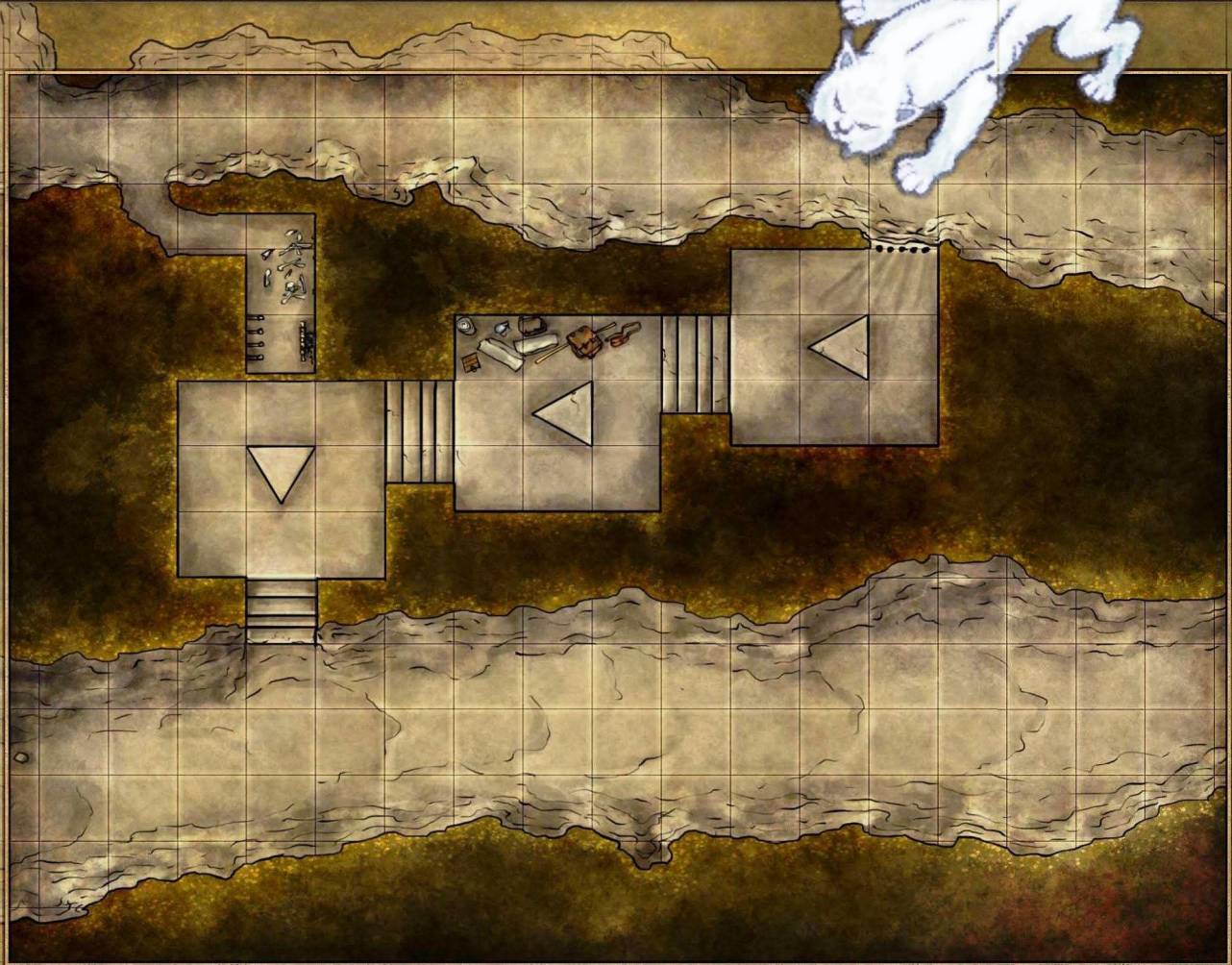


Rite Publishing Presents

Ruined Gate

Level 1 Room 2



By T. H. Gulliver



The Ruins Perilous





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Ruins Perilous:
Ruined Gates
Level 1, Room 2

