that Erderick was trying to enlist.
- Jonnel may offer that the Bedine people may be familiar with the oasis.
- They also have the name "Althia" and the hint of an ancient ancestor aiding their cause. What/who/where is Althia? Is Althia a place? The ancestor Erderick mentioned in the letter?

Viable Options

Depending on the information they've gathered, the adventurers may decide to regroup in Rasilith (and collect their reward from Jonnel), head for the Bhunda Oasis or the Netherese camp to try to find out more about Althia, or even go to Evereska to try to warn to Arqwyn, Taryll, or both directly about the plot.

If the party did not encounter Erderick, Trallo, or Drenir, perhaps one of them will attempt to thwart the adventurers at a later date, turning up at an inopportune time as they are on another quest. Or maybe they'll be present if and when the adventurers finally discover the flying fortress. Keep them in your pocket for your campaign, if you'd like.

If the heroes are unsure of what to do next, any of the contacts of Evereska will be willing to help them figure out some of the important clues if they are willing to share what they've found.

While there is still work to do, the party may still press Jonnel for a reward. He'll note that they really aren't done until Evereska is safe but will give them 1,000 gold pieces now if they insist.

Bestiary

Bedine Warrior

Medium human, true neutral

Armor Class 17 (leather armor)

Hit Points 70

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+1	+4	+1	+2	+0	+2

Saves Dex +5, Cha +5

Skills Athletics +5, Persuasion +6

Languages Common, Bedine

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Lightfooted. Can take Dash or Disengage as a bonus action each turn.

Suave Defense. While wearing light armor and no shield, AC includes CHA modifier.

Actions

Multiattack. 2 scimitar attacks.

Scimitar. +7 to hit, 1d6+4 slashing, 5 ft.

Clay Golem

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 133

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+5	-1	+4	-4	-1	-5

Damage/Condition Immunities acid, poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from non-magical weapons; charmed, exhausted, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned.

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive perception 9

Languages Understands creator but cannot speak

Challenge 9(5,000 XP)

Acid Absorption. Is healed by acid damage

Berserk. Roll d6 when golem starts turn with 60 hit points or less. On a 6, golem attacks nearest creature it can see. If it can't get to a creature, attacks a nearby object. Berserk ends when golem is destroyed or fully healed.

Immutable Form. Immune to anything that would alter its form.

Magic Resistance. Advantage on saves vs. magic and magical effects.

Magic Weapons. Attacks are magical.

Actions

Multiattack. Two slam.

Slam. +8 to hit, 2d10+5 bludgeoning, 5 ft. 15 DC CON save or reduce max hit points by damage amount. Can be removed with *greater restoration* or other magic.

Haste (Recharge 5-6). +2 AC, advantage on DEX saves, slam attack as bonus action until next turn.

Drenir

Huge dragon (blue), lawful evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 190

Speed 40 ft., burrow 30 ft., climb 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+7	+0	+6	+3	+2	+4

Saving Throws Dex +5, Con +11, Wis +7, Cha +9

Skills Perception +12, Stealth +5

Damage Immunities lightning

Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive perception 22

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). Can choose to succeed at a failed saving throw.

Actions

Multiattack. Drenir makes either one bite and two claw attacks or one bite and one tail attack.

Bite. +10 to hit, 2d10+6 piercing plus 1d10 lightning, 10 ft.

Claw. +10 to hit, 2d6+5 slashing, 5 ft.

Tail. +10, 2d6+7 bludgeoning, 15 ft.

Lightning Breath (Recharge 5-6). 90 ft. X 5 ft. line, 11d10 lightning damage, DC 17 Dex save for half damage.

Earth Elemental

Large elemental, neutral

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 126

Speed 30 ft., burrow 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+5	-1	+5	-3	+0	-3

Damage Vulnerabilities thunder

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from non-magical attacks

Damage/Condition Immunities poison, exhaustion, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive perception 10

Languages Terran

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Earth Glide. Can burrow through unworked, non-magical earth and stone without disturbing the material it burrows through.

Siege Monster. Double damage to objects and structures.

Actions

Multiattack. 2 slam attacks.

Slam. +8 to hit, 2d8+5 bludgeoning, 10 ft.

Erderick, Netherese Wizard

Medium human, lawful evil

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 84

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
-1	+2	+2	+4	+1	+0

Saves Int +8, Wis +5

Skills Arcana +8, History +8

Languages Common, Elvish, Abyssal, Draconic

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Spellcasting. 13th level, DC 16, +8 spell attack bonus.

Cantrips (at will): *blade ward*, *dancing lights*, *mending*, *message*, *ray of frost*

1st (4): *alarm**, *mage armor**, *magic missile*, *shield**

2nd (3): *arcane lock**, *invisibility*

3rd (3): *counterspell**, *dispel magic**, *fireball*

4th (3): *banishment**, *stoneskin**

5th (2): *cone of cold*, *wall of force*

6th (1): *flesh to stone*, *globe of invulnerability**

7th (1): *symbol**, *teleport*

**Abjuration spell of 1st or higher level*

Arcane Ward. 30 hit points, absorbs damage that would otherwise be dealt to him.

