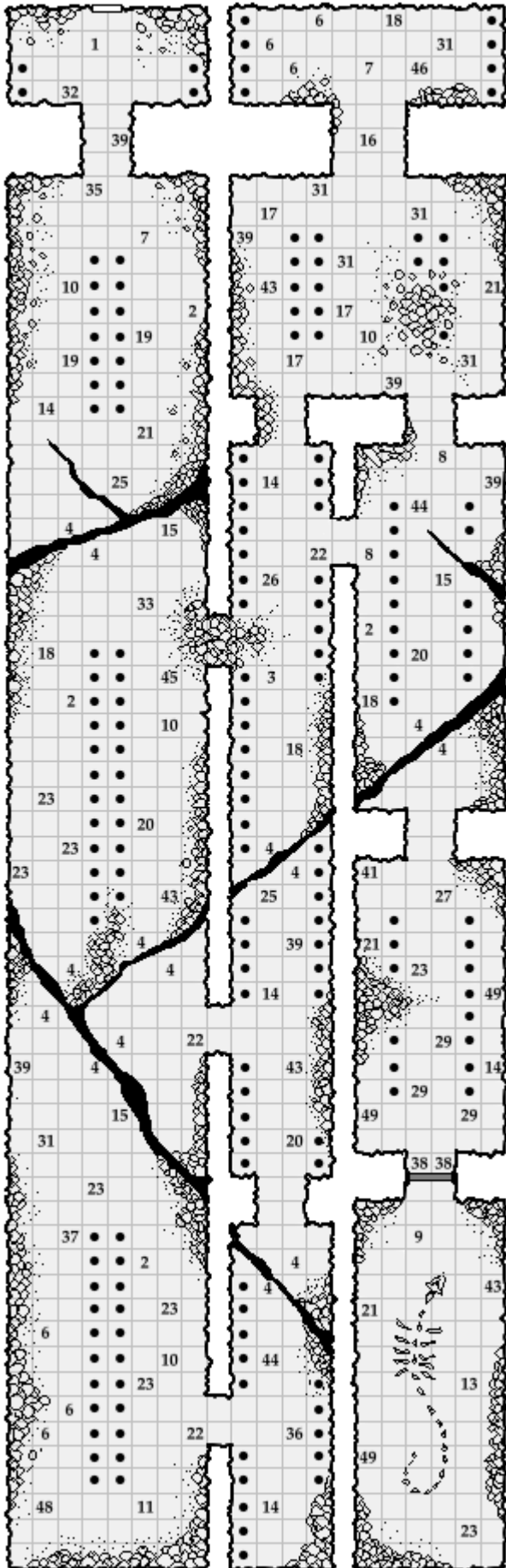


THE DRUHL VAULTS



Note: Each grid square is equivalent to an area 10 x 10 metres.

THE DRUHLSTONE

A gamebook adventure in two pages.
Written and Illustrated by Wayne Densley 2014

Please note that this adventure is a sequel to the micro-gamebook, *Finding Dannam Tull*, and follows on from the conclusion of that adventure.

Introduction

Standing over the body of Dannam Tull you grieve for the old scholar's demise. Respected by all the Brethren you know that his body should be returned to Das Vallendor, but Tull himself has given you reason to delay his return. In your hand you have a map, and its hand-drawn scratchings give hint to the location of a Druhlstone. Such a prize cannot be ignored. As your torch throws jagged shadows upon the stone walls you try and remember all you have been taught about the curious nature of that elusive talisman. Indeed Druhl were only a myth to the Guild, a magical construct made from the skeleton of a long-dead Dragon and given purpose by a glowing blue gem at its heart. It is rumoured that the gem itself was the desiccated essence of a living Dragon, concentrated in its heart and then petrified by long years below ground. You know that such a prize is worth the risk, and that the chance of finding one worth the delay. Quickly you take Tull's pack and pull from its interior three fresh torches and six standard ration packs. These you take with you before surveying the rockfall that killed the old scholar. At its upper edges you find a shallow opening, one that leads to a long tunnel beyond. This is the way you must go and without hesitation you climb up the rockfall and into the narrow gap.

Special Rules

This adventure requires no special rules except those provided with the Standard Rule Set. If you do not have a copy of these rules they can be obtained from arborell.com. The Druhlstone does however, require a player to carry over their character from *Finding Dannam Tull*. To do so copy your character details onto a new sheet of paper then begin your mission to find the Druhlstone at grid reference 1.