Dungeoneer (Design): T. H. Gulliver
(Editor): David Paul

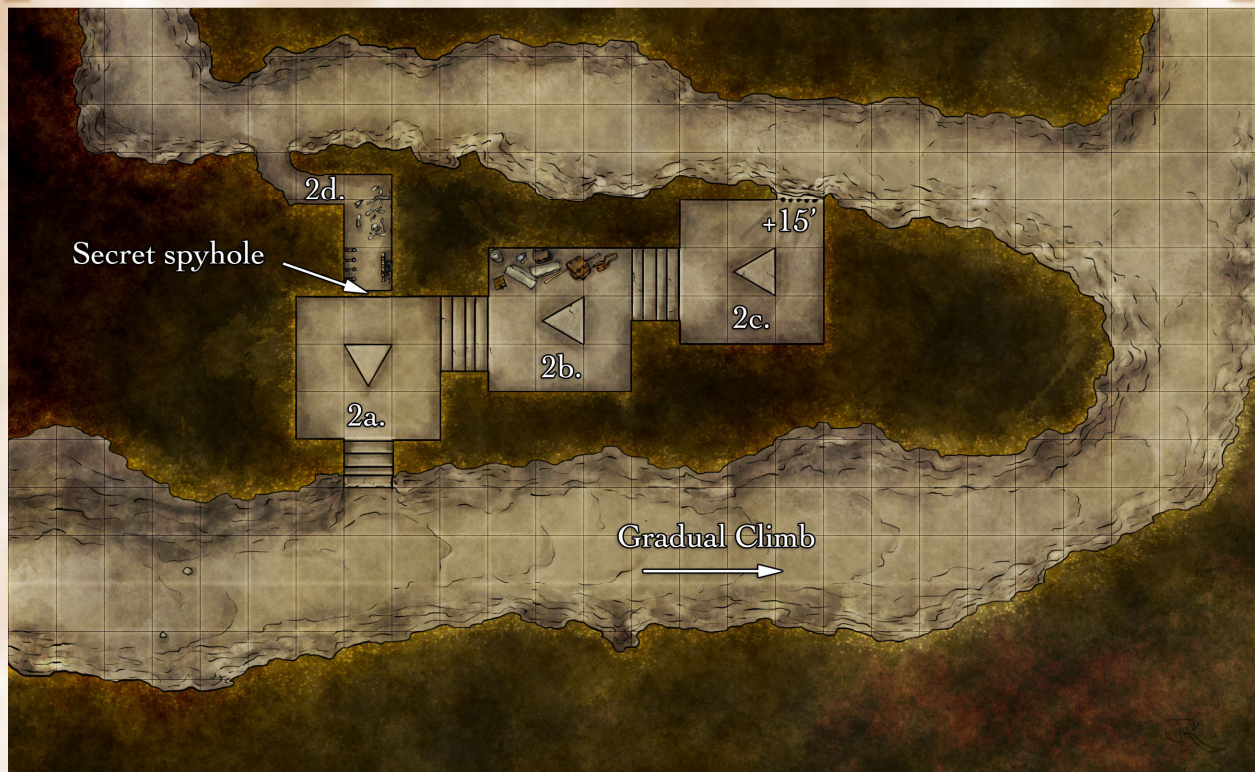
Mason (Cartographer and Interior artist): Jonathan Roberts
Cryptozoologist (Token Artist): James “Devin Night” Hazelett
Foolish Adventurer (Layout and Publisher): Steven D. Russell

Dedication: In memory of **Gary Gygax**, for the *Caves of Chaos*
and all the memories they have given me

*“No words were laid on stream or stone,
When Durin woke and walked along.”*
– J. R. R. Tolkien

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The Ruins Perilous

Level 1: The Surface Ruins

Area 2: The Gates CR 1 (XP 400)

On the other side of the guard tower, a gently climbing path continues along the side of the cliff. There is a sheer drop of fifty feet on the south side of the path and a steep cliff on the north side the path. The path ranges from 10 to 20 feet wide.