Casting level 1 or higher abjuration spell restores 2X spell level hit points to the ward.

Actions

Quarterstaff. +3 to hit, 1d6-1 bludgeon, 5 ft.

Gargoyle

Medium elemental, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural)

Hit Points 52

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+2	+0	+3	-2	+0	-2

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from

non-magical/non-adamantine weapons

Damage/Condition Immunities poison, exhaustion, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive perception 10

Languages Terran

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

False Appearance. While motionless is indistinguishable from a statue.

Actions

Multiattack. 2 attacks, one bite and one claw.

Bite. +4 to hit, 1d6+2 piercing, 5 ft.

Claw. +4 to hit, 1d6+2 slashing, 5 ft.

Tail. +12, 2d8+7 bludgeoning, 15 ft.

Hillbron, Former Netherese Wizard

Medium undead (ghost), lawful evil

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 45

Speed fly 40 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
-2	+1	+0	+0	+1	+3

Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from non-magical attacks

Damage/Condition Immunities cold, necrotic, poison, charmed, exhausted, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive perception 11

Ethereal Sight. Can see 60 ft. into the Ethereal Plane from Material Plane and vice versa.

Incorporeal Movement. Can move through creatures/objects as difficult terrain, taking 1d10 force damage if ending turn inside an object.

Actions

Withering Touch. +5 to hit, 4d6+3 necrotic damage, 5 ft.

Etherealness. Switch from Material to Ethereal Plane or vice versa. Visible on Material while ethereal but can't be effected by anything.

Horrifying Visage. Non-undead within 60 ft. DC 13 WIS save or frightened for 1 minute. Failed save 5 or more target ages 1d4X10 years, must be reversed within 24 hours by greater restoration or is permanent. Successful save can't be frightened by visage for 24 hours.

Possession (Recharge 6). Target humanoid (5 ft.) makes DC 13 CHA save or is possessed until body goes to 0 hit points or ghost leaves body. See *Monster Manual* for more detail.

Juniper Guardian

Large plant, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural)

Hit Points 85

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+4	+1	+3	-2	+0	+0

Damage Resistance bludgeoning

Condition Immunities blinded, deafened, exhaustion

Damage Vulnerability fire

Senses passive perception 10

Languages None

Challenge 4 (1.100 XP)

Explosive. If the juniper guardian is killed in an attack in which it took fire damage, the oils in its branches will ignite and the creature will explode, doing 3d6 fire damage to all creatures within 10' (DC 13 DEX check for half damage).

Actions

Multiattack. 2 branch whip attacks.

Branch Whip. +6 to hit, 1d6+4 piercing, 10 ft. 2 damage on miss.

Any gardner from Neverwinter will tell you that the juniper bush ranks highly on the list of most unpleasant plants to maintain. When pruning, their thorns always manage to find the gaps in even the thickest of sleeves worn by the pruner, and their natural oils burn so hot they are almost impossible to put out.

The juniper guardian is an abomination of that very shrub brought into an animated state by a major magical event. Mobile and territorial, the juniper guardian will attack anything not of its kind upon detection. Like its inanimate cousin, its thorns always seem to find a way through both armor and the deftest of dodging, managing to do damage even when it appears to have missed on an attack.

Additionally, while its berries would likely make the most delicious gin, the oils residing within are highly flammable, and the party that decides to handle the creatures with fire may be in for a nasty surprise.*



*If you've ever had to prune juniper bushes, I hope you enjoy this creature. If you think this is a terrible joke, feel free to replace this creature with the shambling mound in the Monster Manual.

Netherese Soldier

Medium human, lawful evil

Armor Class 17 (splint)

Hit Points 60

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+3	+1	+2	+0	+0	+0

Skills Athletics +5, Perception +2

Senses passive perception +2

Languages Common

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Actions

Multiattack. 2 longsword attacks (does not apply to crossbow).

Longsword. +5 to hit, 1d10+3 slashing (two handed), 5 ft.

Crossbow. +3 to hit, 1d10+1 piercing, 100/400 ft.

Ryonn, Netherese Champion

Medium human, lawful evil

Armor Class 18 (plate)

Hit Points 143

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+5	+2	+2	+0	+2	+1

Saves Str +9, Con +6

Skills Athletics +9, Intimidation +5, Perception +6

Senses passive Perception 16

Languages Common

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Indomitable (2/Day). Reroll failed save.

Second Wind (Recharge after short or long rest). Gain 20 hit points as a bonus action.

Actions

Multiattack. 3 attacks with greatsword or shortbow.

Greatsword +2. +11 to hit, 2d6+7 slashing plus 2d6 slashing if attacker has more than half of total hit points, 5 ft.

