

# **TROUBLE IN IRONBOOT MINE**

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**Part 1: The Aranea Queen**

by  
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I claim no ownership of cover art.

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## About this module

Trouble in Deadsnows is designed for a party of 4-6 PCs of 1. level, a good balance of character classes is advised. It takes place in the Nether Mountains, in the Silver Marches region of the Western Heartlands in Faerun, using the Forgotten Realms setting. The module can be run using any small settlements where dwarven mine is in the near vicinity. All encounters can be easily modified to suit larger or smaller parties. This is the first part of three in the Aranea Queen campaign.

When a dwarf from a local mine is found dead the PCs are sent to investigate. Once at the mine the PCs discover that something terrible has happened and need to find a way to make things right again.

This book is meant for Dungeon Masters and refers the Player's Handbook, Dungeon Master's Guide and Monsters Manual. Spells and items are described in the Player's Handbook, magic items can be found in Dungeon Master's Guide and stat-blocks for monsters and villains are contained in the Monsters Manual, unless otherwise noted.

## Recent developments

The Spellplague hit the small village of Deadsnows hard. The village that rested in a valley in the northern part of the Nether Mountains was all but destroyed, the inhabitants scattered through the Western Heartlands. A century and two years better, humans and dwarves returned to Deadsnows and the Icespear valley, finding the ruined village and the started rebuilding it. Two years later the village is thriving, mostly due to good relations with the local dwarf clans and the village's good situation, by the Fork Road to Sundabar.

One of these dwarf clans was the Ironboot clan. It had ventured deep into the Nether Mountains to mine for gold. The relatively small clan had hit a prosperous vein in an underground chasm created by the Spellplague. Working on the vein the miners discovered series of chambers dating from before the Spellplague, but seemingly abandoned.

Investigation lead the dwarves into a decorated chamber where they found a mostly round golden egg on a pedestal. The investigators, blinded by the monetary value of the egg, removed the egg from the pedestal, awakening ancient guardians placed there over a century ago by the former inhabitants of the place. The egg is in fact an Aranea queen egg, left by the Aranea clan there as a safety measure,

when Spellplague forced the clan to go deeper into the Underdark.

The guardians, once woken, chased the dwarves out of the Aranea complex and killed them. Only one dwarf escaped, barely managed to make it to Deadsnows, where Rubert Anon, priest of Lathander, finds him dead.

Meanwhile a few kobold discover the Ironboot mine abandoned, the guardians having completed their task and taken their position in the decorated chamber. The kobolds find the egg and not understanding what it is decide to take it back to their cave. The Aranea, feeling the gentle summoning tug of the protective spells placed on the egg and the chamber make their way up from the Underdark, intent on retrieving the old queen egg.

## Adventure overview

Torbin Ironboot, elder of the Ironboot clan, is discovered dead in Deadsnows. Rubert Anon, cleric of Lathander, asks the PCs to inform the clan of their elder's death. The mine is in the Nether Mountains and the town has had a good relationship with the dwarf clan ever since it was rebuilt. The trip takes a couple of days but once there the PCs discover something terrible has happened.

The mine is empty and there are obvious signs of struggle. The main hallway, leading down into the mining area is sealed off, closed with all manner of debris and overturned furniture. Once the PCs go deeper into the mine they find that the dwarves had opened a strange chamber, one with a pedestal with a nest for something. The nest used to store an Aranean queen egg of an old Aranea clan, left there once the clan fled deeper into the Underdark following the horrors of the Spellplague. The dwarves discovered the chamber and removed the queen egg, waking the guardians.

The guardians, after battling the dwarf clan, summoned the elders of the Aranea clan, which are back for the egg and not that happy finding the chamber opened and empty. They demand the queen egg be given back to them or they will unleash their anger upon the dwarves in nearby mines. A local clan of kobolds, divided by internal bickering between the leader and his son, Kax, made the most of the opportunity when it discovered that the dwarves were gone and looted the mine and enslaved the remaining dwarves. The PCs need to find the kobolds and discover what happened to the egg and the dwarves.

# Chapter 1: In Deadsnows

## Dawnlord in distress

The PCs are on their way to Deadsnows following the Fork Road. It's late Mirtul, grass turning green and rivers, once clad with ice are whitewashed and hard to cross. As the hot day passes the PCs draw nearer to Deadsnows. If one or more PC has a **Passive Perception 13** or higher they hear a spell boom up the road, the sound of battle and shrill screams. Read or paraphrase the following, if they PCs decide to investigate.

A cart has been turned over in a fork of the road. Several small creatures surround the cart and send volleys of pebbles over it, screaming with delight. A few of them move forward with crude daggers and clubs. A lone man stands beside the wagon, holding a golden symbol high. He calls forth a rosy-hued shimmering light around himself. Blood stains his face. The attackers will soon overrun him.

The PCs can make an **Intelligence (Religion) DC 10 check** to recognize the cleric as a priest of Lathander. His name is Rubert Anon (see appendix), who's returning from Sundabar. Rubert is a local priest and lives in Deadsnows. If the PCs help him he will be thankful and talk highly of the PCs in Deadsnows. Rubert will fight to defend his cart. He's armed with a quarterstaff and has used Shield

of faith to bolster his defense. He has already used sacred flame and cure wounds. If the PCs enter the fight he will use bless but save the remaining spell slots for healing.

The attackers are 6 red scaled **kobolds** (see **MM p.195**), a small group led by **Kax** (see appendix), son of Roqua, leader of the Burnt hand Clan. Each kobold have burn marks on the left hand. If half of the kobolds is slain the rest flees. The kobolds try to use their slings as much as they can but once in melee they use their pack tactics as much as they can. Their goal is to loot the cart and two kobolds will use their actions to do so. Kax urges his kobolds on speaking Draconic, eager to impress his draconic master and taking his father's place as speaker. Kax is the first to flee the scene.

Kax is a despicable little creature and will use every opportunity to belittle the PC's. He leads from the rear but is easily recognisable from his red cloak, studded leather armor, eye patch and squeaky voice. His warriors are fearless while he's there.

If the PCs intervene the kobolds fight for three rounds. If they manage to bring down a hero and haven't looted the cart they fight on for another two rounds. If they see that the PCs are putting up a good fight, Kax calls them back and flees, Kax



doesn't participate in the encounter in any other manner. If the kobolds have managed to loot the cart they leave. If the PCs try to talk to the kobolds they are only interested in getting their hands treasure the PCs and Rubert have. If the PCs capture a kobold and interrogate it, the kobold says that Kax lead the raiding party and the goal was to collect treasure for Alizarinathrax, the red dragon living deep in the Nether Mountains and the kobold clan pays homage to.

Once the kobolds have been left Rubert thanks the PCs. If they managed to thwart Kax's plan to loot the cart, Rubert is all the more grateful. In the cart he has a small box containing 350 gold pieces, a support from the Lathander church in Sundabar for a new church in Deadsnows. Rubert offers to heal the PCs' wounds, if there are any. He invites the PCs to accompany him the last few miles to Deadsnows. Rubert informs the PCs that kobolds have been a nuisance since last summer and the town's militia and rangers have tried to keep them down, but there have been reports of the kobolds attacking both travelers and small caravans.

## TRAVELING THROUGH ICESPEAR VALLEY

The Icespear Valley is a peaceful place. It rests between the Nether Mountains and the steep lower mountainsides are covered with fur and pine woods. The woods are scarce the higher you get and the mountain tops are covered with ice and snow.

Many farms dot the valley, though most rest near the village. Sheep and cattle grass in the valley, guarded by sheep dogs and sleepy teenagers. The Icespear River is swollen and whitewashed, due to snow melting high in the mountains. The days are hot but as soon as the sun sets the cold creeps in, a nasty reminder that the summer hasn't taken completely over.

In the northern part of the Valley stand the ruins of Hospice of Marthammor Duin. Formerly an abbot dedicated to the dwarven deity it stands now as a dark reminder of the effect the Spellplague had on the Icespear Valley.

Caravans and traveling merchants make their stop in Deadsnow while traveling the Fork Road between Ascore and Sundabar. Militia from Deadsnows occasionally traverse the road from Deadsnow to Fork Road and with the help of locals try to keep the path free of danger.

## A dead dwarf in the gates

As the PCs draw nearer to Deadsnows they spot a village being rebuilt. There are both new houses, houses rebuilt and old houses either crumbled or about to. The walls surrounding the town have been hastily rebuilt and are in the process of being strengthened by a crew led by a dwarven stone mason.

Dusk is falling and the warm lights of Deadsnows, the small village in Icespear valley, look welcoming and warm. As the sun sets a cold wind picks up, rustling the trees by the road. When you come closer to the village you see that it's being rebuilt, many houses are new, wooden frames on stone foundation, three story high with steep roofs. White smoke rises from many chimneys. The wooden walls are hastily assembled but the gates look sturdy.

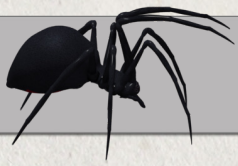
Rubert Anon can fill the PCs on the town's history and its build up (see Background). He was urged to move to Deadsnows by his mentor in Dagger Falls and bring the gospel of Lathander and partake in the rebirth of the village. Rubert has managed to convert many villagers and has with the help of the congregation managed to build a small church, situated where the old Morning Watchtower used to stand. He invites the PCs to pay him a visit before they leave Deadsnows.

As the group draws enter the village they see that there's something happening in the south gates. Concerned and curious villagers are walking over there.

The wooden gates of Deadsnows are closed. On either side of the gate are stone pillars, the one on your left is carved with dwarven runes, the writing on the one to your right says: Well met, traveler! Rest your bones, rest your weary feet. Rest your sword and leave in peace.

Rubert Anon calls out: "Lo, guards! Rubert Anon, second speaker, returns." After a short while the gates are opened by a flustered guard. Rubert greets the man and claims that you are his guests.

As you enter Deadsnows you see that the other guards are looking towards the south gate, straining to see what's going on there and seemingly too busy to pay you any notice. People are gathering there.



Rubert decides to investigate this further. If the PCs decide to join him, read or paraphrase the text below. If the PCs feel weary and in need of a warm bath and cozy bed it shouldn't take them long to find The Rose and Hammer, the only house in the village that survived the Spellplague.

The villagers have gathered in the South gate. Rubert pushes his way through, coming to an abrupt stop. An old, white haired dwarf lies beside one of the carved gate poles, clutching a dire wound in his side. Rubert starts praying to his god but the dwarf grabs his hands and opens his eyes. He draws the cleric closer and whispers something in his ear. The people present there strain to hear what he has to say.

The PCs can make a **DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check** to hear what the old dwarf says to Rubert. Those that pass the test hear the dwarf say: Don't let them have it.

The dwarf passes away not long after this. He's too weak to answer any questions and refuses to receive healing from Rubert, who only eases the dwarf's pain. After the dwarf's death Rubert arranges that the body will be carried to his temple and he proclaims that he will be singing over the body in the morning.

The PCs can easily learn that the dwarf's name was Torbin Ironboot, a ledge keeper of the Ironboot clan from a mine nearby. Rubert excuses himself but asks the PCs to find him in the morning in the temple. He tells the PCs to stay at The Rose and Hammer and where to find the inn.

## Deadsnows

*Village, population 230*

Deadsnows was until recently little more than a ghost town. Now it thrives once more and travelers and caravans are making a stop there, bringing coin and product.

### History

Originally a keep for a human lord who desired his own kingdom, his dream was shattered before it had ever really started. He died in the Battle of Deadsnows, a minor skirmish with some of the countless orc raiders that continually plagued his designs and the battle which gave the place its

name. Two religious groups, Dwarves of Martham-mor Duin and Humans of Lathander eventually settled here, building impressive temples to each of their respective gods.

In Eleint, 1372 DR, during the winter melt a hunter was filling his waterskin at a swollen river 3 miles from the village when he noticed the water contained tiny golden flecks. He returned and began to prospect, discovering to his joy that there was indeed gold to be found. Word spread around the village which then got out, and within a couple of months, 300 dwarves, elves, humans and halflings had flocked to the village, either looking to mine the gold themselves or hawk their wares to said miners. A few also arrived for more nefarious ends, to sell illegal items or to steal.

This sudden influx of people taxed the village to its limit and it looked like it would continue to do so until the gold ran out. However, the Spellplague destroyed the buildings and fields of the village, forcing the survivors to flee.

In 1486 DR rumors of Deadsnows being rebuilt started circling in the Silver Marches. Many hopeful entrepreneurs and adventurers made their way to the old, abandoned village in the next months. The first winter was hard but the coming spring the villagers saw that a few dwarf clans found their way to Deadsnows and started mining in the Icespear Valley and nearby valleys. Once again Deadsnow prospers.

### Leadership

Deadsnow is led by a council of elders. Since the population is still small the elders are mostly people that have been handpicked and asked to sit on the council. The council meets as often as is needed and makes decisions on pressing issues. Now, in 1489 DR, there are five council members, each representing a small part of either the town's population or some part of its social or economy.

The council is led by Diliana Viveros (see appendix A) and has the title Speaker. Diliana is a Cormyr-ian, she was among the first settlers along with her husband, Garos, but he didn't make it through the first winter. Diliana speaks for the council and takes care of the everyday business. She organizes the militia, but every able man and woman is supposed to serve one day of every tenday. She is respected in the community and thought of as fair and just.



The council also includes Rubert Anon, Thodvar Nun, Coral Brittlebeard and Ol' Tom. Rubert represent the divine and religious part. Thodvar Nun speaks for the farmers, Coral is the spokesperson of the dwarven community and Ol'Tom leads a small circle of druids and sits on the council on their behalf.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Deadsnows population is mostly humans and dwarves. There are a few halflings and half-elves there as well, but elves are few. Other races are seldom seen.

## Economics

Deadsnows is an agricultural village based on barter and trade. The dwarf clans bring their ore and metal into town where the craftsmen work it into products. Adventurers should have no trouble buying common items but uncommon and rarer items are harder to come by.

## KEY TO DEADSNOWS

### 1. Village gates

The gates are usually guarded by a pair of guards. Both are part of the town's militia and armed with halberds, short swords and shields, wearing leather armor. The gates are wooden and closed after sunset and barred. Only a councilmember can overrule this. Stone pillars are on either side of the gates, one carved with dwarven runes, the other in common. The pillars say: Well met, traveler! Rest your bones, rest your weary feet. Rest your sword and leave in peace. The guards remind visitors and travelers to stay their weapons while in the Icespear Valley and that the use of magic is frowned upon.

### 2. The Rose and Hammer

Deadsnow's only inn is The Rose and Hammer. It was the only building that survived the Spellplague. Harad Havsum (see appendix A) took over the inn, which needed a lot of rebuilding. The inn is cozy and welcoming. It's a three story building, stone foundation and a cellar below. The upper floors are mostly bedrooms, the 2nd floor is used for guests but the 3rd floor is used by Harad and his staff.

The common room isn't as large as the big inns in Silverymoon and Waterdeep, but it can easily house 30 people. There's a moderately sized bar in one end and a fireplace in the other. Round tables are set around the support beams and therefor can't

be moved. There's a head of a stag above the fireplace, a trophy Harad claims he collected in the Vordron Woods. There's always a fire burning in the fireplace and at nights a large chandelier is lit. The windows all look over the nearby marketplace. There's always a faint smell of cooking in the common room, since the kitchen is in next room.