A series of chambers is carved through the cliff about 120 feet past the guard tower. While those hauling heavy goods in wagons or sledges could continue on the path, most traffic was expected to pass through these chambers for inspection.

As the PCs approach the tunnel, read or paraphrase the following:

An 8-foot wide entrance is carved into the side of the cliff. The stone around the entrance has smooth surfaces and sharp corners but it is decorated with grim faces, crudely chiselled from the stone. Above the gate are a series of runes. The chamber beyond is unlit.

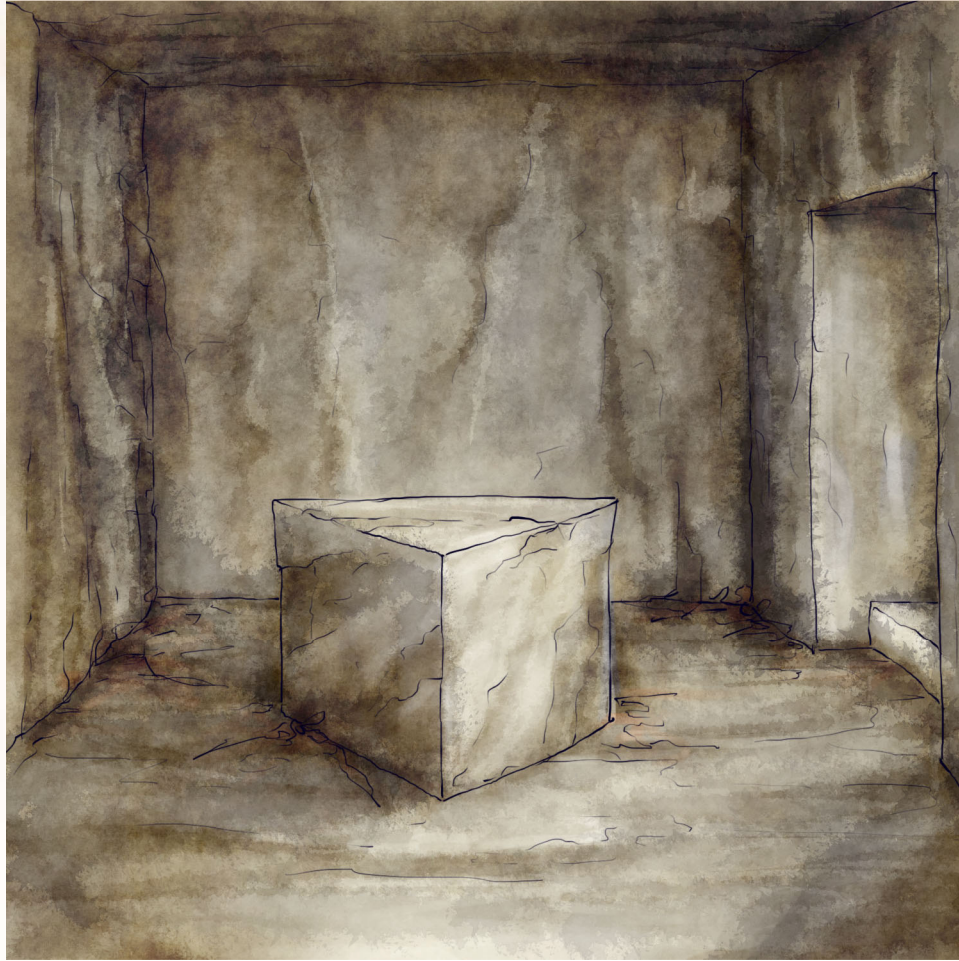
The runes are from an older, almost forgotten writing system, but any character who speaks Giant can read them if they succeed on a DC 25 Linguistics check. Such a check provides the following interpretation,

“Life in service.” A character whose Linguistics check exceeds the DC by at least 5 reads it more clearly as, “Live in slavery.” Though they appear to be crude carvings, the faces are in fact accurate depictions of some of the rock hag’s trusted servants.

