

CRAWLING FOR CASH

CRAWLING FOR CASH

A role-playing game by Ben Wright

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CRAWLING FOR CASH

Book 1

The Basics

The Game

This is a role-playing game dedicated to the concept of the dungeon crawl. Kill stuff, loot the rooms, then run.

You will need a number of players, one of which will assume the mantle of the Dungeon Master (or DM). You will need some dice, in a number of sizes ranging from four-sided (d4) up to twelve-sided (d12), but no more than 5 of each kind. Paper and writing tools are also required.

Paper money from a board game and some coloured beads to act as gems are not essential, but add to the experience.

Beyond that, all you need is your imagination.

This first section tells you how to create a character, and most of the rules of the game. The other rules are in the chapter that details the abilities a character can have and the Dungeon Master's section.

Facts of Life

Civilisation, as people held it, was nearly destroyed completely. A huge wave of orcs, demons, skeletons and even worse things swept down from the north-west. Empires and cities fell, none putting up more than a token resistance. There were massacres on a scale that boggles the imagination. Refugees fled eastwards, only to have to flee again when the horde continued its march. No-one knows exactly where this army came from, or who led it (if anyone). All anyone could do was fight or run. Everybody who fought, died. The enemy became known as the Horde- no other qualifier needed.

The Horde had nearly reached the east coast of the continent, when suddenly all the energy seemed to leave it. Newly built siege engines were left where they sat, armies dissolved into squabbling packs of monsters, and the dark magic that fortified them all dissipated. Those humans left alive, on the narrow strip of unconquered land before the sea, couldn't quite believe their luck. When all seemed darkest, they were saved.

Of course, there's a big difference between 'saved' and 'safe'. The monsters haven't gone away, they just don't have much motivation to conquer any extra land. The kingdom on the coast lost half of its territory and its capital city, so there is no government left to speak of. It's flooded with refugees. There is just enough cultivatable land to feed everybody, but monster raids and bandits mean a lot of it is unused. Starvation is a fact of life.

So many people have died, and so many armies been crushed, that the whole land is lousy with weapons and armour, some still with corpses rotting in them. It's easy to find a weapon, which only makes banditry more common. A loaf of bread costs more than a masterwork sword.

History is Bunk

There's a whole continent out there. It used to have kingdoms, religions, guilds, cults, you name it. Centuries of proud history and many different and interesting cultures.

They're gone, utterly destroyed. No-one cares about them any more. Don't trouble yourself to learn anything about them.

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To the west, there's a seething mass of monster lairs, infested mines, despoiled cities and, of course, hazardous dungeons. Not everything of value has been destroyed, and the hoarding instinct seems to be strong in the monsters. The remains of some evil creatures can even be processed into valuable materials. It's dangerous work, but it usually pays well.

Money

The main currency of the coast is the Crescent, the sickle-shaped coins of the largest coastal kingdom. A decade before the Horde, that kingdom moved over to paper currency above a certain denomination. These paper Crescents are very difficult to forge, and remain in use despite the kingdom that backed them effectively no longer existing. Of course, many examples of other currencies have found their way to the coast. Exchange rates fluctuate wildly, but gold is still gold. Dungeon crawlers often find caches of foreign currency which they then have to find a way of spending without getting stiffed on the exchange. Small, valuable items, such as gemstones, are also widely used as they are easier to carry than a purse of coins or a wad of notes.

Inflation has run rampant since the Horde appeared. The economy is a mess, and one bad harvest can throw the entire coast into disarray.

The table below is a rough guide to a 'normal' price for various goods and services. To avoid unnecessary complication, the table uses broad categories and their equivalent in Crescents. In actual fact, prices paid will seldom be exactly those listed here- haggling is the usual approach. When a particular commodity is plentiful, it may drop an entire category in price. If something important is in short supply, particularly food, prices can go up by as much as 3 categories. Some denominations have common nicknames, often based on the coin they replaced.

Unique objects will sell for whatever the market will bear.

Your character starts the game with 400 Crescents to her name, in whatever combination of equipment, food, gems and money she wants.

Keeping cash in hand can be dangerous, not least because of pick-pockets, but there are few reliable alternatives to carrying money. A few 'banks' operate on the coast, but they have a tendency to close up business after the owner goes missing with all the money.

It's All About the Money

I recommend you use physical money. Notes borrowed from a board game would be ideal. When the players come into cash, give them the notes to hold. Make them spend them out of hand when they buy something. Valuables other than cash can have physical representation, too. Little glass beads make excellent gemstones. Encourage the players to 'pick-pocket' each other if a player leaves his money unattended. Encourage the victim to kill the character of the thief if he gets found out. As DM, you naturally assume the role of NPC pick-pockets. Of course, if the DM is caught in the act then the next step is a fight with a low-level NPC sneak thief. Of course, if the thief had strong friends, more mayhem will ensue...

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Crescents	Slang	What It Gets You
1	Copper Crescent	1 slug of bathtub gut-rot
5	Brass Crescent	Poor quality weapon
		Inexpensive personal items
10	Pony	Good quality weapon
		Poor quality armour
		An evening with a prostitute
		Lodgings for 1 week
25	Silver Crescent	Starvation rations for 1 week
		Medical treatment for 1 week
50	Double Crescent	Good quality armour
		Peasant rations for 1 week
		Peasant wages for 1 week
		Magical medical treatment for 1 week
		Lodgings for 1 month
		A mid-sized sapphire or emerald
100	Gold Crescent	Good rations for 1 week
		Healer's wages for 1 week
		Hireling's wages for 1 week
		Starvation rations for 1 month
		A mid-sized diamond
250	Crown	Dungeon crawler's wages for 1 week
		Magical healer's wages for 1 week
		Peasant rations for 1 month
		Peasant wages for 1 month
		A mid-sized ruby
		Your very own hovel
500	His Lordship	Healer's wages for 1 month
		Hireling's wages for 1 month
		Good rations for 1 month
1000	A Legion	Dungeon crawler's wages for 1 month
		Magical healer's wages for 1 month
		Your very own small house
2500		Your very own fishing boat
5000		Your very own large house

Creating a Character

You can get stuck right in and create a character to play.

Motivation

There's a line on your character sheet, for her motivation. Fill it in now with 'Avoid starving to death'. One day, your character may be rich enough to worry about other things. For now, that is all the motivation she needs.

There are some other details you can flesh your character out with, and can write on the back of the character sheet, but they are not as important.

- Where she learned to fight (or cast spells, or steal, or whatever).
- How she escaped being killed by the Horde.
- The loss she feels the deepest.
- Why she didn't become a bandit instead of a dungeon crawler.

If you wish, you can add a physical description of your character to that information.

Markus wants to make a character called Elwen, who originally trained as a wizard at the Sapphire Academy but has since taken up the bow to earn a living. So, he fills in:

Motivation: Avoid starving to death.

Learned magic at the Sapphire Academy, never graduated.

Was part of a caravan when the Horde destroyed the academy. Kept running east but was separated from the rest of the wizards.

Her long-term boyfriend was at the academy- he is almost certainly dead she hasn't put it behind her.

She wanted to learn magic to help people, and refuses to prey on the weak to make a living.

Abilities

Characters have a number of abilities, which are sorted into six categories-

- Strength
- Health
- Nimbleness
- Lore
- Puissance
- Finesse

A Note on Tone

Role-playing games tend to played the way the group wants to. You may get the impression that this game is all very serious and hard-hitting. You may get the impression that this game is shallow monster-killing for the hell of it. Both of these can be true, if that's how you want the game to be. Don't think there's no room for humour or melodrama- both can be found in abundance in a situation where riches can be won or lost in the space of an hour. Above all, remember that money is the most important thing in this game. Whether that's because you need it to survive or because it's how you keep score is not important. Money. You want it.

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Most categories have a score, equal to the number of abilities invested in them. Puissance has a number of scores, one for each school of magic, but characters seldom learn magic from more than 2 schools. When a character learns a new ability, the related score increases. This means that learning a new ability not only opens up a new possibility, but also makes a character better at existing abilities in that category.

The full list of abilities and how the category scores are used are given later. Note that Puissance and Finesse are both used exclusively for magic- if a player wants to make a character that does not use magic then it is not necessary to buy abilities in either category. However, most experienced dungeon crawlers have at least a beginner's knowledge of magic.

As a living, uncrippled adventurer your character automatically gets the abilities 'Living Being' (Health) and 'Mobile' (Nimbleness). You can then pick another 13 abilities, as long as you have no more than 6 in any single category, and you meet any requirements for the abilities you pick.

Most effective dungeon-crawlers tend to be generalists in terms of categories, rather than pursuing one category to the exclusion of others. However, there is plenty of room for specialisation within each category.

Markus assigns Elwen's abilities:

Strength- *Wield Tiny Weapon, Wield Small Weapon, Wield Medium Weapon*

Health- *Living Being, Wear Light Armour*

Nimbleness- *Mobile, Fit, Pick the Spot, Avoid Magic*

Lore- *Literacy and Numeracy, Golem Lore*

Puissance- *Basic Air, Whimsical Air*

Finesse- *Cantrip, Sparking Fist*

This gives her the following ability scores:

Strength – 3

Health – 2

Why So Weak?

The starting number of abilities may seem weak, especially compared to some of the common monsters that dungeon crawlers will meet. There are 3 reasons why.

Firstly, it is assumed that the dungeon-crawlers will almost always act first. This is a big advantage, and means that sometimes the monsters might not even get to fight back.

Secondly, overcoming difficult fights requires that the players work as a team and make the best use of their abilities. There should never be a 'comfort zone' where killing a room of monsters is routine, and starting off that way makes it clear that's how it's going to stay.

Thirdly, and most importantly, strong characters have a large number of abilities and it can be hard to remember all of them. By starting with fewer, there is much less chance a player will forget a key ability could have been used in a fight. Few things are more annoying than realising a fight was much harder than it needed to be.

On the other hand, if the DM wishes to start the players at a more advanced stage, he is free to increase the number of abilities a character starts with.

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Nimbleness – 4

Lore – 2

Puissance – 2 Air

Finesse – 2

She is something of an all-round character, being able to cast 2 spells and fight. However, she can't take much in the way of punishment and doesn't excel at any particular thing.

Weapons

The most important tools of a dungeon-crawler protect her and hurt her enemies.

Weapons come in 5 sizes-

- **Tiny weapons** (0/d4) – Small enough to be carried and used in 1 hand, and can be drawn from a belt or sheath without spending an action. They are also small enough to hide.
- **Small weapons** (1/d6) – Small enough to be carried and used in 1 hand, and can be drawn from a belt or sheath without spending an action.
- **Medium weapons** (2/d8) – Small enough to be carried and used in 1 hand.
- **Large weapons** (3/d10) – Can be carried in 1 hand, but take 2 hands to use.
- **Massive weapons** (4/d12) – Must be carried and used with 2 hands. It takes 2 actions to unstrap one from your back.

You need Strength abilities to wield weapons. Note that although you can pick abilities such that your character wields the biggest weapons quite early on, it is still usually not optimal to do so. It is best overall to roll at least 3 dice or more, even if you have to step down a weapon category to do so. There are also a number of weapon types, each of which is usually available in each of the above sizes.

- **Blades** – daggers and swords. Tiny bladed weapons can be thrown. Swords are a popular general-purpose weapon.
- **Axes** – hand axes and battle axes.
- **Spears** – spears and other polearms. Large or massive spear weapons can attack enemies 2 paces away as long as nothing is between you and them.
- **Bludgeons** – hammers, maces and flails.
- **Bows** – bows are ranged weapons; all bows require 2 hands to draw and fire. Drawing the bow and shooting the arrow each take an action. They cannot be fired at adjacent enemies.

Weapon Statistics

Weapon attributes are given as N/dX. 'N' is the penalty to a character's Strength score for the purposes of damage rolls when using the weapon. 'X' is the size of dice rolled for damage rolls. When using two weapons, the format is N/dX/dY- 'X' and 'Y' are the size of dice rolled for the 2 separate attacks and 'N' is the penalty to Strength endured by both attacks.

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- **Crossbows** – crossbows are ranged weapons. All crossbows require 2 hands to cock and load. Cocking the crossbow and loading the quarrel each take 1 action. The weapon can be fired with 1 hand if it is tiny, small or medium. Because they are so slow, crossbows are generally used as secondary weapons, to be fired before engaging in mêlée. Tiny and small crossbows can be fired at adjacent enemies, but larger version can't.
- **Thrown** – some weapons can be thrown. Throwing the weapon is an attack, and unless the weapon is Tiny or Small it takes an action to ready the weapon for throwing if it is not already in hand. Weapons can't be thrown at adjacent enemies.

Range

In the close confines of a dungeon, or the winding streets of a town, the range of distance weapons is irrelevant. Over open ground, the combatant with the distance weapon almost always wins.

Some of these types have special rules for them- such as spears and crossbows. However, there are also abilities characters can have that make give them additional capabilities when using a particular sort of weapon. If that isn't enough information to construct any weapon you want your character to have, you need help.

Shields can be worn on one arm, but not together with a weapon that requires 2 hands to wield. If this all seems complicated, your options boil down to:

- Use a massive weapon, if you have the necessary ability.
- Use a single smaller weapon, with the other hand free to cast spells, throw weapons or use potions.
- Use a medium or smaller weapon and a shield, if you have the necessary abilities.
- Use 2 medium or smaller weapons at the same time, if you have the necessary ability.

Characters can, of course, change what equipment they are using, but this takes time they may not want to spend in the middle of a fight. In particular, a character may have to drop a weapon or shield in order to use a potion or cast a spell.

Armour

Armour also comes in a number of varieties. Armour offers protection against attacks measured in points of damage, but imposes a penalty on Nimbleness. There is the choice of armour that only protects the front and armour that protects the back as well. The advantage of the first kind is that your character has less of a penalty to Nimbleness. The advantage of the latter kind should be obvious. Light armours include hardened leather and chain mail, the heaviest armours involve interlocking plates or treated dragon hide. Shields offer a bonus on top of any armour, but need a hand free to use. The basic types are:

- Basic light armour – 0/5
- Full light armour – 1/5f
- Basic medium armour – 1/10
- Full medium armour – 2/10f
- Basic heavy armour – 2/15
- Full heavy armour – 3/15f
- Shield – 0/+5

Armour Statistics

Armour is specified by N/X(f). 'N' is the Burden applied to a character's Nimbleness for wearing the armour. 'X' is the amount of protection afforded by the armour. 'f', if present, indicates that armour protects the back as well as the front.

The quality of weapons and armour makes little difference, except to the regularity with which they will have to be repaired or replaced. The cost of either is not terribly consequential.

Markus described Elwen as using a bow, so he considers his choices. She could use a longbow, but the strength penalty would mean she only rolled 1 die, which would be weak. So, he picks out a short bow for her. Later on in her career, if she becomes stronger, she can use a longbow instead. He doesn't want to reduce her Nimbleness, so he gives her basic light armour. She might be attacked at close quarters, so he gives her a dagger in case of emergencies. She has:

Short bow 1/d6

Dagger 0/d4

Basic light armour 0/5

That equipment costs 70 Crescents, leaving her with 330. Although the bow requires 2 hands to use, Elwen can hold it 1 hand in order to perform magic with the other.

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Weapon	Stats	Type	Other Rules
Dagger	0/d4	Blade, thrown	
Sling	0/d4	'Bow'	Draw and fire
Dart	0/d4	Thrown	
Short sword	1/d6	Blade	
Hand axe	1/d6	Axe, thrown	
Mace	1/d6	Bludgeon	
Short bow	1/d6	Bow	Draw and fire
Pistol crossbow	1/d6	Crossbow	Cock, load and fire; can shoot adjacent
Throwing star	1/d6	Thrown	
Long sword	2/d8	Blade	
Battle axe	2/d8	Axe	
Warhammer	2/d8	Bludgeon	
Short spear	2/d8	Spear	
Longbow	2/d8	Bow	Draw and fire
Light crossbow	2/d8	Crossbow	Cock, load and fire; can shoot adjacent
Javelin	2/d8	Thrown	
Bastard sword	3/d10	Blade	
Double-bladed axe	3/d10	Axe	
Spear	3/d10	Spear, thrown	Attack 2 paces away
Heavy mace	3/d10	Bludgeon	
Composite bow	3/d10	Bow	Draw and fire
Heavy crossbow	3/d10	Crossbow	Cock, load and fire
Greatsword	4/d12	Blade	
Greataxe	4/d12	Axe	
Halberd	4/d12	Spear	Attack 2 paces away
Greathammer	4/d12	Bludgeon	
Greatbow	4/d12	Bow	Draw and fire
Mighty crossbow	4/d12	Crossbow	Cock, load and fire
Bolas	4/d12	Thrown	

Other Equipment

Basic pieces of equipment such as bedrolls, eating knives and bandages are cheap and can be taken as read. There is one other special type of equipment a well-prepared dungeon crawler has, and that's potions. Potions are covered in depth later on, but it should be borne in mind that they are a) expensive and b) life-savers in sticky situations.

Markus decides that Elwen has a single potion, some Corpse Ichor, which costs 100 Crescents. That leaves her with 230 Crescents in cash; enough to buy 2 weeks of food with a little change left over.

Filling in the Blanks

By this time, you have picked your character's abilities and equipment. There are some derived values that are easy to calculate from what you have already.

- **Effective Nimbleness** – is her Nimbleness score less her Burden and any penalties. Normally, the only Burden comes from armour but if the DM feels she is carrying an excessive amount of other equipment it may be higher. If her Effective Nimbleness is 0 or less, she cannot use any of her Nimbleness abilities. Effective Nimbleness is always used for die rolls rather than unmodified Nimbleness.
- **Movement** – is how many paces she can take in a single action. If her Nimbleness score is 5 or more, this is the same as her Effective Nimbleness. Otherwise, it is 5 less your Burden and any Starvation penalty. If her Movement is 0 or less, she cannot move without help.
- **Front Armour** – her armour value plus any shield bonus.
- **Rear Armour** – her armour value for a full set of armour, or 0 otherwise.
- **Wounds** – is how many wounds she can receive before becoming incapacitated. It is equal to 4 times her Health score. There is an accompanying Wound track for recording wounds received.
- **Shock Threshold** – is how many wounds it takes to kill her if she doesn't receive any first aid in the meantime. It is equal to her Health score.
- **Weapon Damage Roll** – for each weapon she carries calculate how much damage you roll when she uses it. The number of dice is given by her Strength score, less the penalty of the weapon. The die size is given by the weapon. Attack spells also have a damage roll, but in that case the damage varies by the amount of power used to cast the spell.

The Rule of 5

You never roll more than 5 dice for anything. If you would do so, the extra dice are lost.

You also never take more than 5 Wounds from a single attack.

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Markus fills in Elwen's other statistics.

Effective Nimbleness: 4

Movement: 5

Front Armour: 5

Rear Armour: 0

Wounds: 8

Shock Threshold: 2

Weapon Damage Rolls:

Dagger 3d4

Short bow 2d6

Sparking Fist Xd6+5 Air

(The spell's power varies by how much Air magic is used to cast it. It's also magical damage, of the type Air, which is noted above. Magical damage ignores most forms of armour, which is useful. Sparking Fist requires Elwen to be next to the target to cast it, but her Whimsical Air ability means she can move while raising magical power which makes it much easier to land the spell on the target she wants.)

Employment

It's not possible to just wander into a monster infested dungeon and saunter out rich. It takes a little preparation. First, you need to know that there's something in there worth risking injury or death for. Often it's as simple as inside knowledge that there's a big cache of gold or other valuables in a temple over-run by monsters. Other times, there may be a buyer lined up for some family artefact lost to the Horde. In all cases, it's a case of judging whether the risk is worth the reward. Because both of these approaches require contacts, it's not possible to simply set yourself up as a group of dungeon crawlers and start making money. For characters without these contacts, there are two ways they get into the business.

Work For Hire

The entry-level job involves getting hired on a per-day basis for a particular crawl. The money is not great, you're expected to bring your own equipment and you have to meet any expenses out of your own pocket. The standard practice is to be paid half the money upfront and the rest on completion. On the other hand, this leaves little reason for your co-workers to drag your unconscious body out of danger.

Regular Employment

A steadier job involves being on the payroll of a crawling enterprise. Employees typically get paid half-wages even when not on active duty. Medical expenses, food and lodging are usually taken care of. Because of this, the actual wage packet is only half or less than the nominal 'wage'. Another drawback is that resting crawlers are not permitted to work for other companies without losing their existing position. Potions are often provided by the company, but if an employee uses them in a profligate manner their cost is often taken out of her wages.

Many dungeon crawlers begin in the first, then move onto the latter. Most, however, dream of being a partner in their own company, where the real money is to be made. The profits go into the company itself, and few companies pay bonuses to their staff when a venture goes well. If the characters are particularly fortunate, they may even begin as partners in their own company.

Partners

Apart from the dangerous business of dungeon crawling itself, partners in a company have to find buyers for the goods recovered, meet all expenses (including bribes for corrupt officials) and shoulder the burden of any disasters. Worse still, they live in constant fear that any crawlers they employ are stealing from them. Some partnerships struggle to make ends meet, and are constantly under prepared. Others make a good living, purchasing fine delicacies and commissioning flattering portraits. Guess which kind your characters would be in.

10 Steps to a Successful Dungeon Crawl

Practical Advice from One-Handed Mike

Only 5 Crescents!

1 Get a Prospect

It's no use just blundering into a nest of monsters at random. It's best to have solid information that there is something worth taking there. An eyewitness report of a unicorn means there's money to be made by an enterprising maiden with a hacksaw. A dispossessed noble may offer money for the safe recovery of family artefacts from the hidden vault in his estate cellar. Or at least someone who claims to be the legitimate owner may offer you money to do so. Temples and palaces are not the safe bet you might think they are, as monsters often destroy anything of value they can't stuff into a pocket. You should also make sure that the expected earnings from the expedition are greater than any associated costs. Just sayin'.

2 Case the Joint

The next step is to gather as much information about the location as possible. What kind of monsters are there? Is there a refugee in the town who can tell you the layout of the area you intend to go to, or give you the inside line vis a vis secret passages and the like? Do you actually have any idea where your destination is? Heading to a place that's just an X on a map is a recipe for disaster. Of course, sometimes the reward is so great that it's worth taking a blind risk...