The rooms are comfortable but Spartan. Guests can choose between a shared room, where there are two beds and a nightstand. At the end of each bed there's a trunk, which can be locked, but the inn doesn't provide locks. There are two single rooms, both have a bed and a nightstand along with a cabinet and a trunk. The shared rooms are 3 sp per night which includes an oatmeal breakfast. The single rooms are 5 sp per night and includes oatmeal breakfast. Harad also allows poorer travelers to spend the night in his stable for a meager 5 cp but that doesn't include breakfast.

### 3. Hope's Rebirth, temple of Lathander

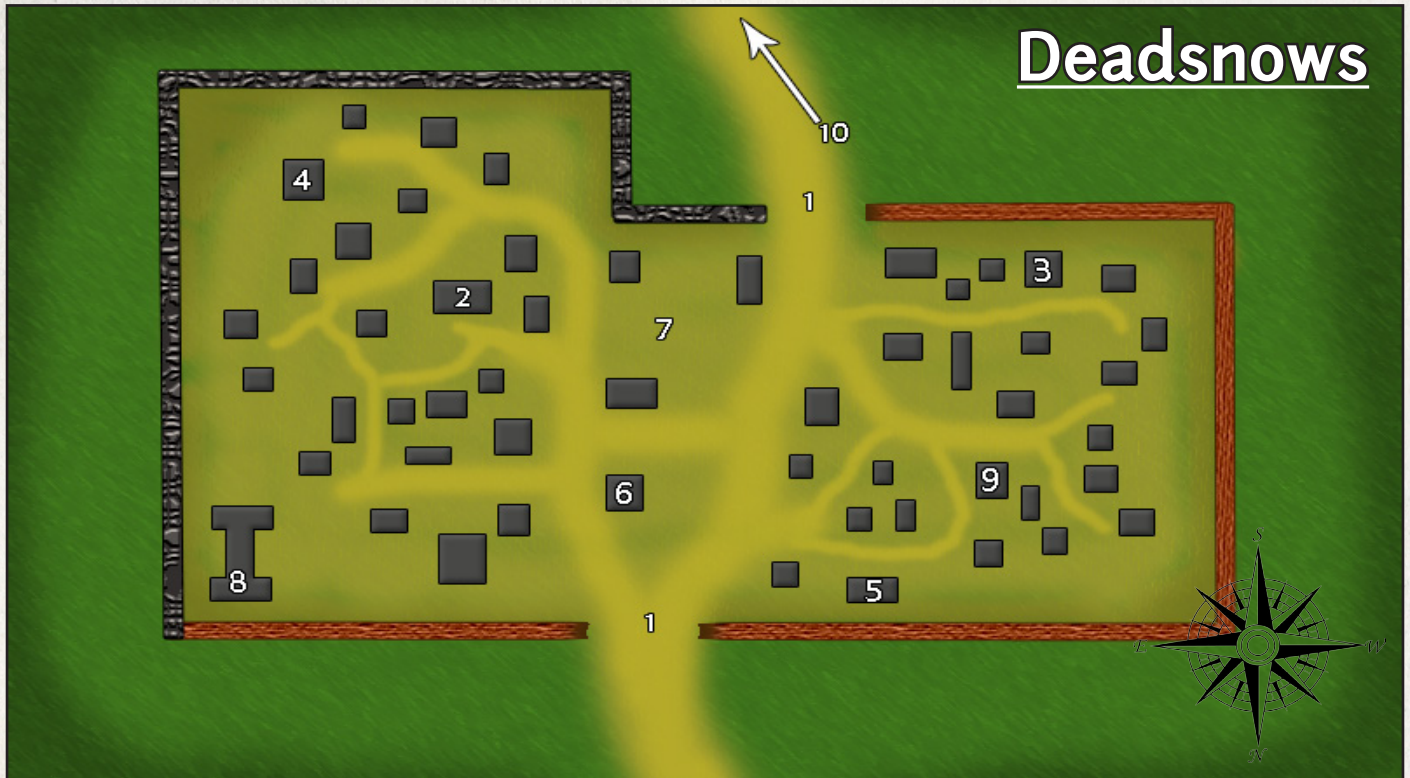
The temple is being built and is far from being ready. Its four main walls are up but the main hall is empty. A large window faces the morning sun and beneath it stands a small dais with a modest altar. The roof isn't finished but is being worked upon. The temple is built from local wood and even now one can see where the locals have etched their initials in the wood planks. Rubert explains that the villagers believe it brings them good fortune and Lathander's blessing if they do this.

What looks like a small ramshackle hut beside the temple is in fact Rubert's quarters. He uses only a portion of what funds he manages to raise for the temple for himself. His clothes are washed by people in the congregation and he accepts what food he's given. He has a bedroll, a few books, his holy symbol and his travelling clothes. In a locked chest he stores his chainmail and Morningstar.

### 4. Brittlebeard's smithy

Coral Brittlebeard's smithy is a little more than a huge forge and a massive anvil. The smithy is a one story house, a sturdy building that reminds one of a small fort. The walls are made of thick stone, the windows fortified with iron and the door ironbound and massive.

Smoke billows from the chimney and the heavy sound of hammer falling on anvil can be heard from dawn till sundown. The smithy itself is filled with all manners of tools and if one looks closely one can spot a few weapons, axes, picks and warhammers



in particular. There's also bucket full of horseshoes of all sizes.

Coral sells most simple weapons made of metal at the price given in PHB. He can also mend and fix armors and weapons. He also sells many simple metal items, such as crowbar, spades and shovels etc.

### 5. Evert's shop

Evert and his wife Una run the local shop in a house that they're still building. The third floor is not ready yet. The shop is on the ground floor and is a wondrous place, where both mundane items imported from neighboring cities and local exotics can be found. The smell of many different and exotic spices fill the air and linger about outside the shop when the weather is still.

Hidden in the doorpost is a small carved mark, a simple harp (Wisdom – Perception DC 15 check). It's also said that Evert gets strange and foreign visitors after sundown and that lights are often seen in their windows long after midnight.

The shop sells all kinds of mundane equipment at standard PHB rates. For a fair price he can also appraise and even identify magical items for the PCs, as long as the PCs have a reputation of being good and trustworthy.

### 6. Sheriff's house

Sheriff Olaf's house stands not far from the north gate. Olaf, who lives alone, uses the first floor as an office and one room as a holding cell. He prides himself in the fact that he has never been forced to use it, though it has been used a few times for those who have either no other place to go to or have drunk too much.

Just outside the Sheriff's house there's a board where villagers post ads and all kinds of posters hang. There are also posts from Sheriff Olaf, where villagers and visitors are urged to not use arcane and harmful magic within the village. Wizards and sorcerers are also supposed to let Olaf know of their arrival.

If locals or travelers revert to violence, especially if they draw weapons, Olaf and whoever is on militia duty will soon arrive and either settle the dispute or step in and take the fighting parties to the Sheriff's house. Olaf usually just expels visitors from the village and makes them pay a hefty debt. If locals are involved he tries to settle the dispute.

### 7. Marketsquare

Every weekday during summer the locals and travelling merchants set up their stalls and sell their products. The stalls are colorful, where the PCs can buy fruits, bread, meat and all sorts of local crafts.



Prices range from fair to ludicrous but both merchants and locals are used to haggling.

In a small stall the PCs can find Madame Loorou. The Madame is a traveling fortune teller and the PCs can enter the tent for the small fee of 5 sp. The fortune teller uses a crystal ball to divine the hero's future but every fortune telling is vague and it doesn't take long to figure out that Loorou is more of an entertainer than a real diviner. She uses simple tricks and tries to read her guests (she has Insight +7).

There's a well in the northern part of the square and often people gather there to gossip. Spending time there one can learn a lot about the locals.

## 8. Old Icespear Manor

The old manor is more or less in ruins. It was the largest building in the village before the Spellplague struck. The ruined walls still bear marks of the plague. The roof has fallen in and it's hazardous to enter the ruins.

Under the manor is a cellar and the locals say that sometimes during the darkest winter nights they hear voices and strange sounds coming from there. Until now no one has ventured into the cellar and Sheriff Olaf has declared that no one is to enter the ruins. The council hasn't decided what to do with it.

## 9. Viveros' bakery

When Dilana Viveros isn't acting as a speaker of the town council she can be found in her small bakery. Her house stands in not far from the east wall. It isn't large or especially noteworthy, standing two story high with a steep roof. One would be hard pressed to guess that it houses not only a bakery but in fact a quite good bakery, for Viveros is in fact a really good baker.

When she's baking a sweet smell entices both old and young alike to enter her small foyer, where her daughter, Annabel, serves customer. Bread, Danish and sweets line the walls and many villagers visit the bakery almost daily. Dilana also brews the ale that Harad sells in the Rose and Hammer. For a few silver pieces the PCs can stock up on good traveler's bread.

## 10. Thodvar's farm

Thodvar's farm is easily recognized, for it's the only one that has a small windmill. The farm is in good shape and it's obvious that he runs a good and

organized farm. Thodvar also grinds all the grain that the farmers in Icespear Valley harvest each fall.

The farm is on one floor and made of stone with thatch roof. Thodvar and his sons have erected a four foot high stone wall around their land. It's obviously not meant to hold people at bay, but serves its purpose well, since Thodvar also keeps sheep and cattle.

When visiting the farm the first thing the PCs should be aware of are his many dogs. Thodvar prides himself in his dogs and many farmers in the valley have dog raised by Thodvar, which are both excellent guard dogs and good sheep dogs.

## RUMORS AND HEARSAY

These rumors can be easily learned from staying in Deadsnows for a short period of time. The PCs can talk to locals, spend some time in the market square or in the Rose and hammer. The villagers are eager to inform their guests about their neighbors and learn more about the newcomers.

## Ol'Tom

People in the Deadsnow respect the old druid but the respect is mixed with awe and fear. Children are even sometimes chastised saying that if they don't behave Ol'Tom will take them away. The villagers often wonder where the old man lives and how comes he knows so much about them. There are even those that believe that Ol'Tom used to live in Deadsnows before the plague.

## The treasure of the Icespear Manor

Before the Spellplague the Icespear family, led by Arletha Icespear, used to live in the manor but they were never known to be especially rich, since their richness was mostly tied up in lands and houses. When the Spellplague struck most of it came worthless and so Arletha Icespear and her family fled along with other villagers. But still villagers speak of a lost treasure, hidden in a secret chamber in the cellar. But no one dares to enter the cellar due to the strange nighttime sounds and sightings reported by villagers and travelers alike.

## Brotherhood of the Moon

A small band of adventurers called the Brotherhood of the Moon used Deadsnows as a base of operations before the Spellplague struck. Unfortunately they didn't have time to gather their treasure before leaving town, which caused many treasure hunters



to search for it in the ruins. One of them, an orc called Histarack, discovered it and had the rumors spread that said that the town was a pocket of Spellplague energy, which aroused the interest of Order of the Blue fire, which in turn sent envoys to reveal the hoax for what it was. The treasure however disappeared and hasn't been found ever since.

## The Hospice of Marthammor Duin

When the Spellplague struck and the villagers fled no monk was seen leaving the old abbey that stands in the mouth of the valley. Now the abbey is in ruins, though many dwarves still pay a visit to the place and the shrine of Marthammor. No one know what happened to Observer Kerilla Gemstar and his monks but many believe that underneath the abbey is an entrance to the Underdark and following the Spellplague the Hospice was overrun by some foul aberrations from below.

## Red dragon sighted!

Lately many travelers have reported seeing a red dragon soaring above the Nether Mountains. The council knows about this but the villagers are concerned that it isn't acting on it. If a red dragon has laired in the mountains it could prove a great threat to both villagers and travelers alike.

## An invitation to an adventure

When the PCs wake up, they receive a note from Rubert Anon, where he asks them to see him in Hope's Rebirth as soon as possible. The note doesn't say anything why the cleric wants to see the PCs. Walking from The Rose and Hammer takes the PCs through the town which gives them an excellent chance to learn more about the town and even get to know some of the villagers.

The day is warm and the villagers go about their business lightly dressed and with a smile on their face. Hope's Rebirth is bathed in the morning light and it's easy to imagine how magnificent it will look once finished. A large window faces the sun and once decorated with colored glass the church hall will a testament to Lathander's glory. As you enter the church you see where Rubert Anon stands by the altar and speaks with a woman in red dress. Her hair is graying but her blue eyes are as sharp as the clear sky.

Rubert greets the PCs with warm and introduces

them to Diliaana Viveros. He asks them how their stay at the Rose and hammer was and makes small talk before turning to the matter at hand. He tells the PCs that the dwarf that died in the southern gate was Thorbin Ironboot, an elder of the Ironboot clan, which have a mine high in the Nether Mountains.

Rubert and Diliaana have their concern about the Ironboots. The elders of the clan haven't left the mine since opening it three years ago and the fact that Thorbin found his way to the village more dead than alive, only to die with this cryptic message: Don't let them have it. Viveros fears that something has befallen the clan and the council wants to know if there's something wrong and if so, what has happened, though of course they hope that nothing is wrong.

"We can't pay you much, but you will have our gratitude," says Viveros and Rubert nods his head. "We can pay you 20 gp's each but that's all we can afford." Rubert smiles. "I also have two vials of healing potion I'm willing to give you if you are willing to do this for us."

Once the PCs have given their answer Diliaana excuses herself and exits the church. If the PCs refuse to do this Rubert tries to convince them to help them (see sidebar). If the PCs have agreed to go to the Ironboot mine Rubert can answer any question the PCs might have about the Ironboot clan (see below). Once the PCs have gotten all the answers they need he bids them farewell and reminds them that if something has happened and the PCs think they can help the clan, that the council would be even more grateful, for the relations with the Ironboots is valued in Deadsnows.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### Where can we find the Ironboot mine?

You'll have to walk there. The mine is in mt. Arnetha and it's about a day's walk over there. It's southeast of here, deep in the Nether Mountains. The entrance is visible from the path, so you shouldn't have any trouble finding it if you follow the path leading east, when you exit Deadsnow through the South gate.

### What do you know about the mine?

The Ironboot clan came three years ago and opened the mine. They have been working there ever since, hammering day and night. They've brought their metals to Coral and sold it to merchants in the market square. I've never been to the mine but



Coral has. He can probably help you and tell you more of the mine. I've heard that if the dwarves have managed to carve out a good mine there, they struck a nice vein of iron not long after they came here, so they've probably made a fortune.

### **Who was Thorbin?**

Thorbin Ironfoot was an elder in the clan, serving as a ledge keeper. I've only met him once, he came here to arrange a deal with Coral. He struck me as serious and stoic. He always wore a holy symbol of Dugmaren Brightmantle.

### **Do you know what could've killed him?**

No, but his wounds were serious. The cuts were deep and clean. My guess is that he must've been cut with something very sharp. He had more cuts, but none as deep as the ones in his side. In fact, it's amazing that the old dwarf managed to get here, he must've been quite fortuitous. Or stubborn. You know dwarves, if they set their mind to something...