Using these Section References:

The section references that follow correspond to numbered grid squares found upon the map provided opposite and in most cases need only be read once. The exception are section numbers enclosed within brackets (). These sections must be actioned no matter how many times they are landed upon. All of the numbered grids can however, be used as end of turn way-points as many times as is necessary. It should be noted that if a numbered grid blocks the way forward the player must land on that grid before continuing.

Sections

- 1: Standing in the shadows of this large chamber you brush yourself down and survey what you have uncovered. The tunnel had reached deep into the earth and here you sense the air is different, the rock decrepit and unstable. You can feel the vast age of the chamber and can only wonder at what might lie ahead. There is however, only one way forward and no reason to delay.
- (2): In the dark you stand and listen. There is movement ahead but you can discern only muffled echoes that fade with the shadows. Whatever their origin you have no choice but to move on.
- 3: On the ground you find a pile of old Hordim tools. All are rusted or broken so you move on.
- (4): Ahead opens a deep rift in the ground that must be crossed. If you wish to jump the gap test your Agility and Strength attributes. If you succeed with either you make the other side and can continue. If you fail both turn to section 28. If you would rather not attempt the jump and you have a rope and grapple test your Agility instead. If you are successful you swing across to the other side. If you do not succeed the attempt fails and you will have to take the leap instead.
- 5: Quickly you reach for another torch but find that you have used your last. Without light you are defenceless and the end comes swiftly. From behind you there comes a furtive rush and then an impact that tears flesh and breaks bone. You try and turn but it is too late, another strike and you hit the ground hard, your lifeblood draining away. In this life your mission is over.
- (6): Too late you realise you have walked into a trap. Across the floor there lay a thick mat of root-like tendrils, and at the first touch an Oer'daaki (CV-15, EP- 10) rouses from its slumber. Before you can turn to run thick roots fall from the surrounding walls, the plant reaching out to find a firm purchase upon its prey. You slice through one of the roots but not before another entwines itself about your foot. If you are to escape this plant you must cause it enough harm that it will release you. Fight this Oer'daaki until it has no endurance remaining. Only then will it release you. If it crushes you instead your mission here will be over.
- 7: Quickly you move forward, but must come to a halt when you see a flat indentation in the dust at your feet. Crouching, you run your finger about its edges and confirm it is the print left by a very large Reaver. The scorpion-like creature is one you must avoid if you can.
- 8: For a moment you pause. The air has changed here, a heavy odour of ruthless malice and old death permeating each breath you take. There are Dreyadim close, of this you can be sure.
- 9: In this vast cavern you can see the skeletal remains of a Dragon. For a moment you listen intently and hear from within its massive ribcage sounds of movement. Carefully you make your way forward but are confronted in the gloom by a huge Reaver. Turn to section 24.
- 10: In the dust you notice something unusual. It is a footprint but it is neither Hordim nor Guild. Someone else has found their way here and you wonder if their purpose is the same as your own.
- 11: Resting upon the ground you find a Hordim shield. Made of a single Dragon scale it is sturdy, but burned along one edge. (If you wish to take this shield add +1 to your CV.)

12: Carefully you place the crystal key into the lock. Immediately the key turns in its escutcheon, the thick metal slab dissolving away. Beyond this threshold you can see nothing, the interior as black as a pit. It is however, your only way forward.

13: Carefully you move along the eastern edge of the cavern but must come to a halt when you realise that you are not alone here. At the centre of this vast chamber there lies the skeletal remains of a huge Dragon, its bones glistening in the shadows. For a moment you remain quiet then from within its massive ribcage there arise sounds of movement. Carefully you make your way forward but are confronted in the gloom by a huge Reaver. As its gaze falls upon you, you prepare to fight. Turn to section 24.

14: For a moment you come to a halt and listen. There is a noise in the dark ahead, a rasping scrape that fades quickly into the gloom. You wait but it does not return. (15:) In the gloom you see gas spewing from the ground ahead. Immediately you feel its effects, the Gas Flume spreading quickly into the cavern about you. If you cannot get away from its poisonous gases it will do you harm. Test your Agility and Luck attributes. If you succeed with either you run beyond its reach and escape. If you fail both roll 1d6 and take the number from your endurance before continuing.

16: In the shadows you take a moment and consult Tull's map. It tells you there is a dead end to the north and much more to be found to the south.