3 Prepare

Now you need to make sure you have everything you need for the trip. Food, of course, to last the journey there and the journey back. A stock of potions to use on anything really unpleasant. A hireling to watch your stuff when you enter the dungeon. Anything you think you might need that you can afford. It's a good idea to find someone you can trust to look after any belongings you can't take with you, or simply sell them on.

4 Travel

Getting to the location may not be easy. If the site is deep within Horde occupied territory, you may have to contend with roaming bands of monsters. Luckily, smaller groups don't often trouble well-armed bands of humans and the larger bands are easy to keep out of the way of. Nearer to civilisation, bandits can be an issue. Naturally, mother nature can throw a spanner in the works by washing away bridges or generating inclement weather.

5 Set Up Camp

It's useful to have somewhere to stow travelling gear near your target, so you don't have to carry your bedrolls and whatnot around while killing monsters. A hireling can be left to watch over them if you wish- few would have the courage to steal your stuff and head for home alone. Having a pre-arranged place you can all return to if you have to split up when it all goes pear-shaped is sensible, too.

6 Get In

Getting into the dungeon is not easy, but seldom hard. A lot depends on exactly what kind of location you are entering. Towns, mines and other civilian areas are not noted for their security, but there are often some monsters on watch just in case. Fortifications would once have been formidable challenges, but the Horde didn't bother repairing any walls they breached when they took them. Cave systems and monster's lairs are a maze of passages, usually with several entrances. The trick is to get inside the place without alerting all of its occupants to your arrival.

7 Get Out

Knowing when to cut your losses is important. Is getting that treasure worth your life? If your financial situation is dire enough, it might well be. If you can get to the major goal of your expedition early on, you should seriously consider whether it's worth your while to explore further. You don't get extra credit for killing more monsters. Healing takes time- time you could spend making money somewhere else. Of course, in some cases your party will be strong enough to clear the entire place out and drag everything of value away in a big sack. Savour those occasions.

8 Travel Home

Getting back is no easier than getting there. Depending on how well things went, you may be running short of food. Even after a successful expedition you may have suffered significant injuries. The bandits you dodged on the way out may notice your conspicuous treasure sack and seek to relieve you of it now you're weakened.

9 Sell Your Loot

With any luck, you'll find buyers for everything you brought back. Some of them may even give you a fair price. The company may take care of this side for you and give you your miserably small cut afterwards. You can always try pocketing a few trinkets and hoping your employer doesn't notice, if you can stand the risk, but take it from me, it ain't worth the trouble.

10 Ale and Whores

Now your living expenses are met, it's time to spend a little of your profits on some of the finer things in life.

Good luck, dungeon-crawlers! And remember, One-Handed Mike is available for specialist advice and consultations at affordable rates!

Look out for him underneath the three-arched bridge!

CRAWLING FOR CASH

It's implied that in all three cases that the player characters are not the only people involved in the business as there will be either higher-ups or peons. However, in all cases it is important that the player characters are the primary focus of the game. They may be sent as a team to one part of the dungeon while the rest are elsewhere, for example. If some players can only turn up occasionally in a regular campaign, it makes sense for their characters to be on a work for hire basis even if the rest are salaried or are partners. Basically, go with whatever works.

Markus is joining a game with some already experienced characters. The players have just left a company in order to start their own, so they need a reason why they'd accept Elwen as an inexperienced dungeon crawler over any other who might have applied. Markus suggests that one of the other characters could have been on good terms with the Sapphire Academy before the Horde and gives Elwen a chance to prove herself because of that. Once of the other players says that fits well with his character, and Elwen is hired for a trial period before they make a final decision.

The Main Rules

The rules of this game are straight-forward. Many conflicts are resolved using a simple die roll, and combat, being at the heart of the game, runs on a simple 'roll dice, see how much damage you do' basis.

Eating To Live

The biggest expense of living is food. People who live active lifestyles need more food, and better quality food, than those who don't do much. As a dungeon-crawler, your character needs more food than most to stay fit and strong. The lesser quantities of food are peasant rations, starvation rations, and no rations. Successfully gathering food in the wild generally provides starvation rations, or peasant rations if the characters are lucky.

Your character has a box for a Starvation number on the character sheet. For each week your character doesn't get enough food, this number increases. The amount by which it increases is related to the number of steps away from a proper meal she is- 1/2 a point for peasant rations, 1 for starvation rations, 1 1/2 for no rations. The Starvation number is reset to 0 if your character enjoys two weeks of good rations. One of the biggest problems about starvation is that it takes so long to recover fully.

Peasants require less food as their work is not as strenuous as wearing armour all day and swinging a weapon about.

Each point of Starvation makes your character worse off. All her scores are reduced by the Starvation number (ignore the half). This affects things like Wounds and Movement, so be careful to recalculate everything if the Starvation level changes. This makes her weaker, slower, less able to survive injury and seriously impairs any magical ability. Should her Starvation number equal or exceed her Health score, she dies of starvation.

Although this sounds dangerous, starvation is not a common occurrence for dungeon crawlers. They may encounter it during a bad year, when food prices soar, or have their rations stolen or spoiled when they're a week or two away from safety. Most of the time it's just a distant threat.

Exploring

Once in the dungeon, it needs to be explored. A drawn map is very helpful in showing how the different areas are connected. It does not have to be to draughtsman standard, and tedious measuring of distances and counting of paces should not be a part of it. It's best if the DM draws it piecemeal as the party explore the dungeon.

The process of exploration is assumed to be done cautiously, checking for traps and any sign of monsters, and trying to avoid making unnecessary noise. The exact position of the characters during exploration is not that important. It's assumed that they travel in some sensible marching order, with the most vulnerable members in the middle of the line, to avoid 'upsets'.

Although some dungeons are self-contained, others are merely one part of a much larger network. It's not usually a sensible idea to just keep going until you run out of dungeon.

CRAWLING FOR CASH

Movement

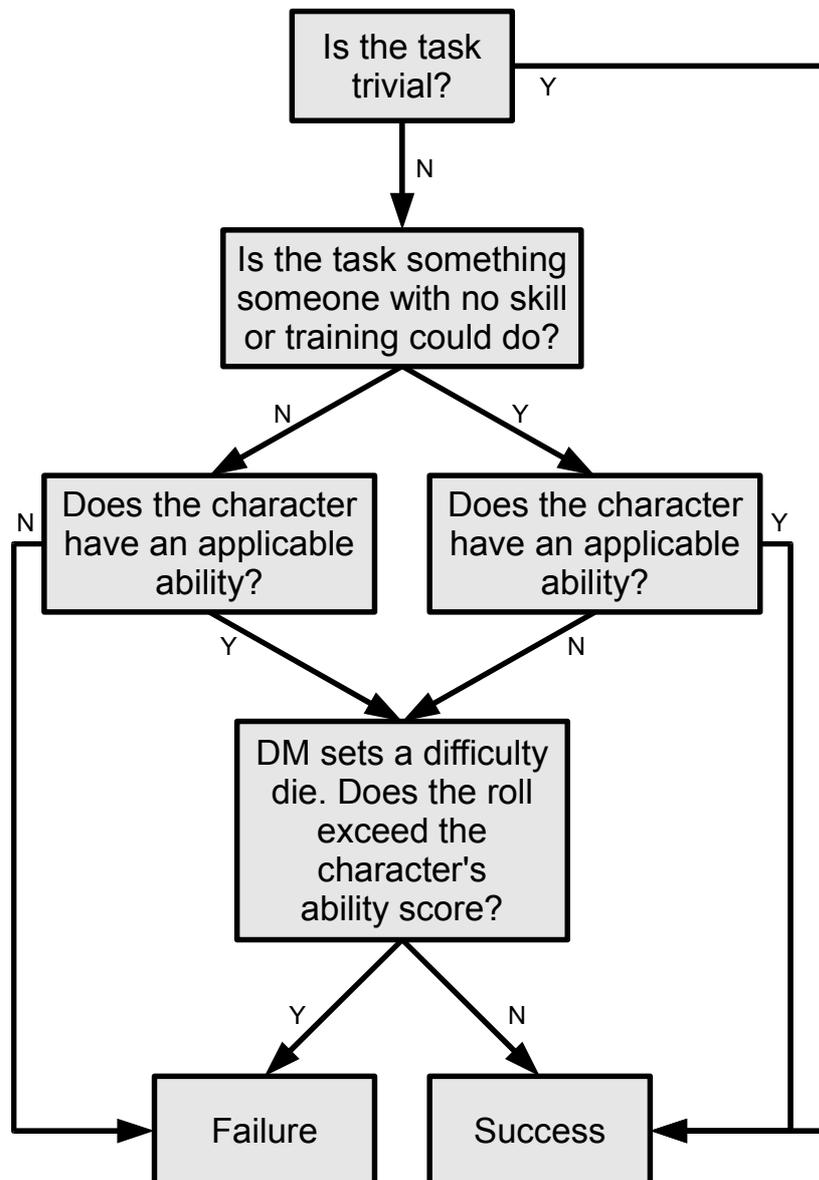
Movement speed is not important when exploring. Travelling full tilt would mean not checking for traps, which is often unwise.

If it ever becomes important who can run the fastest- because a dragon is chasing everyone down a tunnel, for example- then an Ability Check (described below) is needed. There is a Strength ability called 'Run Really Well' which would apply.

Movement during combat is another matter. Being able to cover ground quickly is not as important as being able to keep your guard and work out where you want to move to quickly. For this reason, movement during combat is based on Nimbleness, as noted in the 'Filling in the Blanks' section.

Ability Checks

Where the outcome of a character action is in doubt, an ability check is called for. Use the following flowchart to work out what happens.



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If the character is attempting a particularly difficult task using an ability, the dice rolled range from 'very difficult' (d4) to 'almost impossible' (d12). If the character is attempting an easier task without an ability, the dice range from 'almost trivial' (d4) to 'very difficult' (d12).

The die the DM assigns is based on the circumstances, including access to tools, having someone to help, being under time pressure, or whatever. As a rule of thumb, the default die size is d10, and the DM adjusts a step down for each reason why the task should be easier, and 1 step up for each reason the task should be harder. If the chosen category is Nimbleness, then the character's Effective Nimbleness is used for the check instead of base Nimbleness. It may well be that the task is easy enough that the player can't roll higher than his character's score; in which case you can skip the unnecessary roll and proceed straight to sweet, sweet success.

If a character has failed, that character can't try again unless something happens to significantly skew the odds in her favour. Other characters can only attempt it instead if they are better at it- i.e. they have a higher score in that ability category or an applicable ability.

Elwen has fallen down a hole in a dungeon. She can hear something moving in the dark near her. She wants to try to climb out of the hole, which is a Strength ability check. The DM says that climbing the rough brickwork doesn't require an advanced level of skill, but Elwen does not have an appropriate ability so has to roll for success. The DM says that the brickwork is slippery, which makes it more difficult. She rolls a d12 and gets a 5. This is higher than her Strength, so she fails to escape.

The rest of the party help her out by dropping a rope to her. This makes it easier for her, so she gets the chance to roll again. This time, the DM says that the task is 2 steps easier- 1 for having the rope, and 1 for having the rest of the party pulling on the rope to help. She rolls a d8, and gets another 5. Again, she fails.

Another party member climbs down to help her. He has the Climb Really Well ability, and can get down the wall without bothering to use the rope. Seeing a monster about to attack her, he abandons the original plan of tying the rope around her waist, throw hers over his shoulder and tries to climb back up. The DM rules that getting up the wall carrying someone is difficult enough that his ability doesn't grant him an automatic success (by extension, it also makes it difficult enough that a character couldn't manage it at all without the ability). The DM says that the other factors, the slimy wall, the rope and the help, still apply so a d8 is rolled. This lands as a 6, which is less than the character's strength, and Elwen is carried to safety.

She has not made a good impression on her first job.

Opposed Checks

Where two characters are competing (in a running race, for example), then a similar procedure is followed. Firstly, if one character has an applicable ability and the other doesn't - the character with the ability wins. If they both have such an ability, or both lack one, then dice are rolled. The DM assigns a die size to each of them separately, to reflect if one has a situational advantage or not.

If they both succeed, then neither 'wins' and nothing changes. If one succeeds and the other fails the roll, then one character has won the contest. If they both fail, then neither wins and the situation gets somehow worse for both of them.

A goblin thief has grabbed one of the backpacks and is trying to escape with it. Elwen, being the closest, grabs the bag to try to stop it. This prompts an opposed Strength ability check. The DM rules that neither side has any advantage, so they both roll a d10.

If Elwen succeeds and the goblin fails, she takes the bag from it. If Elwen fails and the goblin succeeds, then it snatches the bag from her hand and runs away.

If they both succeed or both fail, then they remain struggling over it for a few moments. This would buy time for the other party members to run over and chase the goblin away.

The chances are good that the goblin's attempted theft will fail thanks to Elwen's timely intervention.

Combat

When the party encounter monsters, combat will almost inevitably ensue. During combat, creatures take turns to smash the hell out of one another. The combat can be played out on squares, or left to the DM to describe in abstract terms. In either case, it is important to have a keen conception of the positions of the creatures in the fight, as position is important to many abilities and spells.

Starting a Fight

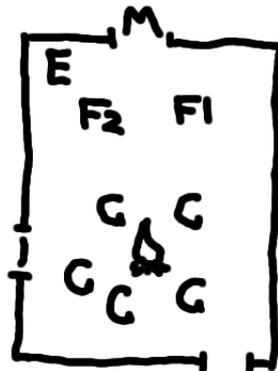
One side always acts entirely before the other. If the party kicked open the door and ran through screaming, then they go first. If the monsters heard them arguing outside the door and ran out to 'greet' them, then the monsters go first. When one side has taken all of its turns, the other side then takes its turns. Within the player character side the players can choose in which order they act to get the best advantage. Similarly, the DM can choose what order monsters act in during their turn.

When a fight starts, the DM works out where the player characters and monsters are in the room. The placement of monsters is entirely up to him, but he should bear in mind what the monsters were doing before the fight. The players have input into where their characters are at the start of the fight, but the DM has final say as to where they are. Generally, the side that is surprised should be at a disadvantage.

If the fight was started by opening a doorway, it makes sense that the attackers should have taken a couple of paces into the room already. This prevents every fight from turning into a fight over the natural bottle-neck. If the attackers prefer to fight that way, they are free to do so, however. Once the positions of the characters and monsters are established, one side takes its turn.

Elwen, feeling a little nervous, is the last through the door when the party surprises a room of goblins. The DM decides that the goblins are in a loose circle around a slow-burning fire.

The standard procedure for the party is for the resident fire mage to throw a fireball in to try to kill the weaker monsters, then have 2 mêlée fighters mop up the resistance. So, with the DM's approval, the fighters are put 2 paces into the room either side of the door, and the mage just outside it. Elwen chooses to have ducked in but hugged the wall so as not to get in the fighters' way.



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When the fight begins, the party will take the first turn. The mage will act first, to use a fireball spell. Elwen can then act next, to shoot at a surviving goblin. Then the fighters can take their turns. If they went before Elwen, they might get in the way of her shot, so they let her fire first.

The Turn

When a creature takes its turn, it gets two actions. It cannot take an action, wait for another creature to take its turn, then resume where it left off. An action can be any of the following:

- Move
- Attack
- Use magic
- Use a potion
- Do something else

A creature can also do the following during its turn, but they do not use up an action:

- Talk
- Drop something
- Face a different direction

Both actions in a turn can usually be the same type of action.

Move

When a character moves in combat, she can move a number of paces equal to her Movement score. She cannot move through other creatures or over obstacles. If using a square grid, diagonal movement only counts as a single pace. You can only spend 1 action a turn moving unless you have the 'Fit' ability.

If there is an obstacle that can be climbed on or over, climbing up or climbing down counts as a single entire movement action. The Nimbleness ability 'Tumble Really Well' lets a character ignore most obstacles that don't fill the entire square, and flying monsters are naturally not impeded by obstacles that are only at floor level.

Climbing in a way that requires the use of hands needs at least one hand free to do so. If the climbing speed is an issue, the vertical distance is half the Movement score of the creature. Similarly, movement while swimming is at half speed.

As the first action of her turn, Elwen needs to move to get a good shot at a goblin. She moves back in front of the doorway to protect the mage. She can always move out of the way on the next turn if the mage wants to cast another spell.

Attack

When a character attacks another, the dice are rolled for her weapon. There is no 'to-hit' roll; most attacks inflict damage. The attacker totals up the dice, then subtracts the armour of the target. If the target has different armour values for front and back, then pick the side that is most appropriate. This adjusted total is then divided by 5, rounding down, to find out how many Wounds are inflicted. In any case, the number of Wounds inflicted is never more than 5. If the target has any Toughness, the wounds are reduced further.

$$((\text{Attack roll} - \text{armour}) / 5) - \text{Toughness}$$

Most creatures do not have Toughness, making the equation simpler. Naturally, if the total is negative the target does not recover lost wounds. That would be silly.

Ranged weapons usually cannot be used against adjacent targets. Any ranged attack, including spells that attack at range, require 'line of sight' to the target. Line of sight requires that there be nothing between the attacker and the target, including allies. It is up to the DM to decide what blocks line of sight and what does not, as seems appropriate.

Elwen fires her bow at a goblin that is facing her. She rolls 2d6 for the damage and gets 9. The goblin's armour reduces her roll by 5, leaving her with 4. This is not enough to hurt the goblin.

The second time she fires at it, it has its back to her. She rolls 2d6 and gets 5. The goblin has no rear armour, so the damage converts to 1 Wound. This is enough to kill the goblin.

One of her companions is fighting a heavily-armoured orc chief. His damage roll is 4d8, and the roll he gets is 21. The orc's armour is 10, which reduces the total to 11. This would be enough to inflict 2 Wounds, but the orc also has 1 point of Toughness, so it only suffers 1 Wound.

Armour vs Toughness

Armour is nearly always in multiples of 5, and they both subtract from the attack roll in a similar way, so why have both?

Well, the most important reason is that Toughness works against all forms of damage, not just attacks. Armour can also (sometimes) not be in multiples of 5. Lastly, some abilities negate armour and others negate Toughness, so some characters will be better at overcoming one than the other.

Magic

Using magic is a two-step process. First the mage has to raise power of an appropriate kind, then he has to funnel it into a spell. In game terms, this takes a number of combat actions, usually over more than 1 turn. All magic requires that the caster has at least 1 hand free to work it. Spoken phrases are not required, but the summoning of magical forces is always a noisy thing.

Spells require a certain type of power, and a minimum amount of it. So, to cast a spell that requires a minimum power of 2 generally takes at least three actions- two to raise the power by 1 step, and the third to cast the spell. Because of this, magic is slow in combat. It

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makes up for it by being potentially very powerful. Firstly, magical damage ignores armour. Secondly, it rolls big dice, and often adds a fixed value onto them. The variable effects of spells typically hinge on the amount of power used to cast them. Magic is also flexible- the mage does not have to decide what spell she is casting right from the start of raising power. It could be used for any spell that needs power of that type.

There is no hard upper limit on the amount of power that can be used to cast a spell. However, mages can never raise more power than they have Puissance abilities in that form of magic. This is, naturally, the only limit on the power of spells cast without a time constraint.

Elwen is involved in a fight with some orcs. One of the orcs is particularly dangerous, and is proving hard for her comrades to kill. She decides to use magic.

On her first action, she fires her bow as she has an arrow nocked. On her second action, she raises 1 level of Air magic. Because of her Whimsical Air ability, she could move while doing this, but she chooses not to.

The rest of her comrades take their turns, then the monsters counter-attack. The dangerous orc notices her using magic, but she has a wall of comrades in the way to protect her.

On the next turn, her comrades move out of her way. She spends her first action raising another level of Air magic. This takes her up to the maximum she can create. She also moves while creating it to put herself next to her target.

On her second action she casts the spell. This uses up all the power she had ready. She casts 'Sparking Fist' against the orc. The damage from the spell is $2d6 + 5$. She rolls a total of 13. The orc's armour is useless against the magical damage, and it takes 2 Wounds, which turns out to be enough to kill it.

Some spells have effect that endure as long as the mage concentrates on them. A mage can only maintain such a spell if she does nothing other than concentrate on it. This means the mage cannot move around, attack or cast another spell while maintaining concentration. Spells with a duration listed in turns do not count the turn in which they were cast towards that time.

Spells can sometimes affect more than one target. In particular, spells that cause damage can hurt creatures within a circle, or in a line away from the caster. All creatures within the area of effect of a spell are affected by it, whether the caster wants them to be or not. When a spell causes damage over an area, the dice are rolled separately for each creature caught in them.

One special kind of spell is countermagic- this spell has a duration of concentration and can prevent a certain type of magic from functioning within its area. For a spell to succeed if it is of a type that could be countered, the spell must have more than twice the power of the counterspell. Spells that are countered are consumed harmlessly. If a spell with a duration enters the area of effect, it will be countered under the same terms as if it had just been cast.

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An enemy magician wants to counter Elwen's spell-casting. He raises one level of Fire magic, then casts 'Counter Air'.

He has to maintain concentration to keep the spell active, so at least he can't cast any spells himself. The most power Elwen can use to cast a spell is 2, which is not enough to overcome the counterspell. She is free to use magic against targets outside the counterspell's area. If she had but one more Air Puissance ability, she would be able to cast spells with 3 power that would completely ignore the counterspell.

Once a mage has started raising power, it must be used. If a mage tries to dismiss power she has already raised without using it in a spell, she suffers Xd6 damage to herself, where X is the amount of power she had already raised. This generally doesn't happen because there is almost always a spell that can be cast to use the power up safely without hurting anyone- even if this ends being an attack against a wall.

Use a Potion

Potions are very powerful things. They come in three basic varieties. A tincture is meant to be drunk, a vapour is meant to be inhaled and a grenade is meant to be thrown at an enemy with great force. There's no difference in game terms between a tincture and a vapour (although it's generally accepted that vapours take effect more quickly but get less doses to the bottle). Grenades, however, are single-use items. The details of various potions, their effects and how they are made is covered in a later section.

Do Something Else

Practically any other action can be performed, as long as it is reasonable to do so within the context of a running battle.

If a character wants to change the weapon she is using for another, drawing a weapon usually takes an action. During the same action she can put an existing weapon away (unless it is massive), or drop it on the floor. Tiny and small weapons can be readied without spending an action, unless the character has to stow a larger weapon in the process. Dropping a larger weapon and drawing a tiny or small weapon does not take an action. Readyng or stowing a massive weapons takes two actions, and the character's entire turn. It is usually advisable save time by dropping it instead.