### **What do you think he was referring to when he said: Don't let them have it?**

#### **Who are they and what is it?**

That's the thousand gold pieces question and what we need to find out. Whatever it was or is, it's something that he gave his life to warn us about.

If the PCs have other questions about the mine or the events Rubert doesn't know the answers and refers to Coral Brittlebeard, the dwarven blacksmith. He also says that Ol'Tom knows the surrounding lands quite well and it could be helpful talking to him. Thodvar is also used to go hunting in the mountains along with his sons and dogs, so he could be of some help.

### **What do you know about the clan's history before they came here?**

I know that they came from Citadel Adbar and still had some relations there. I believe the clan decided to move in order to improve their standing, or at least that's what I've heard.

### **Are there other dwarf clans or mines around Deadsnows?**

Yes, the Fenabars are west of here, a small clan and recent addition to the valley's population but the Gunlaugsons have been mining the Nether Mountains since 1480 DR, I think. They're south of Deadsnows.

## **TALKING TO CORAL BRITTLEBEARD**

If the PCs decide to investigate the clan further and talk to Coral Brittlebeard they find him in foul mood. Thorbin Ironboot was Coral's friend and he's both mourning for his friend and eager to find whoever murdered the old dwarf. He's not too keen on having non-dwarves going to the Ironboot Mine. The PCs need to convince him of helping them, the PCs need to pass a **DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check**, non-dwarves have a disadvantage on the roll. If the PCs speak to Coral in Dwarven they can roll a **DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check** to understand that he's both angry and full of sorrow for his friend. The DC is 15 if they only speak Common with Coral. If the PCs manage to convince Coral to help them he answers their questions as best as he can.

### **What do you know about the Ironboot mine?**

The mine is well crafted and much better than your average human mine. A dwarf's mine is also a home. The living halls are not far from the entrances, but the mine itself is deeper in the mountain. If enter the main entrance you should pass Moradin's halls soon. There you'll find Durna, the clan's cleric. She's grim and unwavering, but fair. Treat her with respect and she'll show you the same. Beyond the halls is the Ledger room, where Thorbin watched over the clan's ledgers and planned the mining with Durna and Isarn, the clan leader. His room is beyond the Ledger room. Isarn is usually down in the mine, managing the work. The clan's living quarters, smelting room, anvils and kilns are below these halls. The mine is accessible through the smelting room.

### **Is there more than one entrance?**

Yes, it's a dwarven mine! There's always more than one entrance. I've only seen the main entrance, but of course there's another one.

### **Can you draw us a map?**

Yes, I can.

### **What do you think has happened?**

I honestly don't know but I hope you find out. Thorbin wouldn't leave his ledgers unless the situation was dire.

Coral knows that the Ironboot clan came from Citadel Adbar and left the dwarfhold hoping to carve out their own place in the Nether Mountains. There were around 30 dwarves living in the mine.



He hopes that the PCs will find out what happened and says if they return to him with news of the clan he will be grateful. If the PCs return to him and tell him what they've found out, he will thank them and offer them 10% discount.

## Talking to Thodvar

The PCs can find Thodvar at his farm. Thodvar is wary of strangers and isn't all too keen on talking to whoever passes by his farm. The PCs need to pass a **DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check**. If they mention that Rubert Anon sent them, they will have advantage of the roll.

He has never been at the mine itself but he knows the route well enough. He warns the PCs that this is the time when the bears have younglings and he knows that there's a bear cave not far from the path, not far from where the Trout stream comes into the Icespear. He urges the PCs to be careful, since mother bears can be protective.

## What equipment do we need?

I think that a normal traveler's kit should suffice. A rope, some food packs, good clothes and decent boots is all you need to get there. If you leave late in the day, you might need to camp over a night.

## Do you know where the entrance is?

Yes, it's visible from the path. I've also seen Ironboot dwarves in the Shadow gorge, which is a little more east than the entrance. I don't know what they were doing there, but I've seen them more than once.

If the PCs want to buy a dog Thodvar is more than eager to both talk about and sell his fine breed of dogs.

## Speaking to other villagers

Other villagers don't know more about the Ironfoot clan than these other three persons. No one has had bad experience with the dwarves though most villagers can tell the PCs stories about the gruff and haughty nature of the clan, yet no one has ever been treated unfairly or swindled. The villagers all know Dorna and speak highly of her, she has been a valued adviser in building the town walls.

If the villagers are asked about what they think has happened to the Thorbin Ironfoot they quickly blame it on the kobold raids that have been happening frequently lately.

## Enroute to Ironboot mine

Once the PCs have made all preparations they need and gathered what information they need. If the PCs choose to leave after noon they will either have to trek in the dark or pass the night outdoors, since walking to the Ironboot mine takes around 8-10 hours. A good part of the way is uphill and arduous task. If the PCs decide to leave after noon allow them to make **DC 5 Wisdom (Survival) check** to figure out that they would need to spend a night under the stars.

The first few miles are easy enough, the path lies in the foothills and passes between fir and pine trees. Every now and then a stag or other game is spotted but the first few hours are uneventful. Once the path starts to climb the walk gets harder and especially for encumbered PCs.

There's no need for random encounters, unless the PCs spend the night in the mountains. The trail is often travelled and watched over by both the people in Deadsnows and the local dwarf clans.

When the PCs see where Trout Stream merges with Icespear River they meet Ol' Tom. The druid is worried and warns the PCs that an angry mother bear is on the loose. One of her cubs is missing.

You've been climbing the steep path for hours and the task is proving to be harder than you expected. Fir and pine trees cover the mountain sides, blocking for most parts your view of the surroundings. Suddenly you hear someone whistle a tune higher up on the path. Before long a white haired man in brown and green robe appears. Once he sees you, he stops and looks at each of you in turn.

"Well met, travelers," he says in deep baritone voice, "well met indeed." He holds a modest wooden staff and leans forward on it, as if to get a better look at you.

If the PCs introduce themselves, he in turn tells them his name is Thomas, but most folk in Deadsnows refer to him as Ol' Tom, which is as good as name as any. He asks the PCs what brings them to these parts of Nether Mountains. The PCs can make a **DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check** to learn that Ol' Tom is trying to find out if the PCs are there to hunt or otherwise harm the animals in this part of the mountains.

If there's a barbarian, ranger, a druid or anyone proficient in nature, survival or animal handling in



the group he asks the PCs to help him. If the group has a druid he will speak to that person in druidic.

"I'm in a bit of pickle," he says. "A mother bear lost one of her cubs and she's going rampant. I need to make sure that she doesn't come to harm. If you could please help me find her cub, I would be very grateful."

If there aren't any PCs that are proficient in these skills or look like they do, Ol' Tom only warns the PCs that there might an angry mother bear up the road and asks the PCs to take care not coming between her and her cubs.

## Finding the cub

Ol' Tom tells the PCs that he suspects that the cub has probably gone down the mountain side, since that's where its mother usually feeds. He asks the PCs to bring the cub back to this place if they find it and whistle loudly.

Once the PCs are off the path they need to pass a **DC 5 Wisdom (survival) check** to make sure that they don't get lost in the fir woods. To find the cub they can either search for tracks left by the cub or actively search for it. Both are **DC 15 Wisdom (perception) check**. If a PC proficient in Nature passes a DC 10 check the PCs have an advantage on the roll.

A little brown cub stands by a large fallen tree and digs into the ground, with bees buzzing around its head. It's seemingly oblivious to your approach.

The cub has found a small beehive and is gorging on the sweet honey. The PCs can make a **DC 10 Wisdom (Animal handling) check** to get the cub to follow them. There are other ways to get the cub, award the players for both ingenuity and good ideas. If the PCs decide to use physical force to overbear the bear or make too much of a racket the noise will attract **3 wolves** (See MM p. ) who join the fight, eager to get a piece of meat.

Once the PCs have captured the cub finding their way back to path is easy, if they have passed the earlier Wisdom (Survival check). If they failed the check the PCs need to pass a **DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check** to find their way back on the path.

Ol' Tom responds quickly once they whistle. He appears on the path above them after a few minutes. When he sees the cub he smiles and thanks the PCs. Once the druid has the cub he gives the

PCs a small pouch containing 12 goodberries.

## BLACK BEAR CUP

CR 1/4

*Small beast, unaligned*

**Armor class** 11 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 13 (2d8+4)

**Speed** 30 ft, climb 20 ft

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 13 (+1) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 2 (-4) | 13 (+1) | 7 (-2) |

**Skills** Perception +3

**Senses** passive perception 13

**Languages** -

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 xp)

**Keen Smell.** The bear has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

## ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee weapon attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4+1) piercing damage.

**Claws.** *Melee weapon attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6+1) slashing damage.

If the PC's decide to attack the cup and try to overbear it, then it will fight feriously. It's curious about the PC's but once they show hostility it becomes afraid and will fight dearly for it's life. The cup favors it's claws and will use them as long as it can.

## REWARDS

Award normal XP for defeated foes. Award each player XP for completing the following:

- Keeping the kobolds from looting Rubert's cart, 50 XP.
- Getting to know Deadsnows and it's citizens, 25 XP.
- Learning about the side entrance from Coral Brittlebeard and Thodvar, 50 XP.
- Returning the black bear cup to Ol' Tom unharmed, 25 XP.

If you are using the Milestone rule the PC's should be leveled up to 2nd level after completing this chapter.

# Chapter 2: The Ironboot Mine

## Approaching the mine

It's easy to spot the mine from the path. It rises above the treeline and below, in a small valley, the black main entrance stands out in the green foliage. Even from where the group stands it's obvious that the entrance has collapsed.

As the path rises to its highest point you finally see over the treeline. Below you is a small valley, where a small but foaming creek finds its way to the mouth of the valley. You can see where the mine is in the middle of the valley, its black entrance a stark contrast in the green foliage of the surroundings.

If the PCs pass a **DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) DC check** they can see that the mine entrance has collapsed. As they draw closer and investigate the entrance, the PCs make a **DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check** to discover that the entrance has been collapsed intentionally. Dwarven PCs have an advantage on the roll due to their Stonecunning feature. The PCs can also make a **DC 10 Intelligence (history) check** to know that dwarven mines tend to have more than one entrance, if they haven't learned that already from Coral and Thodvar.

If the PCs decide to search for another entrance they need to make a **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check**. If the PCs have talked to Thodvar and know about Shadow Gorge, from where the small creek flows, they have an advantage on the roll. Each roll means that the PCs have searched for two hours. The side entrance is hidden from view and securely locked. The dwarves also placed a trap that needs to be disabled before the door can be unlocked.

After an intensive search you finally spot the side entrance, hidden behind a fallen tree and a large grey boulder. It's craftily built and blends perfectly with the cliff.

The PCs need to find a way past the trap and to unlock the door. If one of the PCs has a **Passive Perception 15** or higher they automatically spot the trap. If not they can search for traps if they make **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check**. If the PCs spot the trap they still need to disarm it. To do so they must pass a **DC 10 Dexterity check**. If they fail with 5 or more they set the trap off. Once they've dealt with the trap they can unlock the door, if they make a **DC 10 Dexterity check**.

The trap is simple, a needle is fired at the intruder and an alarm goes off in the mine, which was intended to alert the dwarves.



## POISON NEEDLE TRAP

*Mechanical trap*

CR 1/2

When the trap is triggered a small needle extends 3 inches straight out from the lock. A creature within range takes 1 piercing damage and 6 (1D10) Poison damage and must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 hour.

## Ironboot Mine

The Ironboot mine is relatively new but the clan has already carved deep into the mountain in the three years that have passed since they arrived. The mine is on two levels, the upper level is used by the ruling class and used for ceremonies and meetings. The lower level is where the clan's living quarters are and the mine itself. Since the clan opened the Aranea Egg Room the Burnt Hand Clan has managed to enter the mine and loot what they have found, amongst the treasure the Queen egg.

### MINE FEATURES

The mine is well built and it's easy to find one's way, if there's someone among the PCs who reads dwarven. The corridors are marked with simple dwarven runes. Though most of the PCs have probably never been in a dwarven mine the mine itself isn't what's most troubling. The eerie silence, the sulphuric smell, the dried bloodstains and the mines desolation should both frighten and interest the PCs. The overwhelming dread and feeling that something terrible has happened is prevalent and tangible as soon as the PCs step through the door. The side entrance leads into the Smelting hall. From there the PCs can either enter the mine itself, the living quarters or go up to the main halls.

### Hallways and rooms

All hallways are 10 ft. tall and 10 ft. wide. Unless otherwise noted all rooms are 10 ft. tall. All walls are even and polished stone. The mine itself is rougher and the stone walls unworked.

### Doors

All doors are wooden and can be barred from the inside. A door locked this way can be broken down with a DC 15 Strength check. Unless otherwise noted all doors are unlocked and easy to open.

### Floors

Unless otherwise noted the floors are even and worked stone.

## Visibility and lights

There are light globes hanging on walls with 60 ft. interval in the hallways. The globes follow the same rules as torches. The rooms have both globes and braziers that can be lit.

## LOWER LEVEL

### 1. Smelting hall

The first room the group enters is the Smelting hall, where large anvils, kilns and 2 great furnaces stand. There's unworked stone and ore in carts and tools lying around. The whole area is in disarray and obvious that it was deserted in haste.

The hall beyond the door is dark and silent. You push on and finally reach a large room. Large kilns, two great furnaces and number of rune encrusted anvils bear a silent witness of the work that was done here. Hammers, bellows and other blacksmithing tools lie scattered on the floor. A dark hallway leads deeper into the mountain, where another opening is obviously the mine. A few carts stand there, full of unworked stone. A wooden staircase strengthened with iron bindings leads to the upper level. Beside the staircase is an elevator, large enough for a single cart.

The furnaces and kilns are cold, but it should be easy enough to get them burning again. There's both coal, shovels and tindertwigs beside the furnaces. If the PC's make a **DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check** they discover a dry blood stain beside one of the three rune encrusted anvils.

If any of the PC's have a **Passive Perception 15** or higher they hear a shuffling of feet coming from same hallway that the PCs used to get there. A small group of kobolds led by Kax discovered the open door and decided to have look inside, in hope of finding some treasure for their red dragon queen. Kax doesn't want to confront the PCs, at least not yet. He orders his kobolds to wait in the darkened hallway until the PCs move up to the upper level. If the PCs don't have that high Passive Perception, they still feel like someone is watching them.

### 2. Living quarters

The living quarters are a number of rooms that are all in similar state, in places have doors been broken down, in other parts are scorched blast marks. The rooms are almost all personal quarters of the clan members and going through them should feel like they're going through the personal stuff of someone else.



## Ironboot Mine: Lower level

The clan's living quarters are simple yet comfortable. Each room is similar in size, though they differ in almost all other aspect. The beds, the sheets, the clothes, each room has their own character. Many doors have been broken down, in a couple of places are visible blast marks.

Searching the living quarters shouldn't take long. If the PC's make a **DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check** their search reveals a few coins (2 gp, 31 sp, 10 cp) and pouch containing a small piece of emerald worth 20 gp's. If the PC's are actively looking for sign of what could have happened to the dwarves and make a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check** they spot faint drag marks on the floor. If the PC's make a **DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check** they figure out that it seems that at least some of the dwarves were dragged towards the elevator in the smelting hall.