17: From the ceiling overhead there comes a loud hum. Before you can prepare yourself a swarm of **Needle Flies** (CV-16, EP-100) descends in a cloud, the huge fist-sized insects swirling about your position. You know this is a fight you cannot win for the flies are far too numerous. Instead you decide to run. Conduct a combat with the swarm. If you survive six rounds you can escape the swarm and continue. If you do not survive then it is here that you will die.

(18:) From the crumbling wall a **Cragwyrn** (CV-13, EP-8) lunges forward. In one powerful thrust it attempts to bite down upon your arm but you are too quick. Drawing back you take your weapon in hand and wait for the huge, eel-like creature to strike again. In this combat you must either kill it or die in the attempt, and you will have been injected with venom if you lose more than two combat rounds. If this is the case (and you survive the combat) you must take -1 from your CV for the remainder of the mission.

19: For a moment you consider a huge stone pillar that rises out of the ground in the centre of the chamber. It is but one of a multitude that have been cut as supports for the massive curving vault of the roof overhead. It is rough hewn, but appears to have been carved as a single piece of stone that extends upwards into the darkness. Curious, you tap at it and see a small piece of stone flake away. Like everything else in these chambers it is in danger of collapse and you move on.

20: Moving forward you search the shadows. You can see little but there is a smell in the air that brings you to a halt. It is something all Brethren recognise. From against the far wall of the chamber a **Reaver** (CV-16, EP-14) disengages. It is only a juvenile but enough of a match for one lone Brother of the Guild. Without hesitation the scorpion-like creature attacks. There are no options here. Kill it or it will kill you.

21: In the shadows ahead stones trickle down a slope of broken rock. This wall is on the verge of collapse and it seems the roof is just as unstable.

22: Tull's map tells you this exit leads to another cavern. Quietly you move on.

(23:) Without warning the floor collapses beneath you, an enormous hole dragging rock and choking clouds of grit into a widening abyss. You have one chance at survival and instinctively you leap forward. Test your Agility and Luck. If you fail both tests go to section 47. Otherwise you avoid the collapsing floor and land on firm ground. If this is your fate continue with your mission.

24: In the dark you see the faint glimmer of a Druhlstone resting within the remains of the Dragon, but it is beyond your grasp whilst the **Bone Reaver** CV-18, EP-15) lives. In a rush the monster charges you, enormous pincers snapping at the air. If you win turn to section 50. If the Reaver prevails your mission here is over.

25: Carefully you peer over the edge of the rift. It is a deep abyss, a black tear in the ground that extends into darkness below. Looking around you move on.

26: Upon the ground you find the remains of a tent. It is covered in a slew of fallen stone but you can see that it is neither Guild-made nor Hordim in origin. Carefully you pull the canvas aside and find a satchel containing three rations. These you take with you. (Record this find then move on.)

27: In the cavern ahead you see something. It is but a shadow, one you recognise as you watch it disappear into the gloom. There are Drey'a'dim here.

28: With a sickening thud you hit the edge of the chasm, showering earth into the abyss beneath. With one hand you take a firm hold upon an embedded stone and attempt to pull yourself out. Test your Strength attribute. If you are successful you haul yourself out of the rift. If you are not turn to section 40.

29: From out of the gloom ahead three **Morg Drey'a'dim** (CV-13, EP-9) rush towards you. Each is armed, and all must die if you are to move forward.

30: In frustration you hit the metal slab, but there is nothing for it, you need the key. Looking at Tull's map you see areas of the vaults that you have not yet surveyed. Perhaps if a key exists it might be found there. Turning on your heel you consider what you should do. It is then that you see a distortion in the shadows. As you draw your weapon a **Jotun Drey'a'dim** (CV-18, EP-16) coalesces in the chamber ahead. It is an enormous creature almost four metres high, wielding a long wooden beam as it advances. There are no choices here. With your back to the metal slab you must fight. If you win this contest the key can be found elsewhere in these chambers. If it is the Jotun that prevails your mission ends here.

(31:) Overhead there comes a resounding crack as rock breaks away from the roof of the cavern. Instinctively you run forward as huge chunks of stone slam into the

dirt about you. Test your Agility and Luck. If you are successful with either test you avoid the falling stone. If you fail both your fate will be sealed as tonnes of debris collapses upon you. If this is so your mission here will be over.

32: Upon the wall here you find a mark scraped roughly into the stone. It looks like the letters "AD" but you cannot be sure. It is however, very old and with no other evidence to indicate its origin you move on.

33: Your map tells you that there should be an exit here, but all you find is collapsed stone and scattered debris. Maybe you will have better luck further to the south.