Shortbow. +6 to hit, 1d6+2 piercing plus 2d6 piercing if attacker has more than half of total hit points, 80/320 ft.

Tail. +12, 2d8+7 bludgeoning, 15 ft.

Trallo, Netherese Wizard

Medium human, lawful evil

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 67

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
-1	+2	+0	+4	+1	+0

Saves Int +7, Wis +4

Skills Arcana +7, History +7

Languages Common, Elvish, Abyssal, Draconic

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Spellcasting. 15th level, DC 15, +7 spell attack bonus.

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt*, *light*, *mage hand*, *message*, *true strike*

1st (4): *detect magic**, *featherfall*, *mage armor*

2nd (3): *detect thoughts**, *locate object**, *scorching ray*

3rd (3): *clairvoyance**, *fly*, *fireball*

4th (3): *arcane eye**, *ice storm*, *stoneskin*

5th (2): *Rary's telepathic bond**, *screying**

6th (1): *mass suggestion*, *true seeing**

7th (1): *delayed blast fireball*, *teleport*

8th (1): *maze*

**Divination spell of 1st or higher level*

Portent (Recharge after casting Divination spell level 1 or higher. Can roll d20 and choose to use that roll instead when creature makes an attack, save or check.

Actions

Quarterstaff. +3 to hit, 1d6-1 bludgeon, 5 ft.

Umber Hulk

Large monstrosity, chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 93

Speed 30 ft., burrow 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+5	+1	+3	-1	+0	+0

Senses darkvision 120 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive perception 10

Languages Umber Hulk

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Confusing Gaze. Can magically force creature within 30 ft. that can see its eyes to make DC 15 CHA save unless incapacitated. On failed save no reactions until start of next turn and rolls d8 to determine action for its turn. On 1 to 4 creature does nothing; on 5 or 6 takes no action but moves all range in random direction; on 7 or 8 creature makes melee attack against random creature or does nothing if not in range.

Tunneller. Can burrow leaving a 5 foot wide, 8 foot tall tunnel.

Actions

Multiattack. Three attacks - two claw and one mandible.

Claw. +8 to hit, 1d8+5 slashing, 5 ft.

Mandible. +8 to hit, 2d8+5 slashing damage, 5 ft.

Wight

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (studded leather)

Hit Points 45

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+2	+2	+3	+0	+1	+2

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +4

Damage Resistances necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non-magical/non-silver weapons

Damage/Condition Immunities poison, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Sunlight Sensitivity. Disadvantage on attacks and wisdom checks relying on sight while in sunlight.

Actions

Multiattack. 2 longsword or longbow attacks; or 1 longsword and 1 Life Drain attack.

Longsword. +4 to hit, 1d8+2 slashing, 5 ft.

Longbow. +4 to hit, 1d8+2 piercing, 150/600 ft.

Life Drain. +4, 1d6+2 necrotic, 5 ft. Target makes DC 13 CON save or hit point max is reduced by damage amount until long rest. No death save. Humanoid slain by Life Drain rises as zombie under wight's control in 24 hours unless raised or body destroyed.

Wraith

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 67

Speed fly 60 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
-2	+3	+3	+1	+2	+2

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from non-magical/non-silver weapons

Damage/Condition Immunities necrotic, poison, charmed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive perception 12

Languages Common, Elvish, Abyssal, Draconic

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Incorporeal Movement. Move through creatures/objects as difficult terrain, takes 1d10 force dmg ending turn inside an object.

Sunlight Sensitivity. Disadvantage on attacks/WIS checks using sight in sunlight.

Actions

Life Drain. +6, 4d8+3 necrotic, 5 ft. Target makes DC 14 CON save or hit point max is reduced by damage amount until long rest. No death save. Humanoid slain by Life Drain rises as zombie under wight's control in 24 hours unless raised or body destroyed.

Create Specter. Can create a spectre from body of humanoid that's been dead for no more than 1 minute.

Wyvern

Large dragon, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 110

Speed 20 ft., fly 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+4	+0	+3	-3	+1	-2

Skills Perception +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive perception 14

Actions

Multiattack. 3 attacks, two bite and one stinger. When flying can use claw attack.

Bite. +7 to hit, 2d6+4 piercing, 10 ft.

Claw. +7 to hit, 2d8+4 slashing, 5 feet.

Stinger. +7 to hit, 2d6+4 piercing. Target makes DC 15 CON save, 7d6 poison damage on failed save, or half on successful save.



Appendix A - Arqwyn's Story (from The Ancient Relic of Netheril)

Arqwyn Raptis'triskal is a green dragonborn wizard from Evereska. She was born a runt and always seemed to have an innate master incantations as she matured. Growing up, she was frequently mistaken for a kobold, which at best made her furious and at worst would put her in danger. Indeed, she left her birthplace of Waterdeep because of this. Even as an adult dragonborn, she lacks the size of most of her kin as she's only about four feet tall and weighs just under 70 pounds.