### 3. Mine

The mine is of typical dwarven design (any dwarf with the stonemasonry trait can see that). There are tracks in the floor and globes of light with 60' intervals, giving light to 10' around themselves. The rock is worked and the mine itself is a testament to the Ironboot's craftsmanship. It's easy to find the exit to where the mine opens up into a large and deep cave, the opening is in the cave wall and it's a sheer 400' drop down from the mine opening. The cave leads down into the Underdark. There are steps

hewn into the cliff, leading down from the dark and to an opening, the PC's see the steps with a **DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check**. Getting down isn't hard, the PC's get there with a **DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check**, using rope yields advantage. If the PC's fail their check with more than 5 they lose their grip and start to fall. Let the falling hero do a **DC 10 Dexterity saving throw**. If the hero makes the save it manages to grab a hold onto something. If not, it's a long fall down.

A trail of blood is on the cliff and the mine floor by the opening, leading down into the dark opening below the mine, PC's with a **Passive Perception 13** spot it.

A young carrion crawler has found its way up from the Underdark, having caught the scent of blood and carrion in the Ironboot Mine. As soon as it spots the PC's it attacks. If the PC's have taken measures to use stealth they have a chance of surprising the carrion crawler. If the PC's are not moving as silently as they can, the carrion crawler knows they're coming and hides.

If the PC's have Passive Perception 14 they are not surprised in the first round. The Carrion Crawler attacks the first PC's, eager to make a kill. It will fight feriously and defend it's newly gained territory to the death.



## YOUNG CARRION CRAWLER

Medium Monstrosity, unaligned

CR 2

**Armor class** 13 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 37 (4d10+12)

**Speed** 30 ft, climb 30 ft

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 12 (+1) | 13 (+1) | 16 (+3) | 1 (-5) | 12 (+1) | 5 (-3) |

**Skills** Perception +3

**Senses** Darkvision 60 ft, passive perception 13

**Languages** -

**Challenge** 2 (450 xp)

**Keen Smell.** The bear has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**Spider climb.** The Carrion Crawler can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The Carrion Crawler makes two attacks, one with its tentacles and one with its bite.

**Tentacle.** *Melee weapon attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d4+1) poison damage, DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. Until the poison ends the target is paralyzed. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each its turns, ending the poison on itself on success.

**Bite.** *Melee weapon attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. Hit: 6 (2d4+1) piercing damage.

## 4. Aranea egg room

Where the steps start in the cliff is another opening. The walls are uneven and alien, the floor laid with obsidian octagon tiles, strange purple glow emits from below the tiles. At the end of the hall is a stone door, which has been broken down. Beyond is a weird room, an Aranea Queen Egg room, where an Aranea clan hid their queen egg when the Spellplague struck, storing the egg in a place of temporal stasis. Now, the seals have been broken and the egg of extreme value to the clan, which eagerly wants it back.

The egg room is extensively decorated, with imagery from the Aranea clan's history, the shapechanger's history and many powerful arcane runes. Many

sacrifices lie scattered on the floor, most of them are in clay urns or leather sacks. In the middle of the room is a pedestal, decorated with spidery looking imagery and ancient arcane runes.

You follow the strange corridor towards the doorway. Beyond the door is a strange and alien room. The walls are decorated with symbols of spiders and humans alike, foreign-looking symbols and images. On the floor lie clay urns and leather sacks scattered around, many have been opened. In the other end an octagonal pedestal stands with purple cloth on top, decorated with ancient glyphs and runes.

If the PCs decide to investigate the pedestal there's a lot that can be learned from it. Studying the pedestal itself and the cloth one can see that something oval has rested upon it with a **DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check**. Investigating the glyphs can reveal that they contained powerful divination, abjuration and conjuring magic with a **DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check**. But the runes are of a more religious kind, the PC's can see that there are some connection to both Eilistraee and Mystra with a **DC 20 Wisdom (Religion) check**. If the PC's want to know how old the pedestal or the runes they discover with **DC 10 Intelligence (History) check** that both are pre-Spellplague, but post-Times of Troubles.

If the PC's investigate the sacks and the other sacrificial items they discover quickly that someone has been here before and ransacked the room. A **DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check** reveals that probably two groups have entered room. The dust on the floor shows both heavy booted footprints and a few made by small, clawed feet. Under a leather sack there's a red scale, the PC's know that the scale belonged to a kobold with a **DC 10 Intelligence (Nature) check**. The walls have pictures that are pre-Spellplague and show strange crossbreed of humans and spiders, using spells and other arcane mysteries. With a **DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check** the PC's can learn that the pictures portray the Aranea. With a **DC 15 Intelligence (History) check** the PC's know that the paintings were created pre-Spellplague but after the Times of Troubles since they portray a reference to both Cyric and Kelemvor.

The Ironboot clan opened the egg room and investigated it, discovering the egg on the pedestal. Once they removed the egg from the room the guardians were summoned into being and they attacked the clan. Once Kax discovered that the mine was left unguarded he led an expedition of his most trusted



warriors and looted the place, taking into captivity those dwarves that were still alive. He's eager to find more treasure to bring his dragon overlord, though he's smart enough not to put himself in harm's way.

## Message from the Aranea

As the PC's are leaving the Egg Room an image shimmers into being. Each PC hears the message in his own language, i.e. elven characters hear the message in elven, Halfling characters in Lurien etc. The image portrays a figure dressed in a dark robe, with eight black eyes with a red tinge to them visible under the hood.

As you're exiting the room you feel a strange sensation send shivers down your spine, the release of arcane energy. Suddenly a large black robed figure shimmers into being before you. Its face is mostly hidden by shadow, though you can see eight small black eyes with a red tinge to them stare down at you.

"The Queen has been taken. Woe upon those who break the seals. Woe upon those who disturb her majesty's rest. Woe upon you!"

The robbed figure points a long, clawlike finger at you. Purple luminescence surrounds the finger and streaks out towards you. The light dissipates before reaching you.

Then the image fades and disappears.

This is a programmed illusion left by the Aranea, a PC proficient in Arcana knows this with a **DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check**. It appears to everyone who leave the chamber without uttering: 'Her majesty rests' in Undercommon. It was left by the Aranea as a last effort to keep would-be robbers away.

## UPPER LEVEL

The Upper level of the Ironboot Mine is used by the clan's leaders and elders. It's also the part that the clan uses to receive visitors so it's lavish and made to impress. The hallways are wide and well lit. All doors are sturdy, made of wood but can be broken down with a DC 20 Strength check. The floor is tiled.

### 5. Clan room

Isarn Ironboot, the clan's leader, used this room to conference with his council and to receive visitors. In the middle is a huge table, wherein the clan's crest has been carved. As many as eight dwarves can sit by the table in good wooden chairs. Isarn's seat has high back and a wooden frame picturing the clan's crest and Isarn's favorite weapon, heavy

warpick, is carved into the top piece. The walls are decorated with paintings, but it's also obvious that weapons and shields hung on the wall but have been removed.

Exquisite wooden chairs lie scattered about the floor in this decorated room. In the middle stands a huge wooden table with the Ironboot crest carved into it. Dwarven art hangs on the walls.

If the PC's investigate the room they discover with a **DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check** that there were weapons and shields also hanging on the walls, but they have been removed. If the PC's investigate Isarn's chair a **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check** the PC's will spot a small latch under the seat, indicating a secret compartment. If the PC's try to open it they find it locked, but it can be opened with a **DC 10 Dexterity check**. The secret compartment holds a *Potion of Bear's Endurance*, a ruby worth 100 gp's and a *Dagger +1*.

There's a secret door behind Isarn's chair but it's well hidden. If the PC's declare that they are actively searching for secret doors they can find it with a **DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check**. If the kobolds have started the fire (see below) it's easier to find the secret door due to draft, the door can then be found with a **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check**. The door leads to a rough and unworked unlit tunnel, the exit hidden by large boulders and trees in a small ravine east of the main entrance.

### 6. Ledger room

Thorbin Ironboot was in charge of ledgers, manuscripts, scrolls and books. The walls of this room are lined with bookshelves, scrollcases, maps and all manners of books. In the middle of the room is a large desk littered with scrolls and all sorts of paper. A large candlestick lies on the floor. The annals of the Ironboot clan rests upon a pedestal, a heavy tome wrought in brass and leather.

You enter a small library. Bookshelves line the walls, heavy ledgers, scrolls and books bound in leather, wood and even stone in every shelf. In the middle of the room a large desk stands, papers, maps and scrolls cover every inch of it. A heavy tome rests upon a simple pedestal, it's wrought in leather and brass with the Ironboot crest. A large candlestick lies on the floor.

A short investigation of the room with a **DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check** uncovers a cou-



ple of useful scrolls, one containing the spell Invisibility and the other one the divine spells Divine favor and Shield other.

If the PC's decide to read the annals of the Ironboot clan the book is locked with a pretty good lock, one that can be unlocked with a **DC 15 Dexterity check**. If the PC's manage to open the lock, show them handout #1. It's latest entry shows how the miners opened to Aranea egg room. Despite Dorna's warnings Isarn decided to remove the egg and the sacrifices from the room, claiming it as a part of the Ironboot treasure. After the guardians had crippled the clan's defenses the kobolds attacked through the main gate, lead by Kax. Many dwarves where enslaved, those who died in the attack where taken by the kobolds as fodder for their dragon overlord.

## 7. Moradin's Halls

Moradin's Halls is the religious center of the Ironboot mine. At one end is an altar devoted to Moradin, which the Ironboots see as their patron deity, but the Halls also include a shrine devoted to Dugmaren Brighmantle, Marthammor Duin and Dumathoin, the PC's can recognize the shrines with a **DC 10 Intelligence (Religion) check**. Usually Dorna and her apprentice, Reamar, would be within the halls but now this area is empty just as the rest of the mine. The altar resembles a great anvil and lying upon the altar is a golden ceremonial hammer, with a **DC 15 Intelligence check** the PC's know that the hammer is worth at least 500 gp's, even more when sold to dwarves. Not far from the entrance is a dried pool of blood, the kobolds found Reamar there and he put of a fight defending the Halls. The kobolds, frighten by the anvils protector, left the halls after defeating Reamar and looting the shrines.

You open heavy brass doors and enter a large hall. A great anvil stands in one end, heavily decorated with dwarven runes. Three shrines are in the other end, seemingly dedicated to other dwarven deities. Wooden benches line the walls which are decorated with picturesque tapestry. The floor is mosaic and shows Moradin's holy symbol. A part of it is covered by dried blood.

If the PC's investigate the blood they find out with a **DC 10 Wisdom (Medicine) check** that someone must've been gravely wounded there a few days ago. Upon a closer inspection the PC's can discover a subtle blast mark with a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check**, left by the spell Sacred flame cast by Reamar. There's also a small red scale in the blast mark.

If the PC's investigate the altar they quickly find the golden ceremonial hammer, which radiates magical aura, Conjuraton. If they take the hammer without saying: 'Moradin bless my hand' in dwarven, the hammers protector, a **small earth elemental**, is summoned into place.

If the PC's investigate the shrines they discover that they have been looted.

### EARTH ELEMENTAL

CR 2

*Small Elemental, neutral*

**Armor class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 33 (3d10+12)

**Speed** 30 ft., burrow 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX    | CON     | INT    | WIS    | CHA    |
|---------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| 17 (+3) | 8 (-1) | 16 (+3) | 5 (-3) | 8 (-1) | 5 (-3) |

**Damage Vulnerabilities** thunder

**Damage resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

**Damage immunities** poison

**Condition immunities** exhaustion, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, unconscious

**Senses** Darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive perception 13

**Languages** Terran

**Challenge** 2 (600 xp)

**Earth Glide.** The elemental can burrow through nonmagical, unworked earth and stone. While doing so, the elemental doesn't distrube the material it moves through.

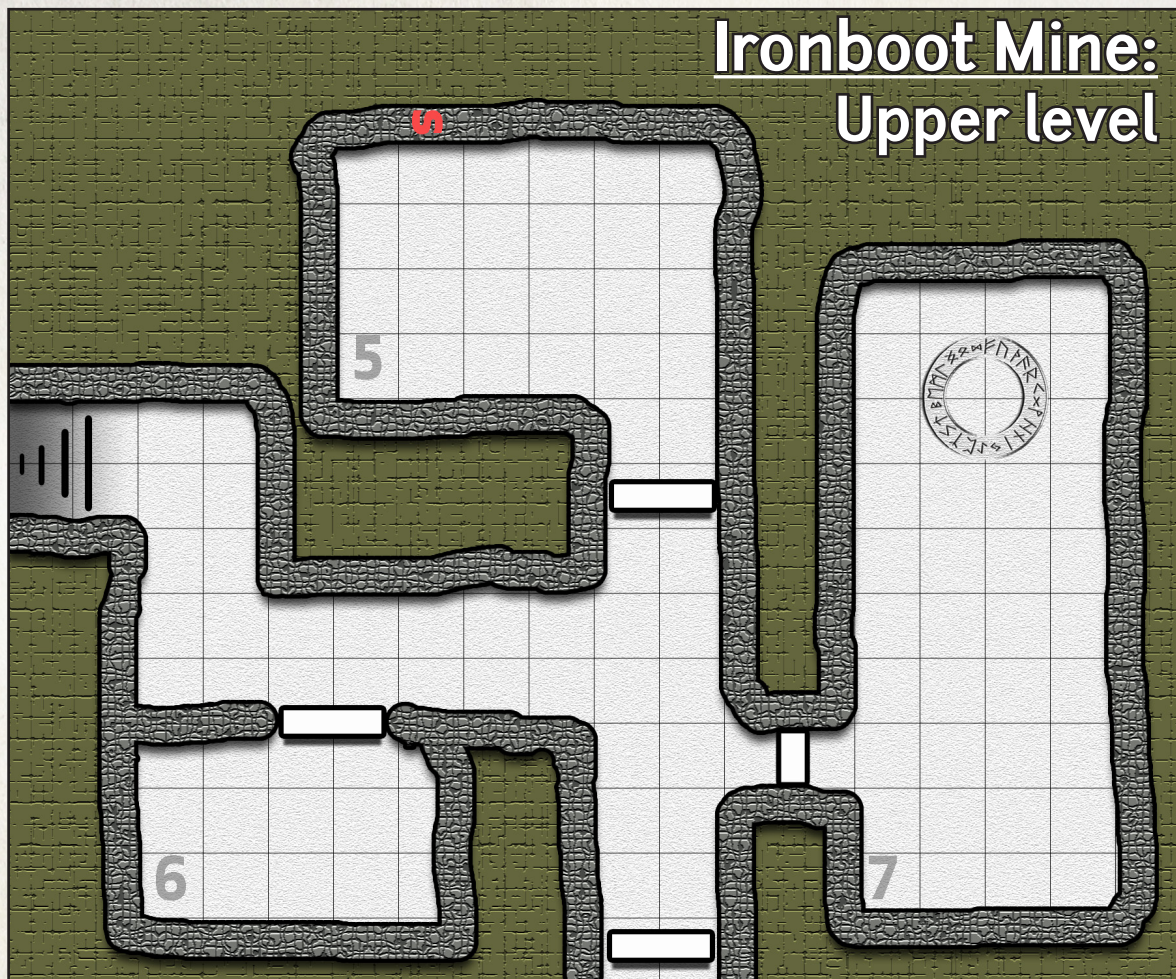
### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The elemental makes two slam attacks.

