

DUNGEONS ARE REAL

SWORDS & WIZARDRY or compatible system adventure for 4 characters of 1st experience level, pre-rolled characters are included.

THIS ADVENTURE IS BASED ON A TRUE STORY

Almost twenty years ago I was avid explorer of the decaying ruins of Krepost Sveaborg around Helsinki. In those days, the “hobby” of urban exploration practiced by enthusiastic youths was not known by that name, it was just kids messing around where they should have not been. My interest was sparked in one particular hot lazy summer, I had barely noticed old fortifications and empty ammunition storages hewn to rock near my home but after being introduced to a deceptively simple game of dragons and dungeons, I started to feel their irresistible pull. Those old Russian-built tunnels leading to depths of earth were like dungeons described in that game and Cyrillic alphabets carved in the rock might as well have been dwarven runes.

Old locals told many grim tales of these fortifications to youth willing to listen. Most stories told to us were about how Russians had used Chinese prisoner labor in building the fortifications that led to prisoners dying in droves and some told about desperate battles of Finnish Civil War where Reds tried in vain to defend themselves in the fortifications from the victorious Whites and their German allies. Those tunnels and corridors had a history, and quite a bleak one, and as we soon learned, dark places are best to be left alone for other reasons too.

This adventure module is intended to be used as dramatic recreation of events that transpired in the exploration of dungeon near the Vik Campus. We had previous experience on exploring tunnels and old ammo depots, but nothing prepared us for what we found. I have in preparation of these notes and map tried to describe what once was there in the most detailed manner possible.

Profiles of four explorers have been included in the end of this module, personal details are sparse and names changed as none of the other involved parties alive want to have nothing to do with this recreation and do not wish their names to be associated with the incident of the Vik dungeon.

The incident itself had few articles written of it in some of the most lurid crime magazines, none of them getting even near the truth and I am afraid it fueled to great degree the suspicions people have towards roleplaying games. To clarify on some of the rumors, none of us were engaged in what is these days is called live roleplaying or wearing funny costumes and makeup. None of us were using drugs and listening to heavy metal is hardly dabbling in the occult.

Enter The Dungeon

You awake after sudden collapse of the corridor behind you. Dust is settling in the flickering light of the flashlights. You hear the coughing of your friends. The room is 30 feet wide and of same length, there is lot of rubble on the floor. Dark corridor 10 feet wide opens in the northern wall. Air tastes funny, somewhat metallic like copper pennies in your mouth.

Room descriptions:

1.

This is the starting room of the exploration, corridor south is blocked by tons of rocks after collapse. Walls are plastered with concrete.

If rubble on the floor is examined disturbing find of smashed human bones will be made, one skeleton that has been destroyed very thoroughly. Walls, if examined have Chinese characters scratched on them in great amount, but none of the explorers can read them.

2.

This 30x30 feet room is meeting point of four corridors, floor is wet and mold grows on the walls like water would be seeping in from the ceiling. Rusted sign near the northern corridor has something in Cyrillic written on it, but none of the explorers can read it.

If searched, a pair of thoroughly rotten leather boots can be found in the north-east corner and several empty shell casings of rifles can be found on the floor.

3.

This 30x20-foot room at end of long corridor has set of four manacles attached to western wall. There is rusty pile of knives, razors, screwdrivers and nails in middle of the room.

4.

Floor of this room is covered in muddy foul smelling water at least foot deep, there is two exits one to east and one to west.

There are nine bear traps hidden in the murky water, if nobody searches the water with stick or similar item the first explorer to walking in the water will step to bear trap and take 1d8 damage, possibly (50% chance) falling head first on another, taking another 1d8 of damage.

5.

This 30-foot by 20-foot room is otherwise empty except for very rusty bolt-action rifle lying on the floor next to tipped chair.

The rifle is of course useless and impossible to put in to use as it cannot be repaired in these conditions even if any of the explorers knew how to. It might be used as club, though.

6.

This 30 by 30 feet room seems empty except for piles of mouldy rags on the floor.

If the piles are examined it is clear they re clothes are from the first quarter of the 20th century, clothes of at least twenty people are scattered around. Clothes will deteriorate when handled.

7.

This 40 feet long room looks like barrack of some sort, deteriorating bunks line the walls.

If searched through deteriorated clothes similar to those in room 6 may be found. There is scribbling in Cyrillic alphabet on the walls and stick figures with pointed hats.

8.

This room seems empty except that your lights flicker for a moment and you hear mumbling and whispers somewhere near.

Source of the sounds is unclear and is not revealed by searching.

9.

Flashlights flicker in this room as you see piles of human bones heaped on the floor.

Insane chattering and mumbling starts to echo in the room as three one foot long humanoids looking like bearded small men with tall pointed hats emerge and with hateful expression on their tiny faces they charge at you.

These creatures are gnomes, use stats for *Kobolds* on page 80 of the rules. They cannot be reasoned with. Bones, if examined, will reveal that they are covered in tiny bite marks, gnomes have been chewing them for long time. Gnome bodies are like those of tiny and malformed humans with pointy teeth.

10.

This 30x20-foot room is filled from floor to ceiling with rusty barbed wire.

Any rustling in the barbed wire will alert the three gnomes in room 9, they will charge in with mad chattering and mumbling when at least one explorer is tangled up in the wire, otherwise they wait for a better chance later. Movement is reduced to 4 ft/combat round and explorers fighting here get a -2 penalty to hit. Gnomes being small creatures and having set up the barbed wire do not suffer such penalties.