Never feeling truly accepted anywhere, she made her way to the elven city of Evereska, where she eventually began working with Taryll Stormbender, an elven wizard and Councilmember of Evereska. While plainly not elven, her remarkable abilities at a young age gained her a grudging acceptance among the elves within the city and a true mentorship and friendship with Taryll. So while she still doesn't truly fit in within her adopted home, she's free to hone her powers

with with someone she knows she can trust, and that's good enough for her to call Evereska home.

Now an adult and skilled wizard, Arqwyn works for the Council of Evereska to help the city bolster its magical defenses against the coming threat of the recently returned Netherese, who, if given the opportunity, will storm Evereska. While she's tolerated within the gates of Evereska, many council members see her as Taryll's 'pet' rather than as his apprentice due to her non-elven heritage. Consequentially, Taryll often finds himself agreeing to send her on dangerous errands outside the gates of Evereska in exchange for their tolerance. Several on The Council do little to conceal their hopes that she does not return, but Arqwyn

doesn't mind. She sees these challenges as an opportunity to both increase her standing with Evereska as a whole and to prove that her mentor's confidence in her is not misplaced.

Through her research Arqwyn stumbled upon an untitled old book describing a flying temple to Azuth, a lesser god of mages. According to the book, the temple frequently flew near the old city of Rasilith. The book also stated that, unbelievably, the artifact powering the temple's flight was the result of a Netherese attempt at creating a *mythal*. Known as one of the most powerful magical item types created by the elves, Arqwyn speculated that they attempted to use The Nether Scrolls to create their own *mythal*. The little known temple all but disappeared from history, but the book from Taryll's library in Evereska contained a list of frequently used "anchors" for the flying temple.

Upon searching several areas reported to contain an anchor around the town of Rasilith, she uncovered the entrance to the temple near the town, where she enlisted a group of adventurers to find the *mythal* in the temple's depths.

Appendix B - Rasilith (from The Ancient Relic of Netheril)

Rasilith

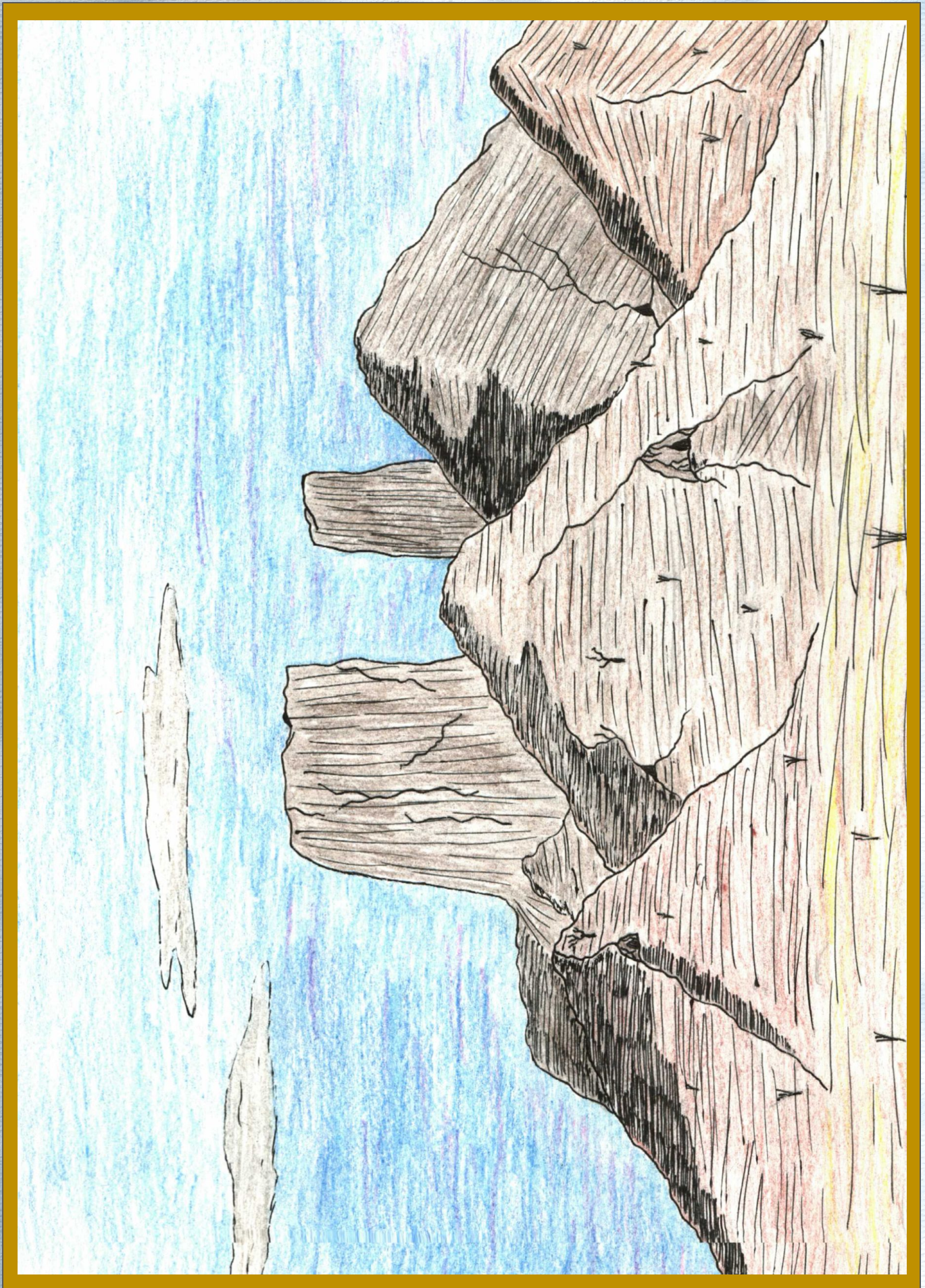
Much of the town of Rasilith's history is lost to time as few written records exist, and word of mouth can change history from generation to generation. According to the locals of what is now a relatively small settlement in the former Netheril Empire, Rasilith was once one of the capitals of the region before being overrun by the Netherese, prior even to the region becoming Anauroch, the great desert, centuries ago.