The rock hag’s army used these rooms as a second line of defense. Their slaves built a series of portcullises (four in total) at the entrances into and between these chambers. The portcullises could have been dropped if a group of invaders moved through the chambers. This would divide the invaders into separate groups that could be attacked from the path on either side. The heavy iron portcullises have either rusted away or been stolen. Characters who succeed at a DC 10 Perception check notice the evidence of these ancient mechanisms. Carcera has had a new portcullis built at the exit from 2c.

2a. As the PCs enter the first 15 foot by 15 foot chamber, read or paraphrase the following:
A wide flight of stairs climbs five feet into a small chamber. The corners of this chamber are filled with dried leaves and twigs. A triangular stone table occupies the center of the room. Another flight of stairs exits the room on the east wall.

The triangular table once provided support for a heavy crossbow and concealment for the guards behind it. With a successful DC 20 Perception check, the PCs notice a narrow peephole in the north wall through which guards in 2d could spot invaders and drop all four portcullises.



2b. As the PCs enter the second chamber, read or paraphrase the following:
This second chamber is the same size as the first, with a similar table. Stairs lead out through an eight-foot wide exit on the opposite wall. Pouches, packs, bedrolls, blankets, pots, and wooden poles are piled against the northern wall.

These supplies are the refuse left behind by several previous groups of adventurers and have been well picked over. A tahyk lynx sleeps in a small space between the wall of the chamber and the packs. Disturbing the packs rouses the tahyk lynx.

Creatures

A lone tahyk lynx resides in the middle chamber of the tunnels. This tahyk has found the shivs frustratingly difficult to catch and is growing desperate. The tahyk is a cowardly predator and will only attack if the PCs are few in number (3 or fewer) and are wounded. Otherwise, it will flee as quickly as possible. If wounded, the tahyk will flee immediately using its *tahyk's step* ability to become undetectable as it runs.

1 Tahyk Lynx CR 1 (XP 400)
hp 5 AC 17

Treasure

Although other groups of adventurers searched the packs in area 2b, a hidden pocket inside one of the packs contains a masterwork dagger with a hollowed out handle that can be opened by removing a bolt and sliding the handle off the blade. The secret compartment holds five gems worth 10 gp each. The dagger can only be found with a successful DC 15 Perception check. The secret handle can be found with either a successful DC 15 Craft (weapons) check or a DC 15 Perception check.

2c. The third chamber is similar to the first and second but the north wall is blocked by a lowered portcullis. This portcullis is not one of the original portcullises but a more recent addition by Carcera. The portcullis can easily be raised by the winch inside area 2d. From the inside of the chamber, however, it can only be raised with a DC 25 Strength check. With a DC 30 Strength check, it can be raised high enough that it locks in place.

Development

If the tahyk fled, it returns when the PCs leave. If the PCs do not kill the tahyk during their first visit to this area, it may confront them on the way back, especially if the PCs are wounded or fewer in number.

The groundskeeper will lower the portcullis if it is left open.

If PCs are unable to open the portcullis, they can continue along the path taken by wagons and sledges and circle around to the other side of the portcullis.

2d. PCs who succeed on a DC 15 Perception check spot the tunnel leading to area 2d. If the PCs peer into the tunnel, read or paraphrase the following:

A pile of bones rests at the end of the tunnel beneath a large winch and four levers.

The winch and pulley system raises the portcullis in room 2c. One of the levers allows it to drop. The other levers would drop the missing portcullis at the entrance to 2a, between 2a and 2b, and between 2b and 2c. PCs investigating the bones determine that three humans were manacled to the floor in this room.