**Slam.** *Melee weapon attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d8+3) bludgeon damage.

## FIRE!

After the PC's have spent time on the upper floor Kax decides to wait no longer. He urges his warriors forward and sets fire to the wooden staircase and jams the elevator. The PC's are in dire straits and will need to get out as fast as possible, so they won't suffocate. The PC's have the chance to discover the fire in time, making sure they can escape with little or no harm. After the PC's have had the chance to investigate two of the rooms on the upper



floor the Kobolds have had enough time to get a fire started, smoke starts building up and the PC's have a chance of smelling something burning. If the PC's make a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception - Smell) check** or if they have a **Passive Perception 15** they pick up the smell. If they don't pass the check allow them another **DC 10 Wisdom (Perception - Smell) check** after a 10 rounds. After another 10 rounds lower the DC once more. The longer it takes for the PC's to discover the danger they're in, more the deadly the situation becomes.

Once the PC's reach the staircase read or paraphrase the following, if the PC's made the 1st Wisdom (Perception) check.

The wooden staircase is on fire! You see a few kobolds cheering and chuckling with glee as the red and orange flames reach higher and higher. Smoke is building up, making it harder to breathe and see. A kobold, clad in a fancy leather armor and bearing a feather headpiece, jams a pick into the elevator winch, grinning once it's properly stuck.

They have 3 rounds before the smoke gets to thick,

if they wish to attack the kobolds. Once they've made their presence known Kax heroically calls the kobolds back and tells them to exit the mine. Only half of the staircase is burning, making it easier to get down. Running through the fire should only take 1 round, making dangerous but not fatal.

If the PC's made the 2nd Wisdom (Perception) check read or paraphrase the following.

The wooden staircase is on fire. Smoke billows up towards you, making your eyes water and it's harder to breathe. A pick is stuck in the elevator winch.

The PC's are in a great danger and need to get out as fast as possible,  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the staircase is burning, making it dangerous to run through the fire.

If the PC's made the third or fourth Wisdom (Perception) check, read or paraphrase the following.

The wooden staircase is a raging inferno. Black and thick smoke blinds you, making your eyes water and your breath laborious.



Breathing is hard, making the situation even more dangerous, the PC's have a disadvantage on all rolls if they don't make a **DC 10 Constitution save** due to coughing. While the PC's are in the fire they need to make the test every round unless they decide to hold their breath (see page 183 in PHB).

Moving through the fire is very dangerous, possible deadly. Moving through the fire the PC's move at  $\frac{1}{4}$  their movement rate due to treacherous footing, moving blindly and going down a burning staircase. For each round in the fire the PC's take 1d6 damage (Fire), if they make a **DC 15 Dexterity saving throw** they only take half damage.

The staircase is 40 feet high. The wooden frame can be climbed with a **DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check**, with the damage taken for going into the fire. Due to being climbing the PC's have a disadvantage on the dexterity save.

The walls are scalable and can be climbed with a **DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check**. Using rope and climbing gear offers advantage on the roll.

### Designer's notes

This is a deadly encounter. Award the players for clever thinking, no one likes to have their character killed in a fire. Use this encounter first and foremost to show how devious and evil Kax is.

Once Kax has set fire to the staircase he exits the mine and waits there for the PC's. A kobold runner comes from the Burnt hand clan lair and tells Kax that the clan has some problem with the dwarves and that Kax is needed. He orders a handful of trusted warriors to watch over the entrance and let no one in and no one leave alive.

### Leaving the mine

When the PC's leave the mine they discover that Kax has posted sentries by the door, signed with the task to watch the Mine side entrance and make sure that no one leaves and lives to tell the tale. He's eager to make sure that every thing of value in the mine is found and brought to his dragon lord, Alizarinathrax. The sentries, **8 kobolds and 2 ambush drakes** (see appendix), wait hiding not far from the entrance, led by Snarl, Kax's second in command. If they spot the PC's exiting, the kobolds send the drake to attack the PC's if they look hurt or vulnerable. If the PC's look like they're ready to take on whatever threat the kobolds flee with the drake and let Kax know that the PC's escaped.

If the PC's exit the mine before the Kax sets fire to the staircase they can overhear Kax talk to Snarl, with a **DC 10 Dexterity (Stealth) check** in the side entrance doorway. If they understand draconic Kax says: "We will kill them and keep searching the place. Her majesty is ever hungry. There must be something more in there. Perhaps something more in that deep cave."

If the PC's exit the mine without finding the Aranea egg room, they can overhear the same conversation.

### KOBOLD AMBUSH!

Snarl (see appendix) is waiting for the PC's in the canyon where the side entrance is and has set up an ambush, eager to take on the PC's while they are vulnerable after the fire. He is accompanied by **7 kobolds** and **2 ambush drakes**. As soon as the PC's emerge from the dark door he orders his warriors to attack. If the PC's declare that they are on alert they can make a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check** to hear the kobolds whisper and not become surprised. If the PC's have a Passive Perception 15 they also notice the kobolds.

You exit the mine coughing and covered in soot. It's a relief to finally draw a breath of fresh air. Just as you're catching your breath a shrill shout echoes in the canyon.

The kobolds use their slings in round 1, then let the rage drake loose and enter melee lead on by Snarl. If the PC's manage to defeat half of the kobolds the rest tries to flee and escape. The main objective of the kobolds is to try and capture the PC's, to bring to their dragon overlord as sacrifices.

If the kobolds manage to overbear the PC's they tie them up and bring them back to their lair as prisoners.

### CONCLUSION

The PC's have now discovered what happened to the Ironboot Clan, and maybe even shared their fate and have become slaves of the Burnt Hand Clan.

If they haven't been enslaved they can return to Deadsnows and collected their payment from Viveros and Rubert Anon. The town's council will try to encourage the PC's to save the remaining dwarves.

If the PC's have been enslaved by the kobolds, they need to find a way to escape. The Burnt Hand Clan is divided by political bickering between Kax and



his father, Roqua. Kax hopes to take over the clan and believes that he has the approval of his dragon overlord, Alizarinathrax. He has many followers among the warriors of the clan, but the clan's shaman, Yeera, doesn't think that Kax is ready to lead the clan. The clan lives in cave system below the dragon's den.

## REWARDS

Award normal XP for defeated foes. Award each player XP for completing the following:

- Finding the Aranea Egg room, 100 XP
- Surviving the fire, 150 XP
- Discovering that the kobolds have enslaved the surviving members of the Ironboot clan, 100 XP.
- Finding the Ironboot Annals, 50 XP

If you are using the Milestone rule, the PC's should have reached 3rd level after completing this chapter.

## Chapter 3: The Kobold's lair

### Interlude

If the PC's managed to defeat Snarl and his warriors they need to decide what to do. They can track the kobolds back to their lair or return to Deadsnows.

Tracking the kobolds isn't that hard, since they brought drakes with them. With a three consecutive successful **DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check** they can find the lair, which is east and lies hidden high in a mountain side. If a check is failed the track is lost and needs to be found again with **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check**.

If the PC's decide to go back to Deadsnows and talk to Rubert Anon, he's concerned about the dwarves held captive by the kobolds. He urges the PC's to free the dwarves. If the PC's talk to Viveros as well, to collect their payment, she pays them what was agreed upon and also appeals to the PC's to save the dwarves. She says that the Ironboot clan is just and good friends of Deadsnows and she feels terrible knowing that they have been enslaved by the kobolds. If the PC's wish to seek help from the other clans the Gunlaugsons are more than willing but the Fenabars don't see this as their problem.

If the PC's wish to investigate where the raids have taken place in order to get a lead on where the kobold lair is they can discover with a **DC 10 Cha-**

**isma (Diplomacy) check** from both the travelling merchants and locals that the raid have all occurred eastward from Deadsnows on Fork Road between Deadsnows and Ascorp. Thodvar can also be of some help, he has seen some kobold tracks in a valley not far from the Ironboot mine, a two days hard walk from Deadsnows.

Searching the Nether Mountains takes a long time and without any leads will prove fruitless.

Spending the night in Deadsnow calls for random encounters. Roll a D6 for every two hours spent outside in the night, once every hour if the PC's are on the move. On a roll of 6 a random encounter occurs. Consult the random encounter table (see sidebar). Reward the PC's if they have taken measures to protect themselves or for clever thinking, e.g. spending the night in the Ironboot Mine.

If the PC's were defeated by the kobolds they are tied up and brought to the kobold lair to be served as sacrifices to their dragon overlord. The PC's wake up in area 13.

### Approaching the lair

The lair is actually well hidden and the kobolds have made efforts to make sure that any attacker should have a hard time entering the lair unseen.



You enter a short valley, high in the Nether mountains, surrounded by steep and barren cliffs. The wind howls and the cold crawls up your skin, like thousand small spiders. A crude spear holding a rotten gnoll head has been thrust into the ground, a wicked warning to all trespassers.

**3 kobolds** watch over the path to the valley and warn the clan if any intruders are spotted. The sentries lie hiding in the rocks and cliffs above the path. If the PC's are searching for kobolds they see the kobolds with a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check**. If the PC's are actively looking out for sentries they notice the kobolds as one of the kobolds starts to run back to the lair, if any of the PC's have a **Passive Perception 15**. PC's that do not spot the running kobold are surprised when the remaining kobolds spring a boulder trap, meant to fall on unsuspecting wanderers that stop to inspect the gnoll's head.

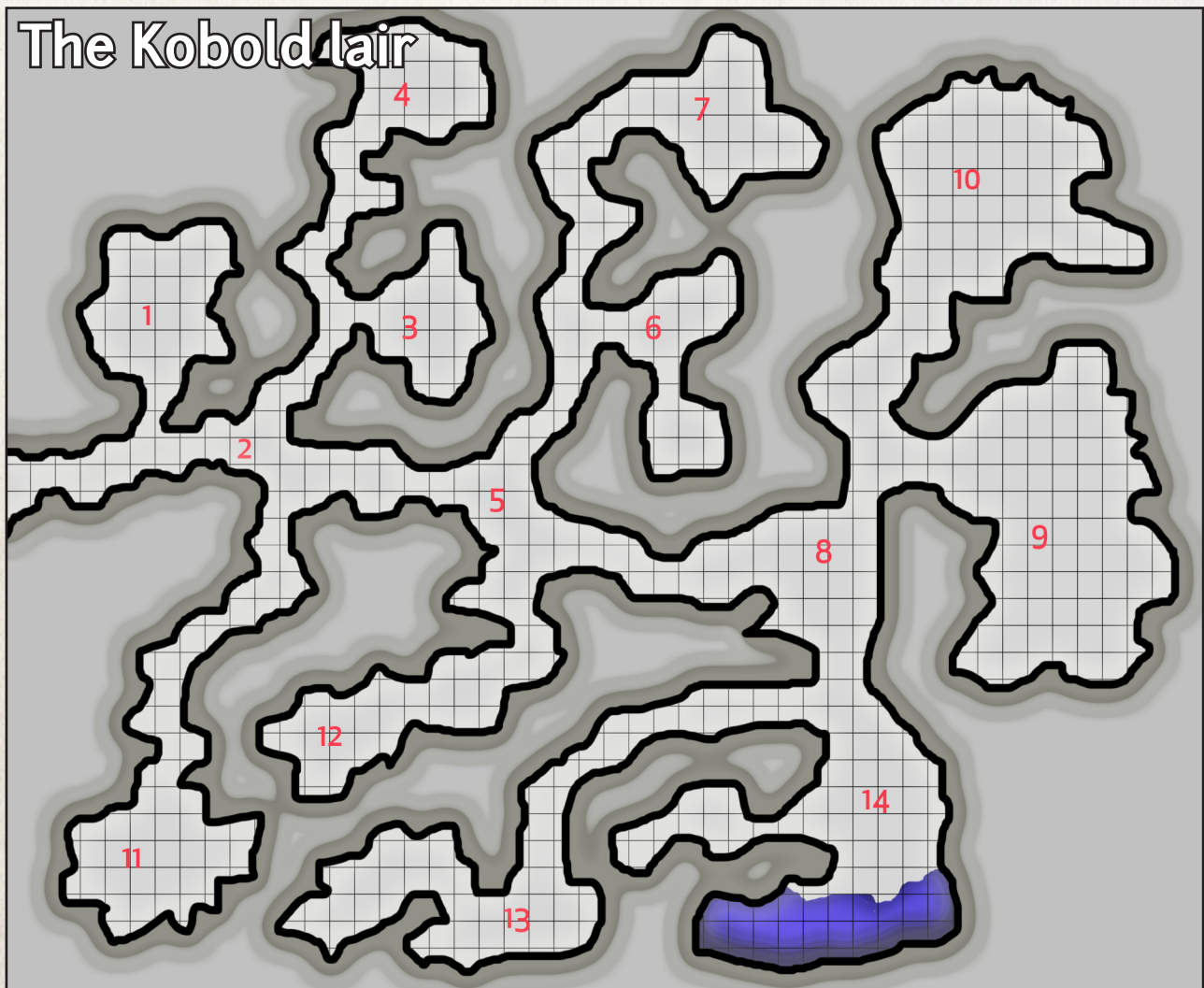
The kobolds wait out of sight until the PC's come

#### RANDOM ENCOUNTERS IN THE NETHER MOUNTAINS

1. Kobold patrol, 4 kobolds.
2. Hunting gnolls, 2 gnolls.
3. Black bear with 2 cubs.
4. Griffon
5. Ogre
6. Ol'Tom

close enough the gnoll head, before setting the boulders loose. Once the trap has been sprung they use slings. The kobolds are in half cover and on higher ground, 20 ft. higher than the PC's. If the PC's fight back and manage to bring down one of the kobolds the other one tries to flee.

If any of the sentries make it back to the lair the clan is on alert (see sidebar). If the PC's manage to overcome the sentries and decide to interrogate them the kobolds only speak draconic. But they know where the dwarves are being held and what treasure where brought before the dragon (the kobolds always speak of her majesty) after raiding





the Ironboot mine. They describe all sorts of metal weapons and armor, but also gold and the strange sparkly stone (which is the Aranea Queen egg). The kobolds can also inform the PC's about the bickering and political fighting between Kax and Roqua. All this can be learned with a **DC 13 Charisma (Intimidation) check**.

### BOULDER TRAP

CR 1

*Mechanical trap*

When the trap is triggered, it releases boulders of various sizes, which fall on the PC's. With a DC 10 Dexterity save the PC's manage to dive into safety. The boulders cause 2d6 bludgeoning dmg, half damage on succesful save.

## Lair of the Burnt Hand Clan

The Burnt Hand Clan found this cave system in mt. Oeraefa few years ago and settled there, the caves suited the kobolds perfectly, for the mountain was a dead volcano but there was still geothermal heat there and deep in the cave system was a fresh water spring. Before long Alizarinathrax, a young red dragon, discovered the clan and enslaved it. The dragon claimed a large cavern as it's lair and had the clan bring meat and treasure.

Lately Kax has been desperatly trying to get on the dragon's good side, hoping that the dragon will eventually kill and eat his father, Roqua. Alizari-nathrax on the other hand has no intention of spoiling her fun watching the endless bickering and struggle for power between the two factions in the clan.