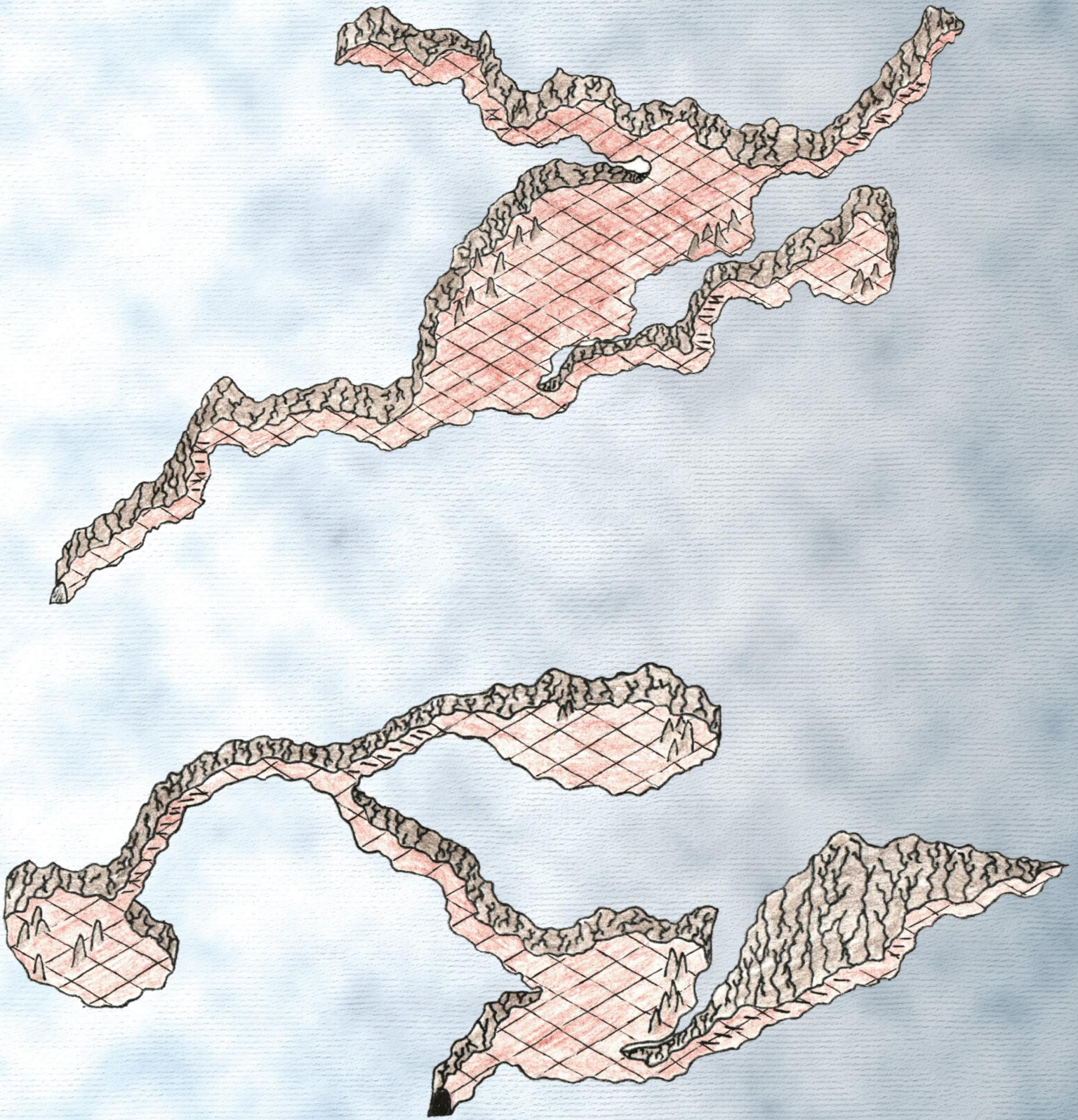
Over the years the shifting sands buried the majority of the city's structures, many of which are still under the earth, despite the powerful spells woven by the mysterious and sinister Netherese wizards after the Spellplague to bring rain that would begin to transform some of the landscape to grasslands reminiscent of their once mighty empire. Why or how they returned, no one seems certain. Though their numbers are few in the region, their motives are plain--return the Netheril Empire to its former glory.