Tahyk Lynx

CR 1

XP 400

CN Small magical beast

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +6

Defense

AC 17, touch 16, flat-footed 12 (+5 Dex, +1 natural, +1 size)

hp 5 (2d8-4)

Fort +0, **Ref** +9, **Will** +6

Defensive Abilities evasion, tahyk's step

Offense

Speed 30 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee bite +6 (1d4-1), 2 claws +6 (1d3-1)

Special Attacks pounce, rake (2 claws +6, 1d3-1)

Statistics

Str 9, **Dex** 21, **Con** 6, **Int** 10, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 14

Feats Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +9, Bluff +7, Climb +7, Perception +6, Stealth +13

Languages Common (understood)

SQ shimmering coat, feigned double

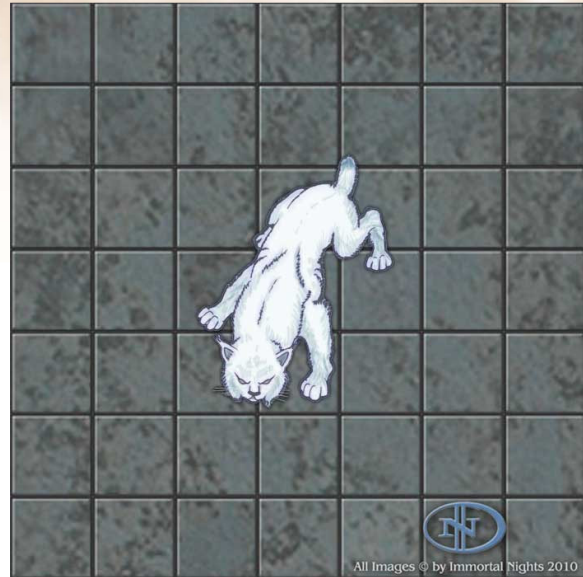
Ecology

Environment any temperate hills

Organization solitary

Treasure none

Tahyks are a thin, sickly species of lynx that have developed magical defenses to both protect them from predators and aid in capturing their prey. Tahyks prefer to hunt smaller game such as squirrels or rabbits, fascinating them with their shimmering coat before leaping. Tahyks, being weak, generally avoid



any larger game, only attacking larger prey when desperate or sure the larger creature is wounded and vulnerable. A tahyk lynx is 3 feet long and weighs 30 pounds.

Shimmering Coat (Su): The tahyk's silver-white fur seems to shimmer and ripple, giving off waves of light. This effect *fascinates* observers within 30 feet. Those who are within 30 feet of a tahyk lynx when they see one are fascinated for 2d4 rounds (DC 11 Will negates).

Tahyk's Step (Sp): For six rounds per day, while moving, the tahyk is able to render itself undetectable; this glamor functions like *invisibility*, except that it masks image, scent, and sound alike, concealing the subject from all senses except touch.

Tahyk's step renders the recipient immune to detection by blindsense, blindsight, *faerie fire*, *glitterdust*, *invisibility purge*, tremor sense, scent, and *see invisibility*. The lynx can still be detected through the use of *true seeing* (or similar divination spell) with a successful caster level check (DC 16). It can also still be tracked using mundane means.

The tahyk cannot maintain this non-detectability while standing still or while attacking, and doing either cancels the effect.

Feigned Double (Sp): As a free action three times per day, the tahyk can create an hallucinatory double. The hallucinatory double acts like a *mirror image* but remains opposite the tahyk at a distance of 10 to 20 feet and reflects the actions of the tahyk. Tahyks are skilled at using their doubles while attacking and gain a flanking bonus when attacking with their double. Tahyks can only maintain one double at a time. If not struck in combat, the doubles disappear after 10 rounds.

The Ruins Perilous

INTO THE DUNGEON

An Apprentice's Guide to The Ruins Perilous

Presented with Introduction, Histories and Worthy
Instruction by the honorable and ancient

Questors' Society

Adventuring Guild of Questhaven

Greetings Apprentice Adventurer!