11.

This 30x30 feet room looks like its walls would have been scorched at some point.

12.

In the middle of this 30x30 room lies the body of a man in blue jogging suit.

This is body of very unlucky jogger dragged here by the gnomes. His face has been gnawed off and his arms have scratches from defending himself. There is nothing in his pockets.

13.

This empty room has in addition to two corridor entrances of east and south strange iron door on the northern wall.

The iron door is covered in glyphs of strange sort, if opened there seems to be only bare rock surface behind it. If the stone surface is touched it feels very cold. This door is magical gnome portal, and operates on principles only the bent mind of a gnome understands.

14.

This 30x20 feet room is filled from floor to ceiling with rusty barbed wire.

Movement is reduced to 4 ft/combat round and explorers fighting here get -2 penalty to hit. Gnomes being small creatures and having set up the barbed wire do not suffer such penalties.

15.

This 30 by 30 feet room seems empty except for broken light bulb hanging from the ceiling.

Entrance to this room on southern corridor has small tripwire running across the floor, if not searched for first one to enter triggers it and the wire rings small silver bell nearby. Bell's sound alarms the gnomes in room 17 so they will be ready and in ambush when the explorers come through. It will also alert the three gnomes in room 9 that will come charging through the corridors chattering in indescribable way, if they have not been already been defeated.

16.

This 30x30 feet room has roughly hewn entrance to uneven corridor on the western wall, like miners of some kind would have broken in to this room through the western wall.

17.

This 30x30 feet room has roughly hewn uneven walls and floor.

Four gnomes guard this room, like their kin in room 9 they look like twisted little bearded men one foot high that wear high conical pointed hats. If they have been alarmed the silver bell in room 15 they get free combat round of actions as described on page 16 of the suggested rules for *Surprise*. For the gnomes use stats for *Kobolds* on page 80 of the rules.

18.

In middle of this chamber roughly 30 feet in diameter are two gnomes that mumble and chatter strange words inside a circle painted with blood. The mummified remains of third gnome rest at their feet.

These gnomes are trying to raise their dead brethren with ritual involving human blood, it is rather lengthy ritual and the gnomes are very angry for any disturbance. For the gnomes use stats for *Kobolds* on page 80 of the rules.

19.

This 40 feet long and 30 feet wide chambers long walls are lined with wooden shelves, on them are placed hundreds of mummified and cobweb covered bodies of small humanoids with pointed hats. Small ladders lead on the shelves. Their empty eye sockets and distorted grins almost seem to follow anyone coming here. There is rusty iron door covered in strange glyphs on the northern wall.

The door needs the combined Strength score of at least 18 to be pried open, which means if there is only one survivor at this point he will be left to meet unknown fate in the dungeon, trying in vain to open the door and the adventure ends here fading to black.

20.

This chamber roughly 30 feet diameter has hole in the northern wall where moonlight from outside is shining through.

This is the exit and leads to a forest near the Vik Campus, this opening was never found later despite

several efforts made to locate it. Original entrance to tunnels was found but the corridor terminated after 30 feet looking like construction was never completed, nevertheless it is now barred with a locked iron gate. Bodies of gnomes turn in to stone when exposed to sunlight making them look like particularly tacky lawn ornaments. The bite marks of gnomes will be regarded as those made by wild animals. The true nature of the incident will be buried by the official investigation until this adventure comes to light in Ropecon 2011.

Character profiles:

Kusti

Strength: 9
Intelligence: 10
Wisdom: 14
Constitution: 9
Dexterity: 9
Charisma: 10

Class/Level: Cleric 1
Saving Throw: 15
Hit Points: 5

Armor Class: 9 [10]

Weapons/Equipment: Hammer (1d4+1 damage), flashlight, cigarette lighter, box of cigarettes, backpack

Spells/Special Abilities: 1st level clerics don't get spells and it is doubtful does the undead turning work. (Kusti has some strange beliefs, some of them even religious in nature)

Juhani

Strength: 13 (+1 bonus to hit and damage)
Intelligence: 12
Wisdom: 9
Constitution: 13 (+1 hit point)
Dexterity: 10
Charisma: 10

Class/Level: Fighting-man 1
Saving Throw: 14
Hit Points: 6

Armor Class: 9 [10]

Weapons/Equipment: Axe (1d6 +1 damage from strength), box of matches, half a pack of cigarettes, flashlight, backpack

Spells/Special Abilities: None (Pretty good at guitar though)

Sulevi

Strength: 10
Intelligence: 10
Wisdom: 8
Constitution: 10
Dexterity: 14 (+1 AC bonus)
Charisma: 12

Class/Level: Magic-User 1
Saving Throw: 15
Hit Points: 5

Armor Class: 8 [11]

Weapons/Equipment: Knife (1d4 damage), flashlight, box of matches

Spells/Special Abilities: Detect Magic (Sulevi is convinced he could spot magic and is in the know of such matters.)

Lasse

Strength: 10
Intelligence: 10
Wisdom: 12
Constitution: 10
Dexterity: 10
Charisma: 10

Class/Level: Fighting-man 1
Saving Throw: 14
Hit Points: 5

Armor Class: 9 [10]

Weapons/Equipment: Crowbar (1d4+1 damage, equivalent of light mace), flashlight, tobacco and papers to roll up cigarettes, cigarette lighter, roll of duct tape,

Spells/Special Abilities: None (Rolls cigarettes by hand effortlessly like an expert though)