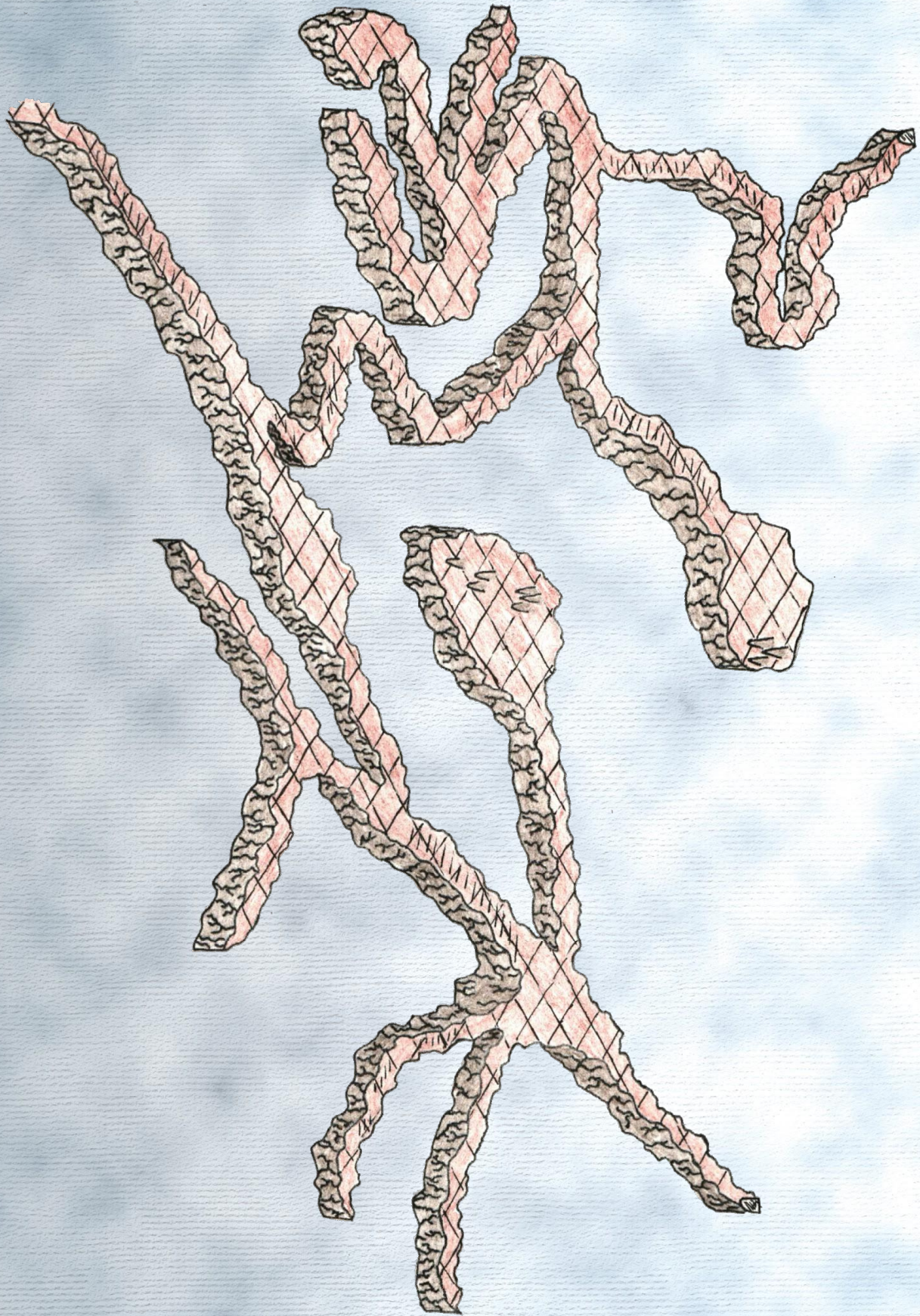
The geography of Rasilith and the surrounding areas is a series of contradictions. Areas affected by the Netherese magic are green, even lush in some places, while stretches of the old parched sea of Anauroch still exist where the desert was not touched by the powerful spells.