Bows require 2 actions to fire, the first to draw and the second to fire. Similarly, crossbows require 3 actions (although they can be carried ready to be fired). Thrown weapons may need to be drawn if they are not already in hand ready to throw. Preparing a ranged weapon in this way counts as one of these other actions All ranged weapons (bows, crossbows and thrown weapons) can be carried ready to fire, so when the fight beings they can be used straight away.

Standing up, if a character was sitting or had been knocked over, takes an action.

Sometimes, a character will perform an action that prompts an opposed ability check with a monster. If this contest is something that the monster can resist without spending an action of its own, it can be resolved immediately. If, however, it's something that would take the monster an action to resist, then the action is only resolved during the monsters' turn, assuming the monster spends the necessary action to do so.

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An ogre is crossing a fast-flowing river on a thin branch. On her turn, Elwen decides to kick the branch to try to force the ogre to fall. The DM rules that this is something the monster can resist without spending an action. The opposed check is made as normal, and the ogre can take both of its actions as normal on its turn.

Later, Elwen wants to push a table in front of a door so some orc reinforcements can't join the fight. The DM decides that the monsters already in the room will certainly try to stop this, so he rules that the action will be resolved during their turn.

If one of the monsters moves to try to oppose Elwen during their turn, the opposed check will be made at that point. If Elwen scores a complete success over the orc she will push the table in front of the door. A tied result means the table won't move, which will be as bad as failure.

If, for whatever reason, no orc attempts to stop her (perhaps because they have all turned and fled), then she automatically pushes the table in front of the door.

In this example, the reinforcements might arrive on the same turn as the orc tries to oppose Elwen. The DM decides that it makes sense that none of them will take their turns until the contest over the table is resolved, otherwise Elwen will have been robbed of the opportunity to stop them arriving unfairly.

Other Important Rules

Recovering Wounds

Wounds track how much damage a character can receive without dying. However, a character can only suffer a amount of Wounds less than her Shock Threshold in a single fight. Receiving first aid between fights resets this counter. If she suffers a number of Wounds equal to her Shock Threshold since the last time she received treatment, she falls unconscious. Any further Wounds will kill her. Players can mark off the critical point on the Wound track whenever their characters receive first aid, as a reminder.

A character can receive first aid whenever there is a spare couple of minutes to apply bandages and put in temporary stitches.

Elwen has a Health score of 2. This gives her a total of 10 Wounds, and a Shock Threshold of 2. During the first fight of the expedition, she is caught off-guard by a goblin channeller and suffers 2 Wounds. She collapses unconscious.

After the fight, her comrades bring her round and patch up her injuries with a few bandages and a shot of medicinal alcohol. She recovers no wounds, but her Shock Threshold is reset to 4 Wounds in total, 2 Wounds more than she currently has.

In a big fight, she suffers 1 more Wound. As they have just found the treasure they are searching for, the party decides to high-tail it out of there without stopping for first aid. Her Shock Threshold stays at 4.

Once out of the dungeon, the party rest up before heading home. Elwen's Shock Threshold now moves to 5. Again, this is 2 more than her current Wounds.

When a character returns from a dungeon crawl, she will have accumulated Wounds that take time to heal. If she receives competent, regular medical treatment for a week (by paying for a stay in an infirmary or by having a friend treat her) she loses a number of Wounds equal to 1/3 of her maximum Wounds score. If this treatment uses magical healing, she recovers 2/3 of her maximum Wounds score. There are some other means of adding another 1/3 to the amount recovered, but no amount of additional healing can make the time to recover less than a week. A patient can be mobile, and perform light duties such as shopping in the market, but cannot do anything more strenuous without losing the benefit of receiving treatment for that day.

Elwen receives a week of medical treatment, paid for by a generous-hearted member of her troupe. She recovers 10/3 Wounds, that rounds to 3. Happily, that was all the Wounds she took on the expedition so she is fully healed after only a week's rest.

If she had suffered 5 Wounds on the mission, then it would have taken 2 weeks of normal treatment to recover, but only 1 week of magically-fortified treatment.

If she had had to leave on the next expedition without being fully healed, she would have still had any remaining unhealed Wounds.

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Light

Many dungeons will be dark. Few monsters can see in total darkness- most have the same level of night vision as humans. Because messing about with how far characters can see and measuring how long torches last is boring, it is assumed that there is always a torch or two being carried by the party. Any free hand can be used, or a fire arrow can act as a torch (fire arrows deal damage normally- they are not hot enough to damage creatures with their flame). Torches are usually dropped at the beginning of combat to free up hands for fighting. Torches continue to burn and light up the room when on the floor, so there is no disadvantage in doing so.

How Not To Be Seen

Because of the way turns work in combat, being able to sneak up on the monsters is very important. Assuming that the dungeon crawlers are not fools, they will be as quiet as possible and peer around corners to make sure no-one is watching them. There are, however, certain things that most monsters will hear and react to, including:

- Combat
- Any use of magic
- Long, protracted discussions over what to do next
- Any use of electronic devices at the gaming table

Hiding is a slightly different matter. In the close confines of a dungeon, there is no realistic way of moving without being seen. Hiding from passing monsters is possible under similar restrictions to moving quietly.

Miscellaneous Dangers

There are hazards apart from monsters that come into play. Some of them may be avoided by the use of abilities, or by cunning use of equipment. If a character falls prey to a hazard, there are several ways of applying the effects.

Most of the time, the DM will simply make a damage roll. Fires, falls and so forth merit a damage roll. It's up to the DM to decide exactly what dice are rolled, but in general roll d12 for each couple of storeys fallen and a number of d6s depending on the intensity of the fire. Sometimes the damage gets worse the longer the character is exposed to it.

If the danger is in the form of an attack, the roll is much the same, but the DM chooses how strong the attack is and the target's armour works as normal to prevent damage from it.

Other hazards, such as diseases, do not do damage. Many of them have only minor effects, but if the DM wants to penalise a character for contracting the disease, he can do so by applying a penalty to all scores similar to Starvation. Minor diseases usually clear up after a week of rest. More troublesome diseases may require someone with the Medicine ability and a successful ability roll. The worst kinds require a particular, difficult to obtain, cure. Poisons operate in a similar fashion, but leave the body more quickly and usually only affect 1 or 2 ability categories.

Magical Research

Magic-using characters may wish to research new spells for their power. This should be done in deep collaboration with the DM. The rule of thumb is that a spell should not duplicate the effect of a spell from another form of magic, or be strictly better than any existing spell. Researching a spell requires weeks, perhaps months of study, access to books on magical theory and specialised materials to test the flow of magic. The latter usually cost 1000 Crescents per minimum power of the intended spell, and are used up in the process.

Once a character has created a new spell, it can be taught to other magic-users, although a canny magician will charge a lot for the privilege.

Crawler Around Town

Although the meat of this game takes place in dungeon, sometimes characters may get into scrapes in town. Some towns remain relatively peaceful, others are a cesspool of violence and betrayal. Although there is no formal governance, many of the nicer places to live still have an almost effective police force.

Dungeon crawlers may find that disreputable characters make trouble for them when they're trying to rest. Simply giving the perpetrator a richly deserved beating can work sometimes, but if he is well-connected there may be trouble in the form of groups of thugs looking to make a point or town guards looking to press charges.

Despite the general breakdown of law and order, characters still can't do as they please, or rock the boat too much, without making more trouble for themselves than they want.

The DM should only introduce escapades in town if the players are happy to have them; if they prefer to spend all their time playing the game on expeditions, the DM should oblige.

Experience

This game is all about making money. Therefore, character advancement is through earnings. At the end of each adventure, characters work out how much money they earned, and what their expenses were. Expenses include food, medical treatment and the cost of any potions used (if the potion used was owned by the character). For company employees, who have most of their expenses taken care of, this profit is based on the disposable income they get paid.

If the character made a profit, add the profit to their current experience total. New characters have an experience total of 0. If the character made a loss, leave the experience unchanged- they've got it bad enough already.

If the experience total is now over 500, the character can obtain a new Ability. Most new abilities come about through experience and easily obtained training, but learning a new spell also requires finding a teacher, which may cost money. The experience total is now reduced by 500. No matter how much profit a character makes in one session, only 1 new ability can be learned after each mission.

Once a character has learned 5 new abilities, the requirement to get a new one is increased from 500 to 1000 experience. After another 5, it goes up to 2500, and so on, in the same pattern as price categories. There's a box on the character sheet to record the total number of abilities a character has.

CRAWLING FOR CASH

If conditions are particularly rough for one session, such as if there is a major shortage of food, the DM may let the characters calculate profit based on the normal cost of food, so their advancement is not hamstrung by plot events.

Elwen made 450 Crescents profit on her first expedition. This is not enough for her to gain any abilities.

On her second expedition, the group strike it lucky, and her share is 800 Crescents. Her experience total is now 1250 Crescents, but she can only gain 1 ability before the next mission, whenever it may be.

Once she has acquired a new ability, her experience total is 750.

Retirement

The most obvious form of character retirement is death. Less obvious is when a character makes sufficient enemies that it's almost impossible for the character to feature in any sessions without being slaughtered by NPCs or other party members.

Some characters may survive long enough that they are rich enough to retire, or strong enough to hire themselves out at rates that guarantee a comfortable life. By this point, the character is not as much fun to play, and it may be time to retire it. The character may still be in the world, and may even become an employer for other characters, but takes no further active role. In particular, once a character is retired in this way her former player no longer has any say in her actions or how she behaves.

Characters can also be retired temporarily- if a character is caught stealing from the company, she may be retired until the rest of the player characters decide to leave the company and form their own, at which point they can invite her to join their company. If this happens, though, it is assumed that the retired character is off on her own adventures, and cannot be contacted by the rest of the characters. Under no circumstances should a player be allowed to 'double-dip' with characters in order to use abilities on two characters at once- there can only ever be a single active character for each player.

There's another way that particularly experienced characters can 'retire'. Sometimes, a veteran dungeon crawler will get the fool idea into her head that it's possible to conquer land back from what remains of the Horde. She gathers a group of like-minded idealists, calls it an army, and marches into Horde territory never to be seen again.

CRAWLING FOR CASH

Book II

Abilities and Potions

Abilities

Abilities are listed by category. Where the prerequisite for an ability comes from another category, that category is included in brackets. The abilities are not quite in alphabetical order; particularly useful or frequently selected abilities are listed first and abilities that form a progression are listed one after another.

Strength

Strength is a pure measure of muscle. You use strength to hit things, hard. It also comes in handy for other physical pursuits, such as climbing or running.

Strength determines how much damage you do with a physical weapon. The number of dice you roll is equal to your Strength score, less the size of the weapon you're using. For other strength-related tasks, you don't take the penalty for the weapon you're using.

Wield Tiny Weapon

Everyone has to start somewhere. Lets you use 0/d4 weapons.

Wield Small Weapon

Maybe it's just the cold weather. Lets you use 1/d6 weapons.

Needs: Wield Tiny Weapon.

Wield Medium Weapon

Lets you use 2/d8 weapons.

Needs: Wield Small Weapon.

Wield Large Weapon

Lets you use 3/d10 weapons.

Needs: Wield Medium Weapon.

Wield Massive Weapon

Lets you use 4/d12 weapons.

Needs: Wield Large Weapon.

Incredible Blows

While you are wielding a Massive Weapon, each die that is lost due to the Rule of 5 is converted into a flat 5-point bonus to your damage roll.

Needs: Wield Massive Weapon, Strength 9.

Wield Two Weapons

Lets you wield two weapons at a time. The allowable combinations are: 2/d4/d4, 3/d6/d4, 4/d6/d6.

Needs: Wield Small Weapon, Strength 3.

Wield Two Weapons Really Well

Lets you wield two bigger weapons at a time. The allowable combinations are: 4/d8/d4, 5/d8/d6, 6/d8/d8.

Needs: Wield Medium Weapon, Wield Two Weapons, Strength 5.

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Axemaster

When you attack with an axe, you can by-pass 1 point of Toughness.

Needs: Wield Small Weapon.

Bludgeonmaster

When you attack with a bludgeon, you can by-pass 5 points of armour.

Needs: Wield Small Weapon.

Break Things Really Well

There are few joys purer than smashing a wooden chest to pieces because you failed at picking the lock. Any time you need to break a physical object, with or without your weapon, this ability is useful.

Climb Really Well

You are a confident climber with or without the aid of rope.

Lift Things Really Well

You can lift heavy objects particularly well. This comes in handy for moving obstacles out of the way or pushing heavy objects around.

Parry

When you would normally make an attack, you can choose to not roll dice and instead enjoy 5 extra points of armour against that target until your next turn. You can only do this once per target per turn. You can still attack that target with your other action that turn, before or after using Parry.

Run Really Well

If you do nothing but run with both your actions in a turn, the total distance you move is half as far again as normal. You also have an advantage when chasing someone or being chased.

Needs: Fit (Nimbleness).

Spearmaster

If an enemy creature spends its turn moving up to you and attacking, before it makes its attack you can roll an attack against it. You can only use this ability once per enemy turn, so if more than one monster rolls up to you to attack, you can only counter attack the first one. This ability doesn't work if a monster starts next to you, unless it is trying to use the 'Charge' monster ability.

Needs: Wield Large Weapon.

Swim Really Well

You can swim confidently through water, moving half as far again as you use both actions to swim, and have a considerable advantage when evading pursuit or chasing someone down in the water.

Needs: Fit (Nimbleness).

Swordmaster

When you attack with a blade, you can force your target to either move 1 pace (while still remaining adjacent to you) or take 1 wound, ignoring armour and Toughness.

Needs: Wield Small Weapon.

Wrestle Really Well

You are skilled at wrestling. You can also use this ability to attempt to restrain or disarm someone.

Health

Health is a measure of vitality, and ability to take physical punishment. The most important use of Health is that the number of Wounds you have depends on your Health score.

Grappling with Grappling Rules

It's often the case that the grappling rules in a RPG are frustratingly complicated, clearly broken, or both. Hence, no grappling rules included in this product for your convenience.

Make up your own if you really want to.

Living Being

This is the ability that confirms that you are, in fact alive. All creatures that are alive possess it. If you want to get technical, this is the ability that gives you a supply of wounds with which to take damage.

Wear Light Armour

Lets you wear light armour: 0/5 and 1/5f.

Wear Medium Armour

Lets you wear moderately heavy armour: 1/10 and 2/10f.

Needs: Wear Light Armour, Health 3.

Wear Heavy Armour

Lets you wear the heaviest types of armour: 2/15 and 3/15f.

Needs: Wear Medium Armour, Health 5.

Use Shield

Lets you use a shield effectively: 0/+5.

Difficult To Kill

Your Shock Threshold is increased by 1 point, on top of the extra point you get for having this extra Health ability.

Needs: Living Being.

Really Difficult To Kill

Your Shock Threshold is increased by another extra point.

Needs: Difficult To Kill, Health 4.

Heal Quickly

You recover an extra 1/3 of your wounds during a week's rest with treatment.

Needs: Living Being.

Resist Cold Really Well

You can endure cold climates without suffering. This does not allow you any reduction in damage received from cold-based attacks, magical or otherwise, but it allows you to operate in extremely cold conditions. If you are in a particularly cold environment without adequate protective gear, you might otherwise suffer a penalty to your scores at the DM's discretion.

Resist Heat Really Well

As Resist Cold Really Well, but for unusually hot environments.

Resist Minor Diseases Really Well

Minor diseases and viruses, such as common colds and some of the milder monster-borne diseases, have no effect on you. You either endure the symptoms without suffering any penalty or the disease is unable to infect you in the first place. You also get a Health check to avoid the effects of more serious diseases, which would otherwise take hold automatically.

Resist Significant Diseases Really Well

You are immune to all but the rarest and most deadly of diseases.

Needs: Resist Minor Diseases Really Well, Health 6.

Resist Starvation Really Well

Your first point of Starvation has no effect on you.

Needs: Health 3.

Nimbleness

Nimbleness is a measure of quickness of thought and step. Your Nimbleness score determines how far you can move with a single move action. Nimbleness abilities also offer a variety of ways improving your mobility and potential to damage creatures.

Mobile

You can move. Good for you.

Fit

You can spend both of your actions in a turn moving- without this ability you can only move once a turn.

Needs: Mobile.

Avoid Magic

Magic that affects an area rather than a target only does half as many Wounds to you as normal, rounding up.

Needs: Mobile.

Avoid Magic Really Well

You never take more than 1 Wound from an area of effect spell.

Needs: Avoid Magic, Nimbleness 6.

Backstab

If you strike an enemy without armour (including when you attack from the back if they are only wearing armour that protects the front), you roll additional dice depending on the weapon you use: 0/d4 weapons add 3 dice, 1/d6 weapons add 2 dice, 2/d8 weapons add 1 die, larger weapons receive no benefit. Monsters with Toughness are immune to this ability.

Needs: Nimbleness 5.

Balance Really Well

You seldom lose your balance. You can traverse narrow ledges without difficulty, and most spell effects or abilities that would knock someone over fail to do so to you.

Bowmaster

When using a bow, you can draw the bow and fire in the same action, but with an extra 1 point Strength penalty on your attack rolls.

Needs: Wield Small Weapon (Strength), Nimbleness 5.

Coup de Grâce

If you pass a Nimbleness check, you can surprise an unaware enemy and slit his throat for the maximum 5 wounds, ignoring armour. Certain foes may survive the experience.

Dodge

If you made no attack and took no magic-using action this turn, you enjoy an extra 5 points of armour this turn against any attacker.

Needs: Mobile.

Dodge Traps Really Well

You can avoid the effects of most traps if they happen to be sprung. This doesn't help you if the trap is in some way unavoidable.

Needs: Mobile.

Forge Really Well

You can create fake documents that will convince all but the closest examination. This does not extend to forging paper currency, which is beyond even your skills, but you can forge other types of official document as long as you have an example to work from or previous experience with the type of document in question.

Hide Really Well

You are exceptionally skilled at staying still and selecting effective hiding places.

Jump Really Well

You can jump over difficult distances particularly well.

Needs: Mobile.

Pick Locks Really Well

You have the necessary skill to open door latches and simple warded locks without difficulty. More complicated locks are not guaranteed to yield to you, but such locks are beyond people without specialist knowledge.

Pick the Spot

If you attack a monster with a naturally tough hide, and you have the appropriate Lore ability for the monster, you can reduce its Toughness by 1. This ability is effective for all kinds of weapons, and for spells.

Pick the Spot Really Well

As Pick the Spot, except that the Toughness reduction is 2.

Needs: Pick the Spot, Nimbleness 4.

Tumble Really Well

Obstacles that don't fill the entire space they occupy don't stop your movement through them. This means you can vault over tables and similar items of furniture as if they weren't in the way.

Needs: Mobile.

Lore

Lore measures knowledge you have accumulated. Most Lore abilities are useful for identifying monsters.

Being able to identify monsters means not only being able to recognise different types on sight, and thus their strengths and weaknesses, but also being able to pick out particular dangers such as leaders or spell-casters. You can also identify monsters of the type by the tracks they leave, and know if any part of them is valuable to the right buyer.

Literacy and Numeracy

You can read and write common languages to an acceptable standard. You can also perform simple arithmetic without difficulty, so you don't get ripped off by merchants.

Medicine

You can treat wounded individuals, allowing them to recover from their injuries. You can also treat common diseases.

Appraise Gem-Stones

Precious stones are often used as a form of erst-while currency, and this ability lets you tell the true worth of a stone.

Art History

Many of the treasures recovered from dungeons are pieces of art, and this ability lets you tell the genuine article from a fake and assess the condition and value of a piece.

Brew Potions

You can brew potions from raw ingredients. This requires another Lore ability appropriate for the raw materials used in the potion.

Demon Lore

You have a working knowledge of creatures corrupted beyond recognition by evil powers.

Dragon Lore

You have a working knowledge of the most feared of all monsters.

Forest Lore

You have a working knowledge of both the monsters of forests and how to survive in them.

Golem Lore

You have a working knowledge of monsters fashioned from inanimate objects.

History

Although the empires of the past have long gone, details of roads and population centres are still handy when travelling. The history of a nation can also be useful inside a dungeon that was once part of it.

CRAWLING FOR CASH

Mountain Lore

You have a working knowledge of both the monsters of mountains and how to survive in them.

Ocean Lore

You have a working knowledge of both the monsters of the sea and how to survive on the coast.

Orc Lore

You have a working knowledge of green-skinned monsters, including goblins and ogres.

Plains Lore

You have a working knowledge of both the monsters of the plains and how to survive on them.

Spirit Lore

You have a working knowledge of the dead who have not passed from this plane of existence.

Spot Traps Really Well

You are particularly adept at spotting traps. You can always find poorly-hidden traps and stand a chance of spotting cleverly concealed ones.

Troll Lore

You have a working knowledge of trolls and other, related, regenerating monsters.

Undead Lore

You have a working knowledge of monsters created from the dead.

Weather Lore

You can recognise bad weather on the way, and know how to survive extreme weather conditions.

Puissance

Puissance is a measure of how much magical power you can control. Unlike other categories, you have no overall Puissance score, but you do have a score for each elemental form of magic. You can only generate magical power up to the limit in that element. Many Puissance abilities create side-effects when you raise power. These side-effects are not optional, and represent the inconveniences of being closely aligned with an element. There are other forms of magic in the world, but elemental magic is the only one widely used by humans.

Basic Air

The starting point for Air magic.

Gusting Air

Anyone next to you when you raise air power is blown one step away from you.

Needs: Basic Air.

Whimsical Air

You can move during an action when you raise air power.

Needs: Basic Air.

Whirling Air

You cannot be harmed by ranged or thrown weapons while you have air power readied.

Needs: Basic Air.

Mastered Air

The mark of a true expert in Air magic.

Needs: Air 4.

Basic Earth

The starting point for Earth magic.

Protective Earth

You gain Toughness 1 as long as you have earth power readied.

Needs: Basic Earth.

Rooted Earth

If you are stood on solid rock, not on soil or an artificial surface, you can raise 2 levels of earth power if you currently have none.

Needs: Basic Earth, Earth 3.

Shaking Earth

Anyone next to you when you raise earth power must pass a d8 balance check or fall over.

Needs: Basic Earth.

Mastered Earth

The mark of a true expert in Earth magic.

Needs: Earth 4.

Basic Fire

The starting point for Fire magic.

