

SLAVE HOLD OF THE OGRE MAGE

A ONE PAGE DUNGEON BY DAVE ZAJAC
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BACKGROUND

While resting at a tavern called the One-Headed Hydra, the PCs are approached by, Hartlow Grommin, a warrior seeking help in rescuing his adventuring party from a rundown keep in the nearby mountains. Hartlow will explain that his party was trying to dislodge an ogre mage slave-trader who has taken up residence at the site. This is only a partial truth. In actuality, Hartlow is in league with the ogre mage, Taltar, who is capturing humanoid stock to sell to the dark elves that live below the mountain. It is Hartlow's job to bring high-end stock to the slave hold.

Hartlow is an accomplished liar who has a complete backstory fabricated about his imaginary adventuring party. The fictional characters include Lester Pullman—a gnome wizard, Yarna Faithlight—a dwarven cleric of Moradin, and Dillin Lymoor—a light-hearted half-elf rogue. None of these individuals actually exists, but Hartlow manages to spin a convincing tale nonetheless.

If the PCs accept Hartlow's quest, he will unerringly guide them to the ogre mage's slave hold.

FEATURES

The slave hold was once a dwarven outpost set near a narrow mountain pass. A century ago, it was overrun by giants and looted before being abandoned. Most of the interior consists of hewn stone rooms and corridors. The corridors are built with 10-foot-high ceilings, while the ceilings in all the rooms are 20-foot-tall (save areas 1 and 6, which open to the outside). Torches are spaced periodically throughout the complex to provide light. Unless otherwise specified, the ogres are not smart enough to flee an attack and will fight to the death.

ROOMS

1: OVERGROWN COURTYARD. This overgrown courtyard was once a place for the dwarves to socialize and enjoy some fresh air. A natural cistern exists in the northeast corner of the space. The entry doors to the area are rotten and falling down. The 10-foot-tall ledge to the north is cluttered with weeds, grass, and small trees. Two ogres lurk here, waiting for intruders. If they see Hartlow, they will attempt to remain hidden, and wait until he opens the doors to area 2 before leaping from the ledge to attack. When this happens, Hartlow turns on the party and attacks them, as well.

2: ENTRY HALL. If the ogre guards in area 6 spotted the approaching PCs, they will likely have moved here to prepare an ambush, taking up position on each side of the double doors. If not, this area is vacant, except for some broken dwarven statues and torn, half-rotten tapestries on the wall of dwarves fighting giants.

3: SLAVE CELL I. A locked cell lies to the west of this area. Inside are a pair of twin female elves (Tevna and Elsa Leafwalker), dressed in rags. They do not appear to have been mistreated or even malnourished. They will beg for the PCs to help them escape. They were brought to the slave hold unconscious and have no knowledge of its layout.

4: SLEEPING QUARTERS. Piles of straw and dirty blankets litter this space that the ogres obviously use for sleeping. If the PCs search through the straw, they will find a pouch containing 325 gp and an onyx ring worth 150 gp.

5: SLAVE CELL II. Smashed, rotten furniture lies scattered about this room, which the ogres use for eating and playing dice. Only a large table in the center remains intact. Several crates have been brought in to serve as chairs. On the north wall are two locked cells. The west cell holds 2 human males and the east cell contains 3 human females. All have sacks over their heads. They are the most recent additions to the slave hold, but since they were brought in hooded, they know nothing beyond the obvious concerning their captors or the fortress layout.

6: ELEVATED LOOKOUT TOWER. The lookout tower in this area lies 15 feet above ground level and is exposed to the outside pass. Two ogre guards wait here hidden below the parapet. If they spot the PCs, they wait until the group enters the courtyard before slipping inside and moving to area 2 to prepare for an ambush.

7: KITCHEN. Two gutted and decapitated dwarven corpses hang upside down from the ceiling by chains in this makeshift kitchen. In the far corner of the room next to a fire containing a boiling cauldron, a short, flabby ogre works diligently with a meat cleaver on a stumpy leg that rests atop a chopping block. On the floor in the corner lie three male dwarven heads. The ogre is busy and will not hear the PCs enter.