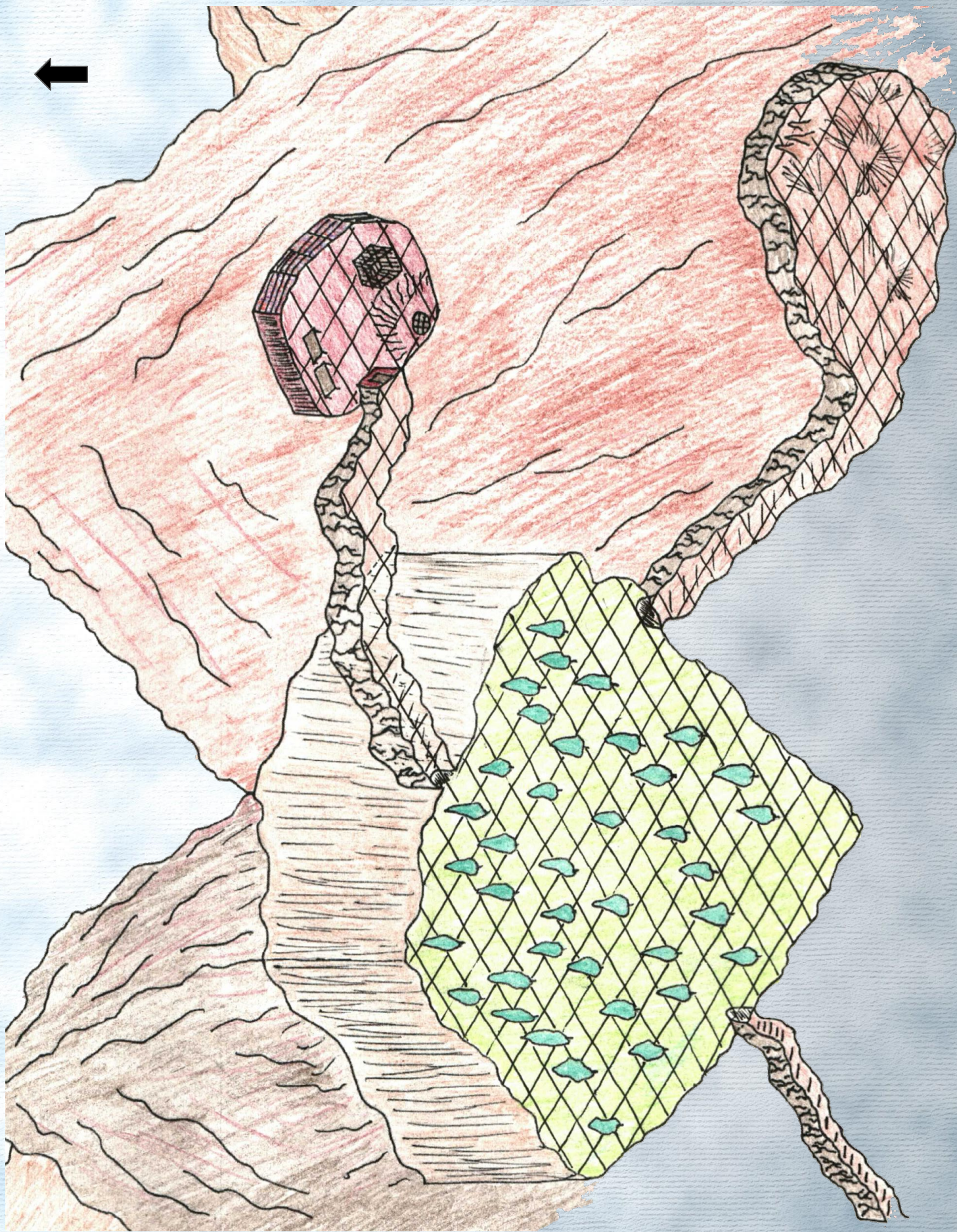
The settlement of Rasilith can boast similar contradictions. Several ramshackle buildings dot the side of the main road while hints of its former glory poke from the ground in places giving hints of the tops of what used to be alabaster towers. Today, it is more of a rest stop for travellers crossing to and from the Moonsea and the North with its visitors more interested in moving on than staying in the area for any length of time. If there's something of interest somewhere under the surface, most do not have the time or interest to make the search.

Appendix C - Player Handouts









To Our Allies,

I require your service and that of any under your command for the greater good of the Empire of Netheril. After our defeat against the forces of Cormyr, we fled back to our ancestral lands, where we discovered a power that will allow us to strike out directly at Evereska and begin to expand our great empire once again.

I write to tell you that the elves are no longer the only race able to create and command the power of a mythal, for my band of wizards was able to accomplish just such a feat. We had planned to use the mythal to attack Evereska, but the creation of the artifact was costly, and we lost a great many of our people in the blast that accompanied our success. The mythal is now on its way to Athia, but we cannot attack yet.