34: Taking your shovel you dig away at the rubble pile. It does not take long to widen the opening and find a way over the debris. Move to the nearest numbered grid and continue your mission.

35: With Tull's map in hand you consider what lies ahead. According to the map there spreads before you a vast cavern and you can sense its age with every breath of the dry, dust-filled air. Carefully you fold the map and replace it in your pocket.

36: Upon the ground you find a line of bootprints. They are not Guild issue and you wonder if there might be a scavenger within the ruins. Such men abide by no code, and can prove as much a danger as any Hordim. It is an unexpected complication.

37: Against the pillars you find the remains of a camp. Judging by the size of the equipment left behind the campers were Jotun but all the evidence left tells you they were attacked by something very big. Looking around you wonder if the attacker might still remain within the ruins. It is a thought that moves you on quickly.

38: Across the passage ahead you find a slab of iron, its prodigious mass completely blocking the way. Carefully you search the barrier for anything that might afford a way through. What you find is an escutcheon at its centre that holds a hexagonal keyhole. If you are to discover what lies beyond this enormous barrier you will have to use a key. If you have such a key turn to section 12. If you have a set of lockpicks and would pick the lock turn to section 42. If you have neither turn to section 30.

(39:) Upon the wall you find a growth of *Baku*. These spherical fungi are favoured by the Guild as an edible food so you take a handful and place them in your pack. (If required these *Baku* will add +2 to your endurance when eaten.)

40: Desperately you try to pull yourself out of the abyss. Struggling upon the edge of the rift you can feel the earth giving way and in one slump of broken rock the rift collapses, your screams lost to the depths below. In this life your mission is over.

41: Here you find the decaying remains of a man. Crouching at his side you check his belongings but find nothing that identifies him. Whatever his purpose may have been here he found death instead. Standing, you cover him then move on.

42: Carefully you try to pick the lock but it is Hordim-made and not one that will succumb to your skill. You try but have no luck. In the dark you turn to section 30.

(43:) Without warning the earth underfoot tremors, and with its increasing violence the near wall begins to collapse. Instinctively you turn away from the falling rock and run for your life. Test your Agility and Luck. If you succeed with either the rockfall does not claim you and you can move on. If you fail both you will instead be crushed beneath the stone, your mission over.

(44:) Without warning your torch flickers then goes out. In the dark you reach for another. If you have a replacement continue with your mission. If you have none go to section 5.

45: As you pass the collapsed passageway you spy a possible way through. At its summit the pile of debris has a narrow opening. Perhaps this is a way through. Carefully you climb the edges of the debris and find indeed a way through, but it is not wide enough. If you have a shovel test your Strength. If you are successful turn to section 34. If you do not have a shovel, or are unsuccessful with the Strength test, the debris is too difficult to clear and you should instead find another way.

46: Overhead you hear the rush of leathery wings slicing through the air. Instinctively you crouch, your torch held above your head to ward the attack you know is to come. In a flurry of dust a juvenile **Molgoth** (CV-14, EP-8) falls to ground, its bat-like wings extended, long taloned claws grasping for a hold upon your flesh. This Molgoth is not large but it moves with a desperate hunger that makes it all the more dangerous. Kill it before it kills you.

47: You jump, but know as you leap that you have misjudged the distance. With a thud you hit the edge of the rift and begin to slide backwards. In desperation you dig your hands into the dry earth and find a hold upon a rock. Test your Strength. If you succeed you pull yourself out. If you fail the depths of the abyss await.

48: In the dust you find the remains of a Hresh. The corpse is no more than dried skin stretched taut upon bone but the uniform it wears you recognise. The Hordim is a Black Cloak, a Hresh tasked with maintaining the secret places that can be found within many of these deep ruins. This Hresh however, did not complete his mission. Quickly you search the remains and find a hexagonal crystal key. (If you wish to take this key record it on your status sheet then move on.)

49: From the shadows a **Hresh Drey'a'dim** (CV-15, EP-10) attacks. You have nowhere to run so you stand your ground. Kill this creature before it kills you.

50: The Bone Reaver lies dead and in the aftermath you try and recover your breath. Before you rests the Dragon and within its ribcage you can see the gleam of a blue gem. Quickly you push your way inside the Dragon's ribs and find against its spine the Druhlstone, a clear blue crystal the size of your doubled fists. Carefully you prise it from its seating. What you feel is the weight of it, and sense that its power is almost spent. Placing it in your pack you look back towards the exit. It is a long way out of these ruins and you have no reason to linger. Your mission here is now over.