Kax and his warriors brought the treasure from the Ironboot clan to Alizarinathrax, though the dragon did not recognize the egg. If the PC's have been captured by the clan their equipment is brought to the dragon's treasure hoard.

Despite the political situation of the clan, it is quite organzined if the lair comes under an attack. The warriors take a stand in area 2 and defend the lair to the death. Once the alarm is raised the clan quickly gathers and set all their traps, making it hard even for most veteran adventurers to breach the lair's defences (see sidebar).

### LAIR FEATURES

The lair is in a natural cave system, one left by lava.

The walls are rough and unworked, hot water trickles through many holes and the air is musky and hot. In many places fungi grows and due to lack of proper ventilation the lair smells horrible, which means that the PC's have a disadvantage on any Wisdom (Perception) checks.

### Hallways and rooms

All hallways are natural caves, making both footing in some places treacherous and even dangerous. Unless otherwise noted most caves are 7 ft. tall, which means that all weapons that rely on good space, e.g. longbow, are at an disadvantage.

### Doors

Most doors are makeshift, made of wood and scraps and easy to break down with a **DC 10 Strength check**.

### Floors

Unless otherwise noted the floor is uneven and rough, in some rooms even hard to cross due to stalagmites, fungi and even litter from the kobolds.

### Visibility and lights

The kobolds don't pay much mind to making sure that all rooms are lit. There's phosphoric fungi in many rooms and in some there are fireplaces which the kobolds use to cook food. Otherwise the lair is dark.

### ALARM!

If the alarm is raised Kax organizes his best warrior and makes a stand in area 2. If the defences have been breached he's smart enough to choose his battles where it suits his warriors the most, e.g. he'd choose to fight few adventurers where his warriors can overwhelm and surround the PC's. If the attacking group is a large one, he finds a spot where the attackers numbers work against them.

If at any time the PC's use explosives or spells that cause loud noises inside the lair the alarm is raised. If a number of kobolds are discovered dead the alarm is raised (one dead kobold does not raise suspicion). If the kobolds discover that the dwarves have escaepd the alarm is raised.

If Kax or Roqua think that the attackers are a bigger threat than the clan can handle they quickly let Alizarinathrax know and try to goat and herd the attackers into the dragon's lair.



## Entrance

The lair entrance is nothing more than a small opening in the side of mt. Oeraefa. The PC's can climb up to the entrance with a **DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check**. A hemp rope has been fastened in the cliff beside the entrance and if the PC's haven't raised the alarm using the rope gives the PC's advantage on reaching the entrance. If the alarm has been raised the rope has been removed.

The entrance is on a small ledge, which is just large enough to hold two kobolds. The clan believes that the lair is hidden well enough so there aren't any sentries on the ledge itself. Kax and Roqua both agree on that posting the sentries by the boulder trap is enough defense.

There's a small but simple trap in the entrance. A string has been crossed over the entrance just above the floor, the string is connected to a small bell in area 1. If the bell goes off the alarm goes off and the kobolds organise their defense. With a **DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check** the string is spotted. Bypassing the trap is simple, the PC's just need to step over the string.

### Designer's notes

The kobolds' leaders are clever and even though they are fighting over who should lead the clan they both know that when the lair comes under an attack they need to work together. If the PC's are discovered and pose a threat or the alarm is raised Roqua and Kax quickly summon their warriors and attack, using their knowledge of the lair to the extreme and, if needed, herd the PC's into the dragon's den. Therefore the kobolds should be roleplayed with this in mind, the clan is well versed in how they should react to intruders and the PC's need to show extreme caution and they may need to fall back once or twice before succeeding.

### 1. Guard room

The kobolds use this sidecave as a room for guards and warriors. A small fireplace is in the middle of the cave and a few nests around it, where the kobolds have pushed aside stones and even some laid down blankets. In the far end there's a crude shrine dedicated to Alizarinathrax and Kurtulmak. With a **DC 20 Intelligence (Religion) check** the PC's recognize the kobold deity.

At any given time there are **8 kobolds** and **1 winged kobold** in this room. 2 of them stand near in the side cave entrance, where they can see the

lair entrance, though most of the time the guards rely on the alarm trap. At any given time at least half of the guards are sleeping.

If the PC's attack the guards the winged kobold commands the guards to defend the lair while it raises the alarm. The winged kobold then tries to reach room 2, where he can sound the gong (see room 2). The kobolds will defend the lair to the death, with a **DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check** the PC's discern that the kobolds fear something far more than the PC's, which is the wrath of the dragon.

### 2. Crossroads

The kobolds have built a crude wall, made of thornweed, wood and rocks. There's a small crawlway in it, with a **DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check** the PC's can reach the other side of the wall. It takes time to breach the wall or break through it, since it's not constructed in any organised manner. With three consecutive **DC 10 Strength checks** the PC's can reach the other side of the wall, if they wish to break through it. The material in the wall is highly flammable, so setting fire to the wall will destroy it in matter of minutes.

If the alarm has been raised the kobolds usually make their first stand in this area of the lair. The kobolds close the crawlway with a boulder.

On the other side of the wall is a bronze gong, a trinket that Alizarinathrax gave to the kobolds. If the gong is sounded Roqua, Kax and their warriors will enter the area in 5 rounds.

Beyond the wall the cave splits in three different branches. At any given time there's a 25% chance that there's a **kobold** in this area. If the PC's are spotted the kobold dives for the gong and tries to sound the alarm.

### 3. Kurtulmak's cave

This is a surprisingly worked cave. The kobolds have evened the floor and build an altar to their evil deity in one end. There the clan's shamans conduct services on honor of Kurtulmak.

The floor is unnatural and even in this sidecave. Some sort of altar is in one end and a gnome skull rests upon it along with a crude and barbaric scepter.

**Yappa**, the clan's shaman (see appendix), spends her time in this area along with **3 kobolds**. As soon as she becomes aware of the PC's she sends one



of the kobolds to area 2 to sound the gong. She invokes the power of Kurtulmuk and uses spells to slow down or stop the PC's, for she wishes to have them captured and offered as sacrifices to Alizarinathrax. If there are any gnomes in the party she will become enraged and attack that PC's head on with lethal spells, screaming the hateful litanies of Kurtulmuk at the top of her lungs.

With a **DC 20 Intelligence (Religion) check** the PC's discover that the altar is devoted to Kurtulmuk, the evil kobold deity. If the PC's decide to investigate the altar they discover a hidden compartment in it with a **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check**. It holds a small green vial (Potion of Invisibility) that Yappa stole from the dragon hoard. There's also 7 cp's and rotting gnome finger, with a bronze ring worth 10 gp's, both donations from the clan members.

#### 4. Roqua's harem

A surprisingly sturdy door shuts this cave off. The door is locked and trapped. With a **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check** the PC's discover a crafty trap, one intended to mark whoever tries to enter the harem. The trap sprays natural glue over the hands of the burglar. Unless whoever is picking the lock makes a **DC 15 Dexterity save** her fingers are glued together, which means that the burglar has disadvantage to all Dexterity checks relying the use of hands. This also means that spells that require intricate somatic components are impossible to cast. With a **DC 15 Dexterity check** the trap can be disarmed. The lock can be picked with a **DC 10 Dexterity check**. The door can also be kicked in with a **DC 20 Strength check**.

In this desolate cave dwell around two dozen female kobold. These are the females that Roqua has claimed for himself. Most of the kobolds have neither clothes nor tools. They are oppressed and with a **DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check** the PC's discern that the kobolds both loathe and despise the situation they're in.

Once you manage to pick the lock the door opens. On the other side is a foul smelling and hot cave. More than dozen female kobold faces turn in your direction, a few more are still down-cast but all are sullen and fearful. Their backs are scarred and none have any clothes nor tools of any sort.

If the PC's speak draconic they can persuade the female kobolds to speak with them, with a **DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check**. The oldest female,

Deka, speaks for the kobolds in the cave. She can inform the PC's that the kobolds in the cave are Roqua's harem. The leader of the clan claims the wives and even daughters of those that have done something to offend the old leader or the dragon. Deka can also be persuaded to tell the PC's where they can find the dwarves or even to draw them a map of the lair. But she wants something in return, she wants the PC's to remove Roqua from the lair, though she'd prefer him being murdered.

The female kobolds are defenseless, they have no weapons and make no move to defend themselves if they are attacked. Slaying the helpless females is an evil act.

There's a 10% chance that **Roqua** (see appendix) is in the Harem at any given moment. He usually visits the Harem once a day and whips and abuses the females. He is usually followed by **5 kobolds**, his most trusted guards.

#### 5. Guard station

The cave opens up and a number of openings can be seen. At any given time there are **6 kobolds** positioned here as guards by Roqua and **2 winged kobolds** from Kax's side of the clan. The two groups warily eye each other and with a **DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check** the PC's can tell that there's an uneasy truce between the two groups, something that can be easily used to the PC's advantage.

#### 6. Kobold den

In these two caves many kobolds following Roqua make their living. There are many small fireplaces and the floor has been mostly cleared of rubble and rocks. If the any of the PC's has more than **Passive Perception 15** they hear many kobolds talking, snoring and going about their business, before they enter the cave. There are about **30 kobolds** living there and amongst them the PC's can find 13 cp's, 7 sp's and 3 gp's.

#### 7. Roqua's cave

Roqua has made his den comfortable in kobold standards, he has a blanket, a pillow and has even piled some stones so that they form a throne. He stores his riches in a hidden alcove in the far end of the cave, which can be found with a **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check**. Roqua's treasure consists of leather bag with 30 cp's, 23 sp's and 34 gp's, a small bloodstone worth 50 gp's and a magical amulet he stole from Alizarinathrax. If the PC's identify the amulet, it's an Amulet of Proof against



detection and location. There's no trap on the secret alcove but Roqua counts his coins almost daily, so he will notice it soon enough if someone takes his treasure. If the PC's manage to remove the treasure without killing Roqua there's a 5% chance that he discovers (adding 2% for every hour that passes) and if he does, he sounds the alarm.

You enter a lavishly decorated chamber. Half a rug lies on the cave floor, moldy blanket lies in the far end beside a fireplace, where an iron kettle, broken porcelain disk and a wooden fork can be seen. Three stones have been laid together, forming a throne, suiting a kobold king.

There's a 50% chance that Roqua is here. He has his most trusted guards with him all the time, for he fears more than anything that the time for Kax to strike against him is coming near. If Roqua is not here, only **2 kobolds** guard this room. If Roqua is here, he sneers once he spots the PC's and asks in accented common if they have been sent by his despicable excuse for a son. With a **DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check** the PC's know that Roqua is stressful. If they decide to play this situation they can, using different social skills. They can also attack Roqua and his guards. Roqua calls immediately for help from the kobold warriors from the den (area 6).

With a **DC 15 Charisma (Intimidation) check** the PC's can threaten Roqua and make him grovel in fear. On the other hand Roqua is used to grovel before beings far superior than him and he is quite an actor. He can turn things his way, even though making it look like he's begging for mercy. If the PC's use this tactic Roqua will beg and whine, saying that his son is the one to blame, he is just an old kobold trying to make sure that his tribe gets by. Not matter what the PC's bring up Roqua blames Kax. If the PC's bring up the dwarves he blames Kax and says that the dwarves are being held in area 9, the dragon's den, and he's more than ready to show them where. The PC's need to see through Roqua's deception or walk straight into a very deadly encounter with a red dragon.

If the PC's treat Roqua with respect he's at first bit taken back, but quickly recovers and sees the PC's arrival a chance to strike back at Kax. He will offer the PC's 500 gp's if they will kill Kax, using his deceptions. If the PC's agree he will draw them a map and tell them where to find Kax. If the PC's bring up the dwarves he will gladly exchange them for Kax's head, having no intention of keeping that promise. If the PC's accept and return with Kax's head, he will tell them that his gold is stored in area 9 and lead the PC's there.

With a **DC 15 Charisma (Deception) check** the PC's can play the role of hired assassins. He will curse them and order his guards to attack 'these whimpering dogs'. He will call for help from the kobold den before entering melee himself.

With a **DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check** the PC's can get Roqua to believe that they have nothing to do with Kax. He will order his guards to be ready but hold a moment. He uses the opportunity to ask the PC's what there business is in the clan's lair and if the PC's mention the dwarves, he will offer to let the PC's have them in exchange for Kax's head, though Roqua has no intention on fulfilling his end of the agreement. If the PC's return with Kax's head Roqua will cheer and lead the PC's to area 9.

If the PC's were captured in chapter 2 and have escaped on their own, Roqua doesn't recognize them, since he had nothing to with their capture. He will believe that they were sent by Kax.

## 8. Alizarinathrax's shrine

A large shrine dominates this chamber, one dedicated to her majesty the red dragon Alizarinathrax. The kobolds have carved a crude looking totem from wood and shows the dragon in almost divine manner. Both Kax and Roqua conducts services for the dragon where they demand tribute and donations from every kobold in the clan. Many kobolds also honor the dragon outside the services and often one can find food and carved idols donated by the kobolds by the shrine.

There aren't any guards there, for the kobolds believe that the dragon oversees the shrine and his magic protects it. But the members of the clan often visit the shrine with religious devotion. Therefor there's a 25% chance at any given time that a **kobold** is by the shrine. If it spots the PC's it will try and make for the dragon den to sound the alarm.

## 9. Alizarinathrax's den

The dragon's den is deep in the cave system and is in the center of the mt. Oeraefa caldera. It's steaming hot in there and the steam reduces visibility to 10 ft. High in the ceiling is an opening through which the dragon can enter and leave at will. The dragon's hoard lies in the center of the cave and there's 75% chance at any given time that the dragon is resting in her den atop her treasure. The dragon, arrogant as she is, truly believes that no one in Nether Mountains can rival her power and in her lair she feels especially powerful, the kobold



clan fueling her arrogance. If the kobolds have goat-ed adventurers or would-be attackers into her den, she likes to play and show off her immense power.

As you climb down to the wide corridor from the chamber dedicated to the dragon the air turns hotter and more steamy. Suddenly the corridor opens and all you see is white mist.

If the dragon is there, with a **Passive Perception 15** the PC's hear something large breathing in the chamber. Heavy sulfuric odor hangs in the air and the oppressing feeling of being in the presence of some greater being is overwhelming.

If the PC's decide to investigate the chamber they need to beat the dragon's Passive Perception. If the dragon notices the PC's it will play with the PC's, using intimidation and deception.

Not far from the entrance to the dragon's den is a brass gong, something that the kobolds use to sound the alarm and wake up the dragon in time of need.

## 10. Storage room

The clan gathers all their mundane items and non-currency in a large chamber. They have attacked and looted scores of caravans of late and their storage is packed with all manner of crates, barrels, bags and caskets filled with food, spices, minerals etc. One would need at least three or four wagons to bring all in the storage room back to Deadsnows.

A simple trap is in the corridor leading to the storage room. A small tripwire crosses the cave just above the floor. Springing the trap releases burning hot steam which fills the corridor. With a **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigate) check** the tripwire can be spotted. With a **DC 10 Dexterity check** the PC's can disable the trap.