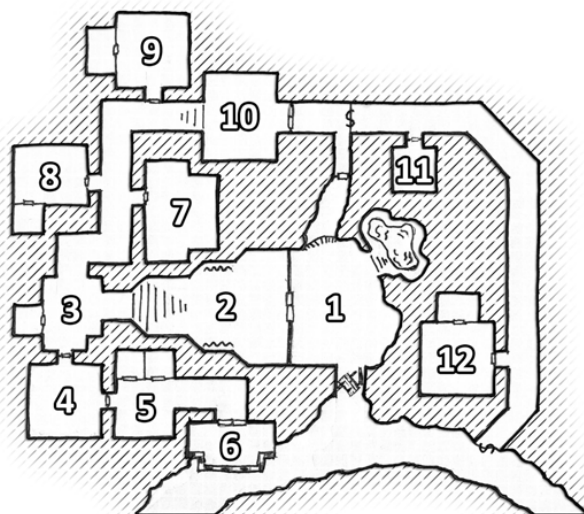
Unlike the other ogres in the slave hold, this one (whose name is Kark) will only fight if attacked, and if threatened sufficiently will reveal the layout of the slave hold and the contents of its rooms in crude common. Kark does not, however, know of the secret entrances to Taltar's inner lair (areas 11 and 12). He only knows the ogre mage has an uncanny knack for appearing and disappearing.

8: SLAVE CELL III. Angry words exchanged between ogres can be heard coming from this room. Four ogres seem to be arguing over what to do with a dwarven prisoner. Keys dangle from the lock of an open door on the south wall. The keys open all the locked doors in areas 1-10. When the ogres see the PC's they attack, hooting loudly, hoping to draw the attention of their allies in area 10.

The dwarf, Amandin Northway, was part of a dwarven fighting party that was ambushed in the mountains. She saw her three male companions slaughtered during the attack, but she does not know they now hang in the ogres' kitchen (area 7).

Amandin has been beaten and severely wounded. She requires aid and healing. She does not know the layout of the complex, but she does know it holds a total of 14 ogres (this total includes Taltar).

9: SLAVE CELL IV. Two ogres sleep atop straw piles in this locked room. A slave cell on the west wall holds 3 male humans, the survivors of a recently raided merchant caravan. The men were the caravan's guards, but they have been stripped of all their possessions. If the PCs attempt to open this door, they draw the notice of the two ogres in area 10, who move to attack. A fight



outside this area awakens the ogres within, who join the battle on the following round.

If the PCs free the caravan guards (named Devin, Thom, and Percy), they may be able to talk them into helping liberate the slave hold, but only if the PCs can provide them with weapons and armor (which can be found in area 10).

10: STOLEN GOODS. Crates, barrels, and piles of weapons litter this area, a product of the ogres' plundering. Two ogres stand guard here, watching the west hallway and nearby door. They attack at the first sign of trouble.

While most of the items in this area are not valuable to the PCs, they can find enough swords, bows, and arrows to arm the caravan guards in area 9.

11: TREASURE ROOM. This magically locked room can only be opened by using Taltar's enchanted key or some form of magical spell. Inside is a locked and trapped chest. If the chest is opened without first disarming the trap, PCs adjacent to the chest suffer 6d6 damage as lightning arcs from the chest to their bodies. The chest contains 1,596 gp, 1,235 sp, 13,986 cp, and 3 magic items of the game master's choosing.

12: TALTAR'S QUARTERS. This unlocked room holds Taltar's private quarters. Unlike the rest of the slave hold, fine tapestries hang from the walls and lavish rugs cover the floor. A smaller room on the north wall holds a large bed covered in blankets and pillows.

The ogre mage can be found here, studying a scroll at a large writing desk. When the PCs enter, Taltar is truly shocked to see them, but his surprise quickly turns to anger, and he attacks with a white-hot rage, hurling magic and insults at the PCs in near-perfect common.

If the PCs defeat Taltar, they find the scroll below and the ogre mage's enchanted key, which opens the door to area 11.

Taltar,

While the quantity of the stock you are supplying cannot be denied, we also require quality if we are to move the product. Elves are of particular popularity as playthings, as are humans. Do not bother with dwarves, there is currently no market for them.

—Saliz Der'nun of House Rakarn



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