Aggressive Fire

Anyone next to you when you raise fire power receives fire damage. The number of dice is equal to the power in fire you have just raised. The dice rolled are d4s. If you raise fire power twice in one turn, only the first raise causes damage.

Needs: Basic Fire.

Flickering Fire

You are not harmed by mundane fire as long as you have fire power raised, and 1 turn after your fire power is expended.

Needs: Basic Fire.

True Fire

Your magical fire can start ordinary fires. Without this ability, your magical fire sputters out shortly after the spell.

Needs: Basic Fire.

Mastered Fire

The mark of a true expert in Fire magic.

Needs: Fire 4.

Basic Water

The starting point for Water magic.

Dousing Water

Any sources of mundane fire, including lamps, that are next to you when you raise water power are extinguished.

Needs: Basic Water.

Raging Water

You can make an ordinary attack in the same turn you cast a water spell.

Needs: Basic Water.

Surging Water

If you are submerged in water up to at least your knees, you can raise 2 levels of water power if you currently have none.

Needs: Basic Water, Water 3.

Mastered Water

The mark of a true expert in Water magic.

Needs: Water 4.

Finesse

Finesse abilities are specific spells you can cast using the magical power you have raised. Your Finesse score is used when trying to create a new spell, in partnership with the DM.

Spells have a minimum cost in power from an appropriate element. Many spells are more effective if additional power is used when they are cast. X, in spell descriptions, refers to the power used to cast the spell. Spells can have one or more targets for their effects:

- Caster - the spell only affects the caster.
- Single adjacent - the spell affects a single creature 1 pace away from the caster when it is cast.
- Within 5 paces of caster - the spell affects all creatures within 5 paces of the caster, or an area of that size.
- Line of sight - the caster needs a clear line of sight to the target of the spell, without any creatures or obstacles in the way.
- Line outwards from caster - the effects follows a straight line from the caster to another point.

Cantrip

A generic spell that creates a small quantity of the element used in its casting. This can be used to light fires, create a cup of potable water, summon a breath of cooling wind or carve an inscription into a stone. However, you can only cast a number of cantrips a day up to your Finesse score. You can never use more than 1 power on a cantrip.

Target: single adjacent.

Minimum Power: any 1.

Duration: Permanent.

Bow of Lightning

A bow or crossbow held by an ally crackles with electricity, dealing extra Air damage when it fires arrows. This weapon still does normal damage, but does an amount Fire damage in addition to that. The amount of extra damage depends on the power used to cast the spell:

1 - d6

2 - d10

3 - 2d6

Toughness counts against both parts of the damage separately.

Target: single adjacent.

Minimum Power: 1 Air.

Duration: Concentration.

Counter Earth

Counters any Earth spell.

Target: within 5 paces of caster.

Minimum Power: 1 Air.

Duration: Concentration.

Enhance Nimbleness

You increase the Nimbleness score of an ally. The increase is X.

Target: single adjacent.

Minimum Power: 1 Air.

Duration: Concentration.

Sparking Fist

You reach out and touch a target to deliver a massive static shock. It deals Xd6+5 damage.

Target: single adjacent.

Minimum Power: 1 Air.

Duration: Fleeting.

Can't-Rip?

The observant reader may be puzzled by the way most magic can be used repeatedly without any difficulty, yet the use of Cantrip, the most basic spell, is limited. This is purely to keep the game interesting.

Cantrip is a very useful utility spell, and can be put into service in all kinds of situations. However, allowing a character to use it all the time would make many puzzles and otherwise interesting dungeon features simple to solve and boring to encounter. The limit on the uses of Cantrip is to encourage entertaining play rather than reliance on magic for every small problem. Even if a wizard hasn't spent all of her uses of Cantrip, the fact that they are limited is a powerful incentive to solve problems without it if possible, keeping all players engaged.

A series of other spells each with a narrower focus would not be attractive alternatives to spells that would be used far more often.

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Wings of Vapour

The target can leap huge distances, 10 paces if the spell is cast with 1 power, 25 paces if the spell is cast with 2 power, 50 paces if it is cast with 3 power and so on. Note that this does not grant additional speed, so leaping truly huge distances still takes quite some time. If the caster has stopped concentrating by the time the jumping creature lands, then the jumper takes falling damage.

Target: single adjacent.

Minimum Power: 1 Air.

Duration: Concentration.

Lightning Bolt

Funny how everybody's hair stands up afterwards, isn't it? Targets take d8+2X damage.

Target: line outwards from caster.

Minimum Power: 2 Air.

Duration: Fleeting.

Whispering Steps

You greatly enhance the speed of an ally, increasing her Movement by X.

Target: single adjacent.

Minimum Power: 2 Air.

Duration: Concentration.

Lightning Fist

You reach out a hand and a bolt of lightning crosses the gap to a nearby foe, scorching them terribly. It deals Xd10+20 damage.

Target: single adjacent.

Minimum Power: 3 Air.

Duration: Fleeting.

Counter Water

Counters any Water spell.

Target: within 5 paces of caster.

Minimum Power: 1 Earth.

Duration: Concentration.

Enhance Health

You increase the Health score of an ally for any purpose other than taking wounds. The increase is X.

Target: single adjacent.

Minimum Power: 1 Earth.

Duration: Concentration.

Obsidian Cudgel

A bludgeon held by an ally gains the ability to multiply its weight when it strikes, inflicting extra Earth damage in the same way that Bow of Lightning inflicts Air damage.

Target: single adjacent.

Minimum Power: 1 Earth.

Duration: Concentration.

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Passrock

The target can walk through solid objects as if they weren't there. This makes it very difficult to use steps, makes the target immune to physical damage (but unable to damage other creatures even with other forms of damage). If the spell ends while the target is still partially or wholly inside solid objects, the effected parts of the body are destroyed.

Target: single adjacent.

Minimum Power: 1 Earth.

Duration: Concentration.

Scree Slam

A scattering of small, hard rocks shoot out from your outstretched hand and strike a single target. They deal $2d4+X$ damage.

Target: line of sight to single target.

Minimum Power: 1 Earth.

Duration: Fleeting.

Granite Skin

You can make the skin of the target as tough as stone, turning aside all forms of damage. The target gets Toughness X-1.

Target: caster or single adjacent.

Minimum Power: 2 Earth.

Duration: Concentration.

Meteor Strike

A single, massive boulder descends from the sky (or ceiling) and hits a single target. It deals $2d6+2X$ damage.

Target: line of sight to single target.

Minimum Power: 2 Earth.

Duration: Fleeting.

Avalanche

A torrent of rocks pours forth from you, smashing outwards in a line. Anyone caught in its path takes $d10+3X$ damage. The line is $4X$ paces long.

Target: line outwards from caster.

Minimum Power: 3 Earth.

Duration: Fleeting.

Counter Air

Counters any Air spell.

Target: within 5 paces of caster.

Minimum Power: 1 Fire.

Duration: Concentration.

Enhance Strength

You increase the Strength score of an ally for any purpose other than dealing damage. The increase is X.

Target: single adjacent.

Minimum Power: 1 Fire.

Duration: Concentration.

Fireball

Creates a blossom of fire centred at a point you have good line of sight to: generally the front rank of the monsters attacking you. You can't just dump it in the middle of them without creating some space first. It deals damage to everything within its radius, which is equal to 2X in paces. The damage is d8+X, rolled separately for each target hit.

Target: line of sight to centre of blast.

Minimum Power: 1 Fire.

Duration: Fleeting.

Hydrophobia

Target creature gains the ability to walk on water, treating it as a stable (albeit slippery) surface.

Target: caster or single adjacent.

Minimum Power: 1 Fire.

Duration: 2X turns.

Sword of Flame

You cause a sword held by an ally to burst into flames along its blade. The weapon deals added Fire damage in the same way Bow of Lightning deals added Air damage.

Target: single adjacent.

Minimum Power: 1 Fire.

Duration: Concentration.

Fire Shield

You create a barrier of magical fire around the target, making it more difficult to hurt her. This barrier grants her 5X points of armour, front and rear, but does not damage anyone who attempts to strike her.

Target: caster or single adjacent.

Minimum Power: 2 Fire.

Duration: Concentration.

Touch of Flame

You reach out and set someone on fire. The target takes Xd8+10 damage.

Target: single adjacent.

Minimum Power: 2 Fire.

Duration: Fleeting.

Raging Fireball

As fireball, but larger and more damaging. The radius is 3X paces, and the damage is 2d8+3X for each target hit.

Target: line of sight to centre of blast.

Minimum Power: 3 Fire.

Duration: Fleeting.

Counter Fire

Counters any Fire spell.

Target: within 5 paces of caster.

Minimum Power: 1 Water.

Duration: Concentration.

Enhance Lore

You increase the Lore score of an ally. The increase is X.

Target: single adjacent.

Minimum Power: 1 Water.

Duration: Concentration.

Fluid Body

You change the structure of an ally's body, making her able to withstand much more damage than usual. The amount of Wounds the recipient can sustain before falling unconscious is increased by X times 1/3 of her usual allowance. So, a character with Health 5 who has this spell cast on her with 2 power has a wound allowance of 8 instead of 5. Note that if the target uses this extra allowance she may die if the spell expires before she receives first aid.

Target: caster or single adjacent.

Minimum Power: 2 Water.

Duration: Concentration.

Gift of Fishes

Creatures within the area of effect gain the ability to breathe underwater. Although the caster needs to maintain concentration, her allies can tow her through the water while she maintains the spell.

Target: within 5 paces of caster.

Minimum Power: 1 Water.

Duration: Concentration.

Tsunami Axe

You make an axe held by an ally to strike with the force of raging water behind it. The weapon does normal damage and extra Water damage in the same way as Bow of Lightning does extra Air damage.

Target: single adjacent.

Minimum Power: 1 Water.

Duration: Concentration.

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Waters of Healing

Accelerates the healing process and counts as treating an individual, but only when applied repeatedly (as with non-magical treatment). Increases Health recovery by 1/3 of total health.

Target: single adjacent.

Minimum Power: 1 Water.

Duration: Permanent.

Squall

Water explodes outwards from a point, carrying with it shards of sharp coral. The radius of the burst is 2X, and all targets within the effect take d12+2X damage.

Target: line of sight to centre of blast.

Minimum Power: 2 Water.

Duration: Fleeting.

Ice Knife

You summon a spike of pure ice that pierces a single target. The victim takes 2d8+3X damage.

Target: line of sight to single target.

Minimum Power: 3 Water.

Duration: Fleeting.

Potions

Potions are made from rare ingredients. Although they have magical properties, no magic is used in their preparation. The basic unit of measurement for the potion is the 'dose', which equates to about a shot glass of fluid. Multiple doses of the same potion can be kept in one container. Dungeon crawlers often wear a bandoleer to hold potion bottles where they are easy to grab.

All potions require careful processing of the active ingredient. Although they are listed with a price in the tables below, they might not be freely available, at any price, if there is not a skilled apothecary in the vicinity. Player characters can try to make a living making and selling potions, but this involves going and fetching the raw ingredients- running the same risks dungeon crawlers do anyway. If employed by a company, the company generally takes any raw ingredients discovered. Raw ingredients generally change hands for one price category less than the final potion. Successfully extracting the raw ingredient for a potion does not require the Brew Potion ability, but does require the relevant Lore ability.

Brewing a potion involves an hour or two of initial preparation followed by a week of letting the mixture steep, occasionally filtering out impurities or adding new ingredients. When the potion is complete, another hour of work is needed to bottle it and make it ready for consumption. More than one potion can be brewed by a single apothecary at a time, but she can't leave her laboratory for more than a few days without the potions spoiling. All a laboratory needs is a small fire, some glass or ceramic jars, a knife and good lighting conditions. Dungeon crawlers who dabble in potion-brewing generally do so during their down time between expeditions.

The tables list the name of the potion, the price, the ingredients, and the relevant lore ability needed to know how to harvest the raw ingredient. The same lore ability is needed in conjunction with Brew Potions in order to be able to make the potion. Price can also be considered a proxy for rarity.

Artefacts

Legendary weapons and suits of armour may fetch impressive prices, but they are not meaningfully better than ordinary equipment. Some people prefer to carry them instead of money or gems, as their value can be very high. Magically enchanted weapons only keep their sparkle for as long as the mage concentrates. Some arch-wizards did develop a method of permanent enchantment before the Horde arrived, but in that case the effect only lasted for as long as the wizard lived. Since almost all of the most powerful wizards were killed by the Horde, almost all such items are now perfectly ordinary. A still-enchanted piece would be a prize almost beyond price. Who am I kidding? Sell that puppy on for thousands and live like a king.

Tincture or Vapour	Price	Raw Ingredient	Lore Ability	Effect
Bitter Syrup	50	Large jug of sap from certain willow trees	Forest Lore	Regular medical treatment is considered magical treatment for 1 week.
Burning Liquor	50	3 pints of blood from a fanatic	Demon Lore	Your Strength score increases by 2 for your next attack.
Eagle's Glory	100	15 feathers from a giant eagle	Mountain Lore	You gain the ability 'Better Flight' for 2 turns.
Gallop in' Juice	100	3 pounds of centaur muscle tissue	Plains Lore	For an hour, you gain the ability 'Run Really Well' and your movement score is increased by 5 points.
Troll Brew	100	Livers of 2 regenerating trolls	Troll Lore	Recover an extra 1/3 of your Injuries during a week's rest with treatment.
Ectoplasmic Serum	250	Bottled ectoplasm from a poltergeist	Spirit Lore	Spirits cannot interact with you for 1 hour.
Pox & Sulphur	250	Bile from 3 plague-bearers	Undead Lore	Cures Plague Rot.
Vampire Essence	250	Vampire brain	Demon Lore	You become sexually irresistible for 5 minutes.
Dragon's Eye	500	Eye of a dragon	Dragon Lore	You can see perfectly, even in complete darkness, and identify precious metals with perfect accuracy for 1 hour.

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Grenade	Price	Raw Ingredient	Lore Ability	Effect
Corpse Ichor	100	Bone marrow from a mummy	Undead Lore	Inflicts d4 Wounds on a living creature, ignoring Toughness.
Living Fire	100	Ashes of 3 fire elementals	Golem Lore	Inflicts d4 Wounds on any creature not immune to fire.
Angel Blossom	250	An angelflower picked before dawn	Plains Lore	Inflicts 1 Wound on an Undead monster, ignoring Toughness.
Banded Coit Venom	250	Expressed venom from a banded coit	Forest Lore	Inflicts d6 Wounds on a living creature.
Tormenting Lymph	250	Blood from at least 5 different fanatics	Demon Lore	Target must pass a d12 Lore check or attack an ally. Target makes a new check each turn until she passes.
Plague Spore	500	Thyroid glands from 3 plague-bearers	Undead Lore	Victim is infected with Plague Rot.
Widowmaker	500	An intact widowmaker mushroom	Mountain Lore	Inflicts 2d4 Wounds on a living creature, ignoring Toughness.
Holy Water	1000	Tears of an angelic being	None	Inflicts 1 Wound on an Undead monster, ignoring Toughness, and reduces the monster's Health score by 5 for the Undead revival roll.

Book III

Advice for the Dungeon Master

Being the Dungeon Master

The other players have an easy time, killing things and rolling dice. The DM gets to have the other kind of fun; the one where he sweats blood to set the session up, with only the prospect of a Total Party Kill to keep him warm at night.

Superficially, creating a dungeon is a simple matter. All it is is a linked web of encounters, each its own neat parcel, with some reason why they're laid out the way they are. The difficulty comes in making sure the dungeon is 'balanced', that is, it provides a significant challenge to the party without becoming overwhelming. Many games spend a lot of time trying to come up with a foolproof way of rating the difficulty of encounters to enable this. That's not really possible, because a lot depends on the party and the expectation that the dungeon crawlers have someone available to fit each little niche places limitations on the characters the players create. In this game, it's not expected that the characters will clear the entire dungeon out. They will fight their way to the main prize, and maybe have enough pep left in them to score a few other valuables while they're in there. In order to facilitate that approach, the DM needs to make sure they have some idea of where the main prize is, and a realistic chance of refusing any fights with monsters they don't want to tangle with just yet. There are several ways to do the latter- mindless monsters can be avoided, and appropriate Lore abilities will warn characters when they're entering the territory of most other monsters.

The most important part of the DM's duties, however, is making sure the game stays fun. Thinking on your feet is an important part of Dungeon Mastering. It's easy, with all the power the DM has, to make the lives of the players a misery. The trick is in arranging matters so that when it all goes horribly wrong they're convinced it was their fault.

Building the Dungeon

Happily, many other games publish reams of modules with detailed dungeon plans that can be repurposed for this game with a little canny monster substitution. On the other hand, writing one yourself lends a personal touch that makes the players feel like their characters are inhabiting a coherent world rather than a series of levels. The important thing when building a dungeon is not to make it especially difficult to explore or logically sound in its layout but to make it interesting for the players. Try to put at least 3 things in each dungeon that are new and interesting to the players, but no more than 1 in each room. Make it memorable, but not a mixed-up mess.

Practical things to think about when designing a dungeon are given in the following sections.

Location

There are several different kinds of location that a 'dungeon' can be. A particular expedition might incorporate more than one, if a castle was built over a cave complex, say, but it is a good idea to have a clear idea as to how these types of location differ in terms of what it's like to explore one.

Fortification

A fortification was built to keep people out. It was designed to be secure, with a few well-guarded access points. Almost all such places have been over-run by the Horde, and while they make a fine base of operations for monsters they are seldom in good repair. Walls will not have been repaired, and a lack of maintenance may have led to other parts of the building falling down. There may well be a few open areas, overlooked by towers and walls, but most of the dungeon consists of corridors and rooms.

The good news, from the dungeon crawlers' point of view, is that it is easy to spot the keep. The keep generally sits on top of any treasure vault, originally housed the most valuable treasures and will be where the monsters' leader will be found. All of this means that the goal of the expedition will almost always be in the keep, butting down on the area to be searched.

Palace

A palace is a large single structure, like a fortification, but not built with defence in mind. This makes it more likely to sprawl over a large area and be home to extensive gardens, lakes or other picturesque features. Of course, all of them will be in a state of disrepair. Temples and other religious buildings are often of this kind. With no emphasis on defence, there is usually a greater choice of routes from one place to another which makes it easier to avoid enemies. The drawback is that there is generally a wider variety of places where valuables may be found, and a greater chance that they have already been looted.

For some reason, abandoned temples were often seeded with Undead monsters by sorcerers in the Horde.

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Town

A town or village is different in that it is a collection of small, unconnected buildings. It's very easy to get from one place to another, but it is also easy to be spotted doing so. There may be a village hall or other centrepiece, but there is no guarantee that the object of your quest is in there. Monsters frequently inhabit towns and cities, making use of the residences, so they will be found in numbers. Many of them might be young, old or otherwise non-combatants but that's cold comfort when a single call for help can bring down dozens of warriors. Denser towns, or cities, often have maze-like properties with narrow back-alleys that are easy to get lost in.

If you can despatch a room of monsters quickly, however, you can go house by house with little danger of having to fight a huge gathering of monsters all at once.

Cave

Natural caves are a favourite haunt of many kinds of monsters. The geography of caves is very different to anything people would carve out. At some point, explorers may have cut stairs into the rock or connected ledges with bridges, but overall the going will be narrow and difficult. Caves can be some of the most difficult places to fight in, and are just as likely to feature steep slopes and sheer drops and level passages. Many other locations have some caves connected to them somewhere as a ready-made enclosed space is useful.

From the point of view of designing dungeons, adding caves can be handy because they provide justification for adding a different type of monster to the dungeon without being too unbelievable.

Lair

A lair is a network of tunnels, usually dug out by monsters for their own use. Abandoned mines also fall into this category, as they have a similar layout. Lairs are typically divided into levels, with few slopes, and every room will have been cut out for a purpose. They also frequently change hands when one band of monsters drives another away. Lairs are possibly the most compact sort of dungeon, with few rooms empty, but they are created piecemeal and often have odd dead-ends, awkward connections and extra tunnels and doorways put in wherever there is room.

The chief concern is easy access to food and the outside, so while the monsters' leader's accommodation may be near the entrance, it is usually not easy to identify among lots of other doors.

Monsters

In tandem with establishing the layout of the dungeon, you need to populate it with monsters. Usually, one type of monster will dominate the area, but you should strive for a variety of encounters. Don't be afraid to leave rooms empty, particularly on the outskirts of the dungeon, as it creates a sense of scale and tension if rooms are (or appear to be) empty.

Because the dungeon crawlers will generally act first, a small number of monsters in one encounter might even be killed before they get to fight back. This is not a reason to always have larger groups; being able to clear a room without suffering any wounds is a good incentive for the party to stay focussed and pay attention to stealth.

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In general, the valuable item or items the characters are in search of should be guarded by a strong group of monsters. This is not to say that the monsters have to be defeated in order to claim the prize, just that the stakes should be a little bit higher.

Big Threat

A cunning aspect to any dungeon is that of the 'Big Threat', a monster or group of monsters powerful enough to kill off the party if they mess things up in a major way. It should not be a hair-trigger kill-switch, primed to wipe them out if they put a foot wrong, but it should be a reason for them to show more caution than recklessness. In general, the big threat should be sufficient to chase the characters out of the dungeon, and make a repeat attempt on the following day unlikely. If they get chased out after having recovered the main purpose of the expedition, the result is a nicely cinematic climax. If getting chased out means the expedition ends in failure, that's a harsh enough penalty for their lack of caution.

Hazards

There can be things in the dungeon other than monsters that pose a threat to the characters. Natural hazards such as large drops, water courses and flows of lava are all appropriate, although possibly not all together. The important thing is that any hazard like that should not be both an absolute barrier to progress and fatal if mis-handled. A deadly hazard is acceptable if there is another way round it, or if it is not a threat by itself. For example, a near-bottomless chasm with a stone bridge across it a good example. The dungeon crawlers may be a little hesitant to trust the bridge with their weight at first, but if the alternative route involves fighting through some monsters the bridge may be the better option. Even if the bridge is completely safe, the depths may harbour flying monsters to harry them. If there's a fight with non-flying monsters, then the crawlers may use spells or abilities to force the monsters off the bridge. killing them swiftly with little risk.

The upshot is that hazards need not be dangerous- they just have to be interesting.