If the PC's were kidnapped and woke up in the kobold's holding chamber (see area 13), all their mundane and non-weapon equipment is there. What currency and magical items they had have been added to the dragon's hoard.

Searching the storage room takes a long time, each Intelligence (Investigation) check takes 20 minutes. There are a few items of note. With a **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check** the PC's find a Potion of Healing hidden in one of the caskets. With a **DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check** the PC's spot a hidden compartment in the bottom of one barrel, containing a scroll with the spell fireball

scribed at 6th level and a wand of Magic Missile (22 charges), caster level 1.

## STEAM TRAP

*Mechanical trap*

CR 2

Springing this trap releases a 15 ft. cone of hot steam from the cave floor. With a **DC 15 Dexterity** save the PC's manage to throw themselves back, taking only half damage. The steam causes 3d6 fire damage.

## 11. Kobold den

The kobolds that follow Kax's leadership have made their den in this chamber. It's more cramped than the other den and there are about two dozen kobolds there. Otherwise see room #6.

## 12. Kax's chamber

Kax claimed this chamber as his own. It was formerly used as pen for the drakes and still smells like that. The strong odor is nauseating and quite pungent. Unless the PC's pass a **DC 10 Constitution save** they have a disadvantage on all skill checks. Kax has put up a simple door, closing off the chamber. It is locked and can be opened with a **DC 10 Dexterity check**. Since Kax only recently claimed the chamber as his own he hasn't had the opportunity to build his own traps.

You open the door and a pungent stench assaults you, bringing water to your eyes. The chamber is long and only lit by a small fireplace in the middle. Weapons of all sizes lie by the walls along with armor and shields.

There's a 50% chance that Kax is here at any given time. He is usually accompanied by 7 **kobolds**. If they notice the PC's they will attack immediately.

If the PC's were captured by Snarl their weapons and armor are all here. Armors made of non-metal material smell horribly and need to be washed. There are about 30 weapons of all sorts, all mundane, and 12 armors light or medium, no heavy armor. The armors are all medium sized.

Kax's guards have both good weapons and good armor. Their AC is 14 and they cause 1d6+2 damage.

Kax has no interest in talking with the PC's, he is convinced that his father has hatched a plan to get rid of him and the PC's are a part of it.

Kax has a small treasure hidden under a rock. With



a **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check** the PC's can discover a small urn containing 23 gp's, 43 sp's and 12 cp's.

In a wooden box by Kax's bedroll lies the Aranea Queen egg. Kax hasn't presented the egg to the dragon, since he's waiting for the right moment. He hopes to donate the egg to Alizarinathrax when he's going to ask her to remove Roqua. The box is crude and obviously made by kobolds. It's both locked and trapped and Kax makes sure that there's always someone guarding it. Upon close inspection the PC's can discover the trap with a **DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check**. A make-shift bear trap springs on whoever that doesn't disarm the trap first. The trap can be disarmed with a **DC 15 Dexterity check**. The lock is simple and with a **DC 10 Dexterity check** it can be unlocked.

### MAKESHIFT BEAR TRAP

CR 2

*Mechanical trap*

A trap closes over the feet of the victim, restraining it. With a **DC 15 Dexterity** save the PC's safely get out of harm's way. The trap causes 2d8 piercing dmg and the target is restrained.

## 13. Holding chamber

Lately the clan has been taking captives, using them either as sacrifices for their dragon overlord or as slaves. Every slave is stripped, for the kobolds have no sense of nudity, and kept in the sidechamber, locked away. The sidechamber has no water or toilet, so the slaves must make do with very little. With a **DC 15 Dexterity check** the locked door can be picked, if no thieves tools are used the PC's have a disadvantage to the roll. With a **DC 20 Strength check** the door can be broken down.

The corridor leading to the holding chamber is trapped. A score of ceramic urns are hidden amongst the stalagmites, containing left-overs of a dead gelatinous cube. A small springloaded pressure plate releases the urns, so they fall on the target. With a **DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check** the PC's spot the pressure plate. With a **DC 15 Dexterity check** the trap can be disarmed.

### ACID URN TRIP

CR 2

*Mechanical trap*

A spring loaded pressure plate releases 6 urns that fall on the victim. With a **DC 15 Dexterity** save the PC's roll into safety and take only half damage. The urns, that contain the remains of a gelatinous cube, cause 2d8 acid damage.

If the PC's were captured by the kobolds they are brought here and thrown in the pen with the dwarves. They are naked, just as the dwarves. In the holding chamber they find both Dorna and Isarn of the Ironboot clan, along with 14 other dwarves. Many of the dwarves are injured and their spirit is broken. With a **DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check** the PC's know that the dwarves' morale is low at the moment and they don't believe that help is near or that they can escape.

If the PC's talk to Dorna or Isarn they are not in a very talkative mood, given the circumstances. With a **DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check** they convince the dwarven leaders to speak to them. If the PC's speak to Isarn or Dorna in Dwarven the DC is 10.

Dorna is in a higher spirit and with a **DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check** the PC's see that she's quite upset, though she tries to hide it. She's really angry at Isarn for not listening to her about the Aranea Queen egg room. She blames him for their situation and the pair hasn't talked since they were captured. She wants to break free and get back to the mine but she hasn't found any way out. If the PC's are in the pen with her and talk about breaking out, she is more than willing to help.

Isarn is downcast and in a bad mood. With a **DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check** the PC's discern that his spirit is broken. He blames himself for everything that happened to the clan, he got greedy and didn't listen to the advice of the other clan elders. He is ashamed of himself and doesn't believe that he can lead his clan back out. If the PC's are in the pen with him and talk about breaking out, he simply shrugs and dismisses the PC's talk as crazy talk.

The other dwarves are not in a good mood and don't feel like talking. The kobolds have been removing one dwarf at a time and they never return. In fact the kobolds have been sending the dwarves into the dragon's den, where Alizarinathrax plays with the dwarves before eating them.

There are always **4 kobolds** present in the main chamber, outside the pen itself. The guards spend their time playing dice and don't pay much mind to the prisoners. At most times the guards are bored out of their mind and are either too busy playing, and fighting over the dice, or sleeping to notice if the PC's approach or try to break out. There's a brass gong on the wall opposite the door to the pen, the kobolds use it to sound the alarm if the prisoners escape.



## 14. Drake pen

Deep in the cave system the kobolds hold their domesticated drakes. They seal off a large cave with a geothermal spring where they keep the drakes. The kobolds use thornweed, wood and rocks to create a barricade. It's easy to set the drakes free by opening the gate. The drakes usually obey their masters but a skillful animal handler could make the drakes angry, before setting them loose in the lair, with a **DC 15 Wisdom (Animal handling) check**.

## CONCLUSION

If the PC's managed to break the dwarves free Isarn and Dorna are extremely grateful. The group of dwarves follow the PC's back to Deadsnows, where they discuss and decide whether they return to Ironboot Mine, join either of the two other dwarf clan in Nether Mountains or return to Citadel Adbar.

If the PC's found the Aranea Queen egg they need to identify it and decide what to do with it. The Aranea clan are aware of the fact that the egg has been removed from the stasis chamber and are actively searching for it.

If the PC's made their presence known to Alizarnathrax they've made a very powerful enemy, one that will stop at nothing acting it vengeance upon the PC's for attacking and seriously maiming the kobold clan worshipping the dragon.

If the PC's managed to free the dwarves without taking out either of the kobold's leaders or finding the Aranea Queen egg they will both have a very angry kobold clan on their heels and will probably have to return to the lair, in search of the egg.

## REWARD

Award normal XP for defeated foes. Award each player XP for completing the following:

- Finding the Aranea Egg, 200 XP
- Freeing the dwarves, 200 XP
- Killing Kax, 200 XP
- Killing Roqua, 100 XP

If you are using the Milestone rule, the PC's should have reached 4th level after completing this chapter.

# Appendix A: NPC's

## Rubert Anon

*LG Human cleric 2 (Acolyte)*

Rubert is dark haired and blue eyed. He's in his early 30's yet his well groomed beard has grey streaks in it. Rubert usually wears a rose hued tabbard and his golden holy symbol. He has a small scar under his cheekbone.

**Background:** Rubert was born and raised in Sundabar, where he joined the church of Lathander. His father was a tanner and had higher hopes for his son, he managed to convince a dawnlord to take Rubert on as an acolyte. Rubert was quick to learn and found that the life of a cleric suited him well. He spent two seasons as a travelling cleric with a group from the church in Sundabar and when he returned to Sundabar, the high cleric asked him to go to Deadsnows and rebuild the church that had once stood there. Rubert accepted this mission and after he moved to Deadsnows has proven a great asset for the growing community.

**Personality:** Rubert is fair and just, he believes that given the right circumstances people will always endure and do the right thing. He is a strong believer in Lathandar and promotes his deity when he can. He usually has a warm smile on his face and strives to bring hope to those who have none.

**Connections:** Rubert is a member of the Church of Lathander in Sundabar. He is also a member of the elder council in Deadsnows and he knows both the villagers and the surrounding farms and mines well. He knows how to brew healing potions and can use his spells to heal the wounded. He is a valuable ally.

**Secret:** Rubert has been investigating on his own the Icespear Manor, for he fears that undead are haunting it. So far he hasn't been able to go deep into the cellar, but a few weeks ago he braved the cellar alone and found strange sigils carved into on wall. A couple of zombies attacked him and managed to wound him, leaving a white scar under his cheekbone.

## Harad Havsum

*CN Hafling rogue 4 (Criminal)*

Harad is sandy haired and brown eyed, quick-witted and cheerful. He likes to wear colorful clothes and usually wears a brown belt with three sheathed daggers, each richly decorated. He has a brand on his neck, one he eagerly explains he got due to big misunderstanding.

**Background:** Born and raised in Mulmaster, Harad quickly learned to help himself from living on the



street. His alcoholic parents never paid him much mind and were more concerned about making sure they had something to drink, rather than feeding their children. After his mother died, Harad ran away from home and managed to south to Raven's Bluff. There he joined a gang of thieves and quickly rose through their rank, though he got caught once and was branded a thief by the magistrate. He joined the Zhentarim a few years later and travelled through the Dragonmere region. After falling into disgrace in the Black Network he slipped away and carved himself out a new life in Deadsnows.

**Personality:** Harad is ironic and quick with a sarcastic remarks, which sometimes make his guest look twice. But he's quick with a smile and though many travellers and guest in his inn the people in Deadsnows know that he doesn't mean much with it. Harad's eyes usually dart from side to side and for some reasons he always has his back to a wall, whenever he can.

**Connections:** Almost all travellers going through Deadsnow spend the night at The Rose and Hammer. He knows most caravan leaders and guards and keeps a good eye where the caravans are headed and where they're coming from. Harad has also a good eye for valuables and can appraise both mundane and magical items.

**Secret:** No one in Deadsnows know that Harad used to be a member of the Zhentarim. There is a price on his head and he knows it. Even though he changed his name and now uses his fathers name (he used to be called Spider), he silently fears the day when his past comes knocking on his door.

## Ol' Tom

### *N Halfelf Druid 7 (Hermit)*

Ol'Tom is a tall but scrawny figure. He has some whiskers of hair in his face, betraying his human heritage. His almond eyes are green as a field of grass. He wears a leather armor and a cape made of twigs and leaves. His gnarled oaken quarterstaff is old and worn.

**Background:** Born to a elven mother many decades ago Ol'Tom was never fully accepted in Evereska. He took to wandering and cherished being alone in nature. He left Evereska and spent many years in the High Forest, being tutored by the druids there. Few years ago he received a dream from Chauntea, where the rebuilding of Deadsnows was prophesied. He travelled to Nether Mountains and has been watching over the rebuilding ever since.

**Personality:** Ol'Tom is a stoic and relaxed figure. He is eager to help those who are on nature's side and do not bring harm to it. He isn't all too fond of people and likes animals more, after being looked down upon most of his youth has left it's mark on him.

**Connections:** Ol'Tom is a good friend to the farmers in Icespear Valley and knows the surrounding valleys well. He's also in good connection with the druid circle in the High Forest, especially those who venerate Chauntea.

**Secret:** Lately Tom has been dreaming about a many faced threat rising from the darkness below. He hasn't figured out what these dream mean but they have left him deprived of sleep and tired.

## Olaf Arnesen

### *LG Human fighter 3 (Soldier)*

Olaf is a large man in every way, his arms resemble tree trunks and his hands look like mallets. His head is bald but he has thick mustache. He usually wears his leather armor and a sword hangs loosely by his side.

**Background:** Olaf used to be a caravan guard before settling in Deadsnows. Originally from Ten Towns Olaf was raised by his father, a blacksmith, and after spending more time around the anvil than he cared for he told his father he wanted something more out of life and signed on as caravan enroute to Waterdeep. Olaf only got as far as Neverwinter but there he joined another caravan. He spent a few summers like this, until he came to Deadsnows and heard that they council was looking for a sergeant.

**Personality:** Olaf is serious and down to earth character, he is pragmatic and realistic. He does not tolerate lawbreakers but strives to solve problems so that he doesn't need to arrest anyone. So far he has managed to do so and the only people who have spent the night in his holding cell are either drunks or travellers when all rooms are booked in the Rose and Hammer.

**Connections:** Olaf is generally well liked by the caravan leaders, who know Olaf from the time when he was a caravan guard. Lately he has also been trying to get Deadsnows a part of the Lord's Alliance, but so far it has been fruitless.

**Secret:** Though he doesn't show it, Olaf is in fact xenophobic. Therefore he usually handles things differently when other races than humans are



involved when something happens in Deadsnows that need his attention. Olaf dislikes Harad and is certain that the halfling is up to nothing good.

## Coral Brittlebeard

**CG Dwarf fighter 2 (artisan)**

Coral is just above 5ft tall, with dark hair and heavy beard that he usually braids. When he's in his smithy he has his leather apron on and wears red trousers covered in soot. Coral tends to carry a large and battered warhammer when he leaves his smithy. His eyes are the color of clear sky and when he gets mad they seem to darken.

**Background:** Coral was born in Mithril Hall to a happy couple. His parents mentored him in the blacksmithing arts but just as many dwarves in the Halls Coral also received military training. After spending years trying to carve out a niche for himself in different dwarven societies Coral finally came to Deadsnows, bent on succeeding as a master blacksmith.

**Personality:** Coral is gruff and appears almost unfriendly to non-dwarves. His strong suit is blacksmithing and socializing with people is something that he feels someone else should be doing. To dwarves he's friendly and fair. His grasp of Common isn't that strong and much is lost to translation.

**Connections:** Coral is the speaker for the dwarven clans in the elder council in Deadsnows. He knows all the leaders of the dwarven clans.

**Secrets:** Coral has been working on getting his family to Deadsnows, he hopes that he can convince them to join him and they could open a mine in the Nether Mountains.

## Diliana Viveros

**LN Human commoner 4 (noble)**

Diliana is a fading beauty. She's in her late 30's and was probably a real stunner when she was younger. But years of struggle and hard work has left its mark on her. Viveros' blond hair is greying and her blue eyes have a worried cast on them. She often wears colorful clothes and has big golden earrings.

**Background:** Diliana was among the first people who returned to Deadsnows. She came with her husband, a hard working baker who had won her heart few years earlier. Unfortunately he got ill the first winter and never recovered, he passed before

spring broke the ice on the Icespear river. Yet she continued to make a living in Deadsnows and tried to help the people get by. Before long she was elected on the elder council.