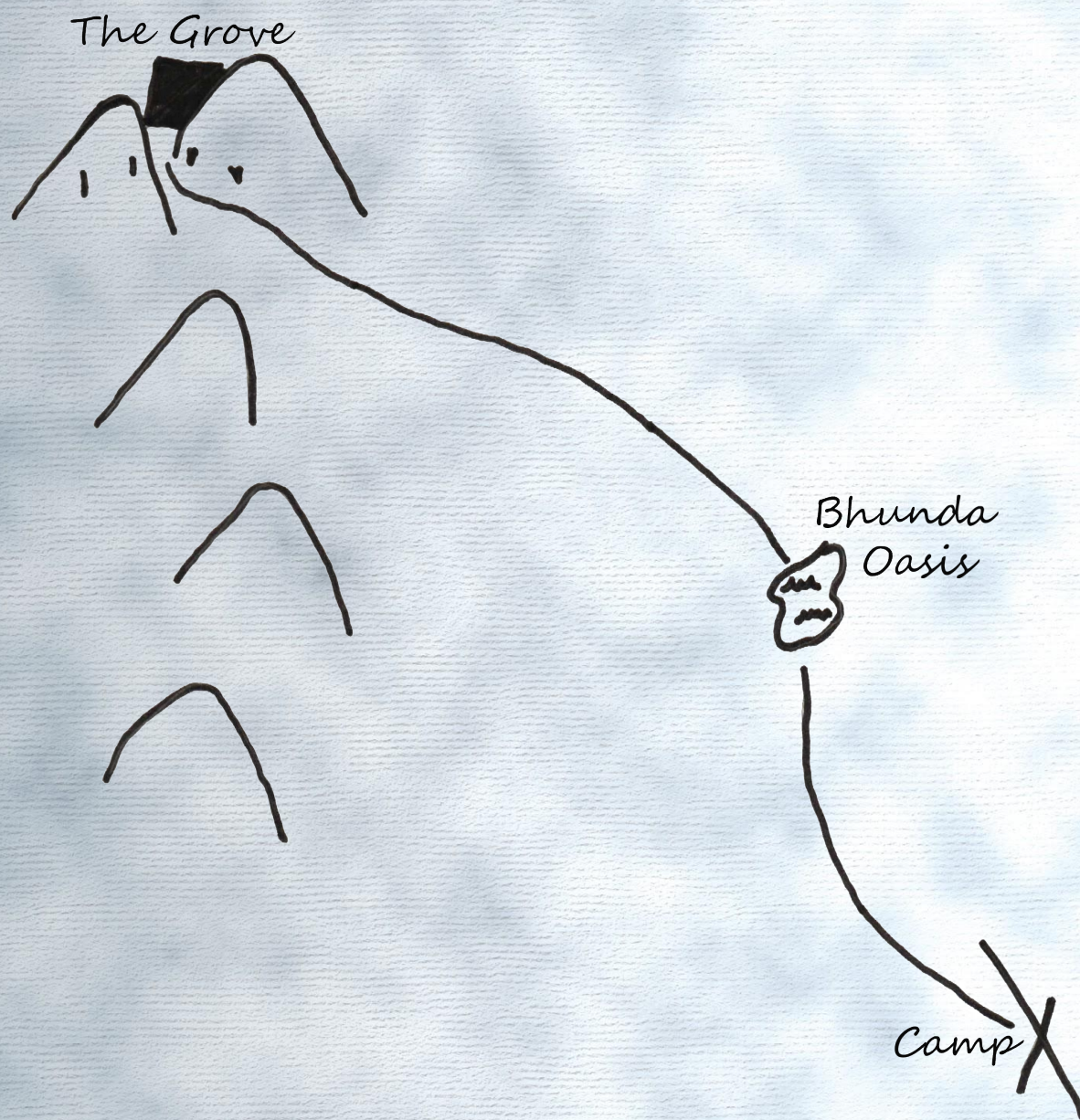
In order to us to assure our triumph, we will need to increase our numbers with your forces. Even with the help of one of our great ancestors, we still need your forces. Tarry not, for time that passes while we wait is lost time in which we could be squashing the elves under our thumbs. When we are united, we will plunder Evereska and share in the glory of the return of the Netherese empire!

My associate, Trallo, will accompany you to Athia.

For the Glory of Netheril,

Erderick, High Wizard of Netheril

A hastily drawn map...



Credits

Story and maps by Ben Holsclaw

Additional Art Elements by

Patrick E. Pullen

<https://www.dmsguild.com/browse.php?author=Patrick%20E.%20Pullen>

Corey Johnston

<https://www.dmsguild.com/browse.php?author=Corey%20Johnston>

Dave Zajac

<https://www.dmsguild.com/browse.php?author=Dave%20Zajac>