Water

Underground lakes and rivers and flooded chambers occur quite often in dungeons. Swimming is slower than walking over dry land, but a greater hazard is drowning. Characters with 'Swim Really Well' can cope with most watery conditions without any problems. Even falling in the water in armour is not a great problem. Characters without that ability, however, can only dog-paddle in still waters competently. If they fall into moving water, or in any water while wearing armour, then they have to pass an Effective Nimbleness check to keep their head above water. If they fail, they are at the mercy of the current and will probably require rescuing. For particularly vicious conditions, such as rapids and whirlpools, even characters with 'Swim Really Well' will have to pass a check to retain some control over where they go. Characters without that ability are simply whisked wherever the water takes them.

There are no specific rules for drowning, as it takes a minute or two for someone to succumb to it even when fully immersed. In general, there will either be someone on hand to get them out of the water, or they are at the DM's mercy. As a general rule, though, it is much more interesting to leave a character washed up somewhere separated from the rest of the party than it is to kill them outright.

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Traps

Traps, in a way, are the opposite of hazards. They are designed with intent to hurt the dungeon crawlers, but there is little in the way of interaction with the party apart from rolling dice. There are three steps to coming up with a trap:

- **How hard is it to spot?** - The Find Traps Really Well ability should guarantee most traps are found. Otherwise, a Lore ability check is necessary, usually by the first character to encounter it. Particularly well-hidden traps require both the ability and the Lore check to find. In many cases, once the trigger is spotted, it can be avoided with no further hassle. If the trigger is impossible to by-pass, then the characters are free to find an alternative route or pick one of their number to trip it on purpose.
- **How hard is it to avoid?** - Even if the trap is well-hidden, it is obvious when a trap is triggered. The Avoid Traps Really Well ability is sufficient to guarantee success at avoiding most traps, or a Nimbleness ability check. Traps that cover a large area or are otherwise difficult to avoid might require both.
- **What does it do?** - This category was touched on earlier- the effect is often an attack or damage roll of some kind. That does not mean that all traps do so, and in fact traps that create additional complications (such as splitting the party) are more interesting and thus better. Where traps have a non-damaging effect, success at avoiding the trap implies that the character has the instincts to do what, in hindsight, would be the right way to deal with it. For example, if the trap drops a portcullis across a passage, a successful roll to avoid it would mean that the character who tripped it was smart enough to jump backwards, not forwards, and all is well.

Getting rid of traps requires more of a judgement call. Sometimes traps only trigger once and then need to be reset. In those cases, no further action is required. If a trap makes a permanent change to the dungeon area, some other ability might come into play to get rid of it. With the portcullis example, a Strength check or Lift Things Really Well will open it up. Rendering a trap safe before it is sprung as another matter. The mechanism is often hidden well away from where it can be sabotaged, and safely disarming a trap probably causes the party to stay in one place longer than they are comfortable with.

Traps should not be over-used. They should be used to season the dungeon, to break up what is potentially a long sequence of fights with something a little bit different, but which can still hurt them.

Rewards

Treasure is important. Not only is it the in-character goal, but it is also the out-of-character award that lets characters improve. As a rule of thumb, the party should emerge from a successful dungeon crawl with twice as much money as it would take to buy food for the expedition. This allows an amount of 'downtime' equal to the time they spend on the job. Of course, this means you have to stock the dungeon with more than that, as they will not clear it out, and having the prospect of extra money if they do really well is an excellent motivator.

You should not be limited in the forms the money takes. Notes and gems are always welcome, but larger objects might fetch a better price if they are in good condition. If there

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is more than can be carried home reasonably, this creates the possibility of a repeat visit to get the rest, meaning less work for the DM in preparation. If the party is wise enough to return with special tools for one particular hazard they found last time, they should get a pat on the back for being smart.

Treasure does not have to be tied to groups of monsters. A barracks seldom contains art treasures. If the party can get to where the valuables are kept without having to fight most of the monsters, good for them. They are being efficient. Don't put the treasure on the other side of a dangerous encounter out of some muddle-headed idea that they have to earn it. This is not just to break with tradition in dungeon-crawling games, it also offers a way for the expedition to go on to succeed even after a few very bad fights.

If the dungeon-crawlers are employed by a company, they don't get to keep what they find. It's worth tracking how much they recover, though, as this affects whether or not the company likes their work and how ripped off the dungeon-crawlers feel by their desultory wages.

Big Score

If the main rewards exist to be relatively straight-forward to gather, even if getting all of them is unlikely, a big score is a large reward which you doubt the group will be able to walk off with. Often it's even bigger than the prize they were looking for in the first place. The catch is that it's almost impossible to take advantage of. There may be a very powerful guardian protecting it, or some other extremely dangerous hazard involved in getting it. Maybe it's very valuable, but difficult to find a buyer for. Maybe there will be plenty of other groups ready and willing to kill the current owners to get their hands on it. The Big Score serves 2 purposes- firstly it exists as a temptation to recklessness. Secondly it offers the small hope of a big pay-off, encouraging hair-brained schemes and creative use of resources.

Making Things Different

It's not difficult to make an encounter just different enough to be interesting. There's a tendency, particularly when using a square grid, to just draw things on it and call it job done, or use what pieces of scenery you have to hand. That's thinking too small. The dungeon is a three-dimensional space, and finding ways of exploiting all 3 dimensions can make a big difference to how the encounter plays out. Don't just think of what might be in the room, think of what might be in the room which one side or the other can use to its advantage during a fight. Look, you're glazing over. I'll give you an example.

The boring map you're working from has a fairly big room labelled 'banqueting hall'. There are 3 doors leading into it. One of them takes the party further into the dungeon. The party may end up entering through either of the others. The uninspired module designer has drawn a couple of tables in the middle of the room, and some pillars close to the walls. Let's bring this to life.

First off, this room is far too tidy. Add a heap of refuse in one corner, left by the lazy monsters. You can hide treasure of some sort in it if you want. Next, smash up one of the tables. They're old and the monsters are rough with them. Now, there are 2 ways into the room so let's make 1 of them a better choice than the other. The door the party will come across first opens onto a set of stairs running down the wall. This could be a tactical disadvantage, as it creates a bottle-neck for the mêlée fighter to get down. It might be an advantage if a ranged fighter or a spell-caster can stand at the top with line of sight to most of the room. The second door comes in from the kitchens and is closer to where the monsters are sitting. Right away, there's an interesting tactical choice for the dungeon-crawlers, assuming they have the sense to peep into the room before entering it. It's still not much of a banqueting hall, so let's give it a high ceiling and a minstrels' gallery around the walls. The stairs up to the gallery have rotted away, but there might be an extra room leading off it to explore. Let's make one of the pillars broken at the base, and have it so that it's leaning against a wall next to the balcony. Now, an enterprising character can run up the pillar to get a commanding view of the room. Hey, why not put a couple of monsters with ranged weapons up there already. If anyone stands on the table, they'll also have a good view. The pillars can serve as cover from the various ranged attacks, offering some protection from the monsters on the balcony or any monster spell-caster that climbs on the table.

See, isn't that so much better?

Running the Game

Describing the Scene

One of the most basic tasks facing the DM is describing the dungeon as it is explored. There's a temptation to fall back on flowery, thesaurus-fuelled descriptions to try to make the environment spring to life, but such attempts always backfire because the important information about the room is hidden amongst detail. It's difficult for the players to pick out what they want to know from what the writer of the description wants them to know. If you want to inject a little extra description into the game, it's best to do so in short bursts, in response to a player query or action.

"Are there any carvings on the wall like the other temple?"

"No, but you do notice some glyphs drawn on the supporting columns that seem familiar."

"I lift a few of the broken floorboards to see if there's anything hidden underneath them."

"The ancient wood splinters as you lift it, throwing up choking dust and mould spores. Underneath the boards, though, is nothing but the dust of centuries."

When it comes to describing the room for the first time, concentrate on what is most important about it. Its size and shape, any exits, what's in it and any distinguishing characteristics it has. These things are what the players will remember about it if they need to refer to it later.

Sometimes a player will be so keen to act that he doesn't wait for you to finish your description of the room before saying what he wants his character to do. Let the action go ahead, with whatever rolls are necessary, then finish the description- including the details that make the action very foolish indeed. Describing what your character is doing before the DM finished describing the situation is exactly like running into a room without looking at it properly. If the player complains "I wouldn't run straight into a room if the floor was covered with scorpions!", the correct response is: "Well, clearly you just did. You rolled to jump over the table and everything. As soon as you heard there was a treasure chest in there you abandoned all caution. Now, make 17 d10 Health checks and let's see how much Strength you've lost."

Note- you may need to improvise an appropriate hazard if the room did not contain one in your dungeon plan.

Keeping Things Moving

It's easy to let play get bogged down in details. If it ever looks like the players are spending all their time poring over exactly which combination of abilities will work best, gently prod them into moving on. Exploring a dungeon should be tense and exciting and anything that detracts from that, even for the most well-meaning of reasons, should be discouraged. On the other hand, discussion as to what to do next (weighing up the choice between cutting

their losses or pressing on, for example) is part of that tension. As long as it doesn't get repetitious it's perfectly acceptable.

Keeping Players Entertained

Many role-playing sessions fall flat because one or more of the people at the table are just going through the motions. They roll dice when they have to, pick an action for their character, but their heart isn't in it. This generally happens when the dungeon is not proving exciting enough. There are several ways to perk the game up- take a short break from the game for snacks or general conversation, minimise the boring parts by making the weaker monsters die after fewer Wounds or come up with some way to inject something different into the expedition. Encountering another group of dungeon-crawlers is a good stand-by as it immediately forces the players to revise their goals and plans.

An essential tool in keeping the game interesting is to recognise that players want to be able to use their character's abilities. If you can find ways of seeding a dungeon with opportunities to use these abilities, even the more obscure ones, then the character gets a chance to shine. If the character gets a chance to shine, the player is happy. It's an obvious point, but it's very easy to get so wrapped up in the details of designing a dungeon that you forget to make sure it's a dungeon the players will enjoy. Each player should get an opportunity for their character to get the spotlight for a while.

Keeping Monsters Believable

Often, dungeon based games expect us to believe that a room full of monsters will stay in the room all the time, almost as if they're in stasis waiting for the party to arrive. Avoid this. Most monsters need to eat and go to the lavatory. They will have their own jobs and go about their business as normal. Think about whether the part of the dungeon they are in is comfortable for them, and what they may have done to make it more to their taste. Intelligent monsters will post guards at the main entrances to their part of the complex, although the guards may be lazy and ineffective. A lone monster might not stand and fight, but raise the alarm. Even if that makes things more difficult for the party, they still don't necessarily have to fight them all. Many monsters will also retreat if things aren't going their way. That's a good way to end a battle early if the outcome is a foregone conclusion.

Monsters will also behave differently in fights depending on their type. Mindless creatures like Undead or Golems will be very predictable, attacking whatever is in reach. Goblins might try to mob weaker targets or orcs seek out strong opponents. Truly intelligent enemies might make a point of running past the mêlée fighters to attack the mage, if they get an opportunity.

Monsters should feel different to the players not just in their statistics, but in how they behave.

Handling Position

There are quite a few things in this game that depend on positioning. The lower armour values in the rear, the area of affect in spells and sundry other abilities need a firm grasp of what is where. How this is approached depends on whether or not you are using a square-based map grid for the game.

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A square grid is a blessing and a curse. It's a blessing because it removes all ambiguity about where things are. It's a curse because it suggests inflexibility and gives players greater precision in knowing where things are than they should really have. If something isn't marked on the map, it is easy to forget. An explicit layout also discourages players and DMs alike from improvising additional details as the fight progresses.

Having no explicit map brings its own problems. There can be awkwardness when the DM and a player have different mental pictures of where things are in the room. The solution to this is communication; the player needs to tell the GM not just what his character is doing, but why, so the DM can give feedback on whether thing will work out like the player expects them too. Some examples:

"After the attack, I'll move to the side of the room."

"Okay, but why?"

"So I've got line-of-sight to the chief for next turn."

"Sorry, but the room's too narrow. The orcs are fanning out to cover their boss, anyway."

"Ah, in that case I'll just make a second attack against the orc."

"I'll run out of the room and come in through the side door we saw earlier."

"Okay, but that's going to take at least 5 move actions to do."

"Really, that long? No point, then."

Another potential problem is if a player starts to abuse the ambiguity of the position to make sure he always has the best advantage. He might claim that when monster A attacked another player, it has to turn its back to him, even though the DM has said that the monsters were advancing in a line. This sort of thing needs to be smacked down. It can be hard to make positional advantage abstract, but a technique the DM can use to moderate positional advantage is to decide how much effort is (and hence, how many actions are) required to get an advantage. In a chaotic mêlée, it's entirely reasonable that there will be a target with its back to the character. Making sure the fireball spell hits all of the monsters and none of the party might require someone to kill a key monster then move out of the way. Getting behind a monster in a more ordered battle clearly requires at least 1 movement action.

You may have noticed that there's nothing to stop a fighter moving behind an enemy and attacking from behind all in one turn, even in a one-on-one fight. If this seems unrealistic, the DM can rule that it doesn't work and the target turns to follow him. However, bear in mind that while moving and attacking may reduce the armour of the target, the alternative option is to attack twice, which will often be a better bet. Hence, ruling out that strategy is not needed to 'fix' the game.

Handling Stealth

Stealth is much-abused in dungeon-crawling games. It is not reasonable for a character to nip behind a pillar, then miraculously become invisible to enemies that saw them only a moment ago. Furthermore, when the party stealth specialist is sneaking up on something, the rest of the party is often left with nothing to do for extended periods. A battle- a scene resolved with a series of rolls with everyone participating- becomes a task check- a scene resolved by a single die roll involving only one character. Stealth can also tip the balance of battles in a system where it's assumed that the party get an entire turn to strike first. If the dungeon is populated with creatures that all get to strike first, it's grossly unfair.

In short, everyone is assumed to have sufficient stealth to sneak down a corridor without making undue noise. No-one has sufficient stealth to be able to hide once a battle has started.

Creatures *can* wait in ambush, however. This requires the 'Hide Really Well' ability, and assumes that the ambushing creature has sufficient cover to hide behind. The ambush is only successful if the hiding creature's Effective Nimbleness check succeeds and the target creature's Lore check fails. In the event that both succeed or both fail, the hiding creature remains hidden but doesn't get an opportunity to strike first. If it chooses to attack anyway, its would-be victims get the first turn. If someone just wants to hide without the possibility of springing an ambush, the 'Hide Really Well' ability is not absolutely required, but would grant her an automatic success.

Handling Missed Opportunities

It's often the case that some parts of the dungeon end up unexplored. This may be because the dungeon crawlers cut and run before reaching it, or they simply miss the hidden doorway. Similarly, they might forget to search a room and miss out on the treasure inside it. It is very tempting as a DM to drop hints about missed opportunities until someone wises up and find them. Try not to do this. It can feel like you're nurse-maiding the players, and if you never give them a chance to fail they never really succeed. It is simplicity itself to take a missed opportunity and transplant it into the next dungeon.

Handling Large Companies

Where the players are assumed to be part of a much larger company, it may seem strange that they are exploring a dungeon by themselves. In truth, they're not. Large companies often try to recover a number of treasures in a single expedition. The player characters may have been sent to a nearby, smaller dungeon to find something by themselves, or been given one part of a larger dungeon complex to explore. You should not waste time with the exploits of non-player dungeon-crawlers, unless you like the idea of saddling the players with an unpleasant superior until they find an opportunity to 'lose' him while in a dungeon.

Handling Rules Gaps

Often, in a dungeon packed with interesting pieces of scenery, a player will want to try some stunt that there are no rules for. Or two abilities may interact and it not be entirely clear how they would do so.

This is inevitable. Rather than bury the DM and players under a morass of clarifications and special cases in the rules, it's up to the DM to decide. If it seems sensible that two abilities would work together, or a particular action merits an extra die of damage, then the players can get that advantage. Note that this is always on a case-by-case basis. If the DM decides that it works one time, it does not guarantee it will work in future. The situation may not be exactly the same, or the DM may only have given you that advantage because you'd been having a rough time so far.

One specific type of unusual action is an indirect attempt to attack a monster. For example, if the party realise that the armour and Toughness of a monster make it nearly impossible to beat, they may try to collapse a roof on it or set a fire in the hope that it will do what they can't. The DM needs to take care that these kinds of stunts don't become a way of performing an end-run around the combat rules. In particular, when the DM is deciding how effective such measures are, he should consider whether the stunt is one that the party might try to pull off time and time again if it proves to be effective. If it's a stunt that is very specific to the monster, or specific to the room they are fighting in, then there is less risk that it will become a regular response. Of course, if the purpose of the stunt is not to hurt the monster, but to cover the party's escape, the DM can be much more lenient.

A related topic is when a player wants to create a new ability for his character. Where this is just an area of expertise that will only come into play in ability checks, the DM can allow it with only a cursory check that it's not too broad. If it comes with extra rules, the player and the DM should thrash it out together to make sure it's both balanced and worth taking over alternative abilities.

The Big Picture

It's easy to get lost in the details of monster abilities and dungeon exploration, and forget what makes things fun and interesting for the players. One obvious approach is to tailor the game to the players, by making sure there is plenty of what they enjoy in it.

Playing to the Crowd

Players are not a homogeneous bunch. There are plenty of books about running role-playing games that list different player archetypes; here is another created with respect to dungeon-crawling games.

Motivator

The motivator is concerned with the quest and with keeping things moving. It's the motivator that supplies most of the ideas and suggestions, and who tries to work out when to run and when to fight. It's tempting to term the motivator the 'natural leader', but in actual fact he often is less concerned with leading play than with playing effectively. It's important to encourage him to phrase his suggestions as choices the group can make rather than try to force everyone else to submit to his will.

Showboat

The showboat wants her character to be effective, and in the most stylish way possible. She wants an opportunity for her character to be seen to be competent and heroic. While this may come about in combat, it can just as easily be the case for a 'utility' character with a battery of useful non-combat skills. Such players are generally easy to please, but you should not allow them to hog all of the limelight and prevent other players from taking centre-stage once in a while. In particular, a player who tries to make a character that steals another player's thunder should be gently steered towards other options.

End-Runner

The end-runner delights in getting rewards without risk. This is the kind of player who will start and inter-tribe war just so the throne room will be left unguarded. There is no confrontation so climactic that the end-runner won't try to avoid it through dirty tricks or creative use of abilities. A little of this makes for an interesting game, but too much leaves the other players without much to do. You may find the end-runner advocating creative interpretations of the rules just so his plan will work. Beat him if he tries this.

Dramatist

The dramatist's primary goal is to have things happen to his character so he can act out the role. Whether these things are good or bad is not as important as that they happen. Hence, a 'status quo' campaign where little changes for the characters except gaining experience offers few opportunities for the dramatist. On the other hand, the dramatist's goals for her character should not be allowed to overshadow the main business of the game- raiding dungeons for treasure.

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Crises

If plundering dungeons ever threatens to become routine, the DM can introduce crises into the world to mix things up a bit.

The most obvious sort of crisis is a shortage of some kind, be it food, water or other essential supplies. A particularly belligerent orc tribe may attack the town, or a strong group of bandits ride in and claim it as their own.

In all cases, the purpose is not just to shake up the status quo but to put an extra challenge in the way of the characters that they have to overcome.

The player characters are likely to have very mercenary attitudes, so it is entirely acceptable for them to simply up sticks and move to a different town to get away from a crisis. This then has its own challenges- they will need to find new contacts in a strange place before they are back up to full speed again. In either case, things have been shaken up a bit.

Building From Here

The system of ability categories is designed to be extended. It's relatively straight-forward to create new monsters using the available abilities, and new abilities can slot into the system seamlessly. The DM and the other players are encouraged to expand the system as they wish.

Fluff

'Fluff', in role-playing games, refers to details about the world and the people in it. As you may have gathered, fluff doesn't have much of a place in this game. This section contains the few additional details that didn't fit in anywhere else.

Religion

There were many religions across the continent before the Horde arrived. Most priestly orders were nearly identical to wizardly colleges- they used the same kind of elemental magic and were equally protective of their secret spells. After the Horde there was little organised religion left. Religious belief amongst the general population has polarised into 1 of 4 kinds:

- The world was wicked and sinful, so the Horde was sent as a punishment. We must mend our ways!
- The world was wicked and sinful, so they didn't protect us when the Horde came. We must mend our ways!
- The gods are not worthy of worship, because they abandoned us to the Horde.
- The gods are not worthy of worship, because they never existed in the first place.

Geography

The geography of most of the continent is irrelevant, as it is occupied by the remains of the Horde and thus inaccessible. The eastern coast, where the refugees gather, is what is important. The coast stretches a very long distance, stretching from the Arctic circle all the way south to the tropics. The line is nearly vertical, except that it curves to the west at the southern end around a range of mountains. The northern end breaks up into a number of small, icy islands. Just above the mountains near the south, there's a very large forest which seems to be largely untouched by the Horde. It's not exactly tropical, but noticeably warmer than temperate. A short distance into the ocean from the mid-point of the coast is a collection of large islands. This is the only kingdom that remains more-or-less intact after the arrival of the Horde. However, trade between it and the mainland has all but stopped so it has problems of its own, not least of which is a shortage of food that isn't fish.

The area just to the west of the coast is where dungeon-crawlers will head looking for riches. They may also change their base of operations if their old home on the coast becomes too dangerous for them or there is a shortage of food there.

Politics

Central government does not exist. Local magistrates and barons have tried to establish their own personal fiefs, but it is just as likely that a murderous bandit has taken their place in any given town. No-one pays any attention to taxation (at least, beyond extorting protection money from the locals), criminal justice or public works. Barons may keep a small standing army of guards to enforce their will and there is a kind of mob justice in many places, but beyond that every man is out for himself. No-one has the resources to spare to actually wage war on someone else. This may change in the future.

Bluffport

Bluffport is example of a 'home' town that a company of dungeon-crawlers can operate out of. Only the most important details are given here, the rest should be made up on the spot if needed.

History

Bluffport is situated at the mouth of a river that cuts a deep valley on its way to the ocean. The town itself was built on a relatively small patch of land at the base of cliffs to the north and south. The cliffs made it an essential stopping-off point for ships heading up and down the coast. It also boasted a healthy fishing trade, supplemented by farms on the cliffs and further inland. A large number of refugees headed for Bluffport in the hope of catching a boat to the island kingdom, but most arrived after the last ship had sailed in that direction. The final ship that tried to make the voyage was overloaded and floundered just after casting off, with the loss of all hands.