**Personality:** Viveros is a kind woman but pragmatic. Though she would love to help everyone she feels that her duty is first and foremost to the people of Deadsnows. Hard life and sorrow has left its mark on her, there's always a shadow in her eyes and longing in her voice.

**Connections:** Diliana knows almost everyone in Icespear Valley and has a great pull in that society. She's not concerned about what the dwarven strongholds are doing or how the different power groups are fighting for more political power in the Heartlands.

**Secret:** Diliana secretly hopes that there's some way to bring back her husband. She has been pouring over books and scrolls she has discovered in the ruined buildings of the village.

## Evert

**NG Human wizard 5 (Spy)**

Evert is one legged and part of his face is badly scarred. He constantly smells of different kinds of herbs due to constant potion making. He tends to wear his green cloak with golden trimming. Evert is in his 40's and going bald.

**Background:** Evert joined the Harpers not long after his time as an apprentice. He travelled up and down the Sword Coast, fighting evil where ever the organization needed him to. After a mission went horrible wrong, with him losing his foot and leaving his face scarred after a fight with a cambion, he decided that it was time to settle down.

**Personality:** Evert is a loner. He never wastes more words on the villagers than he must and keeps to himself for most of the time. He is a sucker for a good puzzle and nothing interests him more than magical items.

**Connections:** Evert is still a member of the Harpers and every now and then some agent pays him a visit. His expertise and knowledge of magical items is valuable to the organization.

**Secret:** No one in Deadsnows knows that Evert is a part of the Harpers, though Rubert suspects. Evert also fears that the Cambion who took his leg will return and kill him.



## Thodvar Nun

### CG Human ranger 3 (Outlander)

Thodvar Nun hails from Furitep in Mulhorand. His skin is dark and he braids his black hair. He wears skins of bears and boars. Nun is usually accompanied by 2 large mastiff dogs, a common breed in Furitep but a rare sight in the Nether Mountains.

**Background:** Born and raised in slavery Thodvar never had any choice about what profession he learned. Though he loved the dogs he was to take care of he hated his masters and their treatment of their canine stock. On a hunting trip Nun lost his temper after his owner had beaten one of his dogs to death for failing to catch a prey. Thodvar attacked his master and killed him. He took the remaining dogs and fled. He wandered for many years, breeding his dogs and selling pups, before settling down in Icespear Valley.

**Personality:** Thodvar is wary of strangers and likes dogs more than people. He watches carefully for how people treat his dogs and how they accept people before he decides how to react. He is a no-nonsense type of person, preferring facts over fiction. The slave in him makes it hard for him to look people straight in the eye.

**Connections:** Thodvar knows the people of Icespear Valley and the farmers in the neighbouring valleys.

**Secret:** Thodvar despises Harad, simply because his dogs don't like the halfling and Nun feels that there's something about the halfling that reminds him off his former masters.

## THE IRONBOOT CLAN

The clan came to the Nether Mountains a couple of years ago, in hope to carve out an existence for themselves. They found a promising veins of iron and copper and their mine has grown larger and larger.

The dwarves of the Clan look to Moradin as their patron deity. Their mine contains a large temple devoted to him, though it also contains shrines dedicated to other dwarven deities. The clan is mostly lawful good though chaotic individuals are amongst them.

The clan is in good relations with the people of Deadsnows and the other two dwarven clans. The clan's leaders are concerned about the rising

frequency of kobold raids and the fact that lately the non-civilised races have been on the rise in the mountains.

## Dorna

### LG Dwarf Cleric 5 (Folk hero)

Dorna is loud, rowdy and strong. She wears her decorated breast plate with pride, the armor sporting the golden holy symbol of Moradin. She is stocky and muscular, her golden hair flowing freely down her shoulders. Her eyes are blue and portray Dorna's wisdom.

**Personality:** Dorna is sure of herself, wise and just. She follows the tenets of Moradin to the extreme and feels that he is her guide in life. She is headstrong and stubborn and angers easily, but if she has done wrong unto someone she quickly sees her error and apologizes.

## Isarn

### CG Dwarf fighter 2 (Noble)

Isarn is simple and an easy going dwarf. He cares deeply for the prosperity of the clan and will stop at nothing in building the riches of the clan. He usually wears his chain mail though he inherited and owns a magical plate mail (one that the kobolds steal and store in the dragon's hoard) he rarely wears it. He usually wears a rune encrusted battleaxe that's called Flamebitter, due to its flaming ability.

**Personality:** Isarn is charismatic and likeable fellow. He treats his clan members well and they would follow him almost anywhere. Isarn isn't necessarily the wisest dwarf around and he looks to both Thorbin and Dorna for advice.

# Appendix B: Adversaries

## Kax

*CE small humanoid (kobold)*

Kax is red skinned though the scales in his back range from crimson to golden. His eyes are yellow and a scar crosses his face, leaving one of his eye dark and dull. Most of the time he wears a blood stained cloth over his bad eye. Kax wears a studded leather armor and fights with a beautiful shortsword, obviously crafted by elven hands.

**Background:** Kax was the first to hatch of his litter and before he was three days old he had eaten two of his brothers. His father taught him the art of kobold warfare and he has been led many raids, growing the hoard of the dragon. Lately Kax has been dreaming of replacing his father and he hopes that he can manipulate events so that Alizarinath-rax will get angry at Roqua and eat him. Kax has already talked many of the best warriors over to his side and though he knows that Roqua is aware of what he's doing Kax doesn't mind. In fact it only amuses him seeing how paranoid Roqua has become.

**Personality:** Kax is the epitome of the despicable and sadistic kobold. He enjoys seeing the fear in his adversaries eyes. He only fights when he knows he has the upper hand and even then he fights

as dirty as he possible can. Kicking a man in the groin, no problem. Murdering the innocent, burning, maiming or terrorizing in any way, Kax has no problem using any of these techniques if they assure that he has the advantage. To say the least, he is a cunning, manipulative son of a female dog.

### KAX

*Small humanoid (kobold), chaotic evil*

**CR 2**

**Armor class** 14 (Studded leather)

**Hit Points** 30 (6d6+6)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR    | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS    | CHA    |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|--------|--------|
| 10 (0) | 15 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 12 (+1) | 7 (-2) | 10 (0) |

**Senses** Darkvision 60 ft., passive perception 8

**Languages** Common, draconic

**Challenge** 2 (450 xp)

**Sunlight sensitivity.** While in sunlight, the kobold has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

**Pack tactics.** The kobold has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the kobold's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.



**Cunning action.** On each of its turn Kax can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

**Sneak attack (1/turn).** Kax deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally that isn't incapacitated and Kax doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

## ACTIONS

**Shortsword.** *Melee weapon attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d4+2) slashing damage.

## Roqua

*LE small humanoid (kobold)*

Roqua is aging, his red skin is losing its color and the scales on his back have lost their vibrant hue. His claws are many broken and the same goes for the horns on his head. He wears an ancient scale mail, a treasure he acquired years ago from a gnome adventurer he killed. He uses both a crossbow and a spear.

**Background:** Roqua took over the clan after murdering his father, Ragek, in his sleep. When Alizarinathrax claimed the lair he quickly perfected his art of growling. The dragon was amused with Roqua's pleading and allowed him to lead the clan. Roqua has managed to make the clan's life a whole lot better and the most of the older kobolds in the clan are grateful for eating something more than fungi.

**Personality:** Roqua is a master manipulator and has had years of experience learning how to read people and understanding what makes them tick. He is not only cunning but also a huge opportunist, making the most of every situation. Roqua knows every nook of the lair and if the lair is attacked he quickly summons all his warriors and makes a stand. He is the one that has crafted most of the traps in the lair. Roqua is intelligent, not only for a kobold, and he's eloquent and charismatic. He will resort to any means to ensure his survival, he would prefer that it wasn't at the cost of his clan though that wouldn't stop him. The years have taught Roqua that self preservation is the best preservation.

## ROQUA

*Small humanoid (kobold), lawful evil*

CR 3

**Armor class** 16 (Scale mail)

**Hit Points** 28 (7d6)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR    | DEX     | CON    | INT     | WIS    | CHA     |
|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|
| 10 (0) | 15 (+2) | 10 (0) | 15 (+2) | 10 (0) | 13 (+1) |

**Senses** Darkvision 60 ft., passive perception 8

**Skills** Insight +4

**Languages** Common, draconic

**Challenge** 3 (700 xp)

**Sunlight sensitivity.** While in sunlight, the kobold has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

**Pack tactics.** The kobold has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the kobold's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

**Lair resistance (1/day).** If Roqua fails a save throw while in the kobold lair he can choose to succeed instead.

## ACTIONS

**Crossbow.** *Melee weapon attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6) piercing damage.

**Shortspear.** *Melee weapon attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d4+2) piercing damage.

**Leadership (Recharges after a short or long rest).** For 1 minute Roqua can utter a special command or warning whenever a nonhostile kobold that he can see within 30 feet of him makes an attack roll or a saving throw. The kobold can add a d4 to its roll provided it can hear and understand Roqua. A kobold can benefit from only one Leadership die at a time. This effect ends in Roqua is incapacitated.

## Yappa

*LE small humanoid (kobold)*

Yappa is the Burnt Hand Clan religious leader and she wears that mantle with pride. She dons a feathery headpiece and a crimson cloak. She recently replaced her mentor, after the older shaman displeased the dragon and got eaten by Alizarinathrax.



Yappa has a crude holy symbol but her main treasure is a gnome skull the clan brought the temple a few years ago, something that has more value in Yappa eyes than all the dragon hoard.

**Background:** Yappa is quite young considering her status. She feels chosen by Kurtulmak, for ever since she can remember she has dreamt the kobold god. The former shaman discovered that Yappa was wise beyond her years and seemed to be blessed with Kurtulmak's divine spirit, for Yappa learned quickly how to channel Kurtulmak's rage and her hatred for the gnome race was endless. It didn't come as a surprise to Yappa when the dragon decided to eat the old shaman, for Yappa was convinced that the former shaman was overly fond of Alizarinathrax and Yappa believed that it didn't please Kurtulmak. Lately Yappa has been a huge advocat of attacking Deadsnows, simply for the fact that Yappa believes that gnomes must live there.

**Personality:** Yappa is wise and wicked. She strongly believes that Kurtulmak has chosen her and that her dreams are visions sent by the god. She delights in tormenting and torturing gnomes and hates the small race more than one could deem healthy, even would be easy to say that Yappa is utterly obsessed with killing and hurting gnomes, so that it borders on the sane.

## YAPPA

*Small humanoid (kobold), lawful evil*

CR 3

**Armor class** 14 (Studded leather)

**Hit Points** 20 (5d6)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR    | DEX     | CON    | INT    | WIS     | CHA     |
|--------|---------|--------|--------|---------|---------|
| 7 (-2) | 15 (+2) | 10 (0) | 10 (0) | 15 (+2) | 13 (+1) |

**Senses** Darkvision 60 ft., passive perception 8

**Skills** Religion +4

**Languages** Common, draconic

**Challenge** 3 (700 xp)

**Sunlight sensitivity.** While in sunlight, the kobold has diadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

**Pack tactics.** The kobold has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the kobold's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

**Divine Eminence.** As a bonus action, Yappa can expend a spell slot to cause her mace attacks to

magically deal and extra 10 (3d6) radiant damage to a target on a hit. This benefit lasts until the end of the turn.

**Spellcasting.** Yappa is a 3rd level caster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). Yappa has following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *guidance, sacred flame, resistance*

1st level (3 slots): *bane, inflict wounds, shield of faith.*

## ACTIONS

**Mace.** Melee weapon attack: +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 1 (1d4-2) bludgeoning damage.

## AMBUSH DRAKE

*Medium dragon, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 22 (4d6 + 8)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 13 (+1) | 15 (+2) | 14 (+2) | 4 (-3) | 11 (+0) | 6 (-2) |

**Skills** Perception +4, Stealth +4

**Damage Resistances** poison

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

**Languages** understands Draconic but can't speak it

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)

**Pack Tactics.** The drake has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the drake's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

**Surprise Attack.** If the drake surprises a creature and hits it with an attack during the first round of combat, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) damage from the attack.

## ACTIONS

**Bite.** Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.



## Handout #1

### 18TH OF TARSAKH

GOOD DAY. TEAM 2 FOUND A STRONG VEIN, MORADIN BE PRAISED. DORNA BLESSED THE MINE. TEAM 1 WORKED THE VEIN AND IT'S PURE. VILMA AND NORBERT ANNOUNCED ISARN THAT THEY ARE EXPECTING. THEIRS WILL BE THE FIRST IRONBOOT BORN IN THE NETHERS. MORADIN SURELY HAS BLESSED OUR CLAN.

A PART OF DELZOUN OF OLD. WE NEED TO GO DEEPER. I ONLY FEAR THAT THE MASSIVE CAVE WILL OPEN UP TO THE UNDERDARK. I'VE PROPOSED TO ISARN THAT WE STATION GUARDS AT THE OPENING.

### 30TH OF TARSAKH

### 22ND OF TARSAKH

THE MINERS OPENED A NEW BRANCH, FOLLOWING THE NEW VEIN. IT HAS ALREADY PRODUCED OVER FOUR UNITS OF PURE IRON.

DORNA HELD A SERVICE IN HONOR OF VILMA'S PREGNANCY, ALL THE WOMEN ATTENDED AND GRATULATED HER.

THE FENABARS CAME AROUND COLLECTING THEIR LOAD, ISARN FINALLY MUSTERED THE COURAGE TO TELL THEM THAT THEY'VE HAD ENOUGH AND THAT THEY HAVE NO CLAIM ON US. THEY LEFT EMPTY HANDED, WHICH IS GOOD THOUGH I FEAR THAT THE HARSH WORDS THE FENABARS AND ISARN EXCHANGED WILL NOT BE FORGOTTEN ANY TIME SOON.

STRANGE DAYS! THERE'S A STRANGE ROOM IN THE CAVERN, COVERED WITH GLYPHS AND WAR-DENS AND STRANGE WRITING. DORNA WARNED ISARN AGAINST OPENING IT, BUT CURIOSITY GOT THE BETTER OF HIM.

THE ROOM IS FULL OF LEATHER BAGS AND SACKS FULL OF TRINCKETS, CRUDE JEWELRY AND GEMS. IT LOOKED LIKE SACRIFICES OF SOME SORT TO ME. A HUGE OVALSHAPED WHITE GEM LAY ON A PEDESTAL. DORNA ADVISED AGAINST TAKING THE GEM, BUT ISARN INSISTED.

ONCE HE REMOVED THE GEM FROM THE ROOM THE GLYPHS STARTED GLOWING. I HAVE A BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS.

### 1ST OF MIRTUL

### 28TH OF TARSAKH

THE NEW BRANCH OPENED INTO A LARGE CAVERN. TEAM 2 INVESTIGATED IT AND MAYHAPS IT WAS

THE HORROR! I TRIED TO WARN HIM. I TRIED TO TELL HIM TO NOT TAKE THE STRANGE GEM. HE DIDN'T LISTEN AND NOW THE CURSE IS UPON US...