Your possession of this brochure indicates that you, having been duly sponsored and, having paid the appropriate dues, are an Adventurer in good standing with the Questors' Society of Questhaven and in full possession of a Questor Guild Ring. This ring signifies both your membership and rank in the Guild. Wear it with Pride!

You are no doubt eager to prove yourself, both to the City and to the Society, climbing in rank within the Guild as you do so. Such an effort, however, will require much from you. The Questors' Society demands loyalty, bravery, cunning, and skill. To demonstrate these qualities, members of the Society are required to pass many tests in order to advance in rank. The most common of these tests is The Ruins Perilous.

Located three days ride from Questhaven, the Ruins Perilous are the remains of a dwarf fastness, now the property of the Society. Within the Ruins Perilous are twenty Questor Guild-Forges. Placing your ring upon the appropriate forge will add a rank-marking to your ring. The first of these Guild-Forges lies near to the subterranean entrance of the Ruins. The Guild-Forges must be used in the correct order and reaching each forge requires a progressively more difficult trek. Some of the Forges, after

being used, allow the user to teleport to that Forge from the first Entrance-Forge.

Do not allow the ease with which you understand these instructions to fool you. Only the bravest, cleverest, and most skillful of adventurers can expect to reach the Forges. Many more will perish in the attempt.

A Brief History of the RUINS PERILOUS

The dwarves of the Western Hammer, though now long gone, left behind an incredible number of ruins. Their custom of building rock-carved surface dwellings atop massive underground complexes has long been a source of fascination to historians, sightseers, archaeologists, adventurers, and assorted cultists. Though a combination of weather, economics and arcane devilties brought an end to the culture of the dwarves of the Western Hammer, their ancient homes endure. The Ruins Perilous is one of these fastnesses, a relic of a time forgotten. Though the surface ruins are in poor repair, the interior, subterranean ruins have well stood the test of time.

When the original Questors' Society was first founded, the Ruins Perilous was the very first dungeon explored by the intrepid Guild Fathers. After clearing the dungeon of a number of undesirable tenants and subduing a powerful runic-dragon, the Questors decided, in their wisdom, to claim the dungeon for their own, asking all future members of the guild to explore at least a part of the Ruins Perilous in order to prove themselves to the Society.

The Ruins Perilous have seen many changes over the years. Modifications and upgrades, of a sort, are being constantly made by the caretakers of the site. Traps are replaced. Deadly beasts, adversaries, and verminous entities move in and out of the ruins, so that its population is in constant flux. Yet at its heart it is still the same dwarf-made dungeon it was when the Founders

first explored it.

Advice For the Apprentice Explorer of the Ruins Perilous

Bear in mind that the Ruins Perilous are specifically designed to test your skill and cunning. Each room is a challenge. Each adversary has been placed there purposefully to thwart you. How you overcome each challenge is up to you, but be *always* on your guard and take nothing for granted! While there is treasure within the complex, (paid for with dues, city taxes and the estates of fallen Guild members), never lose sight of the real goal: reaching the next Guild-Forge. Some challenges in the ruins may require you to have found or overcome previous obstacles. So if you find yourself at an impasse, do not lose hope. Retrace your steps and determine what you might have missed!

We advise those entering the Ruins, in addition to their Guild Ring and any weapons and armor they deem appropriate, to carry the following with them:

- A suitable light source
- A sturdy ten foot pole
- A leather backpack and sufficient rations
- A crowbar and several iron wedges
- A sufficient quantity of bandages and splints
- A dry change of clothes
- 20 gold coins

Arley Lonox serves as the current surface groundskeeper of the Ruins Perilous and visitors and explorers are advised to check in with him, if possible, before exploring the Ruins. We ask this, not only as a courtesy to the Society but as a courtesy to your families. Should you perish in your exploration of the Ruins Perilous, we will be better able to notify your loved-ones if we know you are there.

Check it out at
<http://ritepublishing.com/ruinsperilous.html>

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