Population

The town is overcrowded. Most of the farms have been churned to mud by becoming overflow refugee camps. The town itself is packed with people. The harbour has been built over to make extra wooden accommodation, which frequently catches fire and falls in the ocean. The original townspeople are outnumbered 11 to 1 by the newcomers, if the shanty towns nearby are considered. Most of the formerly wealthy citizens escaped early or are now as poor as the rest.

Economy

The fishing trade has ceased. The river itself is polluted by Horde activities further upstream, and only gets worse after it's washed through the refugee areas. The filthy outflow means there are no fish stocks anywhere near Bluffport. Hence, there was no need for such a large harbour. Ships do stop by from time to time, usually to sell food at grossly inflated prices. All food comes from further up or down the coast, in heavily guarded merchant caravans. On years where there is a shortage of food, none comes to Bluffport. This means many of the locals tend to hoard food that keeps for a long time. There are a handful of tanners and blacksmiths still at work, but they usually supplement their main income by having their family work in the fields away from town.

Temple of Varis

The goddess Varis has a temple near the harbour area. It became a hospice of sorts during the worst days of the Horde. Recently, however, it has been taken over by an evangelical group of worshippers of Varis, who only offer succour to those they deem are deserving of help. Making a sizeable donation to the temple makes a person deserving very quickly. All patients at the hospice are subjected to frequent lectures on how to avoid the wickedness that brought the Horde down on the world.

The Grey Company

The largest dungeon crawling company operating out of Bluffport was founded by a former sneak thief and horse rustler. It's one of the most successful in the world. It has its own walled compound on the south side of town, and only veterans of at least three expeditions are allowed inside to take advantage of the better accommodation there. It takes a very

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large cut of the treasure, and there are persistent rumours that it guarantees its profit margin by murdering junior members in the field if a trip goes badly.

Murgott's Manglers

The other company of note in the town is a smaller affair, but it supplements its income by operating as an erstwhile banking concern. It's considered more trustworthy than most others in the area. Becoming a dungeon-crawler in the Manglers is not an easy task; they prefer to recruit highly experienced men and women who have quit the Grey Company in disgust. They don't have their own buildings, but the pay is better.

Rostov Darkhand

The 'Dark Hand' was a criminal organisation far to the west, and Rostov was one of the movers and shakers. He fled the Horse and tried to set up an organisation along similar lines to his old one in Bluffport. It didn't really take off, so he turned it instead into a third dungeon-crawling outfit. It never really took off, so he disbanded it and now operates as a sole trader specialising in smuggling, theft to order and human trafficking. Although he has no official group to back him up, he is exceptionally influential on Bluffport's criminal underground, and has a finger in most disreputable pies in the area. As part of his latest scheme he has seized control of the only well in the area, a short walk upriver from the town, and is charging a small fee to anyone using it.

Baron Farcastle

The Farcastle family are the historical overlords of Bluffport, pledging allegiance to whatever king claimed sovereignty over the area. The current Baron has become a recluse in the family estate, built on an outcropping of land just north of the town proper and connected by a bridge. He conducts business through his estate manager, Bronson. The Baron has a large force of guards that protect the estate and mete out justice in the town on an ad hoc basis. The Baron is known to be an avid collector of antiquities, and is the largest purchaser of treasures in the area. Bronson acts as his agent around town, and the threat of the Farcastle guards means he is safe to go where he chooses.

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Book IV

Bestiary

Monsters!

For a player to recognise the exact kind of monster the party is facing, she needs the corresponding Lore ability. This will not only identify types of monsters within a class (as sometimes that will be obvious to even the ignorant) but will also give the player a brief summary of the strengths and weaknesses of the monster, and any unexpected attacks or abilities it may have. This will be the case even when facing a 'custom' monster, as it is assumed that the Lore ability includes knowledge of rarely-encountered variations on the main monster type.

The inability to recognise monsters if you lack a Lore ability goes deeper than not knowing the strengths and weaknesses of every monster around. The players won't even know *which* monsters in a group are dangerous. The DM doesn't even have to remember which monsters are which- you just fill the room with the right number of monsters and 'promote' one of them when you want to. Of course, this special monster can always blend in with the crowd and disappear again. In short, not having the right Lore ability when faced with a mob of monsters should be a royal pain.

This Bestiary

There is no exhaustive list of monsters. The DM is expected to make them up as he needs them. Some stock monsters are given in this section to act as off-the-shelf opponents. It's better if any particularly strong or interesting monster is custom made by the DM for that dungeon. In particular, slightly altering one of the basic types given here can help deal with cheeky players who try to remember what abilities the monsters have session to session without having the appropriate Lore ability.

The total number of abilities that a monster has is a rough indicator of how dangerous it is, but should not be taken as definitive. Some monsters may be listed with more than one set of equipment- in this case it's easier to have some armed one way and some armed the other than having to deal with them swapping weapons mid-battle.

The 'Wounds' listed for monsters in the description here are really their Shock Thresholds, but in the context of a fight with monsters the Shock Threshold is the only important measure of their health, so you may as well call it Wounds. Monsters do not fall unconscious unless the player attacking them wants them to. Usually, if a monster takes enough damage to throw it over its Wounds score, it is killed.

There are certain abilities which are available only to monsters and not to player. These abilities are listed in *italics* and are described in the next section.

Sometimes They Just Fall Over

It can be very tedious to keep track of wounds for monsters that are intended to be weak and easily dealt with. If the DM can't be bothered, particularly in a large encounter, he can rule that a monster was already wounded when the fight started and thus had fewer Wounds than normal. The reason to do this rather than just giving all weak monsters a Health score of 1 is because a monster that's trivial for an experienced dungeon crawler to defeat can be more of a challenge to a weaker one.

If the GM can't be bothered looking up the details for all of a monster's abilities, he can ignore them. Similarly, if he can't come up with sensible abilities to make up the score he wants a monster to have, he can make up abilities with no associated rules.

Demons

Demons come in many forms. The one thing they have in common is that they have become corrupted by evil magic. Often, they bear no resemblance to whatever they once were. Demons that were particularly useful for the Horde, including Imps and Hellhounds, were created in bulk. Perhaps the most dangerous demons are those that are humans who willingly put themselves into the hands of darkness. Some demons are little better than beasts, killing by instinct, whereas others are criminal masterminds of the first order.

Demon Count

Cloven hooves are so in this season.

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
7	6	3	2	Fire 2	1
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
2	6	3	5	5/0	21
Strength	Wield Tiny Weapon, Wield Small Weapon, Wield Medium Weapon, Wield Large Weapon, Wield Massive Weapon, <i>Large, Large Grip</i>				
Health	Living Being, Wear Light Armour, Resist Heat Really Well, <i>Elemental Immunity Fire, Tough, Tough Like Stone</i>				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, <i>Long Reach</i>				
Lore	Demon Lore, <i>Speak Human Language</i>				
Puissance	Basic Fire, Aggressive Fire				
Finesse	Fireball				
Equipment	Basic light armour, greataxe				
Damage	Greataxe 3d12, Fireball d9+X Fire				

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Fanatic

For the Horde!

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
2	2	3	2	Blood 1	1
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0	2	3	5	5/0	11
Strength	Wield Tiny Weapon, <i>Rage</i>				
Health	Living Being, Wear Light Armour				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, Hide Really Well				
Lore	Demon Lore, <i>Speak Human Language</i>				
Puissance	<i>Blood Magic</i>				
Finesse	<i>Bloodshot</i>				
Equipment	Basic light armour, dagger				
Damage	Dagger 2d4 (4d4 when in rage), Bloodshot 2d6 Blood				

Hellhound

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
4	3	5	1	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0	3	5	5 (15 run)	0	13
Strength	<i>Natural Weapons</i> , Run Really Well, <i>Smash</i> , <i>Better Natural Weapons</i>				
Health	Living Being, Resist Heat Really Well, <i>Elemental Immunity Fire</i>				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, <i>Charge</i> , Jump Really Well, <i>Superior Senses</i>				
Lore	Demon Lore				
Damage	Bite 3d8 (4d8 when charging)+smash				

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Imp

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
2	2	6	2	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0	1	6	12	0	12
Strength	Natural Weapons, Parry				
Health	Living Being, Resist Heat Really Well				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, <i>Flight, Better Flight</i> , Avoid Magic, <i>Small</i>				
Lore	<i>Speak Human Language</i> , Demon Lore				
Damage	Claws 2d4				

Iron Slave

These men and women have been sealed inside metal armour inscribed with sigils of dark magic.

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
6	5	1	3	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0	5	1	2 (can't run)	15/15 (20/15)	15
Strength	Wield Tiny Weapon, Wield Small Weapon, Wield Medium Weapon, Wield Two Weapons, Break Things Really Well, <i>Overwhelming Strength</i>				
Health	Living Being, Wear Light Armour, Wear Medium Armour, Wear Heavy Armour, Use Shield				
Nimbleness	Mobile				
Lore	Demon Lore, <i>Speak Human Language</i> , Literacy and Numeracy				
Equipment	Full heavy armour, 2 hand axes				
Damage	Hand axes 2d6/2d6				
Equipment	Full heavy armour, battle axe, shield				
Damage	Battle axe 4d8				

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Sorcerer

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
2	5	5	3	Blood 2 Earth 3	5
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0	5	4	4	5/5	25
Strength	Wield Tiny Weapon, Wield Small Weapon				
Health	Living Being, Wear Light Armour, Wear Medium Armour, Resist Heat Really Well, Resist Minor Disease Really Well				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, Backstab, Forge Really Well, Avoid Magic				
Lore	Demon Lore, <i>Speak Human Language</i> , Literacy and Numeracy				
Puissance	<i>Blood Magic</i> , <i>Blood of Cruelty</i> , Basic Earth, Protective Earth, Shaking Earth				
Finesse	<i>Unholy Vigour</i> , <i>Blood Rain</i> , Cantrip, Scree Slam, Avalanche				
Equipment	Full light armour, dagger				
Damage	Dagger 2d4, Blood Rain d8 Blood, Scree Slam 2d4+X Earth, Avalanche d10+3X Earth				

Vampire

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
5	8	9	6	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
1	4 (regen 1)	9	9 (27 run)	5/0	28
Strength	Wield Tiny Weapon, Wield Small Weapon, Run Really Well, Climb Really Well, Swordmaster				
Health	Living Being, Resist Cold Really Well, Heal Quickly, Resist Minor Diseases Really Well, Resist Significant Diseases Really Well, Wear Light Armour, <i>Tough</i> , <i>Regeneration</i>				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, <i>Flight</i> , <i>Better Flight</i> , <i>Extra Attack</i> , Coup de Grâce, Tumble Really Well, Balance Really Well, <i>Infection</i>				
Lore	Demon Lore, History, <i>Speak Human Language</i> , <i>Entrancing Stare</i> , <i>Broad Entrancing Stare</i> , <i>Leadership</i>				
Equipment	Basic light armour, short sword				
Damage	Short sword 4d6 and also Bite 5d4+Infection				

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Vampire Thrall

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
3	4	5	1	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0	4	5	5	5/0	13
Strength	Wield Tiny Weapon, Wield Small Weapon, Run Really Well				
Health	Living Being, Resist Cold Really Well, Resist Minor Diseases Really Well, Wear Light Armour				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, <i>Extra Attack</i> , Tumble Really Well, Balance Really Well				
Lore	<i>Speak Human Language</i>				
Equipment	Basic light armour, dagger				
Damage	Dagger 3d4 and also Bite 3d4				

Dragons

Dragons are rightly considered the most dangerous monsters one can face. Every dragon should be a rare and special jewel, but two examples are included here as starting points for the DM's own creations.

Fire-Breathing Dragon

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
11	10	7	8	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
4	10	7	7	0	36
Strength	<i>Natural Weapons, Large, Very Large, Hulking, Better Natural Weapons, Fast Natural Weapons, Even Better Natural Weapons, Better Fast Natural Weapons, Even Better Fast Natural Weapons, Smash, Lift Things Really Well</i>				
Health	<i>Living Being, Elemental Immunity Fire, Resist Heat Really Well, Resist Minor Diseases Really Well, Resist Significant Diseases Really Well, Tough, Tough Like Stone, Tough Like Steel, Heal Quickly, Tough Like Your Mother</i>				
Nimbleness	<i>Mobile, Fit, Flight, Long Reach, Extra Attack, Balance Really Well, Superior Senses, Magical Extra Attack, Area Extra Attack</i>				
Lore	<i>Dragon Lore, Speak Human Language, Art History, Literacy and Numeracy, Weather Lore, Mountain Lore, Plains Lore, Appraise Gem-Stones</i>				
Damage	<i>Claws 5d12/5d12+smash and also fire breath 4d4 Fire, 14 pace radius</i>				

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Serpentine Dragon

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
8	9	10	7	Water 5	5
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
3	9	10	10 (30 run)	0	44
Strength	<i>Natural Weapons, Large, Very Large, Better Natural Weapons, Smash, Even Better Natural Weapons, Lift Things Really Well, Run Really Well</i>				
Health	<i>Living Being, Elemental Immunity Water, Elemental Immunity Air, Resist Cold Really Well, Resist Minor Diseases Really Well, Resist Significant Diseases Really Well, Tough, Tough Like Stone, Tough Like Steel</i>				
Nimbleness	<i>Mobile, Fit, Flight, Long Reach, Extra Attack, Balance Really Well, Superior Senses, Better Extra Attack, Tumble Really Well, Avoid Magic</i>				
Lore	<i>Dragon Lore, Speak Human Language, History, Literacy and Numeracy, Weather Lore, Mountain Lore, Ocean Lore</i>				
Puissance	<i>Basic Water, Surging Water, Dousing Water, Raging Water, Mastered Water</i>				
Finesse	<i>Cantrip, Counter Fire, Waters of Healing, Squall, Ice Knife</i>				
Damage	<i>Bite 5d12+smash and also tail swipe 5d6+smash, Squall d12+2X Water, Ice Knife 2d8+3X Water</i>				

Forest Creatures

The creatures of the forest are not all friendly.

Banded Coit

Why did it have to be snakes?

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
4	4	4	1	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0	4	4	5 (can't run)	0	13
Strength	<i>Natural Weapons</i> , Wrestle Really Well, Climb Really Well, Swim Really Well				
Health	Living Being, Resist Minor Diseases Really Well, Resist Starvation Really Well, <i>Poison Attack (Strength)</i>				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Hide Really Well, Balance Really Well, <i>Squeeze Really Well</i>				
Lore	Forest Lore				
Damage	Bite 4d4+Poison (Strength)				

Nymph

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
2	2	6	3	Water 2	1
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0	2	6	6	0	16
Strength	Wield Tiny Weapon, Swim Really Well				
Health	Living Being, Resist Cold Really Well				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, Jump Really Well, Hide Really Well, Balance Really Well, Tumble Really Well				
Lore	Forest Lore, <i>Speak Human Language</i> , <i>Entrancing Stare</i>				
Puissance	Basic Water, Surging Water				
Finesse	Squall				
Equipment	Dagger				
Damage	Dagger 2d4, Squall d12+2X Water				

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Wolf

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
3	2	6	1	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0	1	6	12	0	12
Strength	<i>Natural Weapons, Run Really Well, Smash</i>				
Health	Living Being, Resist Cold Really Well				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, Jump Really Well, <i>Small, Charge, Extra Attack</i>				
Lore	Forest Lore				
Damage	Bite 3d4 (5d4 when charging)+smash and also claws 4d4 (5d4 when charging)+smash				

Golems

If Undead are the icky side of magical creations, golems are the genteel, respectable side. The two are very similar, but golems are crafted from inanimate objects and smell rather better. Golemcraft was a jealously guarded skill before the the Horde arrived, and as such is all but lost. Golems are very stupid, and are generally given very simple tasks, such as 'kill any living things that enters except me, your master'. The Horde did not make as much use of golems as of undead, but there are plenty of wizard's towers and deserted academies where golems still go through their daily routine, untroubled by the fact their masters are dead.

Air Elemental

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
1	4	7	0	Air 3	3
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
1	1	7	7	4/4*	18
Strength	<i>Natural Weapons</i>				
Health	<i>Constructed Being, Resist Starvation Really Well, Elemental Immunity Air, Tough</i>				
Nimbleness	<i>Mobile, Fit, Flight, Better Flight, Squeeze Really Well, Extra Attack, Better Extra Attack</i>				
Puissance	Basic Air, Whimsical Air, Gusting Air				
Finesse	Lightning Fist, Lightning Bolt, Enhance Nimbleness				
Damage	Twister 4d6, Lightning Fist Xd10+20 Air, Lightning Bolt d8+2X Air				

Clay Man

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
3	6	3	1	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
1	1	3	5	11/6*	13
Strength	Wield Tiny Weapon, Wield Small Weapon, <i>Large</i>				
Health	<i>Constructed Being, Use Shield, Resist Starvation Really Well, Resist Cold Really Well, Resist Heat Really Well, Tough</i>				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, Balance Really Well				
Lore	<i>Speak Human Language</i>				
Equipment	Club, shield				
Damage	Club 2d6				

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Earth Elemental

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
5	5	1	0	Earth 3	1
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
1	1	1	5 (can't run)	5/5*	15
Strength	<i>Natural Weapons, Large, Smash, Break Things Really Well, Lift Things Really Well</i>				
Health	<i>Constructed Being, Resist Starvation Really Well, Resist Cold Really Well, Elemental Immunity Earth, Tough</i>				
Nimbleness	Mobile				
Puissance	Basic Earth, Rooted Earth, Protective Earth				
Finesse	Meteor Strike				
Damage	Fists 5d4+smash, Meteor Strike 2d6+2X Earth				

Fire Elemental

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
2	4	5	0	Fire 3	3
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
1	1	5	5 (15 run)	4/4*	17
Strength	Natural Weapons, Run Really Well				
Health	<i>Constructed Being, Resist Heat Really Well, Elemental Immunity Fire, Tough</i>				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, <i>Squeeze Really Well</i> , Tumble Really Well, <i>Extra Attack</i>				
Puissance	Basic Fire, True Fire, Aggressive Fire				
Finesse	Touch of Flame, Fire Shield, Fireball				
Damage	Burning touch 2d4 and also Immolate 3d4, Fireball d8+X Fire, Touch of Flame Xd8+10 Fire				

CRAWLING FOR CASH

Imposter

Wizards sometimes create golems that are almost indistinguishable from humans, for their own inscrutable purposes. Some escape their masters and live among humans, making sure to kill anyone who finds out their terrible secret.

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
4	7	4	3	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0	1	4	5 (15 run)	12/7*	18
Strength	Wield Tiny Weapon, Wield Small Weapon, Wield Medium Weapon, Run Really Well				
Health	<i>Constructed Being</i> , Wear Light Armour, Use Shield, <i>Elemental Immunity Fire</i> , <i>Elemental Immunity Water</i> , <i>Elemental Immunity Air</i> , <i>Elemental Immunity Earth</i>				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, Backstab, Hide Really Well				
Lore	<i>Speak Human Language</i> , <i>Golem Lore</i> , Literacy and Numeracy				
Equipment	Short sword, shield				
Damage	Short sword 3d6				

Iron Man

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
5	8	5	1	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
3	1	5	5 (can't run)	13/8*	19
Strength	Wield Tiny Weapon, Wield Small Weapon, Wield Medium Weapon, <i>Large</i> , Lift Things Really Well				
Health	<i>Constructed Being</i> , Use Shield, Resist Starvation Really Well, Resist Cold Really Well, Resist Heat Really Well, <i>Tough</i> , <i>Tough Like Stone</i> , <i>Tough Like Steel</i>				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Balance Really Well, <i>Long Reach</i> , Avoid Magic, Avoid Magic Really Well				
Lore	<i>Speak Human Language</i>				
Equipment	Short sword, shield				
Damage	Short sword 4d6				

CRAWLING FOR CASH

Simulacrum

Sometimes an small object bears a striking resemblance to a human face or figure. Some wizards find their cupidity aroused by such curiosities, and turn them into golems. They have few uses, but can be dangerous and difficult to deal with.

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
2	2	6	0	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0	1	6	12	3/3*	10
Strength	<i>Natural Weapons</i> , Climb Really Well				
Health	<i>Constructed Being</i> , Resist Starvation Really Well				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, <i>Small</i> , <i>Charge</i> , Hide Really Well, Jump Really Well				
Damage	Pointy bits 2d4 (5d4 when charging)				

Water Elemental

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
2	4	5	0	Water 4	2
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
1	1	5	5	4/4*	17
Strength	<i>Natural Weapons</i> , Swim Really Well				
Health	<i>Constructed Being</i> , Resist Starvation Really Well, <i>Elemental Immunity Water</i> , <i>Tough</i>				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, <i>Squeeze Really Well</i> , Hide Really Well, <i>Extra Attack</i>				
Puissance	Basic Water, Dousing Water, Raging Water, Surging Water				
Finesse	Squall, Ice Knife				
Damage	Slosh 2d4 and also Crash 3d4, Squall d12+2X Water, Ice Knife 2d8+3X Water				

Mountain Creatures

The creatures of the mountains are not all friendly.

Giant Eagle

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
2	2	7	1	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0	1	7	14 (run 42)	0	12
Strength	<i>Natural Weapons</i> , Run Really Well				
Health	Living Being, Resist Cold Really Well				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, <i>Flight</i> , <i>Charge</i> , Balance Really Well, <i>Extra Attack</i> , Tumble Really Well				
Lore	Mountain Lore				
Damage	Beak 2d4 (5d4 when charging) and also claws 5d4				

Mountain Lion

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
7	4	6	1	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0	4	6	6 (run 18)	0	18
Strength	<i>Natural Weapons</i> , Run Really Well, <i>Rage</i> , <i>Better Natural Weapons</i> , <i>Fast Natural Weapons</i> , Wrestle Really Well, <i>Better Fast Natural Weapons</i>				
Health	Living Being, Resist Cold Really Well, Resist Minor Disease Really Well, Heal Quickly				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, <i>Charge</i> , Jump Really Well, Coup de Grâce, <i>Extra Attack</i>				
Lore	Mountain Lore				
Damage	Claws 3d8/3d8 (5d8/5d8 when charging or in rage) and also bite 4d4 (5d4 when charging or in rage)				

CRAWLING FOR CASH

Orcs

Orcs are a race bred from humans to be brutal and savage. They follow a tribal structure since the Horde stopped its advance, and occupy fortifications and towns. They have no grasp of farming, and subsist by raiding farms or each other, foraging, or eating the flesh of anything they can catch. Ogres are particularly successful pedigrees, goblins are the runts of the race. Orcs are not exactly stupid, but they are sloppy and lazy. This is why it's possible to creep into their camps to steal things or put them to the sword. Most tribes have a shaman or two, and use Fire or Blood magic more often than other kinds. Different tribes of orc often follow different traditions and schools of magic, or have preferred weapon types.

Goblin

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
3	2	4	1	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0	1	4	8 (run 24)	2/0	10
Strength	Wield Tiny Weapon, Wield Small Weapon, Run Really Well				
Health	Living Being, Wear Light Armour				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, Hide Really Well, <i>Small</i>				
Lore	Orc Lore				
Equipment	Basic light armour, dagger, short bow				
Damage	Dagger 3d4, short bow 2d6				

Goblin Channeller

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
3	2	4	2	Blood 2	2
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0	1	4	8 (24 run)	2/0	15
Strength	Wield Tiny Weapon, Wield Small Weapon, Run Really Well				
Health	Living Being, Wear Light Armour				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, Hide Really Well, <i>Small</i>				
Lore	Orc Lore, <i>Speak Human Language</i>				
Puissance	<i>Blood Magic, Blood of Cruelty</i>				
Finesse	<i>Bloodshot, Enrage</i>				
Equipment	Basic light armour, dagger				
Damage	Dagger 3d4, Bloodshot 2d6 Blood				

CRAWLING FOR CASH

Ogre

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
6	6	2	1	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0	6	1	4	5/5	15
Strength	Wield Tiny Weapon, Wield Small Weapon, Wield Medium Weapon, Wield Large Weapon, Break Things Really Well, Lift Things Really Well				
Health	Living Being, Wear Light Armour, Resist Cold Really Well, Resist Heat Really Well, Resist Minor Diseases Really Well				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit				
Lore	Orc Lore				
Equipment	Full light armour, warhammer				
Damage	Warhammer 4d8				

Ogre Chief

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
8	7	2	2	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
1	7	1	4	5/5	19
Strength	Wield Tiny Weapon, Wield Small Weapon, Wield Medium Weapon, Wield Large Weapon, Wield Massive Weapon, Break Things Really Well, Lift Things Really Well, Wrestle Really Well				
Health	Living Being, Wear Light Armour, Resist Cold Really Well, Resist Heat Really Well, Resist Minor Diseases Really Well, <i>Tough</i>				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit				
Lore	Orc Lore, Medicine				
Equipment	Full light armour, spear				
Damage	Spear 5d10				

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Orc

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
4	4	3	1	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0	4	2	4	15/0 (5/0)	12
Strength	Wield Tiny Weapon, Wield Small Weapon, Wield Medium Weapon, Break Things Really Well				
Health	Living Being, Wear Light Armour, Wear Medium Armour, Use Shield				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, Jump Really Well				
Lore	Orc Lore				
Equipment	Basic medium armour, shield, battle axe, short sword				
Damage	Battle axe 3d6, short sword 3d6				
Equipment	Basic light armour, short bow				
Damage	Short bow 3d6				

Orc Chief

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
6	5	5	3	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
1	5	4	4	10/5	19
Strength	Wield Tiny Weapon, Wield Small Weapon, Wield Medium Weapon, Break Things Really Well, Lift Things Really Well, Wrestle Really Well				
Health	Living Being, Wear Light Armour, Wear Medium Armour, Use Shield, <i>Tough</i>				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, Jump Really Well, Coup de Grâce, Dodge				
Lore	Orc Lore, <i>Inspire Allies</i> , <i>Speak Human Language</i>				
Equipment	Full light armour, double-bladed axe, shield				
Damage	Double-bladed axe 4d8				

CRAWLING FOR CASH

Orc Shaman

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
3	4	3	2	Fire 1	2
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0	4	3	5	5/0	15
Strength	Wield Tiny Weapon, Wield Small Weapon, Break Things Really Well				
Health	Living Being, Wear Light Armour, Wear Medium Armour, Use Shield				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, Jump Really Well				
Lore	Orc Lore, <i>Speak Human Language</i>				
Puissance	Basic Fire				
Finesse	Fireball, Enhance Strength				
Equipment	Basic light armour, mace				
Damage	Mace 2d6, Fireball d8+1 Fire				

CRAWLING FOR CASH

Plains

The creatures of the plains are not all friendly.

Centaur

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
5	3	7	3	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0	3	7	7 (run 21)	5/0	18
Strength	Wield Tiny Weapon, Wield Small Weapon, Wield Medium Weapon, Wield Large Weapon, Run Really Well				
Health	Living Being, Wear Light Armour, Wear Medium Armour				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, <i>Charge</i> , Avoid Magic, Jump Really Well, Backstab, Avoid Magic Really Well				
Lore	Plains Lore, <i>Speak Human Language</i> , Literacy and Numeracy				
Equipment	Basic light armour, spear				
Damage	Spear 2d10 (4d10 when charging)				
Equipment	Basic light armour, longbow				
Damage	Longbow 3d8				

Tiger

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
6	3	6	1	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0	3	6	6 (run 18)	0	16
Strength	<i>Natural Weapons</i> , Run Really Well, Climb Really Well, <i>Better Natural Weapons</i> , <i>Rage</i> , <i>Even Better Natural Weapons</i>				
Health	Living Being, Resist Minor Diseases Really Well, Heal Quickly				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, <i>Charge</i> , Jump Really Well, Coup de Grâce, <i>Extra Attack</i>				
Lore	Plains Lore				
Damage	Claws 4d12 (5d12 when charging or in rage) and also bite 4d4 (5d4 when charging or in rage)				

Spirits

If Undead are monsters where the physical remains are given a parody of a soul, spirits are monsters where the soul has lingered after death and generated a pretence of physical existence for itself. Although spirits retain a superficial kinship with who they were when they were alive, the process of becoming a spirit is usually terribly traumatic and little compassion or humanity remains. Even the most mild-mannered creature can become a murderous maniac when trapped between this world and the next. Suffering a grisly death is known to cause a spirit to come into existence, and the arrival of the Horde has meant that spirits appear in record numbers. Spirits also follow their own agendas- which often include killing a living human to take their places- which makes them much more dangerous in some ways. Undead do not leave their lairs because they have been ordered not to do so; spirits cannot leave the place they are tied to. They are quite intelligent, and so will use their abilities to best advantage, but they never retreat, even if outclassed, because they have nothing to lose.

Apparition

An apparition is a simple ghost, often appearing to perform a task it once performed in life.

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
3	3	4	2	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0	1	4	5	0 (3 spectral)	12
Strength	Wield Tiny Weapon, Wield Small Weapon, Wield Medium Weapon				
Health	<i>Spirit, Spectral, Non-Corporeal</i>				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, <i>Flight, Better Flight</i>				
Lore	Spirit Lore, <i>Speak Human Language</i>				
Damage	Spectral weapon 3d4				

CRAWLING FOR CASH

Chained Man

A chained man can be made any time a person is tortured to death. They exist only to inflict pain on others, appearing as a hunched figure wrapped in chains. This chains end in barbs and hooks and the chained man uses them to strike from a distance.

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
7	4	8	1	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0	1	5	5	15/15	19
Strength	<i>Natural Weapons, Wield Tiny Weapon, Wield Small Weapon, Fast Natural Weapons, Better Natural Weapons, Wield Medium Weapon, Better Fast Natural Weapons</i>				
Health	<i>Spirit, Wear Light Armour, Wear Medium Armour, Wear Heavy Armour</i>				
Nimbleness	<i>Mobile, Fit, Long Reach, Really Long Reach, Extra Attack, Coup de Grâce, Better Extra Attack, Jump Really Well</i>				
Lore	<i>Spirit Lore</i>				
Equipment	Full heavy armour				
Damage	Whirling chains 3d8/3d8 and also another chain 2d6				

Drowned Ghost

Drowned ghosts inhabit the stretch of river where they died, seeking to trick a living person into dying and taking their place in the cold, cold river. They typically entrance a target, lure them to the water's edge, then wrestle them to the bottom until they drown.

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
3	4	4	3	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0	1	4	5 (can't run)	0 (spectral 4)	14
Strength	<i>Natural Weapons, Swim Really Well, Wrestle Really Well</i>				
Health	<i>Spirit, Spectral, Elemental Immunity Water, Resist Cold Really Well</i>				
Nimbleness	<i>Mobile, Hide Really Well, Squeeze Really Well, Long Reach</i>				
Lore	<i>Spirit Lore, Entrancing Stare, Better Entrancing Stare</i>				
Damage	Entangling hair 4d3				

CRAWLING FOR CASH

Poltergeist

A poltergeist is an unquiet spirit that seeks only to destroy.

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
3	4	6	1	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0	1	6	12	2/0 (4 spect.)	14
Strength	Wield Tiny Weapon, Break Things Really Well, Lift Things Really Well				
Health	<i>Spirit, Non-Corporeal, Spectral, Elemental Immunity Air</i> , Use Shield				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, <i>Telekinesis, Small, Flight, Better Flight</i>				
Lore	Spirit Lore				
Equipment	Impromptu shield				
Damage	Telekinetic attack 2d4				

Snow Woman

A snow woman is the victim of cold weather, dying alone and frozen and seeking revenge. She usually appears during a snowstorm and tricks traveller into approaching her or following her. Sometimes she holds a lost child, other times she seems to lead the way through a treacherous snow bank. She has breath that can freeze a man solid.

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
5	7	4	3	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0	1	4	5	0 (7 spectral)	19
Strength	<i>Natural Weapons, Magical Natural Weapons</i> , Climb Really Well, <i>Better Natural Weapons</i> , Wield Tiny Weapon				
Health	<i>Spirit, Spectral, Elemental Immunity Fire, Elemental Immunity Air</i> , Resist Cold Really Well, Resist Heat Really Well, Resist Starvation Really Well				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, Coup de Grâce, Balance Really Well				
Lore	Spirit Lore, <i>Speak Human Language, Entrancing Stare</i>				
Damage	Ice breath 3d8 Ice				

Trolls

Trolls are a large breed of thuggish monsters that have always been around in the wild. When the Horde appeared, it included trolls bred for battle rather than the feral, less dangerous kind. The unique attribute of trolls is their ability to regenerate wounds- this makes them very dangerous if you can't take them down quickly. Giants are an off-shoot of trolls- they are taller still, but lack the trollish ability to regenerate. Half-trolls are another Horde product; the result of breeding trolls and ogres together. Despite their power, trolls are slow and stupid and often easily avoided. Trolls often wear pieces of armour strapped to them, but in most cases it is of little use. They are seldom found in large groups, but often become 'leaders' of groups of orcs or bestial men due to their size and strength.

Cave Troll

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
6	8	2	1	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
1	4 (regen 1)	2	5	0	17
Strength	Wield Tiny Weapon, Wield Small Weapon, Wield Medium Weapon, Wield Large Weapon, <i>Large</i> , Wrestle Really Well				
Health	Living Being, Resist Cold Really Well, Resist Heat Really Well, Resist Minor Diseases Really Well, Resist Significant Diseases Really Well, Heal Quickly, <i>Regeneration</i> , <i>Tough</i>				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit				
Lore	Troll Lore				
Equipment	Warhammer				
Damage	Warhammer 4d8				

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Giant

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
9	7	3	2	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
1	7	3	5 (can't run)	10/0 (5/0)	21
Strength	Wield Tiny Weapon, Wield Small Weapon, Wield Medium Weapon, Wield Large Weapon, <i>Natural Weapons, Large, Very Large, Wrestle Really Well, Smash</i>				
Health	Living Being, Wear Light Armour, Wear Medium Armour, Use Shield, Heal Quickly, Resist Cold Really Well, <i>Tough</i>				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Dodge, <i>Long Reach</i>				
Lore	Troll Lore, <i>Speak Human Language</i>				
Equipment	Basic light armour, longsword, shield				
Damage	Longsword 5d8+smash, stamp 5d4+smash				
Equipment	Basic light armour, bastard sword				
Damage	Bastard sword 5d10+smash, stamp 5d4+smash				

Half-Troll

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
5	6	3	2	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0	3 (regen 2)	2	4	5/5	16
Strength	Wield Tiny Weapon, Wield Small Weapon, <i>Large, Wrestle Really Well, Break Things Really Well</i>				
Health	Living Being, Wear Light Armour, Wear Medium Armour, Heal Quickly, <i>Regeneration, Better Regeneration</i>				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, Backstab				
Lore	Troll Lore, Orc Lore				
Equipment	Full light armour, mace				
Damage	Mace 4d6				

CRAWLING FOR CASH

Hill Troll

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
5	6	2	1	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0	3 (regen 1)	2	5	0	14
Strength	Wield Tiny Weapon, Wield Small Weapon, Wield Medium Weapon, <i>Large</i> , Wrestle Really Well.				
Health	Living Being, Resist Cold Really Well, Resist Minor Diseases Really Well, Resist Significant Diseases Really Well, Heal Quickly, <i>Regeneration</i>				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit				
Lore	Troll Lore				
Equipment	Warhammer				
Damage	Warhammer 3d8				

War Troll

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
7	10	2	2	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
2	5 (regen 1)	2	5	0	20
Strength	Wield Tiny Weapon, Wield Small Weapon, Wield Medium Weapon, Wield Large Weapon, Wield Massive Weapon, <i>Large</i> , Wrestle Really Well				
Health	Living Being, Resist Cold Really Well, Resist Heat Really Well, Resist Minor Diseases Really Well, Resist Significant Diseases Really Well, Resist Starvation Really Well, Heal Quickly, <i>Regeneration, Tough, Tough Like Stone</i>				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit				
Lore	Troll Lore, <i>Leadership</i>				
Equipment	Warhammer				
Damage	Warhammer 5d8				

Undead

Undead are creatures animated by powerful necromancy- they actually have no connection to their former lives apart from their shape. Sometimes they resemble a living creature, other times they are a nightmarish mishmash of spare parts. Necromancy has long been a forbidden art; the Horde used it in abundance and the collapse of civilisation means that human practitioners are free to pursue it away from populated areas. Undead creatures are exceptionally stupid; they simply perform the task they were enchanted to do just like golems. Unlike most other monsters, they are tied to a particular location and cannot leave it to pursue trespassers. Undead that haven't been given hostile orders can be safely ignored while dungeon crawling.

Catacombite

Catacombites are made from the 'bones left over', most grossly distorted in size or shape. They are multi-legged monstrosities with a taste for human flesh that can barely be controlled even by their creators.

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
7	8	4	0	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
3 (5 vs rng)	1*	4	5	0	19
Strength	<i>Natural Weapons, Large, Very Large, Hulking, Better Natural Weapons, Even Better Natural Weapons, Overwhelming Strength</i>				
Health	<i>Undead, Resist Cold Really Well, Resist Heat Really Well, Resist Minor Diseases Really Well, Resist Significant Diseases Really Well, Tough, Tough Like Stone, Tough Like Steel</i>				
Nimbleness	<i>Mobile, Fit, Pincushion, Long Reach</i>				
Damage	Distorted claws 5d12				

Mummy

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
6	9	1	0	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
2	1**	1	5 (can't run)	0	16
Strength	<i>Natural Weapons, Lift Things Really Well, Wrestle Really Well, Better Natural Weapons, Parry, Overwhelming Strength</i>				
Health	<i>Undead, Rapid Undead Recovery, Resist Minor Disease Really Well, Resist Significant Disease Really Well, Resist Cold Really Well, Resist Starvation Really Well, Tough, Tough Like Stone, Corpse Rot</i>				
Nimbleness	Mobile				
Damage	Slam 5d8+Corpse Rot				

CRAWLING FOR CASH

Plague-Bearer

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
1	5	1	0	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0	1*	1	5 (can't run)	0	7
Strength	<i>Natural Weapons</i>				
Health	<i>Undead</i> , Resist Minor Diseases Really Well, Resist Significant Diseases Really Well, <i>Corpse Rot</i> , <i>Plague Rot</i>				
Nimbleness	Mobile				
Damage	Bite d4+Plague Rot				

Skeletal Wolf

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
4	3	8	0	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0 (2 vs rng)	1*	8	8 (24 run)	0	15
Strength	<i>Natural Weapons</i> , <i>Fast Natural Weapons</i> , Run Really Well, <i>Smash</i>				
Health	<i>Undead</i> , Resist Starvation Really Well, Resist Minor Disease Really Well				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, Jump Really Well, <i>Small</i> , <i>Squeeze Really Well</i> , <i>Pincushion</i> , <i>Charge</i> , <i>Extra Attack</i>				
Damage	Claws 2d4/2d4 (5d4/5d4 when charging) and also Bite 5d4				

Skeleton

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
3	5	7	0	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
0 (2 vs rng)	1*	7	7	10/0 (5/0)	15
Strength	Wield Tiny Weapon, Wield Small Weapon, Wield Medium Weapon				
Health	<i>Undead</i> , Wear Light Armour, Use Shield, Resist Starvation Really Well, Resist Minor Diseases Really Well				
Nimbleness	Mobile, Fit, Hide Really Well, Dodge, Avoid Magic, <i>Squeeze Really Well</i> , <i>Pincushion</i>				
Equipment	Basic light armour, short sword, shield				
Damage	Short sword 2d6				
Equipment	Basic Light armour, short bow				
Damage	Short bow 2d6				

CRAWLING FOR CASH

Zombie

Strength	Health	Nimbleness	Lore	Puissance	Finesse
5	5	1	0	0	0
Toughness	Wounds	Eff. Nim.	Movement	Armour	Value
1	1*	1	5 (can't run)	0	11
Strength	<i>Natural Weapons, Smash, Break Things Really Well, Fast Natural Weapons, Wrestle Really Well</i>				
Health	<i>Undead, Resist Cold Really Well, Resist Minor Diseases Really Well, Tough</i>				
Nimbleness	Mobile				
Damage	Grab 3d4/3d4				

Other Creatures

The DM is at liberty to introduce new categories of monster, but it is probably best to do so sparingly as each new category makes existing Lore abilities less useful. The dungeon crawlers may also face human enemies- these can be created in exactly the same way as player characters. There is no appropriate Lore ability for humans; it is assumed that everyone is well-enough acquainted with their own species to recognise faces and identify particularly strong foes.

The abilities are a tool-box of monster creation, and the DM is at liberty to get as creative as he wants to be.

If the DM wants the player characters to face bandits or rival dungeon crawlers, then those characters can be created in exactly the same way as player characters, although the DM can change the number of abilities these human characters have to suit his tastes.

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Book V

Monster abilities.

Forbidden Knowledge

Monsters have access to a larger selection of abilities- this reflects their various unique attributes. The abilities in this section are not intended for player characters to use. In particular, many of them are significantly more powerful than normal abilities.

These are just the beginning, though. Feel free to create unique abilities if you want one for a particular monster. The abilities in this section are kept generic so they can be used by many different monsters. If you want to create a custom monster with a much more specific ability, you can, of course, do so.

Strength

Large

This monster is unusually large. It cannot be moved by spells or attacks that would otherwise move it, and suffers no consequences as a result.

Large Grip

This monster can use large weapons one-handed, and massive weapons can be held in one hand to leave the other free for spell-casting or potions.

Needs: Large.

Very Large

This monster is larger still, occupying a square 2 paces across. Large or normal-sized creatures do not block line of sight from it or to it, as it can see and be seen over the top of them. It cannot be knocked over or wrestled with.

Needs: Large.

Hulking

This monster can shoulder aside smaller creatures. When moving, it can force a creature without the ability Large to either move 1 pace in a direction of its choice or take 1 Wound. This can only be done to a creature once per turn.

Needs: Very Large.

Natural Weapons

This monster has natural weapons of 0/d4. A monster cannot use normal weapons and natural weapons at the same time.

Better Natural Weapons

This monster's natural weapons are stronger than usual. They count as 1/d8 weapons.

Needs: Natural Weapons, Strength 3.

Even Better Natural Weapons

This monster's natural weapons are 2/d12 weapons.

Needs: Better Natural Weapons, Strength 5.

Fast Natural Weapons

This monster can attack quickly. It has 2/d4/d4 weapons.

Needs: Natural Weapons, Strength 3.

Better Fast Natural Weapons

This monster has quantity and quality in its natural weapons, having 4/d8/d8 weapons.
Needs: Better Natural Weapons, Fast Natural Weapons, Strength 6.

Even Better Fast Natural Weapons

This monster hits hard, fast and with love. Its natural weapons inflict 6/d12/d12 damage.
Needs: Even Better Natural Weapons, Better Fast Natural Weapons, Strength 8.

Magical Natural Weapons

This monster's natural attacks are imbued with magical properties, or cause damage in a way similar to magic. Armour does not defend against them, but the damage roll is penalised by an additional 1 point of Strength. This ability also overcomes the special limitation of the Non-Corporeal (Nimbleness) ability.
Needs: Natural Weapons.

Overwhelming Strength

When testing Strength against another creature, this monster can re-roll the die if it fails the check, keeping the second result.
Needs: Strength 5.

Rage

If this monster is wounded, it gets a +2 Strength bonus to attacks on its following turn. This ability can only trigger once per turn.

Smash

This monster's attacks throw their target 2 paces away from it.
Needs: Natural Weapons, Strength 2.

Health

Constructed Being

This monster is not living, but created from non-living materials. It falls after taking only 1 wound, but it has a bonus to armour equal to its Health score. Unlike ordinary armour, this bonus also applies to magical attacks.

Corpse Rot

When this monster attacks, there's a chance its victim will succumb to Corpse Rot. Corpse Rot is a minor disease which causes skin discolouration, a foul odour and, if left untreated for around a month, death. Creatures with Resist Minor Disease are immune to it, other creatures must pass a d12 Health check to avoid contracting it. Curing the disease requires a week of rest, and either a successful d8 Health check on the part of the victim or a successful d8 Lore check (with the Medicine ability) on the part of the doctor.

Needs: Natural Weapons (Strength) or Extra Attack (Nimbleness).

A Lot of it Going Around

Corpse Rot and Plague Rot serve as good templates for other diseases the DM wants to introduce.

Plague Rot

This monster carries a more virulent version of Corpse Rot. Plague Rot causes immediate swelling of the face, hands and feet, causing difficulties with speech, and each week that it goes by untreated applies a 2 point penalty to all abilities. Creatures with Resist Significant Disease Really Well are immune to it. Creatures with Resist Minor Disease Really Well can attempt a d12 Health check to avoid contracting it. Creatures with neither are automatically infected. Curing the disease is not a simple matter. For each week of rest followed by a successful d8 Lore check on the part of a doctor with the Medicine ability, the penalty is reduced by 1. If magical healing was involved, the penalty is reduced by 2 instead. If the check is failed, the disease worsens by 1 point (not as bad as receiving no treatment). If the penalty was already 0 and the check is passed, the disease is cured.
Needs: Corpse Rot

Elemental Immunity (Fire, Earth, Air or Water)

This monster is immune to one form of magical damage.

Poison Attack (Strength, Health, Nimbleness, Lore)

This monster can impart a venom or other poison with an attack. The poison takes effect immediately, unless the victim passes a d10 Health check. If poisoned, the character loses d4 points off her score. The effect is reduced by 1 point every ten minutes. Some poisons affect more than one ability score at once. If Health is reduced to 0 by poison, the character is killed. If other scores are reduced to or below 0, the natural interpretations are paralysis (for Strength or Nimbleness) or a temporary coma (Lore).
Needs: Natural Weapons (Strength) or Extra Attack (Nimbleness).

Regeneration

This monster can recover from its wounds very quickly. At the end of each of its turns, it recovers 1 wound. However, the number of Wounds needed to kill it is halved.
Needs: Heal Quickly, Health 5.

Better Regeneration

This monster recovers from wounds even more quickly. At the end of each of its turns, it recovers 2 wounds.
Needs: Regeneration.

Spirit

This monster has only 1 Wound. It cannot be permanently killed; it vanishes and will reappear in d4+X days' time if defeated, where X is the number of Wounds it suffered when it was defeated.

Non-Corporeal

This creature can pass through walls and solid objects with ease. This does not protect it from attacks. Non-corporeal creatures can only attack physically with tiny weapons (or natural equivalents)- any larger weapons only inflict damage as if they were tiny ones.
Needs: Undead or Spirit.

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Spectral

This monster is very hard to hurt with ordinary weapons. If a weapon is not enchanted in some way, the damage rolled must be a multiple of X in order for the weapon to strike as usual, where X is the monster's Health score. Spells damage it as normal.

Needs: Spirit.

Tough

This monster has Toughness 1.

Needs: Health 3.

Tough Like Stone

This monster has Toughness 2.

Needs: Tough, Health 5.

Tough Like Steel

This monster has Toughness 3.

Needs: Tough Like Stone, Health 7.

Tough Like Your Mother

This monster has Toughness 4.

Needs: Tough Like Steel, Health 9.

Undead

This monster will fall after taking only 1 Wound. However, the DM secretly makes a d12 Health ability check. If the monster passes the check, it returns to fight on its next turn, but only takes a single action on that turn. Undead need to spend this action to stand up (or reform) before they can do anything else. If the roll is a 1, the monster recovers one turn later than usual.

Rapid Undead Recovery

This undead does not need to spend an action to recover from falling- it can make an attack or move on the turn during which it recovers.

Needs: Undead.

Nimbleness

Charge

This monster is known for attacking at the charge. If it uses its first action to move, and its second to attack, it can roll its damage using its Effective Nimbleness score instead of Strength (including for Extra Attack, if it has it).

Needs: Mobile.

Flight

This monster can fly. However, it must spend one action a turn moving in order to remain in flight. The ability Run Really Well (Strength) allows the speed bonus when in flight as well as when on the ground.

Needs: Mobile.

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Better Flight

This monster can fly with greater control and can hover in one spot, thus it does not need to spend 1 action a turn concentrating on flying.

Needs: Flight.

Small

This monster is unusually small. It only has half the Wounds it would otherwise have (rounding up), but its Movement is doubled. Similarly, its armour and Toughness are halved (rounding down).

Needs: Mobile.

Extra Attack

This monster can make an extra attack each turn. This attack rolls d4s for damage, and the number of dice rolled is equal to its Effective Nimbleness - 2.

Needs: Nimbleness 4.

Area Extra Attack

This monster's extra attack affects all targets within 2X paces of a central point, where X is the monster's Effective Nimbleness.

Better Extra Attack

The extra attack this monster makes is better than usual. The attack uses d6s instead of d4s, and the number of dice rolled is equal to its Effective Nimbleness - 3.

Needs: Extra Attack, Nimbleness 6.

Magical Extra Attack

This monster's extra attack counts as a magical attack, thus by-passing armour. It rolls 1 fewer die than normal.

Needs: Extra Attack.

Infection

This monster can turn humans into copies of itself, if it succeeds with an attack. The DM secretly makes a d10 Health check on behalf of the character, which Resist Minor Disease Really Well will automatically pass. If the character receives treatment from someone with the Medicine ability, the doctor may make a d8 Lore check. A success on either roll negates the effect of Infection. If the infection takes hold, then within 1 week the character will start showing signs of monstrous transformation. With a week of treatment, the change can be delayed or, with a successful d12 Lore check from someone with Medicine, reversed. If a week goes by without any treatment, however, the change takes full effect and the character becomes a monster.

Needs: Natural Weapons (Strength) or Extra Attack.

Long Reach

This monster can attack targets 2 paces away with its attacks with weapons or natural weapons.

Really Long Reach

This monster can attack targets 4 paces away with its attacks.

Needs: Long Reach.

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Pincushion

This monster has a Toughness bonus of 2, but only against ranged, physical attacks.

Squeeze Really Well

This monster can squeeze through narrow gaps that are nominally too small for its body.

Needs: Mobile.

Superior Senses

This monster can sense its surroundings preternaturally well, making it almost impossible to ambush it.

Telekinesis

This monster can make small objects fly through the air. It can make a ranged attack using them. It must have line of sight to the object it wishes to throw, and there must be line of sight between the object and its target, but there does not have to be line of sight from the monster to the target. The attack counts as a thrown weapon, and the size of the object (and thus the damage) is determined by the size of weapon the monster can wield. The damage roll has a penalty of 1 die when telekinesis is used.

Lore

Entrancing Stare

This monster can attempt to entrance an intelligent target. This involves an opposed Lore check, usually with d10 rolled on both sides. As long as neither this monster nor the target are attacked, the entrancement prevents the target from attacking or casting spells, and the entranced creature will spend 1 action a turn moving in the direction of the monster's choice. The other action may not be spent moving. The monster cannot attack or cast spells while using this ability, and can only use it once per turn.

Better Entrancing Stare

This monster has a particularly potent entrancing gaze. When it rolls a die to entrance an enemy, it rolls 1 die size smaller than it would normally do.

Needs: Entrancing Stare

Broad Entrancing Stare

This monster can entrance more than 1 target at once. It can entrance a number of targets simultaneously equal to half its Lore score.

Needs: Entrancing Stare

Inspire Allies

This monster can inspire the allies surrounding it. The Strength and Nimbleness of its allies are increased by 1.

Inspire Allies Better

This monster can inspire the allies surrounding it better than normal. The Strength and Nimbleness of its allies are increased by 2 instead of 1.

Needs: Inspire Allies.

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Leader

This monster can avoid taking wounds by having its lackeys throw themselves in the way of attacks. If an ally of this monster can move 1 pace and either block line of sight to this monster or become adjacent to a mêlée attacker, then the ally does so and receives the attack instead. If the attack is an area of effect spell, this only protects the leader if the monster gets in the way and causes the area of effect to fall short.

Speak Human Language

This monster can negotiate with, threaten or mock the humans.

Puissance

Blood Magic

This monster knows Blood Magic. Blood Magic is simpler than elemental magic, but inherently evil. It has a number of magic points it can spend on Blood Magic equal to its Puissance (Blood) score. These are spent to power Blood Magic spells, which do not require the caster to spend any time raising power. However, it does give an upper limit on the number of spells the monster can cast. If it ever becomes relevant, the Blood Magic points usually refresh at dusk.

Blood of Cruelty

This monster can regain a Blood Magic point by killing a living creature. This creature can be an ally. This can't be used to let a monster get more than its starting allowance of Blood Magic points.

Needs: Blood Magic.

Blood of Sacrifice

This monster can spend an action to drain its own blood, taking a wound in order to recover a Blood Magic point.

Needs: Blood Magic.

Blood of Torment

Any creature adjacent to this monster when it uses blood magic must pass a d12 Health check or take 1 Wound.

Needs: Blood Magic, Blood 3.

Blood Mastery

Needs: Blood Magic, Blood 4.

Finesse

Blood Rain

The caster causes a rain of boiling blood to fall from the sky. This affects an area with a radius of 3 paces and inflicts d8 Blood damage on all caught in it.

Target: line of sight to centre of blast.

Minimum Power: 1 Blood.

Duration: fleeting.

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Bloodshot

The caster attacks with a jet of caustic blood from her mouth. This causes 2d6 Blood damage.

Target: line of sight to single target.

Minimum Power: 1 Blood.

Duration: fleeting.

Enrage

The caster throws a cup of blood into the air to anoint her allies. Their Strength and Nimbleness increase by 1 point.

Target: within 5 paces of caster.

Minimum Power: 1 Blood.

Duration: concentration.

Thirsty Work

The caster is imbued with dark energy that sucks life from her enemies. Any attacks she makes this turn inflict 1 extra wound that by-passes armour and Toughness.

Target: caster.

Minimum Power: 1 Blood.

Duration: remainder of turn.

Unholy Vigour

The caster fortifies herself with dark energy. This grants her Toughness 2.

Target: caster.

Minimum Power: 1 Blood.

Duration: until the caster is next wounded, or 4 hours maximum.

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Book VI

The Statue of Jallandra

The Quest

This is an example expedition, suitable for starting characters. It only uses stock monsters, so it's handy for the DM that wants to run a game without any complicated preparation.

Players who wish to enjoy this expedition when their DM runs it should stop reading now.

The Pitch

The Jallandra priesthood were a funny lot. They refused to build their temples in towns, preferring to site them a short distance outside. The temple of Jallandra outside the town of Ostler's Ridge commissioned a magnificent statue of the goddess in marble.

Surviving members of the priesthood might want to hire a team of dungeon-crawlers to retrieve it, as would any art collector with deep pockets. The amount of money offered for it will be around 5000 Crescents, an excellent rate of return for a dungeon a week away from wherever the players are based.

The best part is, the temple is built up against a small cliff, with only 1 entrance. The statue is supposedly too large to fit through the main doors, so chances are good that it's still there.

How the party come to hear this information is up to the DM. If they are employed by a large company, then all they hear is that the statue is there and they have to bring it back. If they control their own company, someone may give them the tip in exchange for a small consideration. The would-be buyer may even contact them directly.

Preparation

If the players are employees, the preparation is handled by the company. A larger group of dungeon crawlers are being sent into Ostler's Ridge itself, leaving the temple as a suitable small job for the players.

The statue is heavy, so the company will provide a cart and mule to haul it back, together with 2 weeks' rations for the party. Sledgehammers will also be provided so the characters can widen the front door enough to get the statue out.

If the players are making their own preparations, it's up to them to realise they will need a beast of burden and demolition tools.

The Real Story

Almost inevitably, the task will not be as easy as it sounds.

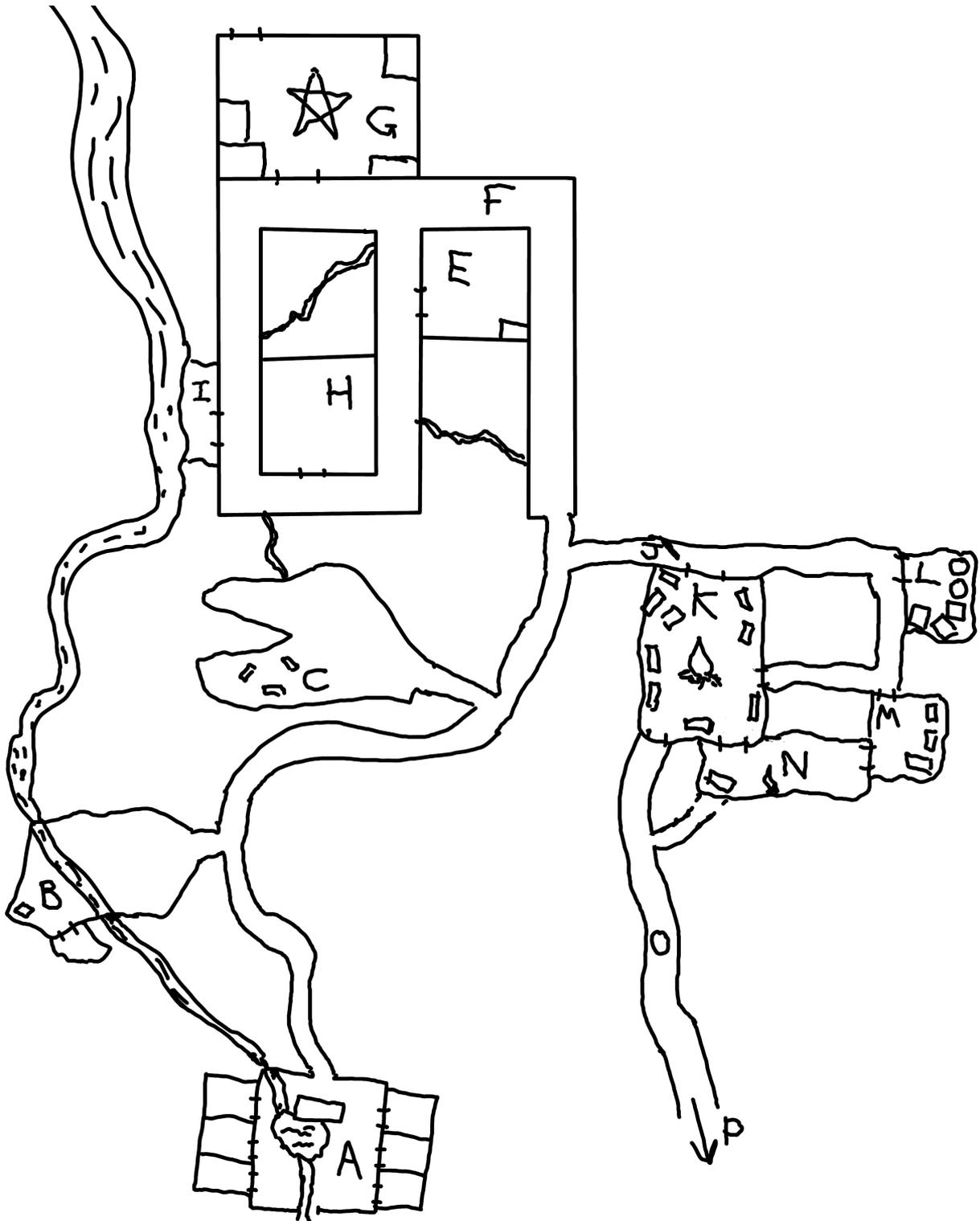
A small tribe of orcs has chiselled out a cave network in the cliff. Their tunnel breached the temple from behind, and they have taken the statue to decorate their chief's quarters.

They also happened to carve their way into the sanctum of a demonic sorcerer. He considers them a nuisance, and has powerful undead to patrol his domain. In particular, he has a few zombies stationed in the temple itself to deter intruders. He will not take kindly to human interrupting him. Fortunately, there is no need for the party to even set foot in his domain, although they do not know so. There is an uneasy peace between the sorcerer and the orc tribe.

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Dungeon Plan

The lists of monsters here assume a party of around 4 starting characters. The DM can increase or decrease the number of monsters to suit the party that turns up. The layout looks like this:



A – Temple of Jallandra

The party enter through the main doorway to the south. The temple is in a poor state of repair. The altar is cracked, and an underground river surfaces near the back corner, floods a lot of the floor, then streams out through the front door. There are 6 smaller chambers off the main temple, each of which is empty. They were once used for personal consultations with members of the priesthood. Where the statue is supposed to be at the back of the temple, there is instead a rough tunnel cut into the rock. The tunnel is large enough for the statue to be taken down it.

4 zombies are stationed in the room with orders to attack anyone and anything that enters.

B – Side Cave

The river runs through this natural cave. Jumping the river without the Jump Really Well ability is a d10 Nimbleness check. On the far side of the river are 2 skeletons, armed with bows.

There is also a small chest, the lock long since rusted solid. If the chest is broken open, it is found to contain 100 Crescents.

The small door off this cave is of obscure purpose, as it leads into a small empty hollow.

C – Side Cave

This is another natural cave. 3 goblins are supposed to be on guard, but they are playing a game of cards instead. One of the goblins has a small pouch at his belt that holds 2 sapphires, worth around 50 Crescents each. If given a golden opportunity, one of the goblins may run to K to raise the alarm.

There is a crevice in the north wall that leads into the sorcerer's domain.

D – Breached Wall

The orcs' tunnelling runs into the sorcerer's area here. They hacked their way through a nicely-built stone wall, and the area beyond this point is wider with torch brackets on the walls and flagstones on the floor.

The sorcerer seem unaware that the crevices in the ancient walls are large enough for people to squeeze through with a little effort. There are 3 such crevices, which may come in handy to avoid the Catacombite.

E – Store Room

This room is unremarkable, except for 8 inactive skeletons. They have not been given any orders, and will not defend themselves if attacked. A small table in one corner holds a ledger, which contains information about the sorcerer purchasing fresh corpses from a contact in the party's home town.

F – Catacombite Corridors

The wide corridors are home to a Catacombite, raised by the sorcerer to keep the goblins at bay. It wanders the randomly, but has orders to stay in the corridors and not to stray beyond point F, otherwise the goblins might fire arrows at it. The narrow crevices are too small for the Catacombite to fit through, but it can still stick a sharp leg bone some distance along them. The party should be able to avoid fighting it if they use the crevices well.

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Mounted on the Catacombite's giant skull, as a decoration, is a massive ruby. If the party somehow killed the Catacombite and prised the jewel off it, it would fetch 3000 Crescents easily.

G – Sorcerer's Sanctum

The sorcerer is busy conducting experiments here. The walls are painted with blood. Apart from the sorcerer, there are 4 imps as assistants, and the sorcerer will kill them to fuel his blood magic if he needs to. The door to this room is large enough for the Catacombite, but doesn't fit the doorway very well. The party will be able to peep through the gap to see the sorcerer at work, as long as the Catacombite doesn't notice them.

Amidst the clutter of the sorcerer's work is a diary outlining his life and describing his annoyance with the orcs down the corridor. In a desk drawer there are 3 small rubies (worth around 200 Crescents each) and 300 in old Crescent coins.

The door in the far well leads deeper into the complex under the cliffs. It's unlikely that the party will get this far, but it can be assumed to hold more of the sorcerer's creations and get steadily more dangerous the further in you go.

H – Store Room

The sorcerer keeps some of his minions here. There are currently 2 zombies and a plague-bearer. They have orders to stay in the room, but are active and will attack the party if they can.

I – Riverside

A door leads into what might have been intended as another room, but actually found the underground river. There's a small strip of floor, then the water. The room is home to a drowned ghost, keen to claim a victim.

J – Orc Trap

There is a simple orc trap here to protect their domain. What looks like a wooden barricade actually screens 5 crossbows pointed west through gaps in the wood. A thin thread is stretched across the floor. If the trip wire is triggered, the crossbow will fire.

The trap can be spotted with a d10 Lore check or the ability Spot Traps Really Well.

Stepping over the wire safely requires a d4 Nimbleness check or Avoid Traps Really Well.

If the trap is triggered, everyone in the tunnel west of point J is attacked with a 2d8 ranged attack.

Naturally, the orcs and goblins in the caves know where the trap is and how to avoid it.

K – Orc Lair

This is the main sleeping area for the orcs. They are currently celebrating finding a cache of alcohol and making a huge amount of noise. This is convenient for the party, as it makes it less likely they will be spotted. The room has a fire in the middle and sleeping mats around the perimeter. An open barrel of rum is dangerously close to the fire.

The room contains a cave troll and 3 orcs.

If the monsters are defeated, looting their corpses yields only 100 Crescents.

L – Food Store

The orcs keep food and water here. The food is disgusting, mostly high meat. There is nothing of value here.

M – Goblin Lair

This is a smaller sleeping area used by goblins. The goblins would be asleep, but the noise of the party is keeping them awake. There are 3 goblins and 1 goblin channeller. The channeller has a purse containing 350 marks, marks being a defunct currency. Changing in them in town might net as much as 80 Crescents.

N – Chief's Quarters

There is an orc chief here. He is awake, but the noise of the party in room K means he won't pay any attention to sounds of fighting in either of the adjacent rooms. The statue is in this room. The orc chief is carrying a fancy sword with golden detail, which can be melted down for 150 Crescents back in town.

O – Orc Trap

A large section of floor here is weak and will give way if someone steps on it.

Finding the trap requires Spot Traps Really Well and a d10 Lore check.

Once spotted, avoiding it is easy.

If anyone falls down the hole, they take 2d6 Wounds from the fall. Climbing out requires a d8 Strength check.

P – Orc Entrance

This tunnel eventually emerges from the cliffs not too far from the temple. The passage is large enough for the statue to be carried down it.

General Hazards

The Catacombite is the only wandering monster, but one of the monsters in room C or K might make a trip to room L for some refreshment and surprise the party. Equally, any of the orcs may leave the dungeon through tunnel P to answer a call of nature.

Should the orc tribe be made aware of intruders (by one of the goblins from room C arriving, for example), they will mobilise in force to chase them out- this may leave room N unguarded and it's possible that by hiding in the sorcerer's part of the dungeon the party can sneak in behind them to claim the statue,

The Statue

The statue has been vandalised by the orcs, mostly by covering it with lewd graffiti. It takes 2 people to lift it, one at each end. If they drop it, it will probably be damaged further. If they need to turn and fight while carrying it, it takes an action to put it on the floor safely. Movement with the statue is very slow; certainly it would not be possible to run away from chasing orcs while carrying it.

If the statue falls down the pit trap, it will be next to impossible to get it out again. Similarly, taking down the trap-door is a one-way proposition.

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Epilogue

If the party recover the statue, the job is done. Employed characters will get their due, but no particular bonus. If the party didn't bring a cart for the statue, its weight means it takes them 2 weeks to travel back to town rather than 1.

If they were dealing with the buyer themselves, he is not happy with the condition of the statue and refuses to pay his promised price. After some argument, he will offer 2000 Crescents but no more. If the party is larger or smaller than 4 characters, adjust his offer appropriately.

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